

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1540

Honolulu, Hawaii

**MAR 24** , 2023

RE: S.B. No. 285  
S.D. 2  
H.D. 2

Honorable Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2023  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce, to which was referred S.B. No. 285, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO WASTEWATER SYSTEMS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish within the Department of Health's Wastewater Branch a Cesspool Conversion Section dedicated to facilitating the conversion of cesspools within the State, including the establishment and funding of positions; and
- (2) Establish and appropriate funds for a three-year New Wastewater System Demonstration Pilot Program within the University of Hawaii's Waste Resources Research Center.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands; Department of Health; University of Hawai'i Water Resources Research Center; University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program; Hawai'i Association of REALTORS; Coral Reef Alliance; Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition; Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i; Surfrider Foundation, Hawai'i Region; Ulupono Initiative; WAI: Wastewater

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Alternatives & Innovations; and five individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from one individual.

Your Committee finds that cesspools are a major source of pollution to Hawaii's waters. Cesspools discharge untreated sewage, which may reach the groundwater and flow into drinking water sources, streams, and the ocean. Since a significant portion of drinking water in the State comes from groundwater sources, these discharges pose a serious risk of harm to public health and the environment.

Your Committee further finds that the Legislature, through Act 125, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017, mandated the upgrade or conversion of all cesspools in the State to certain wastewater management systems or connection to a sewerage system by 2050. To accomplish this mandate, further support is necessary to facilitate the transition of cesspools to approved wastewater systems or connection to municipal sewer systems. This measure establishes a dedicated unit in the Department of Health to provide this essential support.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Appropriating funds out of general funds, rather than the Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund, for three specific positions within the Cesspool Conversion Section; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 285, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 285, S.D. 2, H.D. 2.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Consumer  
Protection & Commerce,



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MARK M. NAKASHIMA, Chair



