



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Health & Homelessness
Friday, February 10, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

By

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And

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And

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HB 440 HD1 – RELATING TO CESSPOOLS

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) and UH Water Resources Research Center support HB 440 HD1.

This bill would establish an income tax credit to offset the financial difficulties of cesspool conversion and upgrades. The Cesspool Conversion Working Group recently reported that the vast majority of cesspool owners cannot afford the upgrade of their cesspool to an advanced form of wastewater treatment. Because it is critical to both human and environmental health that the state's cesspools be eliminated as soon as possible, it is important that a multitude of mechanisms for financial assistance be created for homeowners.

This bill would require the Department of Health to provide necessary certification related to the tax credit. We support this change, but encourage the support of the Department of Health to carry out this responsibility through increases in their capacity with additional staff support.

Hawai'i Sea Grant and UH Water Resources Research Center further support the disclosure of a cesspool's presence on a property during a real estate transaction. This disclosure would motivate conversion prior to the sale of the property, accelerating the statewide conversion and upgrade of cesspools, and would also prevent the new buyer from the undue burden of conversion.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.