

MAR 07 2025

## SENATE 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,  
30 low birth weight, accelerated puberty, and behavioral changes;  
31 and  
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1 WHEREAS, biosolids used as fertilizer that contain PFAS and  
2 other harmful substances can affect crop quality and safety, and  
3 harm aquatic ecosystems; and  
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5 WHEREAS, PFAS can enter food chains and result in  
6 biomagnification, affecting aquatic fauna, insects, amphibians,  
7 fish, and seafood; and  
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9 WHEREAS, regular testing and monitoring at wastewater  
10 treatment plants is necessary to mitigate land application of  
11 biosolids or reclaimed water containing PFAS and to prevent PFAS  
12 exposure and protect public health; and  
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14 WHEREAS, the production of biosolids and reclaimed water  
15 for landscape irrigation, agricultural irrigation, industrial  
16 processes, and other non-drinking water applications is subject  
17 to regulation and approval by the Department of Health; and  
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19 WHEREAS, wastewater treatment facilities that sell or  
20 supply biosolids or reclaimed water to agricultural farms for  
21 fertilization or irrigation should be required to test the  
22 biosolids and reclaimed water for the presence of PFAS and allow  
23 for appropriate management and mitigation measures for the  
24 safety of consumers, farmers, and the environment; and  
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26 WHEREAS, despite the Department of Health and Honolulu  
27 Board of Water Supply's active testing of drinking water wells  
28 for PFAS, forever chemicals have been detected in the State's  
29 soil, groundwater, and drinking water, demonstrating the need  
30 for water purveyors, the military, and other government agencies  
31 to test for PFAS; and  
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33 WHEREAS, in April 2024, the United States Environmental  
34 Protection Agency finalized rules that will require public water  
35 systems to monitor for some PFAS and take action if levels  
36 exceed maximum contaminant levels, and on Oahu, the Department  
37 of Health has reported the detection of PFAS in several  
38 communities' drinking water, including Kunia and Waipio, where  
39 PFAS levels were detected far above what the federal government  
40 considers safe; and  
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1 WHEREAS, requiring monitoring for PFAS at wastewater  
2 treatment plants consistent with environmental regulations and  
3 public health guidelines demonstrates responsible management of  
4 wastewater facilities by the Department of Health; now,  
5 therefore,

6  
7 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third  
8 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025,  
9 that the Department of Health and University of Hawaii Water  
10 Resources Research Center are urged to take all action  
11 necessary, within their respective authorities and expertise, to  
12 incentivize wastewater treatment plants in the State to test  
13 sewage sludge, reclaimed water, and any other residual material  
14 for the presence of PFAS; and

15  
16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
17 urged to adopt administrative rules for the safe disposal and  
18 sequestration of sewage sludge, reclaimed water, and other  
19 residual material that contain any amount of PFAS; and

20  
21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
22 urged to prohibit the issuance or renewal of permits for the use  
23 of sewage sludge, reclaimed water, or other residual material on  
24 land used for agronomic purposes, where drainage tiles have been  
25 installed, that drains into the waters of the State, or in a  
26 five-hundred-year floodplain if testing yields any amount of  
27 PFAS; and

28  
29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is urged to  
30 support the Department of Health's actions; and

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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
33 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director of Health,  
34 and Director of the University of Hawaii Water Resources  
35 Research Center.

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OFFERED BY: 

