



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of H.B. 2121, H.D. 1
RELATING TO WASTE MANAGEMENT**

REPRESENTATIVE GREGG TAKAYAMA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: February 18, 2026
10:00 AM

Room Number: Conference Room 329
and Videoconference

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The fiscal impact of a ban on disposable electronic smoking devices (ESDs)
2 in Hawaii would result in modest reductions in Hawaii's tax revenues while at the same time
3 leading to reductions in chronic diseases and health care spending, including Medicaid
4 spending, in the state.

5 **Department Position:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports House Bill 2121, House Draft 1
6 (H.B. 2121, H.D. 1).

7 **Department Testimony:** The environmental impact of disposable ESD consumption is alarming.
8 Appropriate handling guidelines are lacking, and most individuals have no other option but to
9 discard them in the regular trash.¹ This becomes dangerous because the lithium batteries are
10 prone to ignite and cause fires and the microplastics and chemicals inside the products can
11 leach into the environment after being littered or discarded in landfills.² In a 2024 study

¹ Truth Initiative. (2025, April). *Another reason to quit vaping? The environmental impact of e-cigarettes.*
[https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/harmful-effects-tobacco/another-reason-quit-vaping-environmental-
impact-e](https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/harmful-effects-tobacco/another-reason-quit-vaping-environmental-impact-e)

² Truth Initiative. (2025, April). *Another reason to quit vaping? The environmental impact of e-cigarettes.*
[https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/harmful-effects-tobacco/another-reason-quit-vaping-environmental-
impact-e](https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/harmful-effects-tobacco/another-reason-quit-vaping-environmental-impact-e)

1 conducted by the Truth Initiative, 53% of disposable ESD users aged 15-24 stated that they
2 threw their ESDs in the regular trash at a rate of about three per month.³

3 In 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) restricted the sale of pod-based
4 ESDs, while exempting menthol and disposable ESD.⁴ As a result, use of disposable ESDs
5 increased over 1,000% between 2019 and 2020 among high school ESD users in the U.S.⁵ The
6 proportion of total ESD unit sales attributable to disposable ESDs increased from 26.0% to
7 56.5% between February 2020 and September 2025.⁶

8 At the same time disposable ESD sales soared, nicotine content in these products also
9 skyrocketed and prices lowered. According to the Truth Initiative, disposable ESDs in the U.S.
10 tripled in nicotine strength, quintupled in e-liquid capacity, and dropped in price by nearly 70%
11 between 2017 and 2022.⁷ Citing the unpredictable nicotine concentrations and risk to human
12 health and the environment the Environmental Protection Agency classified all nicotine
13 containing ESDs as acute hazardous waste when discarded.⁸ Besides nicotine, many ESDs
14 contain other toxic chemicals such as formaldehyde, lead, and acrolein.^{9,10} Some ESDs are

³ Truth Initiative. (2024, July). *Not-so-disposable e-cigarettes: Young people grapple with e-cigarette waste amid lack of safe disposal options.* <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/harmful-effects-tobacco/not-so-disposable-e-cigarettes-young-people-grapple-e>

⁴ Public Health Law Center. (2020, January 15). *Much Ado About Nothing: FDA's Lackluster Effort to Restrict Flavors* | Public Health Law Center. <https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/commentary/200108/much-ado-about-nothing-fdas-lackluster-effort-restrict-flavors>

⁵ Truth Initiative. (2025, April). *Another reason to quit vaping? The environmental impact of e-cigarettes.* <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/harmful-effects-tobacco/another-reason-quit-vaping-environmental-impact-e>

⁶ CDC Foundation. (2025, September). *E-Cigarette & Tobacco Monitoring and Research.* Monitoring Tobacco Product Use. <https://tobaccomonitoring.org/>

⁷ Diaz, M. C., Silver, N. A., Bertrand, A., & Schillo, B. A. (2025). Bigger, stronger, and cheaper: Growth in e-cigarette market driven by disposable devices with more e-liquid, higher nicotine concentration and declining prices. *Tobacco Control*, 34(1), 65–70. <https://doi.org/10.1136/tc-2023-058033>

⁸ Federal Register/ Vol.84, No. 36/ Friday, February 22, 2019/ Rules and Regulations (5816). [Environmental Protection Agency. 40 CFR. V. Amendment to the Acute Hazardous Waste Listing for Nicotine and Salts \(Hazardous Waste No. P075\).](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/02/22/2019-04311/amendment-to-the-acute-hazardous-waste-listing-for-nicotine-and-salts)

⁹ Environmental Protection Agency. <https://www.epa.gov/hwgenerators/frequent-questions-about-management-standards-hazardous-waste-pharmaceuticals-and#nicotine>.

¹⁰Salazar et al., “Elevated Toxic Element Emissions from Popular Disposable E-Cigarettes: Sources, Life Cycle, and Health Risks.”

1 designed with built-in video games and Bluetooth speakers and come in candy or fruity flavors
2 to attract youth.¹¹ According to the CDC Foundation’s Monitoring Tobacco Product Use project,
3 these high-tech, alluring ESD products deemed “disposable” due to their non-refillable nature,
4 account for 93% or 6,400 of the recorded 6,800 ESD products available for sale in the U.S.¹²

5 While the DOH supports H.B. 2121, H.D. 1, we do continue to recommend the more
6 comprehensive approach through H.B. 1573, H.D. 1, that establishes the ESD Directory and
7 penalties under the Department of the Attorney General.

8 **Offered Amendments:** None

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

¹¹ Commissioner, O. of the. (2025, September 30). *A Statement From FDA Commissioner Marty Makary, M.D., M.P.H.: Encouraging Retailers to Stop Selling Illegal Vapes*. FDA. FDA. <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/statement-fda-commissioner-marty-makary-md-mph-encouraging-retailers-stop-selling-illegal-vapes>

¹² CDC Foundation. (2025, September). *E-Cigarette & Tobacco Monitoring and Research*. Monitoring Tobacco Product Use. <https://tobaccomonitoring.org/>

Date: February 17, 2026

LATE

To: Chair Representative Greg Takayama
Vice Chair Representative Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy
And members of the House Committee on Health

From: Members of the University of Hawai'i Student Health Advisory Council

Re: Strong Support for HB2121 Relating to Disposable Electronic E-Cigarette Devices

Hearing: Wednesday, February 18, 2026 10:00 am CR 329

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2121. The University of Hawai'i Student Health Advisory Council has played a pivotal role in the development and implementation of health policies and tobacco education on the UH System campuses. We remain deeply committed to the mission of reducing the use of all tobacco products, including electronic smoking devices, especially amongst adolescents and young adults. As a result, we are in strong support of a ban on the sale of all disposable electronic smoking devices.

Disposable e-cigarettes create a dual crisis of severe environmental pollution and public health risks. These single-use devices, which are often used by youth and young adults, contain lithium-ion batteries, toxic heavy metals and high levels of nicotine. Disposable electronic cigarettes are not recyclable and contain hazardous components which leach into Hawai'i's ecosystems and contribute to plastic pollution, landfill fires, and toxic chemicals in our waterways and in the ocean.

According to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, at least five disposable electronic cigarettes are thrown away every second in the United States, amounting to 150 million devices per year. The local and global impact of the world's increasing waste stream is clearly unsustainable and detrimental to the environmental integrity and public health of the State of Hawai'i.

The Student Health Advisory Council urges you to support this measure which will protect the health of our people, environment, and the future of Hawai'i. We recognize your committees' commitment to well-being and ask you to help create a safer Hawai'i for all.

Mahalo from the Student Health Advisory Council

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor



Laura Acasio
Administrator

LATE

County of Hawai'i
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE, EQUITY,
AND RESILIENCE

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HEARING OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

10:00 AM

CONFERENCE ROOM 329

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2121 HD1

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the Committee on Health:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2121 HD1, which would prohibit the sale, offer for sale, or distribution of disposable electronic smoking devices statewide beginning January 1, 2027.

HB 2121 HD1 advances crucial waste reduction and sustainability goals by addressing the disproportionate environmental harm caused by disposable e-cigarettes. Disposable electronic smoking devices are not recyclable, contain hazardous components such as lithium-ion batteries and liquid nicotine, and contribute to plastic pollution, landfill fires, and toxic chemical leaching into soils and waterways.

The bill's findings acknowledge that the exponential increase in single-use products is unsustainable and detrimental to environmental integrity, exacerbating problems related to litter, ocean pollution, and harm to wildlife.

Supporting data from community and public health research reinforce these concerns. Disposable e-cigarettes generate a significant waste stream, and due to the absence of standardized recycling pathways the vast majority are discarded into the regular waste stream where plastics, heavy metals, and batteries pose long-term environmental risks. Improper disposal also increases the likelihood of fires in waste facilities and complicates waste handling and hazardous waste management efforts.

By eliminating the sale of non-recyclable, single-use electronic smoking devices, HB 2121 HD1 supports Hawaii's broader waste reduction strategies to *prevent unnecessary waste generation at the source*, reduce hazards in waste streams, and protect soil, water, and coastal ecosystems from persistent pollution. It aligns with community sustainability priorities to reduce disposable products that cannot be effectively reused or recycled and to advance comprehensive approaches to waste minimization and environmental

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor



Laura Acasio
Administrator

stewardship.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to **pass HB 2121 HD1** and help strengthen Hawai'i's commitment to sustainable waste management and environmental protection.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Laura Acasio
Sustainability Administrator



Hawaii COPD Coalition

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Honolulu, HI 96824

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(808)699-9839

February 13, 2026

Honorable Chair Representative Gregg Takayama
Honorable Vice-Chair Representatives Sue L Keohokapu-Lee Loy
Members of the House Committee on Health

RE: **Strong Support for HB2121, HD1 Relating to Waste Management**

Dear Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the House Committee on Health,

This measure is extremely critical to the health of the children of our state and our entire state as well. **Please pass HB2121, HD1** Relating to Waste Management, which would prohibit the sale, offer for sale or distribution of any disposable electronic smoking devices in the State.

I am Executive Director of the Hawaii COPD Coalition and serve over 45,000 Hawaii adults diagnosed with COPD in Hawaii (with an estimated equal number still undiagnosed). Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease or COPD is an umbrella of diseases which include emphysema, chronic bronchitis and chronic asthma. Since 2007, I have worked in Hawaii, nationally and internationally with countless people who have had their lungs and lives horribly affected by tobacco and nicotine. Many of these people have become disabled and unable to perform jobs and hobbies they enjoyed, spending a lot more time and resources with healthcare providers and requiring support from society than they or any of us would like.

- In 2023, Americans discarded 5.7 million e-cigarettes every second, nearly 500,000 per day.
- The debris created by disposable e-cigarettes is raising concerns for researchers, noting potential impacts to the water quality and aquatic life due to plastic, metals, batteries, and nicotine.
- Disposable e-cigarettes have higher nicotine concentrations than previous generations of e-cigarettes.
- Disposable e-cigarettes contain non-biodegradable plastic and lithium-ion batteries that leach chemicals and create fire hazards.

Please help protect our aina and keep it from being littered by this debris that makes our state ever less desirable to live in or visit, plus is harmful to humans and the animals on land and in our ocean! The Hawaii COPD Coalition thanks you very much for your careful consideration of this most important and timely bill. **Please pass HB2121, HD1** Relating to Waste Management, which would prohibit the sale, offer for sale or distribution of any disposable electronic smoking devices in the State, and help this very important bill become law.

Very truly yours,

Valerie Chang

Valerie Chang

Executive Director

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2121 HD1

TO: Chair Takayama, Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Committee Members

FROM: Michael Paul, Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist

DATE: February 18, 2026 (10:00 AM)

Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) **strongly supports** HB 2121 HD1, which prohibits the sale of disposable electronic smoking devices in the State.

Americans discard hundreds of thousands of e-cigarettes every day, adding up to 150 million e-cigarettes annually. They usually end up in the household trash, against [EPA recommendations](#). This creates a risk of lithium battery fires when the batteries are crushed or exposed to heat in garbage trucks and waste facilities. E-cigarettes contain high concentrations of nicotine which can leach into environment along with the chemicals found in the batteries.

As well, many disposable e-cigarettes end up as litter on roadsides, parks, and even in the ocean. The plastic, metals, batteries, and high nicotine concentration found in e-cigarettes are non-biodegradable and are harmful to people and wildlife, particularly when they find their way into aquatic environments. Please pass SB2175 to protect the health of the people and environment in Hawai'i.

HHRC's mission is to reduce harm, promote health, create wellness, and fight stigma in Hawai'i and the Pacific. We work with many individuals impacted by poverty, housing instability, and other social determinants of health. Many have behavioral health problems, including those related to substance use and mental health conditions.

With the ongoing support of the Hawai'i Community Foundation, HHRC continues to offer smoking cessation services that are tailored to meet the needs of our state's LGBTQ+ people, and other priority populations through its [Hawai'i's Last Drag](#) (HLD) program. We work with individuals in ways that are most appropriate for their current needs, with trainings conducted in person or via phone, text, or videoconferencing. We provide smoking cessation products to assist them with quitting the consumption of smoked tobacco and other nicotine products.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 2:33:04 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charles Fenenbock	Island of Hawaii YMCA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good Morning! My name is Charles Fenenbock and I am the youth director of the Island of Hawaii YMCA speaking on behalf of our organization and community. Personally, I'm born and raised in the heart of Hilo and this island will forever be my home like many other's. I'm here to speak up about the epidemic. The growing devastation that ESD's and it's growing nicotine-based counterparts have are detrimentally impacting our environmental and public health amongst our Ohana and community. Our landlocked supposed beauty of an island called paradise is being treated with utmost disrespect in regards to our beautiful beaches, sacred wildlife, and especially our local youth. From plastic waste on beaches and on the side of our roads we drive on everyday, lithium battery hazards, the chemical leakages in our Hawaiian soil and ocean, to harming marine and wildlife with microplastic pollution, and ultimately affecting our people with health concerns and addiction. Its very unfortunate and disturbing to not only hear but witness from my own eyes. I deal with youth, and one day I took a drive to the beach with my Ohana, only to see one of my students holding a device and puffing on it with a few other kids. He was 8 years old. He is an avid learner and has a bright future ahead of him, and when i witnessed it, I couldn't breathe. I wanted to yell and scream but I knew there was nothing i could do right there and then but I'm here to stand up to my experience and make a point to stop the sale and distribution of all ESD. There is anecdotal evidence that 2nd- 3rd graders are starting to vape. Even more evidence confirms the Island of Hawaii as a whole has the second highest rates for ESD smokers in High Schoolers in the nation and the highest rates for ESD smokers in Middle Schoolers in the nation. These kids are our next generation. We live for them and you should too.



February 14, 2026

To: COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Rep. Gregg Takayama, Chair
Rep. Sue L. Keohokapu-Loy, Vice Chair

Re: SUPPORT of HB2121 HD1 RELATING TO DISPOSABLE ELECTRONIC SMOKING DEVICES

Hrg: February 18th at 10:00 AM

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 450 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawai'i through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy.

Disposable e-cigarettes are hazardous to the health of our people and our environment. These devices contain dangerous plastics, toxic chemicals and lithium-ion batteries that leach into our environment. They also contain higher nicotine concentrations than previous generations of e-cigarettes, leading to high addiction rates amongst users. Please pass this bill to help create a safer Hawai'i for us all.

The Hawaii Public Health Association urges you to support HB2121.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important public health issue.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Holly Kessler'.

Holly Kessler
Executive Director

**Committee
Members**

Annaleah Atkinson
808 652-7743

Regina Floyd
702 292-2372

Brian Foster
808 639-3529

Kristen Greene
808 346-0386

Doug Haigh
808 635-1120

Diana Harvey
530 635-7052

Barbara Honeycutt
541 251-1487

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Scott McCubbins
816 781-5883

Graeme Merrin
808 651-7211

Ryan Moen
808 651-0726

Tommy Noyes
808 639-1018

Jessica Pinson
937 901-5818

Doug Shannon
909 496-1188

Valerie Woods
808 822-2420

Ron Wiley
808 245-9527

Tom Worthen
435 994-0023



February 15, 2026

House Committee on Health

Rep. Gregg Takayama, Chair and Rep. Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair
Members Rep. Terez Amato, Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Rep. Daisy Hartsfield, Rep. David Alcos
III, Rep. Lisa Marten, Rep. Diamond Garcia, and Rep. Ikaika Olds

HEARING DATE: Wednesday, February 18, 2026

**Strong Support for HB 2121 HD1, Relating to Waste Management—Waste Management;
Disposable Electronic Smoking Devices; Sale, Offer for Sale, Distribution; Prohibition**

Aloha House Committee on Health,

I represent the Friends of Kamalani & Lydgate Park, a community service organization that built a major playground in Lydgate Beach Park on Kaua'i in 1994. Every weekend we bring families together to work collaboratively, sustaining that facility and other attractive features of that popular regional park.

Picking up litter is one of our recurring tasks, and we are clearing away more and more e-cigarette rubbish. We were sorry to learn that in 2023, Americans discarded 5.7 million e-cigarettes, nearly 500,000 per day. The debris created by disposable e-cigarettes is raising concerns for researchers, noting potential impacts to the water quality and aquatic life due to plastic, metals, batteries, and nicotine.

Moreover, disposable e-cigarettes have higher nicotine concentrations than previous generations of e-cigarettes, and contain non-biodegradable plastic and lithium-ion batteries that leach chemicals and create fire hazards.

Please advance this in a collaborative effort to reduce environmental harm and protect our most vulnerable citizens from the harms caused by electronic nicotine delivery systems.

Mahalo for your attention to this testimony.

Tommy A. Noyes
General Coordinator
The Friends of Kamalani and Lydgate Park



Chair - Representative Gregg Takayama
Vice Chair - Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy
Members of the Committee on Health

On behalf of the Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i's (CTFH) Youth Council, thank you for allowing us to submit testimony **in strong support of HB2121.**

The CTFH Youth Council is a nationally recognized group of youth leaders fighting to envision and create a Hawai'i centered on uplifting community public health beyond the reaches of Big Tobacco. Our council comprises middle school, high school, and college students, with representation from across Hawai'i's counties.

Hawai'i is facing a youth vaping epidemic. Disposable e-cigarettes have become especially popular among teens because they are cheap, widely available, and easy to use. Disposable e-cigarettes also have higher nicotine concentrations than previous generations of e-cigarettes. Despite many of these products being illegal in the United States, they remain accessible in our communities, demonstrating the urgent need for policy action.

In addition to harming youth health, disposable e-cigarettes are creating an environmental crisis in Hawai'i. These devices contain dangerous plastics, toxic chemicals and lithium-ion batteries that leach into our environment. Currently, there is no standardized way to recycle disposable e-cigarettes in the United States, resulting in toxic materials leaching into the environment.

During a CTFH Youth Council beach cleanup, members collected a staggering number of cigarette butts along Hawai'i's shoreline. While the Youth Council initially observed less visible e-cigarette waste, we later learned that many disposable e-cigarette components do not float to the surface. Instead, they sink into the sand and ocean floor, where they release toxic chemicals, heavy metals, and nicotine residue. This hidden pollution threatens aquatic life and contaminates our marine ecosystems.

The lithium-ion batteries inside disposable e-cigarettes also pose serious safety risks to our communities. When improperly discarded, these batteries can overheat, rupture, or ignite under high pressure and heat, creating dangerous conditions in waste facilities.

At Hawai'i's H-POWER facility, battery-related fires and explosions have slowed operations, damaged equipment, and put workers at risk. H-power has shared with us that In 2024, they had

158 fires total, with 44 being lithium-related. And because these batteries are so small and powerful, stopping them before they enter H-POWER is our best bet for keeping the plant operational and staff safe.

Members of the CTFH Youth Council have also witnessed disposable e-cigarettes catching fire unexpectedly, with some youth experiencing burns and close calls as a result. These incidents demonstrate that disposable e-cigarettes are not only harmful to health and the environment, but also present immediate physical dangers.

Disposable e-cigarettes are hazardous to the health of our people and our environment. Please pass this bill to help create a safer Hawai'i for us all.

Mahalo,
Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i Youth Council

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 7:00:15 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taylor Wong	Coalition For A Tobacco-Free Hawaii Youth Council	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair - Representative Gregg Takayama

Vice Chair - Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy

Members of the Committee on Health

From: Taylor Wong

Aloha Chairperson Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee on Health. My name is Taylor Wong and I am in strong support for HB2121 HD1 which ends the sale of disposable e-cigarettes. This issue has been prominent in many schools across our state. It was reported that nearly 30% of high school students in Hawaii vape; with 46% taking a puff everyday. The overconsumption and access to e-cigarettes are affecting students and our youth. Not only do e-cigarettes pose a risk to the health of our youth, but it also affects others and the environment in schools. Personally, I've had many encounters with students going to the "bathroom" and vaping for the majority of class time. This has led to many bathrooms being closed and the investment of vape alarms. The use of e-cigarettes can not only prevent myself and others from using the bathrooms, it wastes funding on vape alarms; funding that could go into other things that could benefit our schools. In addition it can also take away from other student's class time. Once, my sister had to use the restroom but there were students inside the bathroom vaping. Unfortunately security came in and made everyone go to the Vice Principal's office to search their pockets regardless if they were just there for the bathroom or not. They in fact didn't find anything because the girl who was vaping had run out right before to avoid being caught. Due to that one student, it wasted all the other students' class time.

E-cigarettes should not be accessible to students or adults. I believe that lawmakers have the power to help stop students from using these harmful devices that could cost them their life and waste student's time in schools. I hope that this bill will create a better environment for our youth, especially in our schools- which is a place of learning, not a place to vape. I urge you to support bill HB2121 HD1 to end the sale of disposable e-cigarettes.

Mahalo for your time.



HIPHI Board

May Okihiro, MD, MS
Chair
John A. Burns School of Medicine,
Department of Pediatrics

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Vice Chair
Hawai'i Health Partners

Titimaea Ta'ase, JD
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University of Hawai'i at Hilo

Dina Shek, JD
Medical-Legal Partnership
For Children in Hawai'i

JoAnn Tsark, MPH
John A. Burns School of Medicine, Native
Hawaiian Research Office

Danette Wong Tomiyasu, MBA
Retired, Hawai'i State Department of
Health

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community-Based Research &
Evaluation

Community Health
Worker Initiatives

Environmental Health

Hawai'i Climate Change and Health
Working Group

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol-Free Coalitions

Hawai'i Immunization Coalition

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective/Healthy Aging &
Community Living

Public Health Workforce Development

Date: February 17, 2026

To: Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair
Representative Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Health

RE: Strong Support for HB 2121 HD1, Relating to Waste Management

Hrg: Wednesday, February 18, 2026, at 10:00 AM, Room 329

The Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i, a program of Hawai'i Public Health Institute¹ is in **Strong Support of HB 2121 HD1**, which would end the sale of any disposable electronic smoking devices in the State.

Tobacco-related disease continues to be the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, resulting in 480,000 deaths annually,² with 1,400 of those deaths happening each year in Hawai'i.³ 95% of adult cigarette smokers started before they turned 21 years of age,⁴ so it's clear that to eliminate the harms of tobacco in our society, we need to prevent youth from ever starting.

For the past ten years, Hawai'i's middle and high school students have been reporting high prevalence rates for electronic smoking devices, with current use for middle school students at 10%, and 13% for high school students.⁵ The problem has now become an issue at many of our elementary schools across the state. Sales of disposable electronic devices grew by 500% between 2019 and 2023, making them the most common type of device among young people.⁶

Bad for health.

Nicotine is a highly addictive drug, and can impact the developing brains of adolescents and young adults. A 2024 CDC Foundation report found that disposable e-cigarettes have nicotine levels similar to several cartons of cigarettes, with average nicotine strength increasing 294 percent between 2019 and 2023.⁵ Additionally, a 2025 study from UC Riverside found popular disposable electronic smoking devices expose users to hazardous levels of neurotoxic lead and carcinogenic nickel and antimony.⁷

Bad for the environment.

Disposable, single-use electronic smoking devices are a public health hazard. These products are made of non-biodegradable plastic containing nicotine and other hazardous chemicals, metals, wiring, and a lithium-ion battery. According to a 2023 study, Americans discarded 5.7 disposable electronic devices every second, nearly 500,000 per day.⁸ Over a year, this amounts to 150 million devices, creating a huge amount of hazardous waste.



No good place to dispose of “disposable” e-cigarettes.

There are no easy or safe ways to dispose of or recycle e-cigarettes, leaving most residents to put them in the trash bin.⁹ This results in our landfills and H-Power having to deal with them. The toxic chemicals then leach into our environment and lithium-ion batteries risk catching fire.¹⁰ These microplastics and leached chemicals then are a danger to our land and animals, with microplastics ending up in our streams, and even in our bodies.¹¹ We can end this threat by removing these products from our state altogether.

Opportunity for state action.

With federal regulations lacking enforcement, state and local governments are left to establish their own standards. Hawai'i can prohibit the sale of disposable electronic smoking devices within the state, protecting our keiki and preserving our 'āina. There is growing support for this, according to an independent poll conducted by Ward Research in the Fall of 2025 on behalf of the Coalition, 81% of registered Hawai'i voters support a law that would prohibit the sale of all disposable electronic smoking devices.¹²

We applaud the Legislature for helping to protect the health of our community and our environment by considering this measure, and thank this committee for your consideration of HB 2121 HD1.

We respectfully ask you to pass this measure.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kevin Ramirez'.

Kevin Ramirez
Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i Program Manager
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

1 The Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i (Coalition) is a program of the Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) that is dedicated to reducing tobacco use through education, policy, and advocacy. With more than two decades of history in Hawai'i, the Coalition has led several campaigns on enacting smoke-free environments, including being the first state in the nation to prohibit the sale of tobacco and electronic smoking devices to purchasers under 21 years of age.

2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, May 4). *Burden of cigarette use in the U.S.* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/resources/data/cigarette-smoking-in-united-states.html>

3 *The toll of tobacco in Hawaii.* Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. (2025, December 15).
<https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/hawaii>

4 U.S. Food and Drug Administration. (2024, August 29). *FDA issues final rule increasing the minimum age for certain restrictions on tobacco sales.* U.S. Food and Drug Administration.
<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-issues-final-rule-increasing-minimum-age-certain-restrictions-tobacco-sales>

5 Hawai'i Health Matters. (n.d.). *Tobacco Prevention & Control 2030 Tracker.* Hawaii.
<https://www.hawaiihealthmatters.org/indicators/index/dashboard?alias=Tobacco2030>



6 CDC Foundation. (2024, November 24). As National Sales of E-Cigarettes Climb, Report Shows that State Restrictions on Flavored Products Are Critical to Protect Young People.

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7 Salazar, M. R., Saina, L., Nguyen, T. B., Pinkerton, K. E., Madl, A. K., Cole, A. M., & Poulin, B. A. (2025, June 25). *Elevated toxic element emissions from popular disposable e-cigarettes: Sources, life cycle, and Health Risks* | ACS Central Science. ACS Publications. <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acscentsci.5c00641>

8 FY26 Vape Waste Report 2. (n.d.).

<https://publicinterestnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/PIRG-Vape-Waste-2.pdf>

9 Lithium-ion Battery Disposal. Department of Health. September 25, 2025.

https://health.hawaii.gov/heer/files/2025/11/FINAL_Residents-Lithium-Ion-Info-Sheet.pdf

10 HFD: Lithium-ion battery fires are on the rise. KHON. January 10, 2026.

<https://www.khon2.com/hawaii-fires/hfd-lithium-ion-battery-fires/>

11 Microplastics and our health: What the science says. Stanford Medicine. January 29, 2025.

<https://med.stanford.edu/news/insights/2025/01/microplastics-in-body-polluted-tiny-plastic-fragments.html>

12 This study by Ward Research, Inc. summarizes findings from a telephone/online survey among n=741 Hawai'i registered voters (maximum sampling error +/- 3.7%), conducted between October 3 to November 1, 2025.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 8:48:00 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shani Carvalho	Hamakua-Kohala Health	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha nui, my name is Shani "Kai" Carvalho and I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB2121 HD1 to end the sale of disposable e-cigarettes. As a Tobacco Treatment Specialist I see how it affects adults and youth who use disposable e-cigarettes and the addiction that comes with it causing harm on their bodies. However not only are disposable e-cigarettes harmful to our kino (body) but it also brings harm to our honua (earth). Everyday hundreds of thousands of e-cigarettes are being discarded in the US alone all of which have non-biodegradable plastics that are infiltrating our 'āina. We see these devices in the grass at our parks, on the beach, in the ocean, where it can cause great danger to our sea creatures as well. Please help us protect our land, oceans and our earth by ending the sale of disposable e-cigarettes. Mahalo.

Hawaii Chapter

OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice-Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Committee Members:

The Hawai'i Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (HAAP) would like to provide testimony in **strong support of HB 2121 HD1**, which would ban disposable vape products from being sold in Hawai'i starting in 2027. Not only is tobacco harmful to those who use it in any form, but disposable vapes pose unique risks to children and the environment. The lithium-ion batteries in the vapes pose a fire hazard when improperly disposed, which is likely to be the vast majority of the time. Additionally, the batteries, plastics, and toxic chemicals contained in the vape liquid residue of a disposable vape device risk leaching toxic chemicals not only into the bodies of adolescents who are still developing, but also into the environment.

As pediatricians, we have witnessed increasing numbers of youth who become addicted to nicotine because of bright packaging, youth-targeted messaging, and flavors that are especially appealing to youth. The colorful packaging, fruity flavors, and misconception that vaping is less harmful than cigarettes only serve to obscure the truth, which is that tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable deaths and that tobacco use reduces the average smoker's life expectancy by about a decade. The youth vaping epidemic continues to worsen, with more than 13% of high schoolers and 10% of middle schoolers in Hawai'i reporting using e-cigarettes (2023 data). As you may know, vape liquid contains high levels of nicotine, making it more addictive than cigarettes; this is in addition to dozens of other dangerous chemicals that can seriously harm a young person's lungs.

More than 200 pediatrician members of the Hawai'i Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics support measures that can help to fight the youth vaping epidemic. We have seen first-hand the harmful impacts of nicotine addiction in our adolescent patients, and we have seen discarded vapes washed up on our beaches, polluting the environment. For both these reasons, we strongly urge your support of HB2121 HD1.

Maya Maxym, MD, PhD, FAAP

On behalf of the Hawai'i Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

To: House Committee on Health
Re: **HB2121 HD1 – Relating to Waste Management**
Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference
February 18, 2026, 10:00 AM

Dear Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of HB2121 HD1**. This bill prohibits the sale, offer for sale, or distribution for sale of any disposable electronic smoking devices in the State, beginning 1/1/2027.

Hawai'i has some of the highest youth e-cigarette use rates in the nation, with more than 1 in 4 (29%) of high school and 1 in 6 (17%) of middle school students having tried e-cigarettes.¹ Flavored e-cigarettes play a major role in attracting young users, and Hawai'i was recently given a grade of "F" in the ending of the sale of all flavored tobacco products by the American Lung Association.²

In the past, Hawai'i' was a national leader in tobacco regulation, pioneering policies such as raising the tobacco sales age to 21 and passing a comprehensive smoke-free air law.³

In the absence of federal regulation, our state should take the lead again and ban the sale of disposable e-cigarettes in Hawai'i, in order to better protect our children and youth and reduce smoking-related harm in their communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Please pass this bill.

Thank you,

Nicole Woo
Director of Research and Economic Policy

¹ https://hhdw.org/report/query/selection/yrbs/_YRBSSelection.html

² <https://www.lung.org/media/press-releases/fy26-sotc-hawaii>

³ <https://www.hiphi.org/tobacco/>

LATE

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 10:07:08 AM
Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Ching	American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawaii Chapter	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Honorable Gregg Takayama, Chair The Honorable Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair House Committee on Health

RE: HB 2121 – RELATING TO WASTE MANAGEMENT

Dear Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawai‘i Chapter (HAAP), representing over 200 pediatricians across the islands, strongly supports HB 2121, which prohibits the sale, offer for sale, or distribution of disposable electronic smoking devices in the State of Hawai‘i.

As pediatricians, our primary mission is the health and safety of Hawai‘i’s keiki. We view this measure as a critical dual-pronged approach to public health: protecting our environment from hazardous waste and safeguarding our youth from the pervasive dangers of nicotine addiction.

HAAP supports HB 2121 for the following reasons:

- **Combating Youth Nicotine Addiction:** Disposable electronic smoking devices (e-cigarettes) are a primary driver of the current youth vaping epidemic. Their low cost, ease of concealment, and variety of kid-friendly flavors make them particularly attractive to minors. By removing these disposable products from the market, we can significantly reduce youth access to highly addictive nicotine products.
- **Preventing Toxic Exposure:** These devices contain hazardous materials, including lithium-ion batteries and concentrated liquid nicotine. When discarded improperly, they leak toxic chemicals and heavy metals into our soil and water. As pediatricians, we are acutely aware of the long-term health impacts of environmental toxins on developing children.
- **Reducing Accidental Poisoning:** Disposable vapes often lack robust safety seals, posing a significant risk of accidental nicotine poisoning for young children who may find discarded devices in parks, at beaches, or in their own homes.
- **Mitigating Fire and Safety Risks:** The improper disposal of lithium-ion batteries found in these devices creates unnecessary fire hazards for waste management workers and the surrounding communities, further threatening the safety of the environments where our children live and play.

Nicotine is a highly addictive substance that can harm adolescent brain development, affecting parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control. HB 2121 is a necessary step to curb the "throwaway" culture of vaping that targets our youth and litters our islands with hazardous waste.

For these reasons, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawai'i Chapter, respectfully requests that your committee pass HB 2121.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this important public health and environmental measure.

Sincerely,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawai'i Chapter

LATE

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 11:20:00 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Young	CARES	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Support.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 9:38:50 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emma Waters	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Writing in strong support of this important bill. Mahalo,

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 10:18:09 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Stensrud	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB 2121. Disposable e-cigarettes are single-use plastic items that negatively impact our environment. They leach heavy metals, toxic chemicals and plastics into our fragile environment, create wild fire hazards in our islands and fires in our solid waste facilities.

There is no way to properly dispose of these items in our state and by ending their sale we protect our aquifer, reduce microplastics, and protect against wildfires. Please support HB 2121

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 10:21:35 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle K.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I am writing to show **STRONG SUPPORT** of passing this bill not only to help reduce electronic smoking device waste, but also will help decrease the number of users who smoke. Please think about the benefits to both kids and the environment in the future when this bill becomes law. A cleaner Hawaii means less pollution needed to be clean up and more time for recreation. Thank you for your kind consideration!

Sincerely,
Michelle

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 11:08:07 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Murakami Akatsuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB 2121, HD 1 passage this legislative session. Disposable electronic smoking devices not only impact one's health but is an environmental hazard in our landfills and during the collection of trash by our trash collection drivers in our neighborhoods.

Thank you for the opportunity to strongly support HB 2121, HD 1 passage.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 12:18:59 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jay Ihara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jay Ihara, and I strongly support HB2121 HD1,. In 2023, Americans discarded 5.7 disposable e-cigarettes every second, adding up to nearly 500,000 per day, resulting in 150 million per year. The waste generated by disposable e-cigarettes is raising concerns among researchers, who are noting potential impacts on water quality and aquatic life due to the presence of plastics, metals, batteries, and nicotine. Disposable e-cigarettes contain non-biodegradable plastics and lithium-ion batteries, which can leach harmful chemicals and pose fire hazards. Ending the sale of disposable e-cigarettes will help prevent hazardous substances from contaminating the environment.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 12:38:25 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maddalynn Seseapasara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, co-chairs, and members of the committee. My name is Maddalynn Seseapasara, and I am in full support and hope you will too.

Disposable e-cigarettes are hazardous to the health of our people and our environment. These devices contain hazardous plastics, toxic chemicals, and lithium-ion batteries that leach into the environment. They also contain higher nicotine concentrations than previous generations of e-cigarettes, leading to high addiction rates amongst users. Please pass this bill to help create a safer Hawai'i for us all.

Mahalo,

Maddalynn Seseapasara

February 18, 2026

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and House Health Committee members.

I am writing in strong support of HB2121, HD1 “Relating to Waste Management.”

Disposable e-cigarettes have quickly become one of the most popular illegal nicotine devices used by our keiki and young people. In addition to serving as a way to hook our children at early ages on nicotine (which can also lead to increasing their vulnerability to other potentially deadly addictions, and to leading health risks such as cardiovascular disease, Hawaii’s leading cause of death and disability), as outlined in section 1 of the bill, these devices contain a plethora of chemicals and dangerous metals. They are deemed “hazardous waste” by the Hawaii Department of Health, and as such should be disposed of only in manners dictated by the DOH Hazardous Waste Division. They should not be disposed of in household waste or carelessly discarded in ways that could harm Hawaii’s fragile environment or aquifers.

Unfortunately, many are being discarded in our landfills and/or public spaces. Many, if not most of the disposable e-cigarette products being sold are not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration as safe for sale or consumption and are therefore on the market illegally. Because of recent cuts to the FDA’s Tobacco Control and Prevention Program by the current administration, the need to regulate those products falls is falling on state and local legislators to protect their constituents and environments.

I urge you to support HB 2121, HD1 to help reign in the illegal sale and use of those products and to support the Hawaii Attorney General’s office in enforcing against their illegal sale to minors.

Mahalo for your attention to this important bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Weisman
Kailua, HI

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 2:37:07 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cecilia Sakata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Disposable e-cigarettes pose serious risks to both public health and our environment. These products contain harmful plastics, toxic chemicals, and lithium-ion batteries that can leach into soil and water. Their high nicotine concentrations also exceed those of earlier generations of e-cigarettes, contributing to increased addiction—especially among young people.

Schools across Hawai‘i report accumulating large numbers of confiscated disposable e-cigarettes. Because these devices contain lithium-ion batteries, they cannot be thrown in regular trash without creating fire hazards in dumpsters and landfills. Without proper disposal options, schools are forced to stockpile these devices in offices, classrooms, and storage rooms—creating **additional fire hazards on campus** due to the instability of lithium-ion batteries.

The plastics, nicotine residue, and battery components make disposable e-cigarettes comparable to hazardous electronic waste, which requires specialized recycling and disposal processes.

Please pass this bill to help ensure a safer, healthier Hawai‘i for all of us.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 2:39:30 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of. Thank you.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 2:42:34 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Valerie Smalley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Vice Chair,

As a mom, grandmother and tobacco treatment specialist I strongly support HB2121 HD1. This is an issue that I believe we can all agree on. Please continue to pass this on and support it

Disposable e-cigarettes create a dual crisis of severe environmental pollution and public health risks. Approximately 5 disposable vapes are thrown away every second in the U.S., totaling over 150 million annually.

These single-use devices, often used by youth, contain lithium-ion batteries, toxic heavy metals (like lead and nickel), and nicotine, which leach into ecosystems.

Mahalo Valerie Smalley

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 2:54:34 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donita Garcia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- In 2023, Americans discarded 5.7 million e-cigarettes every second, nearly 500,000 per day.
- The debris created by disposable e-cigarettes is raising concerns for researchers, noting potential impacts to the water quality and aquatic life due to plastic, metals, batteries, and nicotine.
- Disposable e-cigarettes have higher nicotine concentrations than previous generations of e-cigarettes.
- Disposable e-cigarettes contain non-biodegradable plastic and lithium-ion batteries that leach chemicals and create fire hazards.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 2:55:13 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Austin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this important bill, both for the health of our residents and to lesson pollution of our environment!

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 3:42:33 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
AUBREY HAWK	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of HB2121. We should be thinking of ways to REDUCE litter and landfill space, not to make it easier for vapers to make an impulse buy, give vapes away to others (potentially underage), or pollute the environment and their own bodies.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 3:51:36 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Disposable e-cigarettes are hazardous to the health of our people and our environment. These devices contain dangerous plastics, toxic chemicals and lithium-ion batteries that leach into our environment. They also contain higher nicotine concentrations than previous generations of e-cigarettes, leading to high addiction rates amongst users. Please pass this bill to help create a safer Hawai'i for us all.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 4:36:29 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katie Folio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair and Committee Members,

I submit this testimony in strong support of HB2121 HD1.

Passage of this bill will help protect both the environment and the health of Hawai'i's people. We have already seen the lasting impact of tobacco product waste, as cigarette butts remain the most common form of plastic pollution worldwide. We should not repeat this mistake with electronic smoking devices, which introduce additional plastic, batteries, and hazardous components into our waste stream.

Hawai'i's unique ecosystems are especially vulnerable. We have the opportunity to act now, before this problem escalates further, and prevent avoidable environmental harm.

Mahalo for your consideration of this important legislation.

Katie Folio
Kula, Maui resident

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 5:13:10 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John A. H. Tomoso	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

RE: HB2121 HD1

Aloha,

Disposable e-cigarettes are hazardous to the health of our people and our environment. These devices contain dangerous plastics, toxic chemicals and lithium-ion batteries that leach into our environment. They also contain higher nicotine concentrations than previous generations of e-cigarettes, leading to high addiction rates amongst users. Please pass this Bil, which is good environmental and health policy, to help create a safer Hawai'i for us all.

Mahalo,

John A H Tomoso+, MSW, ACSW

51 Ku'ula St., Kahului, HI 96732-2906

john.a.h.tomoso@gmail.com

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 6:45:11 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shelly Ogata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the Committee on Health:

As a long time public health advocate, I am in strong support of HB2121 to prohibit the sale of any disposable electronic smoking devices in our State. Similar to disposable plastic straws, our islands and our ocean are littered with unnecessary plastic and lithium-ion batteries that leach chemicals and create fire hazards. This creates an incredible adverse impact on our water quality and aquatic life.

Disposable e-cigarettes create a dual crisis of severe environmental pollution and public health risks. Approximately 5 disposable vapes are thrown away every second in the U.S., totaling over 150 million annually. These single-use devices, often used by youth, contain lithium-ion batteries, toxic heavy metals (like lead and nickel), and nicotine, which leach into ecosystems. They are difficult to recycle, frequently thrown in regular trash, and cause fires in waste facilities.

Please protect our keiki and our ‘āina by supporting Bill 2121 and ensure the health of our people and overall ecosystem for generations to come. After all, planetary health is public health.

Mahalo for your time and attention to this important issue.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 7:04:07 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Venkataraman Balaraman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. It will support the dual purpose of protecting personal health and the environmental health of our community.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 7:43:32 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Ann K Poire	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Members of the House Committee on Health,

Disposable e-cigarettes are hazardous to the health of our people and our environment. These devices contain dangerous plastics, toxic chemicals and lithium-ion batteries that leach into our environment. They also contain higher nicotine concentrations than previous generations of e-cigarettes, leading to high addiction rates amongst users. Please pass this bill to help create a safer Hawai'i for us all.

Mahalo for your time,

Elizabeth Poire
Kailua Kona, Hawaii

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 8:18:03 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair Takayama and Vice-Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy,

I am writing to voice my full support for HB2121, which is one necessary step to protect Hawaii's keiki from the public health plague of electronic smoking devices. As a teacher of teenagers, I have heard too many stories of parents' distress at the explicit marketing tactics used by tobacco companies to hook kids on these devices. Prohibiting these devices will ensure they stay out of the reach of many kids while simultaneously protecting our waste disposal infrastructure. I urge the Committee to advance this necessary bill.

With aloha,

Dave Ball

Waiālae-Kahala

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 9:13:21 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Galloway	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please protect our environment and give smokers better choices.

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 9:48:38 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bob Grossmann, PhD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii does not undertake lung transplants, so youth that damage their lungs and require one, even if available in another state, will be a huge financial burden to the healthcare system.

Yet, another reason to support this measure.

HB 2121

Ending the sale of disposable e-cigarettes

I am writing as a retired Kauai pediatrician and concerned citizen to strongly support HB 2121 to end the sale of disposable e-cigarettes, or “vapes.” Disposables are made by design to be indestructible and nonrefillable, despite incredibly strong lithium batteries, and have been marketed especially toward our youth, who are the predominant users. There are very few “safe” waste receptacles, no packaging instructions on how to dispose of them, and studies have shown that users are unaware of how they should be disposed of. The lithium batteries are a fire hazard and have started fires even in waste facilities at significant cost to communities.

The debris has a significant negative impact on our water quality and aquatic life: The plastic, which is nondegradable, breaks down into microplastics, there are heavy metals such as lead, mercury, and nickel entering our ecosystems, and the nicotine concentrations are higher than ever and have unknown consequences on both plants and animals.

To put this into perspective, in 2023 about 500,000 disposable e-cigs were discarded PER DAY in the US. It is impossible for beach cleanups to make a dent in this problem. The effects on our island ecosystems are potentially catastrophic. I urge you to eliminate this scourge from our very special island environment by passing HB 2121.

Respectfully,

Linda Weiner, MD

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 5:20:38 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathryn Braun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a long-time educator in the Hawaii system and want to reduce health risks to our keiki.

Disposable e-cigarettes are hazardous to the health of our people and our environment. These devices contain dangerous plastics, toxic chemicals and lithium-ion batteries that leach into our environment. They also contain higher nicotine concentrations than previous generations of e-cigarettes, leading to high addiction rates amongst users. Please pass this bill to help create a safer Hawai'i for us all.

Aloha, Kathryn Braun, Punchbowl

Date: February 14, 2026

To: The Honorable Gregg Takayama, Chair
The Honorable Sue L. Keohokapu-Loy,, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Health

Re: **Support for HB2121 HD1**, Relating to Waste Management

Hrg: Wed February 18, 2026 at 10:00 am via Videoconference Conference Room 329

Aloha House Committee on Health,

As a parent, community member and healthcare professional I am writing in **strong support of HB2121 HD1**, which prohibits the sale, offer for sale, or distribution for sale of any disposable electronic smoking devices in the State.

Disposable e-cigarettes are hazardous to the health of our people and communities.

These devices contain dangerous plastics, heavy metals, toxic chemicals and lithium-ion batteries that leach into our environment raising concerns about their impact on water quality and aquatic life.

Current generation disposable cigarettes contain significantly higher nicotine concentrations than previous generations, leading to high addiction rates amongst users, including our children and teens.

I **strongly support HB2121 HD1**, respectfully ask you to pass it out of committee to help create a safer Hawai'i for all of us.

Many thanks for your consideration,

Forrest Batz, PharmD
Keaau, HI

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 9:08:07 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bryan Mih	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a parent, pediatrician, and medical director of the Kapi’olani Smokefree Families Program, I strongly support this bill, which ends the sale of disposable e-cigarettes.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has strongly supported elimination of disposable e-cigarettes. These products have been shown to be disproportionately used by young people, and make it easier to start using tobacco and nicotine. They also contain higher nicotine concentrations than previous generations of e-cigarettes, leading to high addiction rates amongst users. In addition, disposable e-cigarettes are made of plastics and contain toxic chemicals and lithium-ion batteries that leach into our environment.

Hawaii has one of the highest rates of middle schoolers (16%) and high schoolers (26%) currently using e-cigarettes—it is twice the national average. Nicotine is a highly addictive drug that impacts the adolescent brain, reducing impulse control and affecting mood. Those who use e-cigarettes are four times more likely to smoke regular cigarettes later on. The e-cigarette industry claims these are cessation devices, but a recent study has shown that even if one adult can quit with these devices, the trade-off is 81 young people who will start the habit in their place. This is completely unacceptable.

Once young people are addicted to nicotine, it is extremely difficult to quit. By eliminating these products from Hawaii, we have the chance to improve the health of many, especially of our keiki.

On behalf of the keiki and young people of Hawaii, I urge you to support this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration and support of this important measure.

Sincerely,

Bryan Mih, MD, MPH, FAAP

Pediatrician

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 12:59:45 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
May Okihiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a pediatrician for over 25 years, I have seen the negative impact of nicotine, including e-cigarettes, on the health and well-being of too many community members, starting from a young age. The negative impact of disposable e-cigarettes is compounded by their toll on our 'āina and kai. As such - I STRONGLY support HB2121HD.

Moira Flannery
2/15/2026
Bill: HB2121
Committee: HLT
Position: Support

Hello Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Moira Flannery and I am a student in the Bachelors Social Work program at UH Manoa, as well as a community member in Hawai'i. I am writing in support of HB2121. This bill is an important step in reducing the environmental pollution that these disposable vape and nicotine products are contributing to the local environment and landfills. Not only are these vapes an environmental threat, but they are also a threat towards the people of Hawai'i. Children have been at risk of exposure to these disposable vapes. With the different colors and flavors offered, they are a target to younger audiences.

Disposable vapes are increasingly being found in public spaces. Over time they are breaking down into micro plastics which end up contaminating our soil and water with these toxic chemicals. Hawai'i has reported some of the highest vaping rates among middle and high schoolers in the nation, which is contributing to the high volume of waste.

Prohibiting the sale of disposable electronic smoking devices would help to reduce waste, creating a healthier environment over time. It would also work towards preventing kids from getting access to these devices. By removing these flavored nicotine products that target youth, the next generations would see a reduced rate of addiction and health disparities caused by these products. This bill prioritizes the health of Hawai'i's children, communities, and environment, and for these reasons I fully support the passing of HB2121.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Moira Flannery

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 3:59:38 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please accept this as testimony in strong support of SB2175. These cigarettes are hazardous to health and the environment. I should know. As someone with lung issues, breathing gets hard if someone smoking passes me. Health should be a right to have. Smoking should not. In addition, the disposal of lithium iron batteries is a danger to the environment.

Please move this bill forward, for the kupuna, the keiki, the and environment.

Lynne Matusow

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 7:26:41 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
An Vo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee on Health.

My name is An and I'm a college public health student on O'ahu. I'm testifying in strong support of HB2121 HD1 to end the sale of disposable vapes.

I grew up on O'ahu and attended public schools from preschool to high school. When my dad smoked around the house when I was young, I breathed his secondhand smoke and developed asthma. If I didn't breathe my inhaler when I had trouble breathing every night, I would've died.

When I walk outside, I see litter and vapes. Animals eat vapes which are littered in the ocean, making sea critters die. Our food contains microplastics and heavy metals from the lithium batteries in vapes as a result of bioaccumulation.

Our youth and adults are currently letting Big Tobacco shape our health and our future. Lawmakers have a responsibility to protect public health and environmental health by banning tobacco and vapes. Public health means making O'ahu the best place to live, learn, work, grow, and play. I hope future keiki and kupuna will not have to deal with tobacco, breathing difficulties caused by tobacco, or lose loved ones to tobacco.

I urge you to support HB2121 HD1 to end the sale of disposable vapes. Mahalo for caring about Hawai'i's keiki and kupuna.

Mahalo nui loa,
An
Honolulu, HI

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 5:46:52 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeannine Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for your support of this important bill.

LATE

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 12:03:32 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wayne	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for supporting this important measure!

LATE

HB-2121-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 12:24:23 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/18/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gregory Misakian	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB2121 HD1.

Gregory Misakian