

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
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Testimony COMMENTING on SB2095 SD1, HD1
RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

REPRESENTATIVE GREGG TAKAYAMA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date, Time and Room Number: 03/25/2026, 9:30 AM, 329

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 and requests funding.

5 **Department Testimony:** The Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response Office (HEER)
6 provides the following testimony on behalf of the Department.

7 The Department appreciates inclusion of our proposed amendments to SB2095 SD1
8 which establishes a PFAS working group to investigate the existence and environmental
9 dangers of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

10 To successfully accomplish the mandates obligated to the working group the
11 Department requires financial assistance to carry out its administrative responsibilities.
12 Resources are needed to coordinate and facilitate stakeholders meetings, bring in subject
13 matter experts to weigh in on source investigations, design studies and testing requirements,
14 evaluate environmental and public health risk associated with PFAS exposure, review existing
15 policies and provide recommendations. Three annual reports from 2027-2029 must also be
16 submitted to the Legislature.

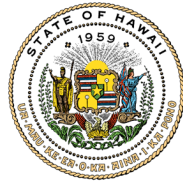
1 The Department respectfully requests funding of approximately \$30,000 to carry out the
2 duties of the PFAS Working Group.

3 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

4 **Offered Amendments:** None

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & BIOSECURITY
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SHARON HURD
Chairperson
Board of Agriculture & Biosecurity

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2026
9:30 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 329 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2095, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Chairs Takayama and Marten, Vice Chairs Keohokapu-Lee Loy and Olds, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2095, SD1, HD1 relating to environmental protection. The bill establishes a per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) working group within the Department of Health to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of PFAS and other related chemicals. The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity ("Department") supports this bill.

PFAS contamination is a serious issue that has already impacted the United States on a national level causing federal and state agencies to regulate PFAS at varying degrees. The Department recognizes the need to assess the presence and risks of PFAS within the State to determine whether further restrictions are needed.

The Department appreciates being included in the working group since agricultural land can be contaminated by PFAS via water, dust, soil amendments, pesticides, and other products or pathways. Crops and livestock will be impacted by these contaminated farmlands and is a potential pathway for human exposure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY
KA 'OIHANA WAI
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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LATE

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA

ERNEST Y. W. LAU, P.E.
MANAGER AND CHIEF ENGINEER
MANAKIA A ME KAHU WILIKI

ERWIN KAWATA
DEPUTY MANAGER
HOPE MANAKIA



March 25, 2026

NĀ'ĀLEHU ANTHONY, Chair
JONATHAN KANESHIRO, Vice Chair
LANCE WILHELM
JEFFREY LAUPOLA
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN, Ex-Officio
GENE C. ALBANO, P.E., Ex-Officio

The Honorable Gregg Takayama, Chair
and Members
House Committee on Health
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 329
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Lisa Marten, Chair
and Members
House Committee on Human Services & Homeless
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 329
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Takayama, Chair Marten and Members:

SUBJECT: SB2095, SD1, HD1 – Relating to Environmental Protection

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) supports Senate Bill (SB) 2095, Senate Draft (SD) 1, House Draft (HD) 1. This bill proposes to establish a working group to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and other related chemicals.

As stated in SB 2095, SD1, HD1, the creation of a PFAS working group to address the presence of PFAS in the State's environment and food and water supplies can provide a centralized and coordinated approach to assess PFAS-related issues, engage with stakeholders, and propose actionable recommendations.

The BWS has been testing its wells regularly for PFAS and discovered low-levels at various wells across the island. The BWS started testing for this contaminant since 2020. We have installed a temporary water treatment system for PFAS at our Ka'amilo Wells.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2095, SD 1, HD 1.

Very truly yours,

ERNEST Y. W. LAU, P.E.
Manager and Chief Engineer



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

Testimony of the Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i in STRONG SUPPORT SB2095 SD1 HD1 — RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Hearing: HLT, Wednesday, March 25, 2026,

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: Room 329 & Videoconference

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee, and Members of the Committee,

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i offers strong support for SB2095 SD1 HD1, which establishes a PFAS Working Group within the Department of Health to investigate the presence and environmental dangers of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in Hawai'i. The bill's findings correctly recognize that PFAS are persistent, bioaccumulative toxic chemicals linked to cancer, liver damage, developmental harm, immune suppression, and endocrine disruption, and that Hawai'i's limited freshwater resources heighten the need for coordinated monitoring and response.

The urgency of this measure has been underscored by the recent Kona Low storms, which overwhelmed the City and County of Honolulu's Wahiawā Wastewater Treatment Plant. When the plant reached capacity, wastewater spilled directly into Lake Wilson at the same time the reservoir was rising toward the 85-foot evacuation threshold. This forced downstream evacuations in Waialua and Hale'iwa, and residents are now under a three-minute boil-water advisory for tap water.

These events demonstrate how quickly contaminants — including PFAS — can move through watersheds during extreme weather. Wastewater spills, storm surges, and flooding can mobilize PFAS and other toxic chemicals into drinking-water systems, agricultural lands, and sensitive ecosystems. Without a coordinated statewide structure, Hawai'i is left reacting to emergencies rather than preventing them.

SB2095 SD1 HD1 provides the framework Hawai'i urgently needs. The PFAS Working Group brings together DOH, DLNR, the Board of Agriculture, the Honolulu Board of Water Supply, UH experts, and community stakeholders to:

1. Identify PFAS sources and exposure pathways;

2. Recommend testing locations for water, soil, fish, and biota;
3. Evaluate environmental and public-health risks;
4. Review regulatory gaps;
5. Propose strategies for monitoring, mitigation, and prevention; and
6. Provide transparent annual reports and a final report to the Legislature.

Given the increasing frequency of severe weather events and the demonstrated vulnerability of our water systems, establishing this Working Group is not only prudent — it is essential. PFAS contamination poses long-term risks to Hawai'i's drinking water, ecosystems, and food security. A coordinated, science-based approach is necessary to protect public health and natural resources.

For these reasons, the Environmental Caucus respectfully urges the Committee to pass SB2095 SD1 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Alan B. Burdick, Co-chair burdick808@gmail.com

Mike Ewall, Co-chair mike@energyjustice.net

Melodie Aduja, Co-chair emerita legislativepriorities@gmail.com

Environmental Caucus Democratic Party of Hawai'i



March 24, 2026

To: Chair Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair Sue Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and the House Committee on Health

Subject: **SB2095 SD1 HD1**, Relating to Environmental Protection

Aloha,

I am writing in **support of SB2095 SD1 HD1** which establishes a PFAS Working Group within the Department of Health to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances and other related chemicals.

PFAS pose a great risk to public health and are becoming an ubiquitous chemical in application and environmental accumulation across the United States. The understanding and management of these chemicals in freshwater, fish, and animal life will help mediate the exposure of these chemicals to humans and mitigate the serious health risks that come with bioaccumulation of PFAS. Also, Hawai'i's geographic isolation increases the vulnerability of our freshwater supply and environment, so measures must be taken to protect our vital resources.

I urge this committee to pass SB2095 SD1 HD1 to establish a PFAS working group so experts can test bodies of water, waterways, fish, and other animals for human consumption to identify possible PFAS contamination, assess potential health risks, and ensure the safety of food and water resources in the State. This measure would continue the efforts already in place for this research while adding additional stakeholders to collaborate and provide more comprehensive studies and data related to PFAS. This work must be prioritized as a current emerging public health and food system resilience issue.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Mahalo,
Sydney Haas & the Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2026, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

SB-2095-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 7:24:13 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/25/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **strong support** of SB2095, which establishes a PFAS Working Group within the Department of Health to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances. This bill is a necessary and timely step to understand and address a growing threat to our water, our health, and our future.

The Problem: "Forever Chemicals" Are Here

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, commonly known as PFAS or "forever chemicals," are a class of synthetic chemicals used since the 1940s in consumer products like nonstick cookware, stain-resistant fabrics, food packaging, and firefighting foam. They are called "forever chemicals" because they persist in the environment for decades without breaking down.

The health risks associated with PFAS exposure are serious and well-documented. Scientific research has linked these chemicals to a range of adverse health effects, including **lipid disorders, hypertension, diabetes, thyroid disorders, infertility, cancer, and neurodevelopmental issues**.

PFAS accumulate in the human body—particularly in the liver and blood plasma—and can be passed from mother to child through breast milk. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has set strict Maximum Contaminant Levels for some PFAS compounds, including a limit of 4 parts per trillion for PFOA and PFOS, reflecting the grave concern at the federal level.

The Threat Is Not Hypothetical—It Is Already Here

Recent detections across our islands confirm that PFAS contamination is not a future problem; it is a present reality. In just the past year:

- **In September 2025**, low levels of PFOS were detected in the Pearl City Wells system serving O‘ahu, with concentrations ranging from 2.2 to 2.4 nanograms per liter.
- **Between November 2024 and February 2025**, PFAS compounds including PFHxA and PFPeA were detected in the Hō‘ae‘ae Wells treatment facility, which serves communities from ‘Ewa Beach to Mākaha, including Kapolei, Nānākuli, and Wai‘anae.

- **In May 2025**, PFHxS was detected in water samples from the Consolidated Baseyards water system serving Central Maui.

These detections span multiple islands and multiple communities. While current levels are below federal standards for regulated compounds, the repeated findings demonstrate that PFAS are present in our environment and our drinking water sources. We cannot afford to wait until contamination worsens to act.

Why a Working Group Is Needed

Hawai‘i has previously recognized the need for a coordinated approach to PFAS. In 2024, the Legislature considered SB2369, which would have established a working group to plan for PFAS remediation across the state. Testimony in support of that measure came from the Honolulu Board of Water Supply, environmental organizations, and community advocates who recognized that PFAS contamination requires dedicated study and planning. While that bill did not become law, its introduction reflected a bipartisan understanding that we must get ahead of this issue.

SB2095 builds on that foundation. The proposed PFAS Working Group would be tasked with investigating the existence and environmental dangers of these substances across Hawai‘i. This includes:

- Identifying sources of PFAS contamination;
- Assessing the extent of PFAS in our water, soil, and biota;
- Evaluating the risks to human health and ecosystems;
- Recommending strategies for monitoring, mitigation, and remediation.

The National Context

Across the country, states are moving to cement PFAS protections amid fears of federal rollbacks. California, Pennsylvania, Maine, and Connecticut have all introduced or advanced legislation to set state-level PFAS standards, recognizing that they cannot rely on federal action alone. At least 29 states considered PFAS policies in 2025.

Hawai‘i should join them. We have the same vulnerabilities—and the same responsibility to protect our communities—as any other state. But we also have unique challenges: our isolation makes us dependent on local water sources, and our ecosystems are particularly sensitive to persistent pollutants. A dedicated working group is the appropriate first step to understanding the full scope of the problem and developing solutions tailored to our islands.

A Proactive Investment

Establishing a PFAS Working Group is a modest but critical investment. It signals that we take this threat seriously and that we are committed to evidence-based policymaking. The group can coordinate across agencies, engage with experts, and produce recommendations that will guide future legislation and funding priorities. Most importantly, it will ensure that when PFAS are detected—as they inevitably will be—we have a plan in place to respond.

The science is clear: PFAS are persistent, toxic, and present in our environment. The detections in our water systems confirm that this is not an abstract concern. Our communities deserve to know what is in their water, what the risks are, and what we are doing about it.

SB2095 provides the framework for answering those questions. I urge this committee to pass this bill and establish the PFAS Working Group as a permanent part of our environmental health infrastructure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2095-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 8:46:32 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/25/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Ball	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the members of the Committee,

I am writing to voice my full support for SB2095. I urge the Committee to advance this necessary bill.

With aloha,

Dave Ball

Waialae-Kahala

SB-2095-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 7:44:36 AM

Testimony for HLT on 3/25/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i currently lacks a unified, statewide strategy to track and mitigate PFAS contamination. A DOH-led working group is critical to create a centralized framework to tackle this crossboundary environmental threat effectively.