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December 10, 2024

The Honorable Tommy Waters
Chair and Presiding Officer
and Members
Honolulu City Council
530 S. King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Waters and Councilmembers:

I am providing written testimony on Bill 59 (2024) Relating to Plastics on behalf of the City administration. The City administration previously submitted practical reservations with the proposed ban on single-use plastic containers.

While the administration supports the environmental policy intent of the bill, the administration takes a practical approach which includes, but is not limited to, a distinction between locally made polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles which are specifically made to be fully recycled into replacement bottles. The City administration primarily uses these bottles in limited circumstances, principally for guests, emergency response and situations where potable water is not otherwise available on short notice. The City administration does not purchase these items for regular City employee consumption and we recycle our bottles to mitigate negative impacts to the environment.

My understanding is also that in 2025, a PET recycling facility is planned for Hilo which will recycle existing PET bottles into replacement bottles, all within the State of Hawai'i.

In closing, the administration would hope the Council can find a middle ground that encourages local production, distribution, responsible use and recycling of PET bottles, with an emphasis on 100% recycling versus banning this low-cost, limited use product for practical City operations. The City fully commits to responsible behavior, environmental sensitivity and cost-awareness on behalf of our administration and constituents.

We appreciate your consideration of the above.

Sincerely,

Michael D. Formby
Managing Director

MAYOR'S MESSAGE 216
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