HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. **26-7, CD1**

RESOLUTION

ESTABLISHING AN END LANDFILLS TASK FORCE TO EVALUATE THE FEASIBILITY, COSTS, RISKS, AND IMPLEMENTATION PATHWAYS FOR ELIMINATING LANDFILL DEPENDENCY IN THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU.

WHEREAS, the City and County of Honolulu ("City") relies on landfill disposal as a primary component of its integrated solid waste management system; and

WHEREAS, landfill capacity on O'ahu is finite, and the continued reliance on landfills presents significant long-term environmental, land-use, public health, climate, and fiscal challenges for the City and its residents; and

WHEREAS, although the City utilizes waste-to-energy, recycling, and diversion strategies, including operations at H-POWER, a substantial portion of the City's municipal solid waste continues to be disposed of in landfills; and

WHEREAS, the Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill, the City's only permitted public municipal solid waste landfill, is currently slated to cease operations by no later than March 2, 2028, and the facility's pending closure represents a key planning driver and near-term inflection point for the City; and

WHEREAS, the closure, expansion, or siting of landfills involves complex regulatory, environmental, and community considerations, underscoring the need for long-term planning beyond existing landfill capacity timelines; and

WHEREAS, emerging and existing waste reduction, recycling, diversion, and conversion technologies may provide opportunities to significantly reduce or eliminate landfill dependency, but require rigorous evaluations of feasibility, costs, environmental impacts, regulatory compliance, labor impacts, and operational reliability; and

WHEREAS, transitioning away from landfill dependency would require coordinated efforts among City departments, private industry, labor organizations, the recycling and energy sectors, and State of Hawai'i and federal policymakers; and

WHEREAS, the City Council ("Council") finds that a structured, transparent, and multidisciplinary evaluation is necessary to responsibly assess pathways toward ending landfill dependency while maintaining public health, environmental protection, fiscal responsibility, and workforce stability; and

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, under Council Rule 9A, the Council may, by adoption of a resolution, establish advisory committees to assist the Council in the resolution or study of issues; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that an End Landfills Task Force ("Task Force") is hereby established to evaluate the feasibility, costs, risks, and implementation pathways for eliminating landfill dependency in the City and County of Honolulu; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force be composed of, but is not limited to, the following members who will be appointed by the Council unless otherwise indicated below:

1. Up to two Councilmembers as appointed by the Council Chair, one of whom shall serve as the Chair of the Task Force unless otherwise designated by the Council;

2. A representative from the Mayor's Office;

3. The Director of the Department of Environmental Services, or the Director's designee;

4. A representative from the Board of Water Supply;

5. A representative from Reworld Honolulu, LLC (formerly known as Covanta Honolulu Resource Recovery Venture, LLC) with professional knowledge of the operations at H-POWER;

6. A representative from the metal recycling sector;

7. A representative from the plastic recycling sector;

8. A representative from the energy recycling or conversion sector;

9. A representative from the oil or energy sector with professional knowledge of conversion technologies or supporting infrastructure;

10. A representative from United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO;

11. A representative from the State of Hawai'i Department of Health;

12. A representative from the Office of the Governor;

13. A member of the Hawai'i State House of Representatives, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

14. A member of the Hawai'i State Senate, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; and

15. Any additional subject-matter expert or stakeholder deemed necessary by the Council to fulfill the purpose of the Task Force; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall:

1. Evaluate the feasibility and practical realities of ending landfill dependency, including current conditions, landfill capacity timelines, operational constraints, and regulatory limitations;

2. Analyze the feasibility, costs, benefits, risks, and environmental and workforce impacts associated with technologies and strategies intended to reduce or eliminate landfill reliance, such as advanced conversion technologies (*e.g.*, pyrolysis and plasma arc gasification), unit-based or variable rate pricing mechanisms, and other emerging materials management strategies;

3. Assess alternative waste processing, recycling, diversion, and conversion strategies, including related infrastructure requirements, workforce impacts, market readiness issues, and the long-term operational viability of such strategies;

4. Identify any policy, infrastructure, or operational or regulatory actions required to transition away from landfill dependency, including recommended sequencing of actions;

5. Develop an estimated timeframe and phased transition plan with key milestones and decision points;

6. Identify areas requiring coordination with State of Hawai'i agencies, the Hawai'i State Legislature, and federal partners;

7. Identify potential risks, uncertainties, and barriers to implementation, including legal, financial, technological, and community impacts; and

8. Submit a final written report to the Council within 540 days of the adoption of this resolution detailing the Task Force's findings, options considered, and recommendations, including areas of consensus and disagreement, if any; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in carrying out the duties and responsibilities described above, the Task Force shall coordinate, as appropriate, with relevant State of Hawai'i agencies, including but not limited to the State of Hawai'i Department of Health, the Office of the Governor, and the Hawai'i State Legislature ("Relevant State Agencies"), as well as any relevant groups convened by resolution, statute, executive order, proclamation, or by invitation of any of the Relevant State Agencies, to study or address solid waste management or landfill dependency issues ("Relevant Working Groups"); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is further encouraged to:

1. Share its data and analyses;

2. Participate in joint informational meetings or briefings where appropriate;

3. Align its timelines and analytical frameworks when feasible; and

4. Avoid duplicative research and outreach

with Relevant State Agencies and Relevant Working Groups; provided that any coordination shall in no way constitute or create any joint task force, joint authority, or joint decision-making body; provided further that the Task Force, Relevant State Agencies, and Relevant Working Groups shall remain independent and solely responsible for their own actions and operations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall comply with applicable open meetings and public transparency requirements, and will be supported administratively by the Council unless otherwise directed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force members shall serve without compensation and may not expend or encumber any appropriated funds unless expressly authorized by the Council; and

RESOLUTION

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall remain in effect until the submission of its final report, unless extended or dissolved by the Council; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Council Chair; the Mayor; the Managing Director; the Director of the Department of Environmental Services; the Manager and Chief Engineer of the Board of Water Supply; the Governor; the State of Hawai'i Director of Health; the President of the Hawai'i State Senate; the Speaker of the Hawai'i State House of Representatives; the State Director of United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO; and the Facility Manager of Reworld Honolulu, LLC.

INTRODUCED BY:

Andria Tupola

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

January 12, 2026
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers

CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

CERTIFICATE

RESOLUTION 26-7, CD1

Introduced: 01/12/26 By: ANDRIA TUPOLA Committee: INTERNATIONAL & LEGAL AFFAIRS (ILA)

Title: ESTABLISHING AN END LANDFILLS TASK FORCE TO EVALUATE THE FEASIBILITY, COSTS, AND IMPLEMENTATION PATHWAYS FOR ELIMINATING LANDFILL DEPENDENCY IN THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU.

Voting Legend: * = Aye w/Reservations

01/12/26	INTRO	Introduced.
04/29/26	ILA	Reported out for adoption as amended in CD1 form. CR-108(26) 7 AYES: CORDERO, KIA'ĀINA, NISHIMOTO, OKIMOTO, TULBA, TUPOLA, WATERS 2 ABSENT: DOS SANTOS-TAM, WEYER
05/13/26	CCL	Committee report and Resolution as amended were adopted. 9 AYES: CORDERO, DOS SANTOS-TAM, KIA'ĀINA, NISHIMOTO, OKIMOTO, TULBA, TUPOLA, WATERS, WEYER

I hereby certify that the above is a true record of action by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu on this RESOLUTION.

CHADD KADOTA, ACTING CITY CLERK

TOMMY WATERS, CHAIR AND PRESIDING OFFICER