

CLIMATE CHANGE COMMISSION  
**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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November 18, 2020

The Honorable Ann Kobayashi, Chair and Presiding Officer  
and Members  
Honolulu City Council  
530 South King Street, Room 202  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Kobayashi and Councilmembers:

**SUBJECT: Bill 65 (2020) - Relating to One Water Framework**

In response to Bill 65 CD1 Section 2-11, the City and County of Honolulu (“City”) Climate Change Commission (“Commission”) supports the intent of Bill 65 and requests that the detailed One Water Framework language be reinserted to increase the integration and functionality of climate adaptation planning across city departments.

One Water is a relatively new water management framework that prioritizes resilience and community and environmental needs. Defined by One World One Water, one water management is the “management of all forms of water including stormwater, wastewater, groundwater, sea water, freshwater, greywater, and recycled water. Infrastructure, including roadways, treatment plans, pumping station facilities, and distribution and collection systems are also part of Honolulu’s ‘one water management’ system.”<sup>1</sup> The One Water framework is commonly implemented through a directive from local government or by leadership from water, wastewater, and stormwater utilities. Additionally, One Water incorporates climate resiliency into the planning framework and prioritizes comprehensive and transparent stakeholder involvement.<sup>2</sup> Some benefits of the One Water approach are the leveraging of multiple funds to complete projects that are unable to be done by a single entity, improvement in disaster and emergency response through enhanced relationships, and creating a space to discuss sea level rise adaptation and water infrastructure resiliency.<sup>3</sup> With the impact of climate change on availability and quality of freshwater resources, the resiliency and

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<sup>1</sup> One World One Water. “One Water for Climate Resiliency: A White Paper.” 29 June 2020.

<sup>2</sup> CDM Smith. “National Perspectives on One Water Programs.” October 2019.

<sup>3</sup> One World One Water. “One Water for Climate Resiliency: A White Paper.” 29 June 2020.

adaptive capacity of current water management frameworks through collaborative actions and planning between management agencies are of utmost importance. This urgency is reflected in the non-duplicative nature of the One Water Framework and detailed implementation offered by the original text in Bill 65.

The One Water Framework has been implemented in cities across the country to better integrate freshwater resource planning across departments. Below are summaries of case studies of One Water programs in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Austin, and Miami-Dade County.<sup>4</sup> Note: The outcomes reported below for each case study are not comprehensive. Refer to the original document for complete case studies.

#### Los Angeles, CA

- First IRP with a planning horizon of 2020 was established in 2007. After the drought event that began in 2012, the city responded by initiating OneWaterLA and extending the horizon to 2040 to manage LA's water.
- OneWaterLA resulted in identification of integration opportunities, strategies to conserve and reuse water resources, and funding sources to successfully carry out the program's policies. Stakeholder awareness and collaboration between City departments and regional agencies were also improved.

#### San Francisco, CA

- Created in October 2016, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission introduced OneWaterSF through the publication of OneWaterSF Vision.
- Outcomes include the development of curriculum for students to learn about their role in the hydrologic cycle, a zoo exhibit on resource use and recovery, installation of wireless water meters, and the establishment of a rebate program for rainwater harvesting.

#### Austin, TX

- Led by Austin Water, the Water Forward program uses the One Water planning approach to create recommendations on sustainable water management, climate change adaptation and resilience, and community inclusion for a minimum of the next 100 years.
- Identified strategies include the expansion of the Utility-Side Water Loss Control program to reduce leaks, requirement of capture and storage of stormwater

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<sup>4</sup> CDM Smith. "National Perspectives on One Water Programs." October 2019.

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runoff in multi-family residential or commercial developments, and the increased reuse of household greywater for non-potable demands.

Miami-Dade County, FL

- Miami-Dade has been involved in multiple sustainability and resilience programs, such as GreenPrint through ICLEI in 2009 and the Rockefeller Foundation's Resilient Cities in 2016. The Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department (WASD) is responsible for developing resilience strategies for water resources.
- WASD's integrated utility management strategy includes a 20-year, \$13.5 billion CIP to upgrade thousands of miles of pipes, pump stations, WTPs, and WWTPs.

Given the success of the implementation of the One Water Framework in these four locations, Honolulu could benefit from One Water in multiple ways. For example, there is currently no mechanism in place for connecting impacted agencies to work on adaptation efforts for sea level rise in Honolulu. Additionally, a partnership between BWS and DFM to capture, reuse, and recharge stormwater could conserve potable water and reduce runoff. Codifying a detailed One Water framework would create these partnerships and encourage collaboration to develop comprehensive adaptation and resilience strategies.

One World One Water has created an exhaustive framework for the implementation of One Water in Honolulu, including the identification of required actions to incorporate One Water and affected agencies in its implementation.

To advance needed climate adaptation planning initiatives and follow the Climate Change and Sea Level Rise Directive (Directive 18-2) from 2018, the Commission recommends the One Water Framework to be implemented in the City and County of Honolulu through the original detailed language in Bill 65.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments in support of Bill 65 (2020). The Climate Change Commission urges you to support passage of the bill. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Climate Change Commission at [ccc@honolulu.gov](mailto:ccc@honolulu.gov).

Sincerely,

Victoria Keener, Ph.D.

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Chair, Climate Change Commission

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