

**From:** [Georjean Adams](#)  
**To:** [DEM \(COH\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Mahinakai50](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony For EMC Meeting October 22, 2025  
**Date:** Monday, October 20, 2025 12:42:08 PM  
**Attachments:** [Gmail - Bill 83 Draft 1 Testimony.pdf](#)  
[Gmail - Proposed Bills 64 and 72 Testimony for Oct 8, 2025.pdf](#)

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Agenda Item V.1. Bill 83 Plastics Foodware Ban

I encourage the EMC to oppose Bill 83 as it will not change the volume of waste going to WHSL. Without moving forward on the EMC-recommended ordinance to prohibit landfilling of recyclable materials under a phased-in process that supports feasible reuse and recycling, preferably on this island, this bill is worthless and, worse, misleading. EMC needs to support building a network of life cycle solutions and not hoping for the silver bullet.

Agenda Item V.2. Bill 72

I encourage the EMC to oppose Bill 72 that unrealistically lowers the requirements for the Director of DEM. The DEM is so poorly staffed that its director MUST HAVE technical expertise to adequately address the long term impacts that solid waste and wastewater management decisions can have. Nevertheless, as Commissioner Otsuka has long argued for, the DEM Director must also have skills in human resource management to nurture what will likely always be an understaffed, overworked county department.

Attached below are comments I submitted to the County Council regarding Bills 72 and 83.

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## Bill 83 Draft 1 Testimony

1 message

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Mon, Oct 6, 2025 at 2:01 PM

To: counciltestimony@hawaiicounty.gov

I oppose the draft Bill 83 amending Chapter 20 of the HCC Relating Plastic and Polystyrene Waste to be considered at the October 8, 2025, meeting of the Policy Committee on Environment and Natural Resource Management.

As with the current ban on polystyrene food serviceware, Bill 83 is **misleading** and **inappropriate** in requiring use of the specified alternatives for which

**THERE ARE NO VIABLE MUNICIPAL/INDUSTRIAL COMPOST FACILITIES ON HAWAII ISLAND TO SAFELY MANAGE THESE WASTES.**

As a result, these polystyrene and "compostable" wastes will continue to be landfilled at the West Hawaii Sanitary Landfill, straining its capacity and likely contributing to methane production and release from the landfill counter to the climate goals of the state and county. (For those worried about microplastics in landfill leachate, most of it is from fibers and technology for screening out microplastics is under development.) About the only benefit of this bill is that litter composed of "legal" food serviceware will contaminate the environment for "only" around a year before biodegrading compared to long-lived plastic food serviceware litter. Surely the Council is not saying it's OK to litter these "degradable" products? Instead, the Council should be encouraging safe reuse and/or recycling of food serveware and, most importantly, enforcing proper disposal in a sanitary landfill at end of life.

*Question - Does the County know whether or not the polystyrene ban has resulted in home composters contaminating and/or degrading their compost under the false impression that CMA or BPI-certified products are backyard compostable?*

I recommend the Council hold off on banning plastics until there is a recyclables landfill ban ordinance in place, as proposed by myself and the Environmental Management Commission, that will phase in landfill restrictions only when DEM is able to show that mandated substituted wastes can actually be recycled on island.

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