

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

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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the House Committee on
FINANCE**

**Monday, March 2, 2026
10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 644, HOUSE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS**

House Bill 644, House Draft 2 proposes to prohibit the distribution, sale, or use of single-use plastic food ware containing plastic with regulated 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.**

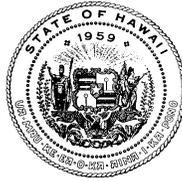
The Department recognizes the deleterious impacts of plastic debris on wildlife and their habitats as a primary natural resource issue throughout the State of Hawai'i. Plastic in the environment degrades both land and ocean-based habitat and impacts wildlife (aquatic and terrestrial) through ingestion, 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 HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'ŌIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

Testimony COMMENTING on HB0644 HD2
RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS TODD, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing Date, Time, and Room Number: 03/02/2026, 10:00am, CR308

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 (EHSD) provides the
6 following testimony on behalf of the Department.

7 This measure proposes a prohibition beginning on January 1, 2028, on distributing,
8 selling, or using single-use plastic foodware containing regulated per- and polyfluoroalkyl
9 substances (PFAS) by businesses where food or beverages packaged and sold on the premises
10 for individual consumption.

11 The Department supports measures that protect public health and the environment by
12 minimizing PFAS exposure pathways and reducing PFAS waste. However, it is unclear what level
13 of resources will be needed to implement this prohibition. The Department does not, at
14 present, have a program designed to sample and test for "regulated perfluoroalkyl and
15 polyfluoroalkyl substances" as defined in this measure. The Department does not have an
16 estimate of the scope and amount of single-use plastic products containing PFAS that are

1 currently being sold or used at businesses where food or beverages are packaged and sold on
2 premises, but it is broadly believed that the food industry has moved away from any use of
3 PFAS in common foodware. Based on the lack of information regarding the pervasiveness of
4 the issue and the lack of existing programs to implement the prohibition on PFAS, the
5 Department is unable to determine the additional resources required, but additional resources
6 are likely needed.

7 In addition, the Department notes that the apparent objective to prohibit the
8 distribution, sale, and use of these products by businesses (page 2, line 7) is enforced only on
9 businesses that serve food or beverages, but does not appear to apply to businesses that sell
10 the products but do not package and sell food or beverages. If the objective is to prohibit all
11 such sales, this presents a gap in enforcement. If the objective is, instead, merely to prevent
12 the use of such foodware by customers on the premises, the prohibition may be over-inclusive.

13 **Offered Amendments:** None.

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



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'alea Avenue #22, Honolulu, HI 96826

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Date: February 28, 2026
To: Rep. Chris Todd, Chair
Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance
From: Victor Lim, Legislative Lead
Subject: HB 644, HD2 Relating to Single-Use Plastics

The Hawaii Restaurant Association, representing over 4,000 Eating and Drinking Place locations in Hawaii, supports HB 644, HD2, which prohibits foodware containing plastics with perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl beginning on 1/1/2028.

It is our understanding that our industry has aggressively working the past couple of years to eliminate these PFAS from our supply chain.

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

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TESTIMONY OF DAVE ERDMAN
INTERIM PRESIDENT & CEO
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII
March 1, 2026

COMMENTS ON HB 644 HD2 – RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dave Erdman, and I am the Interim President and CEO of Retail Merchants of Hawai‘i (RMH), a statewide nonprofit trade association representing retailers, shopping centers, dining establishments operating within retail environments, and allied service providers across Hawai‘i.

Retail Merchants of Hawai‘i offers comments on H.B. 644, H.D. 2.

RMH appreciates the continued efforts to refine this measure and the extended implementation timeline for restrictions on food ware containing PFAS. Many businesses have already begun working with suppliers to reduce or eliminate these materials, and the additional transition time will help retailers and food operators make responsible and cost-effective adjustments.

Our members support practical steps that protect Hawai‘i’s environment while recognizing the operational realities facing local businesses. Retail-based food and beverage operators, particularly small businesses and those operating in shopping centers, continue to face elevated operating costs and supply chain limitations. Reasonable timelines and clear standards help businesses plan inventory and equipment changes in a predictable way.

RMH continues to emphasize the importance of ensuring that infrastructure and supply systems are ready before compliance requirements take effect. Businesses should not be placed in a position where they must absorb additional costs or operational burdens due to factors outside their control.

As this measure moves forward, RMH respectfully encourages continued coordination with industry stakeholders and clear guidance for businesses as they transition to compliant products.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



Date: February 28, 2026

To: The Honorable Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee on Finance
From: Solid Waste Reduction Task Force of Hawaii Environmental Change Agents
Re: HB 644 HD2 – Relating to Single-Use Plastics
Hearing: Monday, March 2, 2026 at 10:00am

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Solid Waste Reduction Task Force of Hawaii Environmental Change Agents **in support of HB644 HD2**, which prohibits single-use plastic food ware containing regulated per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Reducing exposure to these persistent “forever chemicals” is an important public health and consumer protection measure, and we appreciate the bill’s clear enforcement structure and implementation timeline.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

~Solid Waste Reduction Task Force of Hawaii Environmental Change Agents
Lindsey Sabec-Kozuma

HB-644-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:57:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Ewall	Energy Justice Network	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this great bill! While we ultimately need to phase out single-use plastics of all sorts, banning the more toxic and unhealthy kinds is an important first step. Mahalo for your support!



To: The Honorable Representative Chris Todd, Chair, the Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair, and Members of the Finance Committee.

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

Re: **Hearing HB644 HD2 RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS**

Hearing: Monday March 2, 2026 10:00 a.m.

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Finance 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 HD2!

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. 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 destructive violent storms and wildfires.

Many plastic food ware items 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.

Action is needed to shift away from single-use disposable plastic foodware and beverage service items containing PFAS.

Beginning on January 1, 2028, the bill would prohibit the use, sale, and distribution of single-use plastic food ware containing regulated PFAS. This prohibition would apply to businesses where food or beverages that are packaged and sold on the business' premises for individual consumption.

The law would not take effect until 2028, providing a reasonable time to ease the transition away from single-use plastic cups, lids, and food containers that have regulated PFAS. 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)

HB-644-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 6:53:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruth Robison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

From: Ruth Robison

I have been a resident of Hawai`i since 1962 and of Hilo since 1982.

This testimony is in strong support of HB644 RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS.

This measure takes an important step to protect Hawaii’s residents by prohibiting single-use plastic food ware containing regulated PFAS (“forever chemicals”). Reducing consumer exposure to PFAS in food-contact materials is a reasonable and important public health protection.

I respectfully urge your support of HB644 HD2. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HB-644-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 5:36:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noel Morin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB644 HD2

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Noel Morin. I support HB644 HD2. This is an important step in reducing exposure to PFAS and protecting our environment.

Please support HB644 HD2. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

[Noel Morin](#)

Climate, Sustainability, and Resilience Advocate
Hilo, Hawai'i

HB-644-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 12:21:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglas Perrine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

PFAS, aka "forever chemicals" are horrifying in their ability to cause cancers and other ailments, in their stability over time in the environment, and in their ability to infiltrate the human body. They are already pervasive in our environment and in our bodies, and pose an existential threat to ourselves, our keiki, and future generations for centuries to come. I strongly support HB644 to prevent needless introduction of additional PFAS into our environment. My only complaint about this bill is that it does not go far enough.

To: Representative Chris Todd, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

From: Veronica Moore, Individual Citizen

Date: March 1, 2026

RE: House Bill 644 HD2
Measure Title: RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS.
Report Title: Single-use Plastic Food Ware Containing PFAS; Prohibition; Solid
Waste; PFAS

To All Concerned,

My name is Veronica Moore and I support House Bill 644 HD2. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Veronica M. Moore

HB-644-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 8:08:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Lamson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Megan Lamson and I am a marine biologist who has been living and working on Hawai'i Island for over 20 years. I **strongly support HB644 HD2**. This measure takes an important step to protect Hawaii's residents by prohibiting single-use plastic foodware containing regulated PFAS ("forever chemicals"). Reducing consumer exposure to PFAS in food-contact materials is a reasonable and important public health protection.

Working for the local nonprofit Hawai'i Wildlife Fund since 2008, I have seen firsthand the impacts of plastic pollution in our environment. Together with experts and community members, we have tried to promote reuse and the end to single-use plastic products, and also pushed forward legislation aiming at the same. However, with PFAS around in both compostable alternatives and SUPs (single-use plastics), I have learned we seriously need to clean up our system. PFAS are a human health nightmare! This bill is a great step in the right direction and if anything I wish it did even more to restrict PFAS on any food container, anywhere in the state.

In closing, I respectfully urge your support of HB644 HD2. Mahalo for your time and consideration, and the opportunity to testify.

Best,

Megan Lamson Leatherman

Honalo, HI

HB-644-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:52:40 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

HB644 HD2 takes an important step to protect families by prohibiting single-use plastic food ware containing regulated PFAS. Reducing consumer exposure to PFAS in food-contact materials is an essential public health protection.

PFAS--forever chemicals, are linked to significant health risks, including but not limited to cancer, liver damage, developmental issues, weakened immune systems, and endocrine disruption. Oahu is already suffering from the contamination of these forever-chemicals due to the Navy's criminal negligence at Red Hill. Hawai'i cannot afford to further risk contamination of our finite resources and risk the health of our communities.

I respectfully urge your support of HB644 HD2. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



Restore the Commons

Monday, March 2, 2026

House Committee on Finance

HOUSE BILL 644, HD2 – RELATING TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

Position: Strong Support

Me ke Aloha, Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

Mahalo for moving this significant step forward in protecting the health of the people of Hawaii.

Mahalo for the opportunity to address this issue,

/s/ Charley Ice, Hoa'āina, Waimalu, O'ahu;

retired Hydrologist, Commission on Water Resource Management (25 years) and Planner at DHHL (10 years); former OEQC Executive Secretary, House legislative staffer, and intern at DoH and DPED.

former Chair of O'ahu Democratic Party Region 5 ('Aiea-Pearl City);

HB-644-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 12:07:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
LORI OKAMI	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lori Okami, and I support HB644 HD2. This measure takes an important step to protect Hawai‘i’s residents by prohibiting single-use plastic food ware containing regulated PFAS (“forever chemicals”). Reducing consumer exposure to PFAS in food-contact materials is a reasonable and important public health protection.

I respectfully urge your support of HB644 HD2. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo for your support,

Lori Okami

HB-644-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 3:10:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am writing in **strong support** of HB644, which prohibits the distribution, sale, or use of single-use plastic food ware containing regulated perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) by businesses beginning on January 1, 2028. This bill is a critical step forward in protecting our environment, our health, and our communities from toxic "forever chemicals."

The Problem: PFAS Are Poisoning Our Environment and Our Bodies

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, commonly known as PFAS or "forever chemicals," are a class of synthetic chemicals used in food packaging to make it waterproof and greaseproof. They are called "forever chemicals" because they are highly persistent—they do not break down naturally in the environment and can remain for thousands of years once introduced. These chemicals are highly mobile, can migrate into food, are water soluble, and can contaminate groundwater and the environment.

The health risks associated with PFAS exposure are severe and well-documented. Scientific research has linked PFAS to:

- **Increased cancer risk**, including kidney and testicular cancer;
- **Weakened immune response**;
- **Lower birth weight**;
- **Hormone disruption**;
- **Liver and kidney toxicity**;
- **Reproductive and developmental toxicity**.

People can be exposed to PFAS by consuming contaminated food or water, using products that contain PFAS, or breathing air that contains PFAS. When PFAS-laden food packaging is discarded, it leaches these toxic chemicals into our soil and water, where they persist indefinitely and enter the food chain.

Building on Existing Progress

This bill builds on important foundational work already accomplished by this Legislature. In 2022, the State prohibited the manufacture, sale, or distribution of certain types of food

packaging containing PFAS beginning December 31, 2024, through **Act 152, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022**. Subsequent legislation in 2024 and 2025 has sought to expand these protections to additional products, recognizing that PFAS contamination requires comprehensive action.

The United States Food and Drug Administration has already 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 food and protecting 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. Hawai‘i must join them.

The Environmental Justice Dimension

The Legislature has previously found that industrial facilities, including those producing plastics and bioplastics, are likely to be developed in underserved communities, as are most forms of waste infrastructure. These sites emit dangerous pollutants, reduce overall quality of life, and pose a heightened risk of industrial accidents like fires and explosions. By banning PFAS-containing food ware, we reduce the burden of toxic pollution on communities that have historically borne more than their share of environmental harm.

The 2028 Effective Date

HB644 as amended provides a reasonable implementation timeline, with the prohibition taking effect on January 1, 2028. This gives businesses adequate time to use existing inventory, identify compliant alternatives, and transition their supply chains. It also allows the Department of Health time to prepare for implementation, including developing testing capacity and enforcement protocols. As noted in committee reports on related PFAS legislation, the Department of Health may need additional resources—including specialized laboratory equipment and personnel—to verify compliance. The 2028 effective date provides a window to address these needs.

A Comprehensive Approach

HB644 is part of a broader legislative effort to address the full lifecycle of plastic pollution. The bill's findings note that a significant portion of marine debris, estimated to be **80%**, originates on land, primarily as escaped refuse and litter, much of it plastic, via urban runoff. An estimated **8.75 million metric tons of plastic enter our ocean each year** from land-based sources. These plastics degrade into microplastics that are present in the world's oceans at all trophic levels, attracting and concentrating ambient pollutants like heavy metals and persistent organic pollutants, which transfer to fish and other seafood that are eventually caught and sold for human consumption.

The cost of cleaning up plastic pollution falls on taxpayers. A study of over 90 counties in California concluded that taxpayers are paying **\$428,000,000 per year** to clean up plastic through storm drain management, street sweeping, and marine cleanups. San Diego County, which has an equivalent population to Hawai‘i at 1,300,000 people, spends **\$14,000,000 annually** cleaning up plastic. Hawai‘i faces similar costs.

Conclusion

PFAS have no place in our food system or our environment. They are toxic, persistent, and harmful to human health at every stage of their lifecycle. HB644 provides a clear, phased, and achievable path to eliminating them from single-use food ware in Hawai'i.

I urge this committee to pass HB644 and continue Hawai'i's leadership in protecting our communities, our 'āina, and our future from toxic forever chemicals.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



NATIONAL MARINE TEAM

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

March 2, 2026 10:00AM Via Videoconference

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

Aloha Chair Todd , Vice Chair Takenouchi, 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 medical 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-2

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 7:32:55 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

PFAS are persistent, highly toxic chemicals linked to cancer risk, immune system impacts, and other serious health concerns. By restricting their use in single-use food-contact materials, HB644 HD2 takes an important step to reduce consumer exposure and align Hawaii with actions already taken in other states.

Representative Cedric Gates, Chair
Representative Kristin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection / Consumer Protection & Commerce)
Monday, March 2, 2026
10:00 AM, room 308 via videoconference
Hawaii State Capitol

Support for H.B. No. 644, H.D. 2

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ailah Hernandez and I am a resident of Mililani. I am testifying in **support of H.B. No. 644, H.D. 2**, which would prohibit certain disposable and single-use plastic food ware and food service items, including items with regulated PFAS chemicals, from being used, sold, or distributed by businesses in our state beginning on January 1, 2028.

I support this bill because I believe caring for our ‘āina (our land, oceans, and freshwater) is a core responsibility if we want a healthy future for Hawai‘i’s people, plants, and animals. Single-use plastics and PFAS-containing products have become some of the most persistent & long-lasting forms of pollution in our environment, breaking down into microplastics that are carried into our soils and āina, into our streams and ocean, and most likely even into the food we eat.

Pono stewardship means thinking beyond convenience and recognizing our interconnectedness with the ‘āina and all life that depends on it. By reducing the use of products that become harmful waste, especially items that are designed to be thrown away after one use, we honor the mālama ‘āina principles that are so central to Hawaiian culture and to responsible environmental policy. Supporting local, reusable, and truly compostable alternatives helps protect our beaches, reefs, aquifers, and ecosystems, and really just reduces the long-term cost of pollution cleanup that burden our communities and future generations.

For these reasons, I hope you will support passing **H.B. No. 644, H.D. 2**.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Ailah Hernandez

HB-644-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 8:41:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Samson Satele II	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Samson Satele II and I am an 11th grade student at Mililani High School in Hawai'i. I am here today to stongly support the House Bill 644, which focuses on climate change adaption planning in Hawai'i. I am deeply concerned about the future of hawaii and would lvoe for the future to be bright and ready for future peopel to come and take care of Hawai'i.

Climate change is affecting hawaii with rising sea levels, extreme weathers, and damaging the beautiful land and coral reef. These drastic changes threaten our communities, economy, and natural resources. HB 644 is a crucial step in t he right directionby adressing the challenges and make goals and take it step by step in prevention of anything. This bill only is the beginning of something great for the land, the people of hawaii, and its future.

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HB-644-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 8:44:49 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mae Jean Ortogero	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha to the Chair and Members of the Legislature,

My name is Mae Jean Ortogero, and I currently am in my last year of high school. I am writing in support of this bill in order to prohibit single-use plastic foodware that contains PFAS. I believe that supporting this bill is a huge leap to practicing our pono stewardship of our 'āina here in Hawai'i.

As you may now, PFAS are known as those chemicals that last "forever" as they are not easy to break down in our environment, taking a mass amount of time. As these chemicals are often used in our everyday supplies such as, food containers, cutting boards, and utensils, they contaminate whats around them without us noticing. Tiny chemicals contaminate our food, our bodies, water and our land in general. This directly poses a threat to us as it harms both the health of our communities and our ecosystems that provides a home for us people, along with the life of nature.

Pono stewardship to me means taking care of our land, taking responsibility for our actions and showing respect. That unconditional love is important to the sustainability of our home. By reducing these harmful chemicals from our home, we can protect our soil, our groundwater, our ocean and ourselves from pollution. This goes beyond our land as it also helps us protect our cultural practices and local food systems that many locals rely on.

In addition, this bill also gives businesses time to switch to safer options like paper, bamboo, or other sustainable materials. These alternatives are better for the environment while still allowing businesses to serve their customers.

For these specific reasons that I value, I support this bill and encourage you, the legislation to pass it to become something greater. Protecting our land will ensure the sustainability for our future, my future, to live in balance and love in our home of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Mae Jean Ortogero

HB-644-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 9:06:44 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dallas Colburn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The image in text form:

Representative Cedric Gates Chair

Representative Kristin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

Monday, Mar 2, 2026

10:00 AM, room 308 via Video Conference

Hawai'i State Capitol

My name is Dallas Colburn, and I live in Mililani. I am here to express my support for H.B. No. 644, H.D. 2, which aims to ban specific disposable and single-use plastic foodware and food service items that contain regulated PFAS chemicals. This bill would take effect on January 1, 2028, preventing businesses in our state from using, selling, or distributing these harmful products.

I stand in favor of this legislation because I believe that taking care of our 'aina—our land, oceans, and freshwater—is an essential duty if we want to ensure a healthy future for the people, plants, and animals of Hawai'i. Single-use plastics and products containing PFAS have become some of the most enduring pollutants in our environment. They break down into microplastics that find their way into our soils and 'aina, our streams and oceans, and into the food we consume.

To have Pono stewardship means to practice taking care of the land. To have love for the land enough to respect and want to maintain it. It is important to keep our environment clean and balanced so that our equilibrium of natural resources is steady and sustainable. We must Malama or take care of what provides. Again, I am all for the pushing of H.B. No. 644, H.D. 2, which aims to ban specific disposable and single-use plastic foodware and food service items that contain regulated PFAS chemicals.

Sincerely,

Dallas Colburn

Mililani High School

HB-644-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 9:11:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Max Olsson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: The Honorable Members of the House Committees on Energy & Environmental Protection, Consumer Protection & Commerce, and Finance

From: Max Olsson

Re: Strong Support for HB644, Relating to Single-Use Plastics

Date: 03/02/2026

Aloha Chairs Lowen, Matayoshi, and Yamashita, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing in strong support of HB644, which prohibits the sale and distribution of single-use plastic food ware and items containing toxic perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). This bill is a crucial and long-overdue step toward fulfilling our kuleana to protect Hawai'i's environmental health, the well-being of its people, and the economic future of our islands.

As the bill itself finds, the status quo is unsustainable. Single-use plastics are a primary component of marine debris, with an estimated 80% of ocean plastic originating from land-based sources . This waste degrades into microplastics that contaminate our seafood and water, directly impacting the health of local families who rely on them . Furthermore, the chemicals of concern are not limited to the plastic itself. HB644 correctly targets PFAS, or "forever chemicals," which are often added to supposedly "eco-friendly" paper bowls and containers to make them grease-proof. These chemicals are linked to cancer, liver toxicity, and immune system harm, and they persist in our environment indefinitely .

While some may argue that switching to bioplastics is a solution, HB644 wisely addresses this misconception. As the legislature notes, many bioplastics only break down in harsh industrial composters—facilities we largely lack in Hawai'i—and can behave just like conventional plastic in the marine environment .

HB644 provides a clear and phased path forward for businesses. The prohibition begins on January 1, 2026, giving the private sector adequate time to use up existing stock and transition their supply chains . The bill provides sensible exemptions, allowing for compostable plastics where industrial composting infrastructure exists, and most importantly, encourages the shift toward truly reusable and refillable container systems, which are the gold standard for waste reduction .

This bill also makes financial sense. Cleaning up plastic pollution costs taxpayers millions. A study cited in HB644 notes that a county the size of Hawai‘i spends approximately \$14 million annually on plastic cleanup . It is far more cost-effective to stop the pollution at the source than to pay to clean our beaches and storm drains later.

I urge you to pass this measure and send a strong message that Hawai‘i will no longer accept throw-away plastics that poison our people and pollute our ‘āina and kai.

Mahalo for your leadership and service,
Max Olsson