HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. 26-193

RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AND THE HAWAIʻI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO REQUIRE THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY TO INCREASE THE FREQUENCY, CHEMICAL SCOPE, AND GEOGRAPHIC EXTENT OF GROUNDWATER TESTING FOR PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES AND PETROLEUM CHEMICALS IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THE RED HILL BULK FUEL STORAGE FACILITY AND SURROUNDING AREAS.

WHEREAS, Oʻahu derives its fresh drinking water almost entirely from groundwater contained in a network of underground aquifers; and

WHEREAS, life on the island depends on this fragile and irreplaceable resource, and the familiar Hawaiian phrase "Ola i ka wai" ("Water is life") is a reminder that it must be protected; and

WHEREAS, Oʻahu's primary source of drinking water is the Southern Oʻahu Basal Aquifer, which has been designated a "sole source aquifer" by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA"); and

WHEREAS, the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility ("Red Hill Facility"), a complex operated by the U.S. Department of the Navy ("Navy") consisting of 20 underground fuel storage tanks capable of storing up to 250 million gallons of fuel, sits just 100 feet above this sole source aquifer; and

WHEREAS, until it ceased operations in 2024, the Red Hill Facility utilized a synthetic firefighting foam called aqueous film-forming foam ("AFFF"), which contains a class of chemicals known as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances ("PFAS"); and

WHEREAS, PFAS are known as "forever chemicals" because they degrade extremely slowly and thus persist in the environment; and

WHEREAS, PFAS exposure has been associated with a variety of harmful health effects, and research suggests that it may accumulate in people and animals over time; and

WHEREAS, during the Red Hill Facility's 80 years of operation, there were numerous fuel and hazardous chemical releases documented; and

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WHEREAS, on November 24, 2021, approximately 14,000 gallons of a fuel-water mixture was released at the Red Hill Facility, contaminating the groundwater beneath the site and ultimately the Navy's drinking water system, and the public outcry that followed led the U.S. Secretary of Defense to order the shutdown of the Red Hill Facility; and

WHEREAS, on November 29, 2022, approximately 1,300 gallons of PFAS-containing AFFF spilled at the site, raising further concerns about potential contamination; and

WHEREAS, although defueling of the Red Hill Facility was completed in 2024, concerns remain about persistent contamination and the possibility that contaminants in the groundwater under the facility could migrate to other parts of the aquifer; and

WHEREAS, tests done the year after the 2022 AFFF spill revealed the presence of PFAS in groundwater underneath the Red Hill Facility, although it was unclear how much of the it was attributable to the 2022 spill versus historical contamination, and investigators recommended further testing; and

WHEREAS, more recently, the Navy has detected varying levels of more than 10 different types of PFAS compounds at more than 30 of its testing sites within the Red Hill Facility, suggesting that the facility may be a source of PFAS contamination of the aquifer; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Water Supply ("BWS") has detected similar types of PFAS compounds at sites to the west and northwest of the Red Hill Facility; and

WHEREAS, these recent testing results, taken in conjunction with current understanding of groundwater flow patterns, suggest the possibility that PFAS in the groundwater under the Red Hill Facility may be migrating in a westerly/northwesterly direction within the aquifer; and

WHEREAS, additional PFAS data may provide an opportunity to validate groundwater flow model predictions using actual groundwater monitoring data, thereby improving our understanding of how the aquifer has been affected; and

WHEREAS, on June 16, 2026, the BWS sent a letter to the EPA and the Hawai'i State Department of Health recommending increasing the testing frequency of the Navy's drinking water and the groundwater monitoring wells in the vicinity of and away

from the Red Hill Facility for all PFAS and petroleum chemicals that test methods can detect; and

WHEREAS, the recent PFAS detections in both the BWS and Navy wells strongly suggest that contaminant migration is a possibility, and more testing is needed to better characterize the types of PFAS compounds present and delineate the temporal and geographic patterns of PFAS levels in the groundwater beneath the Red Hill Facility and the surrounding area; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it urges the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") and the Hawai'i State Department of Health ("DOH") to require the U.S. Department of the Navy ("Navy") to increase the frequency, chemical scope, and geographic extent of groundwater testing for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances and petroleum chemicals in the immediate vicinity of the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility and surrounding areas; and

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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator, the U.S. Secretary of Defense, the U.S. Secretary of the Navy, the Hawai'i Congressional delegation, the Governor of the State of Hawai'i, the President of the Hawai'i Senate, the Speaker of the Hawai'i House of Representatives, the Hawai'i State Director of Health, the Mayor, and the Manager and Chief Engineer of the Board of Water Supply.

INTRODUCED BY:

Radiant Cabral

Councilmembers

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

AUG 19 2026

Honolulu, Hawai'i

CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

CERTIFICATE

RESOLUTION 26-193

Introduced:	08/19/26	By:	RADIANT CORDERO	Committee:	INTERNATIONAL & LEGAL AFFAIRS (ILA)

Title: URGING THE UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AND THE HAWAI'I STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO REQUIRE THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY TO INCREASE THE FREQUENCY, CHEMICAL SCOPE, AND GEOGRAPHIC EXTENT OF GROUNDWATER TESTING FOR PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES AND PETROLEUM CHEMICALS IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THE RED HILL BULK FUEL STORAGE FACILITY AND SURROUNDING AREAS.

Voting Legend: * = Aye w/Reservations

08/19/26	INTRO	Introduced.
08/26/26	ILA	Reported out for adoption. CR-242(26) 8 AYES: CORDERO, KIA'ĀINA, NISHIMOTO, OKIMOTO, TULBA, TUPOLA, WATERS, WEYER 1 ABSENT: DOS SANTOS-TAM
09/09/26	CCL	Committee report and Resolution 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