

STATE OF HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO  
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**Testimony COMMENTING on SB2095  
RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

SENATOR MIKE GABBARD, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

SENATOR JOY SAN BUENAVENTURA, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Hearing Date, Time and Room Number: 02/02/2026, 3:00 pm, 224

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) appropriations and  
3 personnel priorities.

4 **Department Position:** The Department of Health provides comments on SB2095, which  
5 establishes a PFAS Working Group within the Department to investigate the presence,  
6 environmental impacts, and public health risks associated with per- and polyfluoroalkyl  
7 substances (PFAS) in Hawai'i's environment, food, and water resources.

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

10 PFAS contamination presents a complex and evolving public health and environmental  
11 challenge, particularly for an island state with limited freshwater resources, sensitive  
12 ecosystems, and communities that rely heavily on local food sources. The Department supports

the Legislature's findings that a coordinated, multi-agency approach is necessary to assess PFAS risks, identify potential sources, and inform future mitigation and policy actions.

The Department has proactively established an internal PFAS-focused working group, comprised of program staff with expertise in environmental health, toxicology, drinking water, epidemiology, and environmental assessment. This internal coordination has helped streamline PFAS-related activities across programs and positions the Department well to support the goals outlined in this measure.

This internal working group has already conducted multiple studies that focused on: wastewater treatment facilities, biosolids, landfills, firefighting training sites, ambient PFAS levels in soil, and in fishes. The findings of these studies are available on the HEER office website. There is also an ongoing study to assess potential plant uptake of PFAS containing compost made from R1 (recycled-disinfected water) and compostable service ware.

The Department supports the intent of SB 2095 to further understand the environmental impacts, and public health risks associated with PFAS in Hawai'i. The Department respectfully suggests that the working group work alongside the Department to evaluate PFAS risk in Hawaii, but allow the Department to retain its jurisdiction over site assessment and primary role in testing for PFAS. The Department also notes that undertaking funding may be required to accommodate the provisions of this bill.

**Offered Amendments:** The Department respectfully offers the following amendments to the proposed measure.

SECTION 2, page 3, line 13 through page 4, line 13: "(c) The working group shall:

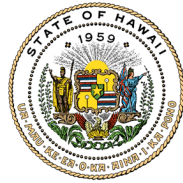
- (1) Assess ongoing work in the department of health to assess PFAS contamination and provide recommendations on additional locations appropriate for PFAS testing and assessment;
- (2) Study sources of potential PFAS contamination in the State;

- (3) Examine best practices on PFAS testing, management, and mitigation from other jurisdictions and provide recommendations on how to apply best practices in the State;
- (4) Evaluate the environmental and public health risks associated with PFAS exposure, particularly in sensitive ecosystems and vulnerable communities;
- (5) Review existing regulations and practices to identify opportunities for strengthening PFAS management and mitigation;
- (6) Propose strategies for testing, monitoring, remediation, and prevention of PFAS contamination; and
- (7) Recommend changes to state policies, programs, and resources to address PFAS effectively."

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**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 SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT AND  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2026  
3:00 PM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2095  
RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Chairs Gabbard and Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Richards and McKelvey, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2095 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 offers comments on this bill.

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

The Department notes that testing of agricultural lands are important when assessing PFAS contamination. Farmlands can be contaminated 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. The Department of Health already has a number of projects underway or planned to assess PFAS contamination within the State.

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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LANCE WILHELM  
JEFFREY LAUPOLA  
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN, Ex-Officio  
GENE C. ALBANO, P.E., Ex-Officio

February 2, 2026

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair  
and Members  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 224  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
and Members  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 224  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Gabbard, Chair San Buenaventura and Members:

Subject: Senate Bill 2095: Relating to Environmental Protection

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) supports Senate Bill (SB) 2095. 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, the creation of a PFA 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 strongly recommends that SB 2095 be amended to include the Board of Water Supply as an additional member of the core working group.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2095.

Very truly yours,

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



## **Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i**

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### **TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2095 Relating to Environmental Protection**

**TO: Chair Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair Herbert M. “Tim” Richards III, and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN)**

**and**

**Chair Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Henry Aquino, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services (HHS)**

**Hearing: February 2, 2026 – 3:00 PM – Conference Room 224 & Videoconference**

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Richards and Aquino, and Members of the Committees,

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i strongly supports SB2095, which establishes a PFAS Working Group within the Department of Health to investigate the presence, pathways, and environmental dangers of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances and related chemicals in Hawai'i. PFAS, often referred to as “forever chemicals,” are persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic compounds linked to cancer, immune dysfunction, developmental harm, and reproductive impacts. They do not break down in the environment and can contaminate drinking water, soil, crops, marine ecosystems, and human bodies. Hawai'i is already confronting PFAS contamination from multiple sources, including firefighting foams, industrial uses, military facilities, wastewater systems, and consumer products. A coordinated, science-based, statewide response is urgently needed to understand and address these risks.

SB2095 creates a dedicated PFAS Working Group within the Department of Health to investigate the presence and movement of PFAS in Hawai'i's environment, assess the environmental and public-health risks associated with exposure, identify gaps in monitoring and regulatory oversight, and recommend strategies for mitigation, cleanup, and prevention. The bill also requires regular reports to the Legislature, ensuring that policymakers have timely, accurate information to guide decisions that protect public health and natural resources. This structure ensures that Hawai'i's response to PFAS contamination is coordinated, transparent, and grounded in the best available science.

PFAS contamination is extremely difficult and costly to remediate once it spreads, making early detection, coordinated investigation, and proactive policy development the only effective strategies to protect Hawai'i's drinking water sources, agricultural lands, food systems, streams, wetlands, coastal waters, and public health. Establishing a PFAS Working Group positions Hawai'i to address emerging contamination risks before they become irreversible and ensures that the State is prepared to respond to new scientific findings and regulatory developments.

SB2095 is a prudent, forward-looking measure that strengthens Hawai'i's capacity to understand, monitor, and respond to PFAS contamination. The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committees to pass SB2095.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Alan Burdick, Co-Chair

Mike Ewall, Co-Chair

Melodie Aduja, Co-Chair Emerita, Environmental Caucus Democratic Party of Hawai'i





January 30, 2026

To: Chairs Mike Gabbard and Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Tim Richards III and Angus McKelvey and the Senate Committees on Agriculture and Environment, and Health and Human Services

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

Aloha,

I am writing in **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 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** 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.

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

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**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.



To: The Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard and Joy San Buenaventura, Chairs, the Honorable Herbert M. “Tim” Richards and Angus McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Agriculture and Environment and Health and Human Services Committees.

From: Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: **Hearing SB2095 RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Hearing: Monday February 29, 2026 3:00 p.m.

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Richards and McKelvey, and Members of the Agriculture and Environment and Health and Human Services Committees!

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (HIROC) is a group of scientists, educators, filmmakers and environmental advocates who have been working since 2017 to protect Hawaii's coral reefs and ocean.

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition **supports SB2095.**

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition appreciates the bill's recognition of the threat presented by perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and the need for testing. Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition **supports the bill's requirement that the Department of Health (DOH) have a PFAS working group.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)

**SB-2095**

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 2:27:48 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/2/2026 3:00:00 PM

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

## Comments:

I strongly support SB2095 which would establish 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. This measure is a critical step toward understanding and mitigating the risks associated with PFAS and other related chemicals

PFAS--forever chemicals, are linked to significant health risks, including but not limited to cancer, liver damage, developmental issues, weakened immune systems, and endocrine disruption. The Navy's fire suppression system at Red Hill spilled over 1,300 gallons of aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) concentrate into the environment in 2022. To protect the health and safety of our communities, it is crucial that we take steps toward assessing and then remediation of PFAS contamination throughout the State.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.