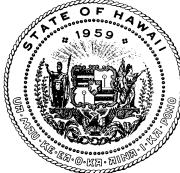


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'



KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'OKELA

STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony COMMENTING on SB2243
RELATING TO CESSPOOLS.**

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

SENATOR MIKE GABBARD, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

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

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** Undetermined.
- 2 **Department Position:** The Department of Health ("Department") offers comments and
- 3 proposed amendments.
- 4 **Department Testimony:** The Environmental Management Division, Wastewater Branch (EMD-
WWB) provides the following testimony on behalf of the Department.
- 5
- 6 SB2443 would amend the deadlines for upgrade or conversion of cesspools. The
- 7 Department understands the challenges faced by municipalities and property owners in
- 8 meeting the current statutory January 1, 2050 deadline and is committed to working with state,
- 9 county, and private partners to provide support and sensible regulation. However, extending
- 10 the deadline from January 1, 2050, to December 31, 2050, for priority 1 cesspools; December
- 11 31, 2060, for priority 2 cesspools; December 31, 2070, for priority 3 cesspools; and December
- 12 31, 2080, for priority 4 cesspools would not be protective of human health and the

1 environment. Extending the deadline would also be inconsistent with the findings and results of
2 the Cesspool Conversion Working Group, Final Report to the 2023 Regular Session Legislature¹.

3 SB2443 also proposes new cesspool priority classifications. The proposed priority
4 classifications are not based on all the risk factors included in the Hawai'i Cesspool Prioritization
5 Tool (HCPT) as developed by the Cesspool Conversion Working Group and are not consistent
6 with the 2022 Hawai'i Cesspool Hazard Assessment & Prioritization Tool 2022 Updated Report
7 & Technical Appendices². Prioritization levels should continue to be based on the HCPT, which
8 was developed and should be updated based on scientific data. A total of fifteen (15) risk
9 factors were used by the HCPT model:

- 10 1. Distance to municipal or domestic drinking water wells;
- 11 2. Well capture zones;
- 12 3. Distance to streams and wetlands;
- 13 4. Distance to the coastline;
- 14 5. Sea level rise zones;
- 15 6. Precipitation;
- 16 7. Depth to groundwater;
- 17 8. Groundwater flow paths;
- 18 9. Soil characteristics;
- 19 10. Cesspool density;
- 20 11. Coral cover;
- 21 12. Fish biomass/recovery potential;
- 22 13. Beach user-days;
- 23 14. Proximity to a lifeguarded beach; and
- 24 15. Coastal ocean circulation proxy

¹ https://health.hawaii.gov/wastewater/files/2022/11/ccwg_final_report.pdf

² <https://health.hawaii.gov/wastewater/files/2022/11/prioritizationtoolreport.pdf>

1 If special management areas are to be considered in cesspool prioritization, then the
2 State of Hawai'i Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) should be consulted as
3 it serves as the lead agency in the administration and management of Hawai'i Revised Statutes
4 Chapter 205A and the Coastal Zone Management law.

5 The Department acknowledges that time extensions to the deadlines would provide
6 time for cesspool owners to upgrade, convert, or connect. However, time extensions would
7 increase human health risk and environmental pollution and the cost of engineering,
8 construction, and materials for the upgrade, conversion, or connection will continue to increase
9 over time.

10 **Offered Amendments:** The Department respectfully recommends no changes to the original
11 statute.

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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOLAEWAE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA
P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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

**Before the Senate Committees on
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
and
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**Monday, February 2, 2026
3:00 PM**

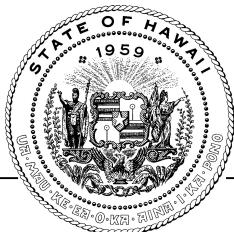
State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2243
RELATING TO CESSPOOLS**

Senate Bill 2243 proposes to amend the deadlines for the upgrade or conversion of cesspools to Director of Health-approved wastewater system or connection of cesspools to a sewerage system; to require priority 1 cesspools to be upgraded, converted, or connected by 12/31/2050, and to phase the deadlines for lower priority cesspools in later years; and to require the Director of Health, in consultation with the counties, to determine the prioritization level of all cesspools in the State. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) offers the following comments.**

Hawai'i has over 83,000 cesspools that discharge 52 million gallons of untreated sewage into the groundwater every day. Sewage discharge can adversely impact marine resources by causing increased nutrients in the nearshore environment leading to eutrophication, reduction in coral cover, and decreased marine species diversity. These effects frequently impact coral reef ecosystems, as sewage has been shown to travel quickly from land to sea. Thus, it is imperative to focus on effective management of wastewater to protect aquatic resources in Hawai'i. The Department recognizes the challenges of meeting current cesspool conversion deadlines, but urges the Legislature to explore additional financing mechanisms and incentive programs to achieve the goal of converting all cesspools statewide by 2050.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII OFFICE OF PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR

Telephone: (808) 587-2846
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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS, Director

before the

SENATE COMMITTEES ON

AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Monday, February 2, 2026, 3:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224

in consideration of

SB 2243

RELATING TO CESSPOOLS.

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

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **offers comments with an amendment on SB 2243**, which amends the deadlines for the upgrade or conversion of cesspools to Director of Health-approved wastewater system or connection of cesspools to a sewerage system; requires priority 1 cesspools to be upgraded, converted, or connected by 12/31/2050, and phases the deadlines for lower priority cesspools in later years; and requires the Director of Health, in consultation with the counties, to determine the prioritization level of all cesspools in the State.

Act 125 (SLH, 2017) established a mandate to convert, upgrade, or connect all cesspools across the state by 2050. However, data provided by the Department of Health to the Individual Wastewater Systems (IWS) Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) of the Simplifying Permitting for Enhanced Economic Development (SPEED) Task Force indicates that Hawai'i's current annual conversion rate is insufficient to meet the mandated deadline. Without concerted intervention by the State, full compliance with Act 125 by 2050 remains unrealistic.

OPSD supports the intent of this measure and believe that this measure serves as a vital bridge for housing production by addressing the infrastructure gap in a realistic timeframe. By allowing for a phased conversion schedule, the State provides homeowners and developers with the necessary time to plan and finance upgrades without halting residential progress. This strategic allocation of time ensures that wastewater capacity is modernized in lockstep with housing needs, removing the immediate threat of non-compliance while building the long-term infrastructure required to support greater residential density and the Governor's housing goals.

SB 2243 RELATING TO CESSPOOLS - COMMENT
State Office of Planning and Sustainable Development
Monday, February 2, 2026

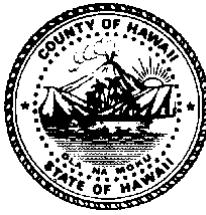
While OPSD agrees with the intent to focus financial assistance on Priority 1 cesspools and lower-income families to ensure resources reach the most vulnerable households and sensitive ecosystems, we wish to offer a cautionary comment. Including rigid priority criteria in statute may lead to unintended logistical or administrative hurdles for the Department of Health. Overly prescriptive statutory language can limit the flexibility needed to respond to varying regional needs and may inadvertently slow the impact of conversion incentives. OPSD suggests that the Department be given the discretion to prioritize these groups through administrative rules or program guidelines rather than a strict statutory mandate, thereby ensuring the program remains nimble and effective.

OPSD respectfully recommends the following **amendment** to lines 13-18 on Page 4:

“(f) The department shall develop and administer expanded grants, tax credits, and low-interest loan programs to support homeowners. The department shall coordinate with the counties to align wastewater infrastructure investments with the phased schedule.”

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on this measure.

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor



William V. Brilhante, Jr.
Managing Director

Merrick Nishimoto
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i ~ Office of the Mayor

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Testimony of
C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor, County of Hawai'i

Before the Senate Committees on
Agriculture and Environment
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

Health and Human Services
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Vice Chair

Monday, February 2, 2026, at 3:00 P.M.
State Capitol Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

In consideration of
Senate Bill 2243
Relating to Cesspools

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair McKelvey, and Members of the Committees,

The County of Hawai'i is in strong support of Senate Bill 2243, relating to cesspools.

Senate Bill 2243 establishes a phased approach for upgrading or converting cesspools to approved wastewater systems or sewer connections, with the highest-risk cesspools (Priority 1) to be addressed by December 31, 2050. Lower-priority cesspools receive additional time for compliance, with prioritization set by the Director of Health in consultation with County's to focus resources where they are most needed.

This legislation is particularly significant for Hawai'i Island, which has the largest number of cesspools in the State and a high proportion of rural and unsewered communities. A risk-based, phased timeline is essential to ensuring progress while recognizing infrastructure limitations, geographic challenges, and affordability concerns faced by residents.

I strongly support the emphasis on County consultation, as local governments are responsible for land use planning, infrastructure coordination, and community outreach. The County of Hawai'i will work with the Director of Health to assist in prioritizing cesspools, provide local knowledge regarding infrastructure feasibility, and help communicate requirements to residents.

Chair Gabbard, Chair San Buenaventura and Members of the Committees

February 2, 2026

Page 2 of 2

This collaboration will help ensure that implementation is practical, equitable, and responsive to on-the-ground conditions.

For these reasons, the County of Hawai‘i strongly supports Senate Bill 2243. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



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 SB2243 RELATING TO CESSPOOLS

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 respectfully but **STRONGLY OPPOSES SB2243!**

I served as the Deputy Attorney General representing the Department of Health's Wastewater Branch from 2006 through 2020; I know Hawaii's wastewater problems very well.

Pollution from cesspools is the largest water pollution problem in Hawai'i. There are over 80,000 cesspools that are dumping over 50 million gallons every day into Hawaii's groundwater, drinking waters, streams, and ocean. This **pollution is making people sick** with diseases such as gastroenteritis, skin rashes, eye irritations, and in some cases much more serious diseases. In some areas, cesspool pollution is **harming drinking water** quality. In particular, the coral reefs that protect our very way of life here in Hawai'i —our recreation-based visitor economy, our fisheries and our shorelines,

are already severely threatened by ocean heating and acidification, sediments, and declining herbivorous fish stocks.

The Legislature has recognized this urgent problem. By law (the mandate of section 342D-72, Hawaii Revised Statutes), all 80,000 plus cesspools must be upgraded to a system approved by the Department of Health by January 1, 2050 (not December 31, 2050 as in the bill). The bill proposes to delay the upgrade requirement for all cesspools, by one year for Priority 1's, eleven years for most Priority 2's, and twenty-one to thirty-one years for the remaining cesspools. This bill responds to this urgent pollution problem in the wrong way by postponing the solution. It is directly contrary to the primary recommendation of the legislatively-convened Cesspool Conversion Working group on which I served for four years, that the upgrade mandates be moved **ahead** from 2050 to 2030 for Priority 1's and 2035 for Priority 2's.

This bill would set back the effort to protect Hawaii's environment and public health from cesspool pollution. Additional action, not delay, is needed now to protect Hawai'i's public health and environment! **Coral reefs may not survive if we wait to solve our cesspool pollution problem until the dates proposed in this bill! We must not “kick the cesspool can down the road” any longer, as this bill proposes!**

The Committee should hold or defer this bill for two main reasons:

- This bill would be **very harmful** to Hawaii's water quality, public health and environment; and
- It is wholly **unnecessary** at this time. The first cesspool upgrade mandate is still almost 24 years away!

Mahalo for not advancing this bill!

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

February 2, 2026

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

RE: Senate Bill 2243, Relating to Cesspools

HEARING: Monday, February 2, 2026, at 3:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Joint Committees:

My name is Lyndsey Garcia, Director of Advocacy, testifying on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawaii and its over 10,000 members. HAR **supports** Senate Bill 2243, which amends the deadlines for the upgrade or conversion of cesspools to Director of Health-approved wastewater system or connection of cesspools to a sewerage system. Requires priority 1 cesspools to be upgraded, converted, or connected by 12/31/2050, and phases the deadlines for lower priority cesspools in later years. Requires the Director of Health, in consultation with the counties, to determine the prioritization level of all cesspools in the State

Hawai'i REALTORS® supports the goal of protecting our drinking water, streams, ground water, and ocean resources. We recognize that cesspool conversion is important to preserve our environment. There are approximately 83,000 cesspools divided into three priorities¹ across the State and to convert 83,000 cesspools by 2050, at least 3,458 cesspools would need to be converted per year. It is crucial that we properly plan and find ways to assist communities and homeowners as resources and manpower are limited, especially on the neighbor islands. Costs will vary greatly depending on resources, labor, permitting delays, property terrain, and other variables. According to the Cesspool Conversions Finance Research Report prepared for the Department of Health, "historical costs of cesspool upgrades to approved systems range widely from approximately \$9,000 to \$60,000 or more depending on the wastewater system capacity (based on bedroom count), technology, and location or site constraints."²

As such, amending the deadline to prioritize the highest-risk cesspools allows the State to protect our water resources while recognizing the financial and logistical challenges faced in converting all cesspools to a Department of Health approved system by 2050.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

¹ University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program. *Hawai'i Cesspool Prioritization Tool*.
<https://seagrant.soest.hawaii.edu/cesspools-tool/>

² Carollo. (January 21, 2021). *Cesspool Conversion Finance Research Report*.
<https://health.hawaii.gov/wastewater/files/2021/02/financefinalreportr.pdf>

February 1, 2026

Senate Committees on Agriculture and Environment; Health and Human Services

Hawai‘i State Legislature
Via Electronic Transmission

Re: Testimony in **STRONG OPPOSITION** of SB 2243 Relating to Cesspools
Hearing: Monday, February 2 2026, 3:00 PM CR 224 & Via Videoconference

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment; and Chair Beunaventura, Vice Chair McKelvey and members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

On behalf of the non-profit WAI: Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations (WAI) with due deference and respect to bill sponsors, WAI reluctantly must oppose SB 2243. In 2017, under Act 125 the State of Hawai‘i pledged to convert all cesspools by 20250. SB 2243 proposes to extend this deadline, and moves Hawai‘i away from the State’s commitment.

WAI is an environmental non-profit dedicated to protecting our water resources by reducing sewage pollution from cesspools. Hawai‘i has more than 83,000 cesspools across the state, discharging 52 million gallons of raw sewage each day into Hawai‘i’s waters, contributing to groundwater contamination, harmful bacteria exposure, nutrient pollution, and coral reef degradation. WAI supports more innovative, affordable, and eco-friendly solutions to wastewater management.

In 2022, the legislature established a Cesspool Conversion Working Group. In the group’s final report WAI Director Stuart Coleman along with the other members recommended to the legislature that highest-priority cesspool systems be addressed on an accelerated timeline, with conversions targeted for 2030 and 2035 because the evidence shows that any delay in action will only prolong and exacerbate severe pollution and public health risks from cesspools. SB 2243 would forgo these evidence-based recommendations, and undermine efforts to safeguard public health, coastal ecosystems, and coral reefs. WAI urges the Committee to consider the importance of the legislature staying on track with cesspool conversion in Hawai‘i because of the severe threat cesspools pose to our States’ water quality and community health.

Further postponing cesspool conversion does not reduce costs; it merely shifts them. Continued sewage discharge through cesspools increases public health threats, reef and coastal degradation, and will result in long-term environmental remediation expenses. Addressing Hawai‘i’s wastewater pollution problem now as mandated is more cost-effective than managing compounded damage later, and is necessary for safeguarding public health, water quality and marine ecosystems. Changes to this deadline are unnecessary as the first cesspool upgrade mandate would not take place for another 24 years.

WAI strongly recommends rather than delaying the conversion timeline, that the Legislature prioritize funding, technical assistance, and innovative wastewater solutions to make compliance more affordable while maintaining necessary health and environmental protections.

WAI respectfully urges the Committees to **defer SB 2243**. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Aloha,

Jessica Kai Paisley

Program and Legal Specialist, Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations



FRIENDS of HANAUMA BAY

CONSERVE • PROTECT • RESTORE

*Dedicated to the conservation of coastal and marine environments,
emphasizing stewardship of the natural resources of Hanauma Bay*

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

From: Friends of Hanauma Bay

Re: SB2243 RELATING TO CESSPOOLS

Hearing: Monday February 2, 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!

With due respect to Hawaii’s mayors, Friend of Hanauma Bay **STRONGLY OPPOSES SB2243!**

Pollution from cesspools is the greatest water pollution problem in Hawai‘i. There are over 80,000 cesspools that are dumping over 50 million gallons every day into Hawaii’s groundwater, drinking waters, streams, and ocean. This **pollution is making people sick** with diseases such as gastroenteritis, skin rashes, and eye irritations. In some areas, cesspool pollution is **harming drinking water** quality. Further, **cesspool pollution is the primary existential threat to our coral reefs** that protect our very way of life here in Hawai‘i —our recreation-based visitor economy, our fisheries and our shorelines.

The Legislature has recognized this urgent problem. By law (the mandate of section 342D-72, Hawaii Revised Statutes), all 80,000 plus cesspools must be upgraded to a system approved by the Department of Health by January 1, 2050.

This bill proposes to delay the upgrade requirement for all cesspools, by one year for Priority 1's, eleven years for most Priority 2's, and twenty-one to thirty-one years for the remaining cesspools, thereby **responding to this urgent pollution problem by postponing the solution - again**. This delay will continue to harm Hawaii's public health and environment. It is directly contrary to the primary recommendation of the legislatively-convened Cesspool Conversion Working group that the upgrade mandates be moved **ahead** from 2050 to 2030 for Priority 1's and 2035 for Priority 2's.

This bill would move Hawaii in the wrong direction. Additional action, built on existing momentum and public support, not delay, is needed now to protect Hawai'i's public health and environment! **We must not "kick the cesspool can down the road" any longer.**

The Committee should hold or defer this bill for two main reasons:

- This bill would be **very harmful** to Hawaii's water quality, public health and environment; and
- It is wholly **unnecessary** at this time. The first cesspool upgrade mandate is still almost 24 years away!

Mahalo for not advancing this bill!

With Aloha,

Lisa Bishop, MS

Friends of Hanauma Bay | President

LATE



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2243 Relating to Cesspools

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

and

Chair Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair Herbert M. "Tim" Richards III, and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN)

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

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

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i strongly supports SB 2243, which amends the deadlines for the upgrade or conversion of cesspools to Director of Health-approved wastewater systems or sewer connections. Hawai'i has more than 80,000 cesspools that collectively release tens of millions of gallons of untreated sewage into the ground every day, contaminating drinking water sources, coastal ecosystems, and nearshore marine environments. Updating the conversion timeline is essential to ensure that cesspool upgrades occur in a realistic, phased, and scientifically informed manner that protects public health and the environment.

SB2243 establishes a clear and structured schedule by requiring Priority 1 cesspools—those posing the greatest risk to drinking water, public health, or sensitive ecosystems—to be upgraded, converted, or connected by December 31, 2050. The bill then phases in deadlines for lower-priority cesspools in subsequent years, allowing homeowners, counties, and wastewater professionals to plan effectively and avoid overwhelming the system. This phased approach balances urgency with practicality, ensuring that the most dangerous cesspools are addressed first while giving communities time to prepare for long-term infrastructure needs.

The bill also requires the Director of Health, in consultation with the counties, to determine the prioritization level of all cesspools in the State. This collaborative, data-driven process ensures that decisions are based on hydrology, proximity to drinking water sources, environmental sensitivity, and community needs. By grounding the prioritization in science and local expertise, SB2243 strengthens Hawai'i's ability to

protect groundwater, reduce nutrient pollution, and safeguard coastal ecosystems that are central to cultural practices, food security, and the State's economy.

SB2243 is a prudent and necessary measure that advances Hawai'i's long-standing commitment to eliminating cesspools and transitioning to modern, environmentally responsible wastewater systems. The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committees to pass SB2243.

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

SB-2243

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 8:37:27 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT!!!

SB-2243

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 8:09:08 AM
Testimony for HHS on 2/2/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Hixon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. I testify as a professional marine biologist who has studied coral reefs in Hawaii since the 1970s. If our reefs were in a healthy state, and if the oceans were not rapidly warming and acidifying, then delaying action on cesspools would be acceptable. Unfortunately, our reefs are suffering terribly because leaching sewage from cesspools is fertilizing seaweeds that smother corals and kill our reefs. And, around Oahu and some other regions, we have horribly overfished the herbivores that control seaweeds, leaving our reef ecosystems vulnerable to collapse as coral bleaching events inexorably worsen. Coral reefs provide billions of dollars worth of goods and services for Hawaii, including sand replenishment and coastal protection from erosion, fisheries, recreation, and tourism. Delaying action on cesspools will be a sin our keiki will never forgive. Please do not pass this bill. Mahalo.