

February 13, 2023

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Wednesday, February 15, 2023
1:30pm
Via Videoconference



RE: **SB1458** - Extended Producer Responsibility (**Strong Support**)

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards & Committee Members,

Chamber of Sustainable Commerce submits this testimony in strong support of SB1458, relating to waste management. As business owners who believe in strengthening our economy without hurting workers, consumers or the environment, we urge this committee to vote in favor of passing SB1458, which would establish an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Program, require certain producers of fast-moving consumer goods to register with the Department of Health and pay an annual fee based on the amount of packaging volume the covered producer places on the market each calendar year, provides for the deposit of fees into an EPR Special Fund to fund a report that assesses the resources needed to reduce the volume of packaging waste sent to landfills or power plants that burn municipal solid waste as a fuel by fifty per cent and eighty per cent by a date to be determined by rule.

If passed into law, SB1458 will establish a model for EPR which is well suited to Hawaii's unique environmental, social and economic conditions. By engaging those producers with the means to distribute the cost of pilot reuse programs over a market share of at least \$500 million, this legislation puts the responsibility for underwriting these programs where it rightfully lies: on businesses that set global trends for design and marketing.

By directing those funds to cover the costs of reuse programs that include producers, county agencies and community groups (as project partners), this legislation gives rise to collaborations that can effectively reduce the volume of waste Hawaii sends to incinerators and/or landfills.

**Hawaii
Legislative
Council**

Maile Meyer
Na Mea Hawaii
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Russel Rudderman
Island Naturals
Hilo / Kona

Tina Wildberger
Kihei Ice
Maui

Joell Edwards
Wainiha Country Market
Kauai

Kim Coco Iwamoto
AQuA Rentals, LLC
Honolulu

While other EPR programs in the U.S. aim to create a layer of bureaucracy and vested interests that will permanently increase costs to consumers, the transitional nature of this proposed program places an appropriate degree of responsibility on the producers that can afford to invest in sweeping systemic change.

As the larger community awakens to the environmental racism embedded in siting incinerators and landfills, opposition to these practices are growing. With that added attention, governments are looking for alternatives; reuse strategies are the most effective means for reducing packaging waste, which represents about 40% of the state's waste stream.

We already have the data, the understanding and the solutions to begin this planet-saving course correction – we do not need to waste valuable time “task-forcing” this issue.



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