
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE WASTEWATER BRANCH OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE USE OF ORGANIC BIODEGRADABLE WATER CLARIFIERS FOR CESSPOOL WATER REMEDIATION.

1 WHEREAS, there are approximately eighty-eight thousand
2 cesspools across the State, with nearly fifty thousand on Hawaii
3 island, almost fourteen thousand on Kauai, over twelve thousand
4 on Maui, over eleven thousand on Oahu, and over one thousand
5 four hundred on Molokai; and
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7 WHEREAS, cesspools are contaminating the State's ground
8 water, streams, drinking water, and coastal ecosystems, and the
9 State is obligated to protect, control, and regulate the use of
10 the State's water resources under article XI, section 7, of the
11 Hawaii State Constitution; and
12

13 WHEREAS, pursuant to Act 125, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017
14 (Act 125), every cesspool in the State, excluding cesspools
15 granted exemptions by the Director of Health, must be upgraded
16 or converted to an approved wastewater system or connected to a
17 sewerage system by January 1, 2050; and
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19 WHEREAS, Act 125 further directed the Department of Health
20 to investigate the number, scope, and location of cesspools that
21 required upgrade, conversion, or connection based on their
22 impact on public health; and
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24 WHEREAS, Act 132, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, established
25 the Cesspool Conversion Working Group to develop a long-range,
26 comprehensive plan for conversion of cesspools statewide by 2050
27 and commissioned a statewide study of sewage contamination in
28 nearshore marine areas to further supplement studies and reports
29 conducted by the Department of Health on cesspools; and
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1 WHEREAS, the Cesspool Conversion Working Group's 2021
2 Hawaii cesspool hazard assessment and prioritization tool report
3 identified the following cesspool conversion priority
4 categories:

- 5
6 (1) Priority 1, which has significant risk of human health
7 impacts, drinking water impacts, or draining to
8 sensitive waters;
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10 (2) Priority 2, which has a potential impact to drinking
11 water;
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13 (3) Priority 3, which has potential impacts on sensitive
14 waters; and
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16 (4) Priority 4, which impacts have not been identified;
17 and
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19 WHEREAS, while most of the cesspools in the State are
20 categorized as priority 3, a large number of cesspools are
21 categorized as priority 1 or 2, posing great health risks for
22 many residents; and
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24 WHEREAS, there are approximately eighty-two thousand
25 cesspools that will be required to be upgraded or converted to
26 an approved wastewater system or connected to a sewer system by
27 2050; and
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29 WHEREAS, on an annual basis, approximately one thousand
30 individual wastewater system applications are processed and
31 reviewed; and
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33 WHEREAS, new wastewater management solutions could greatly
34 improve public health and save public funds, and technologies
35 that are reaching commercial scale for the first time include
36 solutions for individual homes, as well as multi-unit dwellings,
37 apartment buildings, and entire communities; and
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39 WHEREAS, large wastewater management systems can remove
40 sewage from multi-unit dwellings and apartment buildings, and at
41 the municipal scale, these technologies can effectively treat



1 sewage from entire communities for a small fraction of the cost
2 of existing technology now employed in Hawaii; and

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4 WHEREAS, self-contained, self-powered, and self-cleaning
5 toilets can be used in homes that do not have the capacity to
6 connect to the existing sewer infrastructure; and

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8 WHEREAS, one such promising technology is the use of an
9 organic, biodegradable water clarifier that is introduced
10 through an automated, long-lasting delivery device that is
11 inexpensive, tamper-proof, and solar-powered, with clear and
12 simple dosing instructions; and

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14 WHEREAS, new technology such as a biodegradable water
15 clarifier may be a more cost-effective option for many
16 households to comply with Act 125, ensuring the health and
17 safety of residents of the State; now, therefore,

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19 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
20 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
21 Session of 2023, that the Wastewater Branch of the Environmental
22 Management Division of the Department of Health is requested to
23 conduct a feasibility study on the use of organic biodegradable
24 water clarifiers for cesspool water remediation; and

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26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Wastewater Branch of the
27 Environmental Management Division of the Department of Health is
28 requested to submit a report of its findings and
29 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
30 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
31 the Regular Session of 2024; and

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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
34 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health.

35
36 OFFERED BY: Mark J. [Signature] (DR)
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MAR 10 2023