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**COUNTY COUNCIL**  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 S. HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.MauiCounty.us](http://www.MauiCounty.us)

March 11, 2020

TO: The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

FROM: Alice L. Lee   
Council Chair

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 13, 2020; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2151, HD1, RELATING TO CESSPOOL CONVERSION**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to assist low- and moderate-income property owners with converting their failing cesspools to more environmentally appropriate systems by creating a pilot grant project to assist with conversion costs.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. Act 125, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017, requires the replacement of all cesspools in the State by 2050.
2. Hawaii, with approximately 88,000 cesspools statewide, is ranked as the State with the greatest number of cesspools in the nation, per capita.
3. Cesspools discharge more than 53 million gallons of untreated sewage daily resulting in the contamination of the State's ground water, streams, and coastal ecosystems, and poses a significant risk to the environment, human life, marine life, and wildlife, unless they are converted or upgraded.
4. Conversion or upgrading of cesspools presents a potential financial burden on low- and moderate-income families. This measure would assist property owners with meeting the costs of upgrading or converting cesspools by 2050.

For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.

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