

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARK

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

Before the House Committee on
CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

Thursday, February 19, 2026
2:05 PM

State Capitol, VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, Conference Room 329

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 644, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

House Bill 644, House Draft 1 proposes to prohibit the use, sale, and distribution of disposable or single-use plastic food ware and refillable, reusable, disposable, or single-use food ware containing perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) by businesses beginning on 1/1/2028. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent of this bill and offers the following comments.**

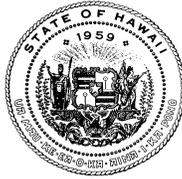
The Department recognizes the deleterious impacts of plastic debris on wildlife and their habitats as a primary natural resource issue throughout the State of Hawai'i. Plastic in the environment degrades both land and ocean-based habitat and impacts wildlife (aquatic and terrestrial) through ingestion, entanglement, smothering, and transport of invasive species. In addition, each step involved in the manufacturing, distribution, and ultimate disposal of single-use plastic products (e.g., bottles and containers) produces greenhouse gas emissions and will increase the current impacts of climate change on our aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. This measure would help reduce the plastic debris load entering Hawai'i's environment and contribute to the improved health of our wildlife and their habitats.

As this measure underscores, PFAS pose a significant threat to human health. PFAS have also been detected in our environment. PFAS in water and soil can lead to uptake in plants and animals. PFAS have been found in sea turtles, whales, dolphins, and Hawaiian monk seals around the state. Seafood consumption has been identified as one of the major contributors

of PFAS to the human diet. Recent studies have found PFAS in various samples of the U.S. seafood supply. While more research is needed to understand the full impact and effect of PFAS on the environment and its connection to human health, this measure would help to reduce the negative impacts and effects.

The Department recognizes that Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Health (DOH) and defers to DOH regarding implementation of this proposed program.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



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

Testimony COMMENTING on HB0644 HD1
RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

REPRESENTATIVE SCOT Z. MATAYOSHI, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE

Hearing Date, Time, and Room Number: 02/19/2026, 02:05 pm, CR329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** Undetermined. This measure may impact the priorities identified in the
2 Governor's Executive Budget Request for the Department of Health's (Department's)
3 appropriations and personnel priorities.

4 **Department Position:** The Department offers comments.

5 **Department Testimony:** The Environmental Health Services Division, Food Safety Branch
6 (EHSD-FSB) provides the following testimony on behalf of the Department.

7 This measure proposes to prohibit businesses where food or beverages are packaged
8 and sold on the business' premises for individual consumption from using, selling, or
9 distributing disposable or single-use plastic food ware, beverage cups, lids, or other food
10 containers. The new statute would also prohibit such businesses from using, selling, or
11 distributing reusable, refillable, disposable or single-use food ware, beverages cups, lids, or
12 other food containers that contain regulated perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances
13 (PFAS).

14 The Department supports measures that protect public health and the environment by
15 minimizing PFAS exposure pathways and reducing waste from single use plastics. However, as
16 provided in testimony on the original version of HB644, the Department recommends waiting

1 until the packaging needs assessment required by Act 103, SLH 2025 is complete before
2 implementing new prohibitions that may increase costs to consumers and businesses such as
3 retail food establishments. The Department is required to submit the completed needs
4 assessment to the legislature by December 31, 2027.

5 Act 103, SLH 2025 requires the Department to conduct a statewide needs assessment
6 and establish an advisory council with relevant stakeholders to determine what would be
7 needed to transition to a more circular system with less waste generation and more reuse, and
8 the necessary infrastructure to sort and locally process recyclable materials through an
9 extended producer responsibility program for packaging materials. This includes assessing
10 single-use product types listed in this measure's prohibition. As part of the assessment, the
11 Department plans to investigate what types of compostable packaging are currently in the
12 waste stream and evaluate potential contaminants of concern, including PFAS. Therefore, we
13 recommend using the results of the needs assessment to inform future prohibitions of
14 disposable or single-use plastic food ware, beverage cups, lids, or other food containers.

15 Implementing this measure, particularly the prohibition for PFAS containing food ware,
16 has uncertain costs. Laboratory testing and development of standards for sampling and testing
17 will require additional resources.

18 Should this measure be passed, the Department respectfully offers amendments to
19 prevent unnecessary or conflicting language with existing enforcement authorities in Chapter
20 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

21 **Offered Amendments:** The Department respectfully offers that the redundant enforcement
22 authority provided on page 6, lines 17-20, and page 7, lines 1-10, be deleted from this measure.

23 ~~———— (d) ——— Enforcement and administration of this section shall be under the jurisdiction of~~
24 ~~the department of health. Any food vendor or business violating any provision of this section or~~
25 ~~any rule adopted pursuant to this section shall:~~

1 ~~(1) Be ordered to discontinue the distribution or sale of items prohibited by~~
2 ~~this section and~~

3 ~~(2) If continuing the distribution despite the order, be subject to a fine of no~~
4 ~~less than \$100 nor more than \$1,000 for each day of violation.~~

5 ~~The director of health may institute a civil action in any court of competent jurisdiction for~~
6 ~~injunctive relief to correct or abate violations of this section or any rule adopted pursuant to~~
7 ~~this section, collect administrative penalties, or obtain other relief.~~

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

**Testimony to the House Committee on Consumer Protection
Representative Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair
Representative Tina Nakada Grandinetti, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, February 18, 2026, at 2:00PM
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference**

RE: HB644 HD1 Relating to Single-Use Plastics

Aloha e Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and Members of the Committee:

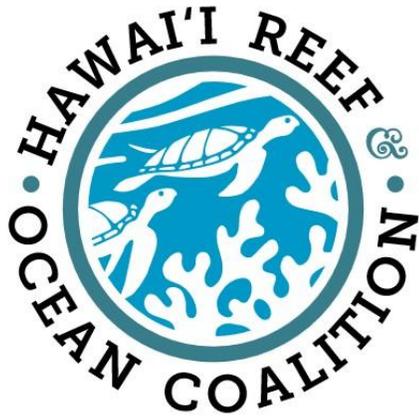
My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber offers comments on House Bill 644 House Draft 1 (HB644 HD1), which prohibits the use, sale, and distribution of disposable or single-use plastic food ware and refillable, reusable, disposable, or single-use food ware containing perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances by businesses beginning on January 1, 2028.

The Chamber appreciates the intent of this measure and shares the goal of reducing waste and harmful materials in Hawai'i's environment. However, we believe the most effective and durable solution will require a unified statewide framework developed in coordination with the Counties, waste management agencies, impacted businesses, consumers, and environmental stakeholders.

Currently, each County maintains different rules regarding foodware and serviceware, requiring businesses operating across multiple counties to navigate varying standards that increase compliance complexity and cost. As drafted, HB644 HD1 would add statewide mandates on top of existing county ordinances, potentially creating overlapping or conflicting requirements. Although reuse and compostable pilot programs are emerging in certain sectors, statewide infrastructure remains uneven. No county currently has fully operational composting capacity at scale, nor is there consistent collection and processing infrastructure across all islands. Without adequate infrastructure, businesses—particularly small and locally owned operators with limited sourcing flexibility—may have few lawful options for compliant foodware. Additional coordination is necessary to align any statewide standard with processing capacity, supply chain realities, and reasonable transition timelines. Infrastructure readiness, transition support, and regulatory clarity will be essential for successful implementation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.



To: The Honorable Representative Scot Matayoshi, Chair, the Honorable Tina Grandinetti, Vice Chair, and Members of the Consumer Protection and Commerce Committee.

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

Re: **Hearing HB644 HD1 RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS**

Hearing: Thursday February 19, 2026 2:05 p.m.

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and Members of the Consumer Protection and Commerce Committee!

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 Climate Protectors Hawai'i seeks to educate and engage the local community in climate change action, to help Hawai'i show the world the way back to a safe and stable climate.

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i **STRONGLY SUPPORT** HB644 HD1!

Hawai'i is uniquely and very negatively impacted by the explosive growth of waste globally and locally from single-use plastic cups, lids, and food containers. This waste fouls our ocean and beaches and kills marine and other wildlife, especially as it breaks down into microplastics. Ocean plastic waste collects, concentrates, and conveys pathogens, bacteria, viruses, toxic algae, persistent organic pollutants, and heavy metals into our food chain and causes human infections and harm to coral. A study of 159 reefs in the Asia-Pacific has shown a 4 to 89 percent increase in coral disease likelihood when in contact with plastic (Lamb. et al., [Science](#) January 2018). Plastic pollution is very expensive to remove and detrimental to the future of Hawaii's economy and environment.

Many plastic food ware items also contain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), "forever chemicals" that are highly toxic and persistent and are sometimes used in food packaging to make it waterproof and greaseproof. PFAS can leach into food, are water soluble, and can contaminate groundwater and the environment. PFAS have been linked to higher cancer risk, including kidney and testicular cancer, weaker immune response, lower birth weight, hormone disruption, liver and kidney toxicity, and reproductive and developmental toxicity. The United States Food and Drug Administration has ended the sales of grease-proofing materials containing PFAS sold by manufacturers for use in food contact packaging, a positive step forward towards reevaluating chemicals authorized for use with, and in food, and the protection of consumers from potentially harmful food-contact chemicals. California, New York, Washington, Vermont, Connecticut, Colorado, and Minnesota have already passed laws restricting the use of PFAS in food packaging.

Plastic is usually made from fossil fuels; its production is contributing an ever-increasing amount to climate heating that endangers coral reefs, threatens our shorelines with sea level rise, and is leading to violent storms and wildfires. **Action is needed to shift away from single-use disposable plastic to a more circular system with more reuse and refilling of foodware and beverage service items and less use of items containing PFAS.**

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i support the bill's exemptions for reusable, refillable containers that don't contain PFAS, State and county-declared emergencies, and not for compostable plastics.

Beginning on January 1, 2028, the bill would prohibit the use, sale, and distribution of disposable or single-use plastic food ware and refillable, reusable, disposable, or single-use food ware containing PFAS. This prohibition would apply to businesses where food or beverages that are packaged and sold on the business' premises for individual consumption. This delay in implementation until 2028 provides a reasonable time to ease the transition away from single-use plastic cups, lids, and food containers. The bill would not supersede more stringent county ordinances.

Please pass this bill to protect public health and the environment!

Mahalo!

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



Mike Palmer, Chair – Ho'okipa Partners **Andy Huang, Past Chairman** – L&L Hawaiian Barbecue
Tambara Garrick, Treasurer – Hawaii Farm Project **Victor Lim, Government Relations Lead** – McDonald's
Address: 2909 Wai'alaie Avenue #22, Honolulu, HI 96826

2025 Board of Directors

Mike Palmer
Andy Huang
Tambara Garrick
Victor Lim
Jesse Aguinaldo
Kia Agustin
Matthew Asato
Javier Barberi
Alessandro Bolla
Timothy Ho
Tim Januszewski
Tom Jones
Jay Kaneshiro
Ryan Ko
Felix Koepenka
Ave Kwok
Keith Mallini
Greg Maples
Don Murphy
Edwin Ohta
Tyler Roukema
Alison Tanaka
Katy Tanaka
Ryan Tanaka
Tina Wang
Nicolas Ware
Anthony Wong
Nicolas Wong

Allied Members

Ronna Bahl
James Idemoto
Raymond Orozco
Bryan Pearl
Randy Sagon

David Yoshioka
Julie Yunker

Advisory Board

Jerry Agrusa
Jamie Brown
Richard Rand
Richard Turbin

Staff

Sheryl Matsuoka
President & CEO

Holly Kessler
Vice President

Date: February 18, 2026
To: Rep. Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair
Rep. Tina Nakada Grandinetti, Vice Chair
Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
From: Victor Lim, Legislative Lead
Subject: HB 644, HD1 Relating to "Single-Use Plastics"

The Hawaii Restaurant Association representing over 4,000 Eating and Drinking Place locations in Hawaii would like to offer the following comments for you.

1. Oahu and Maui have already implemented similar but not identical bills in their respected counties. The primary difference is that Maui doesn't regulate lids.
2. Big Island has also recently passed their version of banning of banning plastics food ware.
3. The cost difference of the fiber and PLA (plant-based resin) is about 2 to 3 times more than the products they replace. This resulted in higher prices for businesses and ultimately higher prices for the consumers.
4. The alternate products are usable but the heat tolerance vs plastics is much lower. Many businesses have switched to reusable plastic containers that are even more expensive, leading to even higher costs for both businesses and consumers. . We hope that these are being reused instead of going into the trash.
5. Contrary to popular belief, supply chain is still erratic due to the many municipalities mandating changes around the world and occasional hiccups in supply still do happen.
6. One of the challenges facing the industry is that there are minor differences in each county.

Thank you for giving us this opportunity to share our concerns.



NATIONAL MARINE TEAM

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

February 19, 2026 2:05PM Via Videoconference

In SUPPORT of HB 644: Relating to Single Use Plastics and PFAS

Aloha Chair Matayoshi , Vice Chair Grandinetti, and members of the committee,

On behalf of our 3.8 million members and supporters nationally, the Sierra Club's National Marine Team **strongly supports HB 644**, which would prohibit the use of plastic and non-nature biodegradable bioplastic foodware and cups, unless there is a regional commercial composting facility that can process the material, and prohibits the intentional addition of PFAS to all take out food ware. This bill builds on Act 152 which regulates PFAS in the most common types of food packaging containing PFAS, and specifically identifies wraps and liners, plates, food boats, and pizza boxes as types of food packaging that cannot contain PFAS in Hawai'i. However, additional types of food packaging can contain PFAS, including items like clamshell containers and molded fiber bowls. While great successes, both Act 152 and the FDA's voluntary phase out of PFAS containing food contacting substances with manufacturers in 2024 are incomplete. At least 11 states have a comprehensive ban on intentionally added PFAS in to go food ware, including California, New York, and Minnesota.

This bill is important to the health of Hawai'i's residents, as well as addresses the continued burden and costs of our overburdened landfill. The typical person's number one source of PFAS exposure is through foodware and dietary exposure. Minimizing our exposure to PFAS through foodware would go far to significantly reduce the health risks and effects and associated costs.

Plastics and non-nature biodegradable bioplastics remain one of the most littered and pernicious items in our environment, breaking down into microplastics that enter the food chain and harm our ecosystems. The truth about bioplastics is that they can include toxic additives to increase their performance, and some bioplastics like PLA are only compostable in industrial facilities. They are sold as a sustainable solution but they can take hundreds of years to decompose, effectively behaving like traditional plastic in the environment. Furthermore, there is no opportunity to recycle PLAs like traditional plastics, so their best case scenario is to end up in the landfill or incinerated, neither of which is ideal for Hawai'i's already challenging *opala*

problem. Worse, some people may litter these plastics believing they will decompose in the environment.

While Hawai'i has been a proud leader in phasing out single use plastics, in particular at the county level, many of the strongest single use plastic bans around the country also include non-nature biodegradable bioplastics like PLAs, which Hawai'i's county bans do not. But we are more impacted by plastic litter than virtually anywhere else in the country, as we are surrounded by 360 degrees of stunning ocean and delicate marine ecosystems and species. Furthermore, our state's economy depends greatly on the continued health of our oceans and marine resources. As a beautiful island culture, we must consider everything we put into the environment.

This bill continues to allow nature biodegradable foodware and cups, including the widely used paper to go boxes and cups, nature biodegradable plastics, natural rubber, bamboo, sugarcane, coconut husk, cassava, naturally occurring polymers such as proteins or starches or other biomass, fully recyclable aluminum and glass, or reusable containers. Businesses will be able to continue using their current distributors that already offer food ware and cups that would be compliant with this bill and existing similar laws.

Furthermore, HB 644 can help reduce the pressure on West O'ahu, which continues to unfairly bear the brunt of the Waimanalo Gulch landfill. Home and nature compostable food ware will reduce the volume entering the landfill, and fewer products with PFAS will reduce PFAS leakage into the *lepo*.

With this bill, Hawai'i has the opportunity to significantly make a difference in protecting our most valuable natural resources for future generations. Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide testimony in **support of HB 644**. I am available to answer any questions you may have or work with you on this bill.

Mahalo,
Leilei Joy Shih-Casado, Ph.D.
Chair, National Marine Team, The Sierra Club
joyshih@hawaii.edu

HB-644-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 10:04:18 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/19/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Catarina Zaragoza	The Locavore Store	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

As a representative of The Locavore Store, in Hilo, I am pleased to provide testimony in support of HB644. This bill aims to protect our communities and families from both the harmful health effects linked to PFAS, as well as the increasingly burdensome and toxic environmental effects these single-use plastics create in our landfills.

It is our job to take care of this place, this 'āina, our home, and eliminating single-use plastics is an important step towards doing so. This ban will help foster the development of much-needed foodware alternatives, while encouraging businesses and individuals to consider other ways of enjoying our favorite take-out and bentos. There are already so many good reusable and compostable options out there, and those options will continue to grow with measures like HB644.

As a business owner, I know changes to supplies can be challenging and costly, but these changes make us, our communities, and our future generations safer and healthier; those are challenges worth tackling.

Me ka mahalo nui,

Catarina Zaragoza

Co-Owner & Curator

The Locavore Store, Hilo

February 18th 2026

SUPPORT FOR: HB 644 HD1

Hearing Date: February 19th, 2026; 2:05 PM

Committee: CPC

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and Committee Members,

My name is **Sydney Millerd**, Storytelling Coordinator for **Sustainable Coastlines Hawai'i**, and we **strongly support HB644 HD1** to prohibit the use, sale, and distribution of disposable or single-use plastic foodware and refillable, disposable, or single-use foodware containing perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances by businesses.

As a nonprofit with a **mission to inspire communities to care for coastlines**, we witness firsthand the impacts of single-use plastics and disposable foodware on our beaches and nearshore environments. Policies that reduce unnecessary plastic consumption and prevent harmful materials from entering our waste stream, in the first place, are essential to protecting Hawai'i's unique ecosystems and advancing our state's sustainability goals.

We appreciate the intent of this measure to address disposable and single-use foodware. However, we respectfully suggest **amending** the provision that excludes "reusable, refillable containers" from being considered single-use plastics. While these products are technically designed for reuse, in practice, many are frequently treated as disposable and discarded after one use, ultimately contributing to the same waste challenges this bill seeks to address.

We have seen many establishments find loopholes in similar language with the application of the City & County of Honolulu's Ordinance 19-30 (formerly Bill 40), which led to giving out "handleless" or thicker plastic bags and containers that could technically be reused, but are not done so in practice. Thus, we advise that the language be significantly amended to address the loopholes that have arisen and can be learned from. We **recommend** clarifying the language to ensure that exemptions apply only to containers that are part of a verified reuse or refill system, such as structured take-back, deposit, or commercial reuse programs that ensure multiple cycles of use. This would help prevent unintended loopholes while still encouraging truly reusable solutions.

Mahalo for your leadership and for considering this important measure. We respectfully urge you to pass HB 644 HD1 with thoughtful amendments that strengthen its environmental impact.

With Aloha & Appreciation,



Sydney Millerd
Storytelling Coordinator, Sustainable Coastlines Hawai'i



February 18, 2026

Representative Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair
Representative Tina Nakada Grandinetti, Vice Chair
Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Support for HB644 H.D. 1 as Amended: A Bill Relating to Single-Use Plastics

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Nakada Grandinetti, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of [Upstream](#) in **support of HB644 H.D. 1 as amended**. Upstream is a US-based non-profit and leading change agency for the reuse movement across the US and Canada. We advocate for innovative solutions to help people, communities and businesses shift from single-use foodware and packaging to reusables.

HB644 H.D. 1 presents a critical opportunity for the State of Hawai'i to catalyze waste reduction solutions, especially by prioritizing reuse - the most effective strategy at the top of Hawai'i's waste hierarchy. **Reusable packaging and foodware have proven environmental, social, and economic benefits over single-use alternatives.** For businesses, especially restaurants and small food establishments, the financial case is clear. **Reusable foodware for customers who dine on-site [save businesses money 100% of the time](#)**, with average small business savings between \$3,000 and \$22,000 per year.

Maintaining the exemption for reusable containers in Chapter 321(b) is essential to reducing waste statewide. **Reusable foodware and packaging prevents waste at the source and outperforms single-use systems across nearly every environmental metric**, including reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, water use,

resource extraction, plastic pollution, and energy consumption. Extending the implementation date to January 1, 2028 also allows businesses adequate time to transition to reusables.

We deeply appreciate the amendment to remove the exemption for compostables from Chapter 321(b). [Compostables and bioplastics](#) frequently [contain harmful chemicals such as PFAS](#), and require more energy, water, toxic chemicals, and greenhouse gases to produce and manage than even single-use plastics. Upholding this amendment ensures that Hawai'i's policy framework remains focused on waste prevention rather than material substitution.

Upstream also supports clarifying language in Chapter 321 to explicitly state that reusable, refillable containers must not contain PFAS. While most durable reusable plastic containers are manufactured using polypropylene (PP) resin - which does not contain PFAS - codifying this requirement safeguards public health and builds trust in reuse systems.

We strongly urge you to pass HB644 H.D. 1 as amended. This bill could position Hawai'i as a national leader in reuse and waste reduction policy, and can help local businesses and communities transition to a more resilient circular economy.

Please feel welcome to contact us at sydney@upstreamsolutions.org or kara@upstreamsolutions.org.

Mahalo for all you do,

Sydney Harris, Upstream Policy Director
Kara Stepanik, Upstream Policy Intern



February 17, 2026

To: The Honorable Scot Matayoshi, Chair
Members, House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

From: Lindsay Stovall
Director, State and Regulatory Affairs

Re: HB 644 HD1– OPPOSE

The American Chemistry Council (ACC) respectfully opposes HB 644 HD1, which would prohibit businesses that package and sell food or beverages on their premises from using, selling or distributing single-use plastic foodservice ware.

ACC membership includes the leading suppliers and manufacturers of plastics foodservice packaging products. ACC and its members support efforts to reduce litter and marine debris through performance-based solutions and outcomes.

ACC believes there is an opportunity to craft meaningful and impactful packaging and foodservice ware policy that considers the necessary role of packaging, including performance needs and assesses a multitude of attributes (e.g. recyclability, waste prevention, material efficiency, greenhouse gas emissions, collection and processing infrastructure, end markets, etc.) of all packaging materials. Combined, these considerations will help arrive at a policy solution that makes sense environmentally and provides the business community with practical and implementable compliance obligations. Policies that focus on banning a single material, rather than performance and system outcomes, risk unintended consequences such as increased material use, higher emissions, and greater waste.

A practical first step toward creating a more circular system for foodservice ware packaging made from all materials is to first understand the current system. This includes the types and quantities of foodservice ware in the waste stream, current recycling and composting rates, available sorting and processing infrastructure, end markets for collected materials, and the funding necessary to improve recovery rates. Simply banning plastic foodservice ware does not automatically mean those alternatives will be recycled or composted.

To that end, HB 750 was enacted last year, which requires the Department of Health conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to “determine what would be needed to transition to a more circular system with less waste generation, more reuse and the necessary infrastructure to sort and locally process recyclable materials through an extended producer responsibility program for packaging materials and paper products.” As directed by HB 750, the findings of the needs assessment must be submitted to the Legislature by December 31, 2027.

Moving to ban single-use plastic foodservice ware before the Department of Health has completed — or even begun — the needs assessment required by HB 750 is premature and risks undermining the Legislature’s own directive for a coordinated, data-driven approach to improving packaging circularity.

For the above stated reasons, ACC respectfully urges you **to vote NO on HB 644 HD1**. Thank you in advance for considering our views. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at 916-448-2581 or via email at Lindsay_Stovall@americanchemistry.com. You may also contact ACC's Hawaii based representative Ross Yamasaki at 808-531-4551 or via email at ryamasaki@808cch.com.



TESTIMONY OF DAVE ERDMAN, PRESIDENT & CEO
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII
FEBRUARY 18, 2026
COMMENTS ONLY ON HB 644 HD 1 - RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dave Erdman, Interim President and CEO of Retail Merchants of Hawai'i (RMH). RMH represents retailers, shopping centers, dining establishments operating within retail environments, and allied service providers statewide.

RMH offers comments on H.B. 644, H.D. 1, and appreciates the Committee's efforts to address environmental and public health concerns associated with single-use food ware and PFAS while providing additional time for implementation.

Our members share the goal of reducing waste and protecting Hawai'i's natural environment. At the same time, many retail-based food and beverage operators—particularly small businesses and those operating in shopping centers—continue to face elevated operating costs, supply-chain uncertainty, and limited access to consistent recycling, composting, or processing infrastructure, especially on neighbor islands.

RMH aligns with prior testimony from the Hawai'i Restaurant Association and the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i regarding the importance of adequate implementation timelines and cost sensitivity as businesses transition to alternative products. It is important that the necessary recycling and composting systems are in place before businesses are required to comply, so individual retailers and dining operators are not forced to absorb costs or responsibilities that are beyond their control.

As this measure continues through the legislative process, RMH respectfully encourages continued stakeholder engagement, implementation flexibility, and coordination with state and county agencies to ensure environmental objectives are achieved while allowing retailers and dining establishments to manage costs in an industry that operates on thin margins.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Mahalo,
Dave Erdman
Interim President & CEO Retail Merchants of Hawai'i



Testimony to the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
Representative Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair
Representative Tina Nakada Grandinetti, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 2:05 PM
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference

RE: HB644 HD1 Relating to Single-Use Plastics

Aloha e Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Jason Higa, CEO at Zippy's Restaurants. I am writing with **COMMENTS regarding House Bill 644 HD1 (HB644 HD1)**, which prohibits the use, sale, and distribution of single-use or disposable plastic food ware and any food ware containing per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances by businesses starting January 1, 2028, with enforcement by the Hawaii Department of Health and exemptions for reusable containers and emergency situations.

Hawaii's long-term economic competitiveness depends on a stable and predictable business environment that supports employers, workforce participation, and community well-being. The transition away from single-use plastics presents cost and operational considerations, particularly where infrastructure for sustainable alternatives is not yet fully developed. For many small and locally owned food service and retail businesses, uneven processing capacity and limited supply chain availability increase compliance complexity, strain operating margins, and create uncertainty at a time when businesses continue to navigate workforce shortages and broader economic pressures.

As drafted, HB644 HD1 may increase operating and compliance costs without corresponding statewide infrastructure readiness. Each County currently maintains its own waste management regulations, and businesses operating across multiple counties already navigate varying standards. Establishing new statewide mandates without clear coordination could create overlapping or inconsistent requirements. While compostable and reusable alternatives are emerging in certain sectors, collection and processing systems are not consistently available across all islands, particularly on neighbor islands.

Without adequate infrastructure, transition support, and coordination with County governments, the measure risks shifting system-level gaps onto individual businesses. A coordinated and phased approach that aligns policy requirements with processing capacity, supply chain realities, and reasonable implementation timelines will be critical to achieving environmental goals in a manner that is both practical and economically sustainable for Hawaii's employers.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask to consider my **COMMENTS on House Bill 644 HD1**. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



February 18, 2026

House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
Conference Room 329
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: HB 644 HD1- Relating to single-use plastics

The Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) is North America's leading authority on compostable products and packaging, certifying over 50,000 products from collection bags to food containers. For more than two decades, BPI has given composters and consumers confidence in compostability claims with the backing of science-based standards, while enabling authentically sustainable choices for brands and packagers. BPI champions a systems-wide transition to the circular bioeconomy through rigorous testing, policy advocacy, and industry collaboration, building the infrastructure for "A World Without Organic Waste"—where food scraps and certified compostable packaging become resources. BPI is a non-profit 501(c)(6). To learn more, visit www.bpiworld.org and follow us on LinkedIn.

BPI appreciates the opportunity to comment on the amended version of House Bill 644 (HD1) and we appreciate seeing some of our suggestions applied to the new draft. We thank the Legislature for requiring that reusables and refillables also adhere to PFAS restrictions. It is important that all food-contact products are held to the same requirements.

Unfortunately, BPI is very concerned that all compostable food packaging was completely removed from the bill. We strongly urge the Legislature to focus on eliminating persistent components from all food packaging and include certified compostable products as a viable zero waste solution. As amended, this would replace non-persistent compostable products, with paper and fiber products that likely contain persistent components, such as adhesives, dyes, or coatings.

Compostables need to be left in as a viable option for the waste stream. Without certified compostable products there will be no market for composting. The best use of energy is to get composting programs established. We recommend re-inserting a definition of



compostable and exempting compostables from a single-use plastic ban to be enacted in 2028 without a collection stipulation.

"Compostable" means products that have been certified by an independent third-party organization to meet ASTM standards D6400 and D6868.

This will ensure that all products labeled as compostable are certified by an independent third-party to meet the ASTM D6400 and D6868 standards.

BPI welcomes the opportunity to discuss these topics in more detail. Please reach out with any questions or to schedule a meeting.

Sincerely
Kimby Davis
Policy Associate
Kimberly.Davis@bpiworld.org



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |
Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e:
info@hawaiiifood.com

Executive Officers

Kit Okimoto, Okimoto Corp., *Chair*
Jayson Watts, Mahi Pono, *Vice Chair*
Jill Tamura, Tamura Super Market, *Secretary/Treas.*
Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *President and Executive Director*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, Odom, *Advisor*
Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*
Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Advisor*
Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale, *Immediate Past Chair*

LATE

TO: Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 19, 2026

TIME: 2:05pm

RE: HB644 HD1 Relating to Single Use Plastics

Position: Oppose

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in opposition to this measure. This prohibition would severely disadvantage some local businesses and force others to close.

This measure bans all plastic foodware and serviceware. This includes banning all plant based compostable bioplastics, which are certified compostable and are currently allowed under the County level restrictions on plastics.

For certain foodware and serviceware applications there are few to no alternatives to plastic or compostable plastic available. For other applications the alternatives can be several times more expensive than compostable plastic, which is already more expensive than non-compostable plastic.

For businesses that are able to source alternatives it will be a major cost increase, which they will likely have to pass along to customers by increasing food prices. For those that cannot find alternatives that meet the strict requirements of the bill they may have to close.



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |
Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e:
info@hawaiiifood.com

Executive Officers

Kit Okimoto, Okimoto Corp., *Chair*
Jayson Watts, Mahi Pono, *Vice Chair*
Jill Tamura, Tamura Super Market, *Secretary/Treas.*
Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *President and Executive Director*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, Odom, *Advisor*
Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*
Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Advisor*
Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale, *Immediate Past Chair*

LATE

It's important to remember that this measure only targets local businesses that are preparing food on the premises. Food packaged on the mainland is not impacted. This makes local food more expensive and less competitive with imported food.

As written this measure would not just impact restaurants, but any "business where food or beverages that are packaged and sold on the business' premises for individual consumption." That includes local grocery stores, bakeries, and other food manufacturers.

The measure allows for reusable containers, but this is not a solution since the Department of Health (DOH) does not allow for reusable containers in many situations that would be impacted by this bill. According to DOH regulations, businesses are not allowed to let customers bring their own containers for hot food bars, acai bowls, and salad bars. This is for good reason; current containers being used in these applications are sanitary. Businesses have no way of knowing if a customer's reusable container is clean or not. There are some very promising reuse pilot projects taking place around the state involving certain types of serviceware in certain settings. However, there are still a number of safety concerns and other obstacles to widespread adoption that need to be addressed before these types of containers are mandated for use in all applications.

We believe that finding functional, sustainable solutions to challenges of foodware and serviceware will involve a collaborative approach that relies in input and expertise from each County, waste management agencies, impacted businesses, consumers, and advocacy groups. A blanket ban of basically all foodware and serviceware, including compostable, that local businesses and customers currently rely on is not the right solution. We ask that this measure be held and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.

LATE

HB-644-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 3:33:53 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/19/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zack Bradford	World Centric	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing representing World Centric, a producer of compostable and reusable food service ware and packaging products with a significant presence in Hawai`i. We have been selling our products to small businesses in Hawai`i for many years and provide valuable alternatives to single-use plastics.

For the most part, we at World Centric are very supportive of HB 644 and efforts in general to reduce single-use plastics, even including bioplastics. That said, the bill, as currently written, would ban *all* compostable bioplastics. We are writing to ask for your help in amending HB 644 to allow for a phase-out of bioplastics instead of an outright ban. This could include a delay in implementation of the bill or could include temporary allowances to compostable plastics such as to allow them where small-scale composting, such as in-vessel composting, home composting, or other alternatives are available.

We also wanted to write to express concern with the definition of "reusable" items within the bill. We are fully supportive of efforts to advance reusable options for food service ware; however, it is important that "reusable" be defined clearly as packaging that is part of an existing reusables program with washing infrastructure in place at the point of sale so that items are indeed collected, washed, and re-used. This helps ensure that any "reusable" products don't end up simply being made of thicker plastics, such as mineral-filled plastic, that are sold for takeaway and just end up in landfills or in the environment.

We thank you for your leadership as a members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce and for considering our concerns. Please let us know if we can work together to amend HB 644 to achieve the goals of banning single-use plastics while leaving room for compostable plastics as we transition away from single-use.

Thank you for your time.

Zack Bradford

Government Affairs and Advocacy Manager

1500 Valley House Dr, #210

Rohnert Park, CA 94928

Phone: 707.341.0922

Certified B Corp

www.worldcentric.com



LATE

HB-644-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 9:24:39 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/19/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephen Ueda	Suisan Company Limited	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Stephen Ueda, President and CEO of Suisan Company, Limited in Hilo. I respectfully oppose HB644.

While I support efforts to reduce plastic waste and eliminate PFAS in food packaging, this bill's broad definition of plastic would prohibit not only conventional plastics but also compostable plastics such as PLA that businesses are adopting to comply with recent Hawaii County law. This creates another significant transition for local food businesses and distributors.

HB644 also does not distinguish between different food preparation contexts and may create unintended impacts for retail and prepared food operations.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask that you reconsider this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Stephen Ueda
President and CEO
Suisan Company Limited
Hilo, Hawai'i

LATE

HB-644-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2026 9:03:23 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/19/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Doshi	Biodegradable Products Institute	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Oral testimony to be provided via Zoom during hearing.

HB-644-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 1:16:06 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/19/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Olderr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Single-use plastics are damaging to the environment and they have no place in Hawai'i.

SUPPORT HB644 HD1

House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
HB644 HD 1 Hearing on Feb. 19, 2026 at 2:05 pm
Conference Room 329 and videoconference

My name is John Kawamoto, and I support HB 644 HD1.

This bill will reduce Hawaii's high volume of solid waste and help reduce the plastic debris entering the environment. The plastic debris has a deleterious impact on the ocean environment and the terrestrial environment, posing a threat to the health of wildlife and humans.

PFAS have been detected in the environment, also posing a threat to the health of wildlife and humans.

Compostable plastics are rarely composted at scale in Hawaii, so the bill should be amended to remove this exemption. The bill should also be amended to delay the implementation date to ensure a smooth transition and compliance.

With those amendments, I support the bill.

HB-644-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 1:33:29 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/19/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Trujillo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

aloha from kaua'i,
mahalo for accepting this testimony if favor of HB644
there are numerous issues with the current version but trust that the senate and house versions will reconcile the dates for implementation and clear up any language/definitions that many have mentioned.
this bill has broad community support and aligns with many of our county's desire to reduce plastics in the environment and the waste stream
please ensure that this bill addresses the critical issue of PFAS in our foodware.
thanx again for accepting this testimony in favor of HB644HD1
with respect and aloha , . . . james g trujillo

HB-644-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 3:56:46 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/19/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Ewall	Energy Justice Network	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

PFAS should not be in any products, and this bill is an important step toward eliminating these toxic "forever chemicals" from our eatingware. Please support this bill.

To: Representative Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair
Representative Tina Nakada Grandinetti, Vice Chair
Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

From: Veronica Moore, Individual Citizen

Date: February 18, 2026

RE: House Bill 644 HD1
Measure Title: RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS.
Report Title: Disposable and Single-use Plastic Food Ware; Refillable, Reusable,
Disposable, or Single-use Food Ware Containing PFAS; Prohibition; Solid Waste;
PFAS

To All Concerned,

My name is Veronica Moore and I support House Bill 644 HD1. Thank you for introducing this bill.

Sincerely,

Veronica M. Moore

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB644 HD1, Relating to Single-Use Plastics. This measure takes an important step to reduce single-use plastic food ware, restrict the use of harmful PFAS (“forever chemicals”) in reusable, refillable, disposable, and single-use food ware, and protect Hawaii’s communities, environment, and consumers. The amended bill also appropriately includes exemptions for reusable/refillable containers and emergencies, and provides a January 1, 2028 implementation date to support a smooth transition.

I respectfully urge your support of HB644 HD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.”

Testimony

TO: House Representative Scot Z Matayoshi, Chair
House Representative Tina Nakada Grandinetti, Vice Chair
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

HEARING: Thursday, February 19th, 2026
2:05 PM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 329

FROM: Melanie Ducsak

RE: HB644 HD1 – Relating to Single-Use Plastics

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Melanie Ducsak, and I am a graduate student in social work currently enrolled at UH Mānoa. My testimony is in strong support of HB644 HD1.

In addition to my academic work, I am a frequent freediver. Each time I enter the ocean, I see single-use plastic pollution beneath the surface. It has become something I expect, rather than something rare. Seeing plastic in the ocean, in spaces that should be safe and undisturbed habitats of marine life, is both disheartening and alarming. If this is what I am witnessing underwater, I can only imagine the extent of the environmental impact affecting other parts of our islands that are less visible but equally vulnerable.

Many of my fellow divers and I bring mesh bags with us so we can remove plastic from the ocean and leave it cleaner than we found it. While we are proud to do this, it is concerning that this has become a routine part of entering Hawai'i's waters. Individual cleanup efforts should not be the primary solution to a systemic problem. Preventative policy is essential.

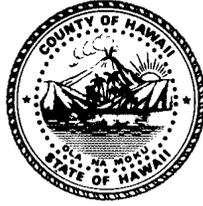
This measure recognizes that single use plastics and chemicals such as PFAS pose risks not only to marine ecosystems, but also human health. Reducing these materials at their source is a proactive step toward protecting both environmental and public health. Policies like this are especially important for protecting vulnerable populations who may be even more susceptible to environmental harms and long term exposure effects.

Hawai'i's environment is inseparable from our identity, culture, and wellbeing. Protecting it requires forward thinking policies that prevent pollution before it reaches shorelines and reefs. HB644 HD1 represents an important step toward that goal and our future health.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to pass HB644 HD1. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Melanie Ducsak

Jennifer Kagiwada
Council Member District 2 South Hilo



Office: (808) 961-8272
jennifer.kagiwada@hawaiicounty.gov

HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 2

25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

DATE: February 18, 2026
TO: House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
FROM: Jennifer Kagiwada, Council Member
Council District 2
SUBJECT: HB644

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti and esteemed Committee Members,

I strongly support HB644. Hawai'i County Council recently passed similar legislation in the form of Bill 83, to prohibit single use plastics and help reduce waste to our landfill. This standardization of legislation will be helpful as multiple counties have now enacted similar laws and by creating a standard across the State it will help vendors source appropriate material in alignment with the requirements and avoid confusion. Additionally, HB644 gives counties the ability to enact ordinances that are more stringent in the prohibition of disposable or single-use plastics food ware. The inclusion of this language is helpful and allows for flexibility that may be necessary in addressing unique situations within respective counties.

For these reasons, I urge your support of HB644.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenn Kagiwada".

Jenn Kagiwada

LATE

HB-644-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2026 10:18:53 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/19/2026 2:05:00 PM

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

Comments:

In strong support of. Thank you.

LATE

HB-644-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2026 12:34:39 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/19/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristina ZaZueta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kakou

i Strongly Support HB644 and urge you too. PFA, PFOAS are ending up in our waterways, leaching into our food systems, fish and it has been traced into our blood system, womens breast milk and in our cells. This Bill is a step in the right direction to slow down/stop the consumption and use of such toxic pollutants especailly for our environment. It a great way to encourage all consumers to use reusable utentils/containers and stop using single use products.

Mahalo Kristina ZaZueta