

OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

KE KE'ENA LOLI ANIAU MĀLAMA 'ĀINA A ME KE OLA LOA

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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April 28, 2025

The Honorable Tyler Dos Santos-Tam, Chair
and Members
Committee on Budget
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Dos-Santos Tam and Councilmembers:

SUBJECT: Bill 15 (2025), CD1 Relating to the Climate Resiliency Fund

The Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency supports Bill 15 (2025), CD1, which strengthens the voter-established Climate Resiliency Fund as a powerful tool to accelerate climate adaptation and resilience across our island. We respectfully offer the following comments:

With regard to fund allocation language in the Proposed CD2, we appreciate the emphasis on ensuring that external grants and loans are a significant use of the fund to support our low- and moderate-income households in building climate resilience. However, for operational clarity and fiscal management, we recommend amending the funding split language to "up to 50%" of annual allocations for City projects and "up to 50%" for external community-based projects. We believe this clarification will provide the necessary flexibility to responsibly manage appropriations year-over-year, while meeting the intent of the Proposed CD2.

With respect to utilizing Climate Resiliency Fund moneys for a grant or loan program to fund cesspool conversions, we recommend limiting allocations for this use to support Priority 1 cesspools as identified by the Hawai'i Department of Health. These cesspools are the most urgent to address, with the greatest potential to impact drinking water aquifers and sensitive nearshore waters and coastal ecosystems. Aligning funding with the highest-priority environmental risks aligns with the voter-approved purpose of the fund to enhance climate resilience and protect critical natural resources.

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Additionally, we note that the Department of Environmental Services is currently in the process of identifying properties potentially eligible for sewer connection and those that will require private onsite conversions. Given such, we recommend that substantial discussion on the development of a Climate Resiliency Fund grant or loan program for cesspool conversions be deferred until completion of the department's study in about 16 months. This will allow us to target financial support to Priority 1 homeowners required to self-convert and ensure efficient and equitable use of the fund's resources.

For use of Climate Resiliency Fund moneys in Fiscal Year 2026, the table below identifies implementation-ready projects that meet the purpose and criteria of the fund.

Proposed FY26 Climate Resiliency Fund Projects		
<u>Agency</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Estimate</u>
1. DFM	Comprehensive Storm Water Master Planning Study	\$ 2,400,000
2. DFM	Ka'elepulu Green Storm Water Planning Study	\$ 750,000
3. DDC	CIP & Climate Change Design Guidelines	\$ 1,500,000
4. OER	The Global Mayors Challenge	\$ 500,000
5. CCSR	Affordable Housing Retrofit Program	\$ 400,000
6. CCSR	Climate Champions Program	\$ 350,000
7. DPR	2026 Summer Recreational Programming	\$ 60,000
8. DPR	Water refill stations pilot	\$ 25,000
Subtotal		\$ 5,985,000
FY 2026 Estimated Fund Revenues		\$ 8,871,465
Balance (rollover to FY 2027)		\$ 2,886,465

We are eager to support the activation of the Climate Resiliency Fund and are committed to establishing transparent, effective, and efficient processes for its use. As part of this effort, we anticipate developing tools such as funding request forms, scoring criteria, reporting mechanisms, and advisory capacities to guide funding decisions and monitor project outcomes.

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Bill 15 (2025), CD1. Should you have any questions, please contact us at (808) 768-2277 or b.sullivan@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,



Digitally signed by: Sullivan,
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Benjamin Sullivan
Executive Director and
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APPROVED:



Michael D. Formby, Managing Director
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