



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1806 HD1
RELATING TO CESSPOOL CONVERSION**

REPRESENTATIVE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing Date: 3/1/2022

Room Number: 308

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (Department) supports this measure. The
3 bill removes the limitation on specific types (septic and aerobic treatment unit systems) that may
4 be installed to replace cesspools. The Department agrees with the current language of this
5 measure that states all cesspools shall be upgraded or converted to a director-approved
6 wastewater system.

7 **Offered Amendments:** None.

8 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Testimony in Support of HB1806 HD 1 Relating to Cesspool Conversion

Aloha, I am writing on behalf of Kauai Climate Action Coalition, a group of engaged citizens of all ages and backgrounds, to support HB1806. Cesspools are a major environmental problem both for our groundwater and our oceans. We must get them converted as soon as possible. As the climate crisis continues the threat cesspools present grows. Please support HB1806 HD1. Mahalo.

HB-1806-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2022 4:01:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/1/2022 12:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ted Bohlen	Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition	Support	No

Comments:

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair, The Honorable Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair, and Members of the House Committee on Finance

From: Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: Hearing **HB1806 HD1 RELATING TO CESSPOOL CONVERSION.**

Hearing: Tuesday, March 1, 2022, 12:30 p.m., CR 308 and by videoconference

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition is a group focused on protecting corals and other ocean species. The **Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition STRONGLY SUPPORTS HB1806 HD1!**

Hawaii has nearly eighty-eight thousand cesspools that release more than fifty million gallons of raw sewage into the State's groundwater and surface waters every day! Cesspools need to be phased out in order to protect Hawaii's drinking waters, surface water quality, and coral reefs and other aquatic life!

Although the State established a requirement for the upgrade, conversion, or connection of all cesspools in the State by 2050, the language of the mandate should be made clearer, as this bill does, to ensure that cesspools are upgraded or converted to a Director of Health-approved wastewater system.

Please pass this bill!

Mahalo!

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)



Feb. 28, 2022

In Support of **HB1806 HD1** Relating to Cesspool Conversion
House Committee on Finance (FIN)
Hearing on March 1, 12:30pm

Aloha, Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the non-profit WAI: Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations, I am writing in **strong support of HB1806 HD1**. This bill would remove the limitation on specific types of wastewater systems to which cesspools must be upgraded or converted to and instead simply requires them to be upgraded to a wastewater system approved by the Department of Health.

Hawaii has more than 88,000 cesspools across the state, discharging 53 million gallons of raw sewage each day into Hawaii's waters. That's similar to a massive sewage spill every day. As a member of the Cesspool Conversion Working Group, I believe this bill provides needed flexibility for DOH's Wastewater Branch to update their rules to allow for innovative and efficient wastewater systems. This will help the state fulfill its mandate under Act 125 to convert all cesspools by 2050 and give homeowners better and often more affordable options.

WAI is a non-profit dedicated to protecting our drinking water, groundwater and near-shore ecosystems by reducing sewage pollution from cesspools and failing septic systems. Our goal is to help find more innovative, affordable, and eco-friendly solutions to wastewater management. Better sanitation systems reduce sewage pollution, protect public health and make properties more valuable, while also protecting our groundwater, streams, coral reefs and coastal areas.

Hawaii is struggling with serious sewage pollution problems, and we need to convert 88,000 cesspools in the next three decades. Previously, DOH required cesspools be converted only to septic systems or Aerobic Treatment Units (ATU's) without allowing for other more efficient and affordable technologies. Though septic systems offer more treatment of pathogens, they do not reduce nutrient pollution, and elevated nitrogen levels can lead to higher risks of cancer and threats to our coral reefs. ATU's offer nutrient reduction but require pumps, annual maintenance and increased utility costs to run properly. The good news is that new passive, nature-based systems also offer nutrient reduction but without pumps, maintenance or increased utility costs. This bill would allow for more innovative new treatment systems like these.

Based on successful bills in other states, this bill creates a practical and expedient way to convert cesspools by allowing for more efficient and affordable options. It will also help homeowners, the counties and the state meet the mandate to convert all cesspools by 2050. Mahalo for your leadership on this issue and consideration of this bill.

Aloha,

Stuart Coleman

Stuart H. Coleman, Executive Director

HB-1806-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2022 5:08:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/1/2022 12:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Douglas Perrine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Cesspools leach pollutants into our public waters. I support HB1806 which requires them to be converted to wastewater treatment systems approved by the DOH. This language is a significant improvement over previous measures which specified conversion to septic or aeration, as new types of small treatment systems are in rapid development, a number of which may be more appropriate to Hawaii than septic or aeration.

HB-1806-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2022 7:32:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/1/2022 12:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Cess pools are not the problem the government is the problem they are just trying to RIP THE PEOPLE OFF Again. WE the people are tired of this crap and you will pay the price for this soon!!