



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Friday, February 9, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

By

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SB 2426 – RELATING TO CESSPOOLS

Chairs Gabbard and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Richards and Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) and UH Water Resources Research Center express **support for SB 2426**, a comprehensive bill with the following key provisions:

- It sets deadlines for upgrading, converting, or connecting priority level 1 cesspools by 1/1/2035 and priority level 2 cesspools by 1/1/2045, advancing the previous deadline of 1/1/2050.
- It allocates funds to implement the cesspool compliance pilot grant project established under Act 153, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022.
- It introduces an income tax credit aimed at offsetting expenses related to upgrading or converting a qualified cesspool to a director of health-approved wastewater system or connecting it to a sewerage system.

The Cesspool Conversion Working Group has highlighted that most cesspool owners face financial constraints hindering the upgrade to advanced wastewater treatment systems. Eliminating cesspools promptly is crucial for human and environmental health, necessitating various financial assistance mechanisms for homeowners.

We support hastening the transition away from cesspools and recognize the need for financial support in doing so. While the inclusion of an income tax credit for cesspool transition is crucial, there remains a need to explore additional financial aid options such as subsidies or grants to alleviate the financial burden on homeowners.

Thank you for considering our testimony on this important measure.