

JAN 17 2025

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the establishment of  
2 a local, certified environmental toxins laboratory is necessary  
3 for the health and welfare of the State. Hawaii's unique  
4 geographic location means that shipping samples to mainland  
5 laboratories can result in significant delays. For example,  
6 during the 2021 Red Hill fuel spill, delays in shipping samples  
7 to the mainland resulted in residents' prolonged exposure to  
8 contaminated water. A local laboratory would enable faster  
9 analysis and response to environmental incidents, ensuring that  
10 remedial actions can be taken promptly to protect public health  
11 and the environment.

12           The legislature further finds that a local laboratory  
13 staffed with experts who have an understanding of Hawaii's  
14 unique environmental conditions and challenges, and who can  
15 accurately interpret test results accordingly, could help the  
16 State's leaders make informed decisions about environmental  
17 management and public health. A local laboratory would also



1 reduce the costs associated with shipping samples to mainland  
2 laboratories, which could be redirected towards other critical  
3 environmental and public health initiatives.

4       The legislature further finds that having a local  
5 laboratory would enhance public trust in the testing process by  
6 providing greater transparency and accessibility to test  
7 results. Residents would have confidence that their samples are  
8 being analyzed promptly and accurately by a trusted local  
9 institution. A local laboratory would further provide valuable  
10 resources for research and educational institutions in the  
11 State, including opportunities for collaboration, internships,  
12 and hands-on learning experiences for students and researchers,  
13 fostering the next generation of environmental scientists and  
14 public health professionals.

15       The legislature further finds that, in the event of natural  
16 disasters or other emergencies, having a local laboratory would  
17 ensure that Hawaii has the necessary infrastructure to quickly  
18 assess and address environmental hazards. This capability is  
19 essential for protecting public health and the environment  
20 during crises.



1           The legislature additionally finds that delays in receiving  
2 lab results due to shipping samples to the mainland can cause  
3 avoidable harm to human health and the environment. For  
4 instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, delays in testing and  
5 receiving results from mainland laboratories led to prolonged  
6 quarantine periods and delayed treatment for affected  
7 individuals. A local laboratory would mitigate such delays and  
8 ensure timely access to critical health information.

9           The legislature further finds that, without a local  
10 certified laboratory, the department of health cannot affirm and  
11 substantiate test results relating to environmental toxins.  
12 Certified laboratories are essential for ensuring the accuracy  
13 and reliability of environmental toxin tests. A local certified  
14 laboratory would promote timely and accurate results.

15           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the  
16 university of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine to  
17 construct, establish, and operate a disease and environmental  
18 toxins testing laboratory to test samples submitted by the  
19 public for diseases; water, air, and soil quality; and complex  
20 testing.



1 SECTION 2. Chapter 304A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
3 and to read as follows:

4 "§304A- Testing laboratory; established; diseases;  
5 quality of air, water, soil, and biological specimens. (a) The  
6 university of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine shall:

7 (1) Establish and operate a laboratory capable of:

8 (A) Testing for diseases;

9 (B) Testing for the presence of toxins in samples of  
10 air, water, soil, and biological and other  
11 specimens; and

12 (C) Conducting other high complexity testing; and

13 (2) Ensure that the laboratory complies with all  
14 applicable standards enumerated in the Clinical  
15 Laboratories Improvement Amendments of 1988, title 42  
16 United States Code section 263a.

17 (b) The laboratory established pursuant to subsection (a)  
18 shall receive and analyze samples submitted by any person who  
19 reasonably believes that the sample contains disease or  
20 environmental toxins in violation of applicable law.



1        (c) In operating the laboratory, the university of Hawaii  
2 John A. Burns school of medicine shall ensure prompt and full  
3 public access to the results of analyses of all submissions of  
4 testing samples submitted to the laboratory. The university of  
5 Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine shall provide complete  
6 reports of all submissions no later than ten days after receipt  
7 of the submissions."

8        SECTION 3. The university of Hawaii John A. Burns school  
9 of medicine may obtain and expend federal funds for the  
10 construction and operation of the testing laboratory established  
11 pursuant to this Act. However, if the university of Hawaii John  
12 A. Burns school of medicine is unable to obtain firm commitment  
13 from the federal government for the adequate financing of the  
14 laboratory within nine months of the effective date of this Act,  
15 the university of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine shall  
16 proceed expeditiously to construct and begin initial operations  
17 of the laboratory using the funds appropriated by this Act.

18        SECTION 4. The university of Hawaii John A. Burns school  
19 of medicine shall submit a report on its progress of  
20 establishing a laboratory pursuant to this Act, to the



1 legislature no later than thirty days prior to the convening of  
2 the regular session of 2026.

3 SECTION 5. The director of finance is authorized to issue  
4 general obligation bonds in the sum of \$ or so much  
5 thereof as may be necessary and the same sum or so much thereof  
6 as may be necessary is appropriated for fiscal year 2025-2026  
7 for the purpose of financing the construction of an  
8 environmental toxins testing laboratory.

9 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the university of  
10 Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine for the purposes of this  
11 Act.

12 SECTION 6. The appropriation made for the capital  
13 improvement project authorized by this Act shall not lapse at  
14 the end of the fiscal biennium for which the appropriation is  
15 made; provided that all moneys from the appropriation  
16 unencumbered as of June 30, 2028, shall lapse as of that date.

17 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

18 INTRODUCED BY: 



# S.B. NO. 1154

**Report Title:**

UH; JABSOM; Disease and Environmental Toxins Testing Laboratory; Report; CIP; GO Bonds; Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine to construct, establish, and operate a disease and environmental toxins testing laboratory to test samples submitted by the public for diseases; water, air, and soil quality; and complex testing. Requires a report to the Legislature. Authorizes the Director of Finance to issue general obligation bonds. Appropriates funds.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

