

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 18 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1985
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection, to which was referred H.B. No. 1985 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CESSPOOLS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Allow certain extensions of the deadline for cesspool conversions; and
- (2) Authorize and appropriate funds to the Department of Health to retain qualified consultants as necessary to identify necessary public outreach and education resources and tools and develop a comprehensive public outreach strategy and website to educate homeowners and wastewater professionals about information and resources regarding the State's cesspool upgrade, conversion, and connection requirements and deadlines.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Health; Office of Planning and Sustainable Development; Hawai'i Association of REALTORS; Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition; and one individual. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources.



Your Committee finds that high costs associated with cesspool upgrades, conversions, and connections place a significant financial burden on certain residents. Your Committee further finds that these requirements necessitate clear, accessible information regarding cesspools and upgrade procedures. This measure ensures that individuals who demonstrate financial hardship can receive extensions for cesspool conversion requirements, establishes a goal for high-risk cesspools to be prioritized, and authorizes the development of certain public outreach and educational resources related to cesspool conversion.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Adding a requirement that applicants must demonstrate efforts made to pay for or finance the cesspool upgrade, conversion, or connection to be eligible for an extension;
- (2) Adding a goal for the Department of Health to prioritize the upgrade, conversion, or connection of certain high-risk cesspools;
- (3) Clarifying that certain outreach and informational resources will be for property owners, instead of homeowners;
- (4) Changing the means of financing for the retention of consultants from the Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund to general revenues;
- (5) Changing its effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (6) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1985, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1985, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Energy &
Environmental Protection,

Nicole E. Lowen

NICOLE E. LOWEN, Chair



