
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII WATER RESOURCES RESEARCH CENTER TO TAKE ALL ACTION NECESSARY TO INCENTIVIZE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS TO TEST SEWAGE SLUDGE, RECLAIMED WATER, AND ANY OTHER RESIDUAL MATERIAL FOR THE PRESENCE OF PERFLUOROALKYL AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES.

1 WHEREAS, perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances
2 (PFAS) are a large category of pollutants known as "forever
3 chemicals" because they do not degrade; and
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5 WHEREAS, some PFAS chemicals have been found to pose a wide
6 range of health risks, even at very low dosages; and
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8 WHEREAS, PFAS have been found in wastewater treatment plant
9 sludge (biosolids) and reclaimed water in the State; and
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11 WHEREAS, PFAS-contaminated biosolids used as fertilizer and
12 reclaimed water used for irrigation may directly impact crops
13 and soil by introducing PFAS into the food chain and adversely
14 affecting both the environment and human health when consumed;
15 and
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17 WHEREAS, consuming PFAS-contaminated produce may pose a
18 wide range of health risks, including prostate, kidney, and
19 testicular cancers, liver disease, endocrine disruption, and
20 other serious health issues; and
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22 WHEREAS, consuming PFAS-contaminated produce can harm
23 reproductive and immune systems and affect reproductive health
24 by decreasing fertility and causing high blood pressure in
25 pregnant women; and
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27 WHEREAS, a pregnant woman consuming PFAS-contaminated
28 produce during critical fetal development stages can impact the
29 long-term health of the child by causing developmental delays,



1 low birth weight, accelerated puberty, and behavioral changes;
2 and

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4 WHEREAS, biosolids used as fertilizer that contain PFAS and
5 other harmful substances can affect crop quality and safety, and
6 harm aquatic ecosystems; and

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8 WHEREAS, PFAS can enter food chains and result in
9 biomagnification, affecting aquatic fauna, insects, amphibians,
10 fish, and seafood; and

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12 WHEREAS, regular testing and monitoring at wastewater
13 treatment plants is necessary to mitigate land application of
14 biosolids or reclaimed water containing PFAS and to prevent PFAS
15 exposure and protect public health; and

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17 WHEREAS, the production of biosolids and reclaimed water
18 for landscape irrigation, agricultural irrigation, industrial
19 processes, and other non-drinking water applications is subject
20 to regulation and approval by the Department of Health; and

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22 WHEREAS, wastewater treatment facilities that sell or
23 supply biosolids or reclaimed water to agricultural farms for
24 fertilization or irrigation should be required to test the
25 biosolids and reclaimed water for the presence of PFAS and allow
26 for appropriate management and mitigation measures for the
27 safety of consumers, farmers, and the environment; and

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29 WHEREAS, despite the Department of Health and Honolulu
30 Board of Water Supply's active testing of drinking water wells
31 for PFAS, forever chemicals have been detected in the State's
32 soil, groundwater, and drinking water, demonstrating the need
33 for water purveyors, the military, and other government agencies
34 to test for PFAS; and

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36 WHEREAS, in April 2024, the United States Environmental
37 Protection Agency finalized rules that will require public water
38 systems to monitor for some PFAS and take action if levels
39 exceed maximum contaminant levels, and on Oahu, the Department
40 of Health has reported the detection of PFAS in several
41 communities' drinking water, including Kunia and Waipio, where



1 PFAS levels were detected far above what the federal government
2 considers safe; and

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4 WHEREAS, requiring monitoring for PFAS at wastewater
5 treatment plants consistent with environmental regulations and
6 public health guidelines demonstrates responsible management of
7 wastewater facilities by the Department of Health; now,
8 therefore,

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10 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
11 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
12 of 2025, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Health
13 and University of Hawaii Water Resources Research Center are
14 urged to take all action necessary, within their respective
15 authorities and expertise, to incentivize wastewater treatment
16 plants in the State to test sewage sludge, reclaimed water, and
17 any other residual material for the presence of PFAS; and

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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
20 urged to adopt administrative rules for the safe disposal and
21 sequestration of sewage sludge, reclaimed water, and other
22 residual material that contain any amount of PFAS; and

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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
25 urged to prohibit the issuance or renewal of permits for the use
26 of sewage sludge, reclaimed water, or other residual material on
27 land used for agronomic purposes, where drainage tiles have been
28 installed, that drains into the waters of the State, or in a
29 five-hundred-year floodplain if testing yields any amount of
30 PFAS; and

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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is urged to
33 support the Department of Health's actions; and

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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
36 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director
37 of Health, and Director of the University of Hawaii Water
38 Resources Research Center.

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OFFERED BY: 

MAR - 7 2025

