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DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

Testimony of  
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
Acting Chairperson

Before the House Committee on  
TOURISM

Thursday, February 5, 2026  
9:30 AM

State Capitol, VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, Conference Room 423

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1948  
RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

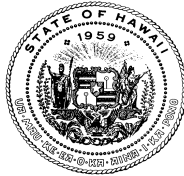
House Bill 1948 proposes to prohibit lodging establishments from providing personal care products in small plastic containers within sleeping room accommodations, any space within sleeping room accommodations, or bathrooms used by the public or guests and establishes civil penalties. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent of this bill and offers the following comments.**

The Department recognizes the deleterious impacts of plastic debris on wildlife and their habitats as a primary natural resource issue throughout the State of Hawai'i. Plastic in the environment degrades both land and ocean-based habitat and impacts wildlife (aquatic and terrestrial) through ingestion, entanglement, smothering, and transport of invasive species. In addition, each step involved in the manufacturing, distribution, and ultimate disposal of single-use plastic products (e.g., bottles and containers) produces greenhouse gas emissions and will increase the impacts of climate change on our aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems.

Hawai'i already has some of the highest reported debris accumulation rates in the United States. While the majority of marine debris may arrive from the ocean, it is our responsibility as a State to reduce the amount of plastic debris entering our ocean and the environment from local sources. This measure would help reduce the amount of plastic debris entering Hawai'i's cultural sites, forests, waters and coastlines, and contribute to the improved health of our wildlife and their habitats.

The Department recognizes that Chapter 342H, Hawaii Revised Statutes, falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Health (DOH) and defers to DOH regarding implementation of this proposed program.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
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**Testimony COMMENTING on HB1948**  
**RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS.**

REPRESENTATIVE ADRIAN K. TAM, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

Hearing Date, Time, and Room Number: 02/05/2026, 09:30 am, 423

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure may impact the priorities identified in the Governor's
- 2 Executive Budget Request for the Department of Health's (Department's) appropriations and
- 3 personnel priorities.
- 4 **Department Position:** The Department offers comments.
- 5 **Department Testimony:** The Environmental Management Division, Solid and Hazardous Waste
- 6 Branch (EMD-SHWB) provides the following testimony on behalf of the Department.
- 7       This measure proposes to prohibit lodging establishments from providing small plastic
- 8 containers with personal care products in any sleeping room accommodation, bathroom used
- 9 by guests or the public, or to any guests. The new statute would provide an exception for bulk
- 10 personal care product dispensers and personal care products in containers made from non-
- 11 plastic materials.
- 12       The Department supports measures that reduce waste contributed to Hawai'i's landfills.
- 13 We recommend placing this language in a different statute, as this measure does not fit within
- 14 solid waste statutes. The regulated parties in this measure are lodging establishments, which
- 15 may not review solid waste pollution statutes when determining the requirements for their

businesses. We defer to the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism on the proper location for this language.

The Department respectfully requests clarification on the civil penalty provision. The measure states that “any lodging establishment that violates subsection (a) shall be subject to a civil penalty...” We note that subsection (b) also provides limitations on where establishments may provide personal care products packaged in containers made from non-plastic. Is the intent that civil penalties in this measure only apply to subsection (a)?

Based on the current draft of this measure, the Department would require additional resources and funding to implement this program.

**Offered Amendments:** Amendments offered below only reference sections or portions of the measure where we are making recommendations for revision and do not include language for the establishment of positions and funding, or the relocation of the language to another statute. We have highlighted, bracketed and struck through the text where we are recommending deletion of amendments in this measure. All other amendments are unchanged.

Section 2. Page 5, Line 19 through Line 20: ““Small plastic container” means a plastic bottle or container that has a capacity of six ounces or less~~and is not intended to be reused by the end user~~.”

The Department recommends removing the struck through text because the measure does not specify whose “intended” use applies. This ambiguity could create challenges for enforcing this measure. For example, an establishment could claim that they intended for guests to reuse the containers, in order to remain in compliance with the new statute.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



February 4, 2026

House Committee on Tourism  
Hawai'i State Legislature  
Via Electronic Transmission

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 1948, Relating Single-Use Plastics  
Hearing: Thursday, February 5, 2026, 9:30 AM CR 423 & Via Videoconference

To: The Honorable Chair Tam, Vice Chair Templo, and Members of the Committee

**Surfrider Foundation Hawai'i Region strongly supports House Bill 1948** which prohibits lodging establishments in the State from providing personal products packaged in small plastic containers in any sleeping room accommodations, space within sleeping room accommodations, and bathrooms used by the public or guests.

Surfrider Foundation is a grassroots activist network dedicated to the protection of our oceans, waves, and beaches for all people. Surfrider Foundation has been tackling plastic pollution for over a decade and has established various plastic reduction initiatives to address plastic pollution at the source. Our [Ocean Friendly Hotel program](#) helps hotels to reduce single-use plastic and make more sustainable choices for the ocean. One of the mandatory criteria is that toiletries (shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, lotion, etc.) are not packaged in small plastic bottles. HB1948 is a proactive measure that directly aligns with our Ocean Friendly Hotel Program.

As of December, the State of Hawai'i received nearly [9.5 million visitors in 2025](#), over six times the state's population. The visitor industry significantly contributes to plastic pollution which often ends up on beaches and in the ocean. This measure applies to lodging establishments defined as hotels, condominium hotels, motels, resorts, bed-and-breakfast homes, and transient vacation rentals. Hawai'i has over 280 hotel-class lodging properties, along with hundreds of bed-and-breakfast homes and tens of thousands of transient vacation rental units operating statewide. By eliminating small, single-use plastic toiletry containers at lodging facilities, this bill would prevent millions of plastic bottles each year from entering the waste stream, creating a scalable, source-based solution to reduce the plastic footprint of Hawai'i's tourism industry—one lodging establishment and one traveler at a time.

Not only will HB1948 reduce plastic pollution, but it will also save hotels money. In 2018, [Marriott stated](#) that they could save about \$2,000 per hotel every year by switching from single-use toiletry bottles to bulk containers. According to Marriott, a large pump bottle

contains the same amount of product as around 10-12 small single-use toiletry bottles. Additionally, we estimate that hotels spend about \$0.37 per ounce on shampoo, conditioner, and lotion bottles packaged in small plastic containers compared to \$0.17 per ounce on shampoo, conditioner, and lotion packaged in bulk.

This aligns with feedback received from hotels participating in Surfrider's Ocean Friendly Hotels Program. Since switching to refillable bulk toiletries, an Ocean Friendly Hotel in Alaska has noticed significant cost savings and found that tracking bulk containers is more efficient than tracking thousands of tiny bottles. Similarly to Hawai'i, Alaska has limited supply chains and logistical hurdles, making refillable personal care products a common-sense approach to saving businesses time and money, while also reducing plastic pollution.

While a number of lodging establishments may be actively moving towards a more sustainable future, most hotels and motels have yet to adopt refillable toiletry containers. A regulatory approach sets the standard and provides a much needed jump start to reducing the environmental impact generated by lodging establishments. Washington, New York, California and Illinois all have similar regulations to ban or limit hotel toiletries. Considering the scale of the visitor industry in Hawai'i, it is time that Hawai'i follows suit.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB1948 on behalf of the Surfrider Foundation's three Hawai'i chapters and members statewide.

Hanna Lilley  
Hawai'i Regional Manager  
Surfrider Foundation

**HB-1948**

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 11:23:56 PM

Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kyla Ranker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I chose to submit testimony in support of HB 1948 because this bill demonstrates how sustainability and tourism can work together rather than in opposition. HB 1948 shows that thoughtful policy changes can reduce environmental impact without compromising guest experience. Hawaii's economy depends heavily on tourism, which makes it especially important for the industry to lead by example when it comes to environmental responsibility. HB 1948 represents a clear step in the right direction toward a more plastic-free Hawaii. The state has already taken meaningful action through policies such as the plastic bag ban and the restriction of single-use plastic containers and utensils in food service. This bill builds on those efforts by addressing another highly common, yet often overlooked, source of plastic waste: small single-use toiletry containers in lodging accommodations. While these items may appear minor on an individual level, they are used daily by thousands of visitors across hotels, resorts, and vacation rentals. Their widespread and frequent use results in a significant amount of plastic waste. HB 1948 offers a simple and practical solution, as refillable dispensers and alternative packaging options are already widely used and accepted in many lodging establishments. As a student in Travel Industry Management, I am learning how sustainability is becoming an increasingly important priority within the global tourism industry. Travelers today are more aware of environmental issues and are more likely to support destinations that take visible and meaningful steps toward sustainability. When states like Hawaii implement policies that reduce plastic waste and protect natural resources, it strengthens the destination's image and appeal to environmentally conscious visitors. By continuing to take incremental but intentional steps like this, Hawaii can strengthen its position as a leader in sustainable tourism while protecting the natural resources that make the islands unique. Thank you for your time and for your consideration to support policies that protect Hawaii's environment and future.**

## **HB-1948**

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 11:29:13 PM

Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Fynesse Alvaro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am a concerned resident of Hawai‘i, here to submit this testimony in strong support of the bill HB 1948, which prohibits lodging establishments from providing personal care products in small plastic containers. This bill recognizes that single-use plastics—particularly small toiletry bottles commonly provided in hotels, short-term rentals, and other tourist accommodations—contribute significantly to plastic waste and environmental degradation in our island communities.

Hawai‘i’s economy and identity are deeply tied to the health of our natural environment. HB 1948 is not simply an environmental protection measure, but is an important economic policy that safeguards the long-term sustainability of our tourism industry and local communities.

### **First, this bill helps preserve Hawai‘i’s “natural capital.”**

Tourism is an experience-based industry built on the beauty of our beaches, forests, and reefs. Pollution from plastic trash directly degrades these assets. Once a shoreline or ecosystem is damaged by persistent plastic waste, its value as a destination declines. Thus, potentially resulting in lost tourism revenue and reduced local employment. Afterall, no one wants a beach wedding on a pile of plastic waste. By limiting single-use plastics, HB 1948 functions as an insurance policy for Hawai‘i’s economy, protecting the very resources that generate income for residents statewide.

### **Second, HB 1948 will significantly reduce municipal waste management costs.**

The financial burden of managing tourism-generated waste falls disproportionately on local governments and taxpayers, not on lodging operators. In other words, the state and residents of Hawai‘i are wasting money on paying for these short-term solutions to plastic waste. Small plastic toiletry containers are particularly difficult and costly to recycle due to contamination and size, and they often end up in landfills. Transitioning to refillable or bulk dispenser systems shifts responsibility back to producers and reduces strain on municipal waste systems, freeing public funds that can be redirected toward essential services and infrastructure.

### **Third, this bill supports local businesses and innovation.**



By banning single-use plastics, HB 1948 encourages hotels to use sustainable alternatives, like locally made glass bottles or bamboo dispensers. For example, a hotel could switch to refillable shampoo containers made by a nearby company. This keeps money in Hawai'i, helps small businesses grow, and can create new skilled jobs beyond traditional tourism roles. Additionally, it incentivizes entrepreneurs to develop eco-friendly products and services tailored to the local market, fostering a culture of sustainable innovation. Over time, these practices can position Hawai'i as a leader in environmentally responsible tourism and green technology.

In conclusion, HB 1948 aligns environmental stewardship with sound economic policy. It protects Hawai'i's natural capital, reduces unnecessary public expenditures, and stimulates local innovation and job creation. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass the bill, HB 1948.

Mahalo for the chance to submit this testimony and for your thoughtful consideration!

Best regards,

Concerned resident of Hawai'i

**HB-1948**

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:40:40 AM

Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle R Stefanik	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this Bill. Vote no.

**HB-1948**

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 4:44:04 AM

Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charles Quesnel	Surfrider Foundation-Maui	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

I am totally in supportive this bill as it will help reduce plastic pollution at the source by prohibiting lodging establishments (hotels, b&b, motels, short term rentals) from providing personal care products in small plastic containers within sleeping room accommodations and guest-accessible bathrooms. It will respond to the growing environmental and waste management impact of single-use plastics in Hawai'i's visitor industry and even hopefully establish civil penalties to ensure compliance.

It focuses on upstream waste prevention rather than downstream cleanup, reflecting best practices in modern solid waste and marine debris policy. We (SFMC) know this as a matter of fact, because we regularly do beach cleanups locally on Maui here, have been for years and see the first hand effects from what is described above.

I hope this bill will be seriously considered. Mahalo for your continued efforts.

**HB-1948**

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 11:06:20 AM

Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
arleen velasco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In Oahu we burn a large percent of our plastic which creates toxic ash and pollutes our air. Many of these pollutants reach our ocean and are affecting our coral reefs and marine life. We must minimize plastic use and having refillable containers for personal care products is an easy, cost effective solution. Please pass this common sense law.

**HB-1948**

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:27:30 PM

Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maureen Brock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1948!