

# Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-04-02 6:00 PM

Meeting Time: 04-02-25 18:00

## eComments Report

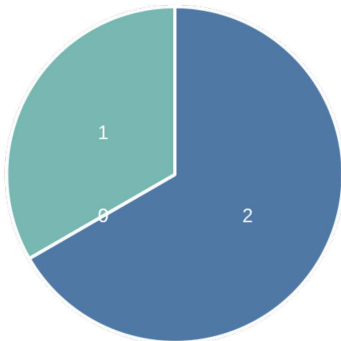
Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-04-02 6:00 PM	04-02-25 18:00	2	3	2	0	0

### Sentiments for All Meetings

The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

#### Overall Sentiment

Support (66%)   Oppose (0%)   Neutral (0%)  
No Response (33%)



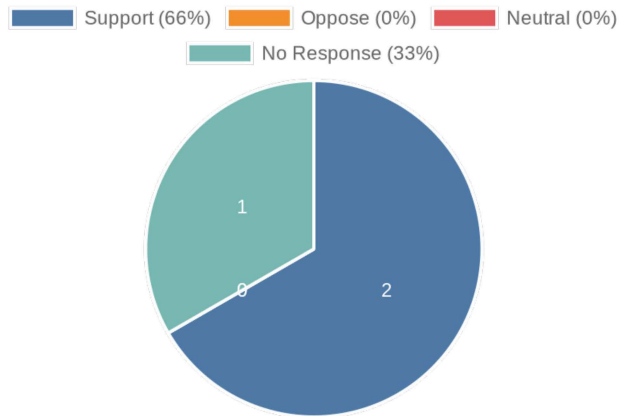
**Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-04-02 6:00 PM**  
04-02-25 18:00

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
AGENDA	3	2	0	0

**Sentiments for All Agenda Items**

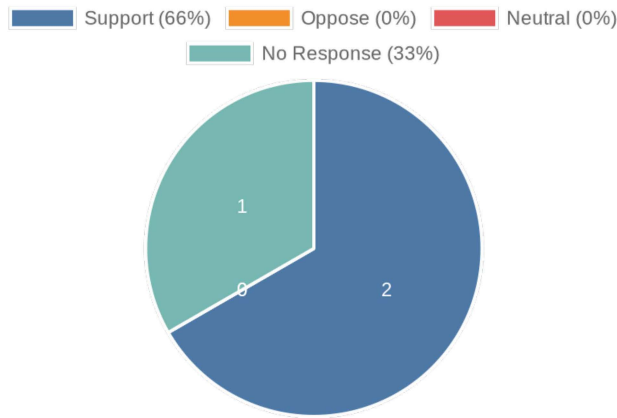
The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

**Overall Sentiment**



Agenda Item: eComments for A G E N D A

Overall Sentiment



**BFED Committee**

Location:

Submitted At: 1:15pm 04-03-25

Testimonies received BFED East Maui meeting 04-02-2025 (3)

**Guest User**

Location:

Submitted At: 6:46pm 04-02-25

Testimony Requesting County Budget Support for Infrastructure, Historic Sites, and Community Initiatives Aloha, Esteemed County Budget Committee Members,

My name is Jessie Kekiwi-Aweau, and I am honored to speak on behalf of N\_ Moku Aupuni o Ko\_olau Hui, the kalo farmers of Wailuanui and Ke'anae, and the broader community who depend on these spaces for agriculture, education, cultural preservation, and community well-being. Today, I respectfully ask for your support in funding critical infrastructure repairs, restoring historic sites, and investing in long-term sustainability for our shared spaces.

**Infrastructure & Water Flow Restoration**

For generations, kalo farming has sustained our families, yet the deteriorating infrastructure threatens water access, property safety, and agricultural sustainability. We request funding to repair clogged culverts, which cause dangerous flooding on Wailuanui Road and a resident's property, creating hazardous conditions. Additionally, we ask for support in restoring a non-operational water pipe, which once fed the lower lo\_i kalo in Wailuanui—a critical irrigation system necessary for food production and cultural continuity. Addressing these water access issues will protect homes, ensure safe road conditions, and secure reliable water flow for farmers, enabling the continuation of traditional agricultural practices.

**Ke\_anae Uka Property Upgrades**

We seek capital funding to upgrade Ke\_anae Uka, formerly the Ke\_anae YMCA, which serves as a hub for education, cultural workshops, camp and event area and community engagement. Necessary improvements

include electrical, plumbing, and structural repairs, ensuring this space remains functional, safe, and accessible for k\_puna, residents, and visitors. By investing in Ke\_anae Uka, we strengthen training programs, restoration efforts, and cultural initiatives that foster long-term resilience.

#### **Ke\_anae School – A National Historic Site & Community Resource**

We also request funding for Ke\_anae School, a Nationally Registered Historical Site. This cherished institution has the potential to serve as a safe resource center and after-school program for the communities of Ke\_anae and Wailuanui. However, repairs and maintenance are urgently needed to ensure the building is safe and fully functional for educational programs, mentorship, and cultural gatherings. Supporting this initiative will provide keiki with opportunities to learn, connect, and perpetuate traditional Hawaiian knowledge, ensuring the continuity of Hawaiian values and practices for generations to come.

#### **Historic Site Preservation – Miracle Church (Shrine/Coral Church)**

Additionally, we request funding to repair the roof of the Miracle Church (Shrine/Coral Church) in Wailuanui and renovate the interior deck, where the tabernacle sits. This historic site is deeply significant to our community, serving as a place of worship, reflection, and gathering. Structural damage threatens its integrity, and immediate repairs will ensure its preservation for future generations and cultural continuity.

#### **Support for Annual Ke\_anae Ko\_olaule\_a**

Lastly, we ask for funding for the Ke\_anae Ko\_olaule\_a, an annual gathering that brings together kupuna, practitioners, and keiki to celebrate Hawaiian traditions with locals and visitors. This event fosters community connection, cultural exchange, and stewardship, showcasing music, workshops, and agricultural demonstrations that educate and inspire. Funding will ensure the continued success of this event, strengthening cultural pride and engagement.

#### **Conclusion**

We humbly ask for your support in restoring essential infrastructure, preserving historical sites, and strengthening educational and cultural resources. These investments will safeguard our community's heritage, ensure safe and functional spaces for learning, and uphold the agricultural traditions that define Wailuanui and Ke'anae.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

#### **Guest User**

Location:

Submitted At: 10:25am 04-02-25

Aloha Kakou. I can't testify live today about the proposed RPT tier thresholds and rates. Hence these brief comments.

The mayor has begun using the flexibility the tiers give you to make the taxes allocated more progressively in a property class. By shifting the tier thresholds in the OO class upward, he has moved many homes in tier 2 to tier 1, and some from 3 to 2. This lowers the tax burden on the lower valued parcels.

I suggest you use exactly the same flexibility in the NOO and STR classes, but in the opposite direction. Lower the tier thresholds so many more of these vacation and second homes pay the higher rates in tiers 2 and 3. I am not suggesting an increase in total revenue by class, only suggesting to rearrange the tax more progressively, as the mayor has done with the OO class.

One note for later consideration. The RPAD data do not truly segregate all genuine long term rentals from second homes. We know there are a few thousand parcels classed as NOO which are actually used as long term rentals whose owners won't or can't qualify as LTR. However, I believe based on past conversations with Marcy Martin, that if tier 1 is set at <800,000, nearly all of those unregistered long term rentals will fall in tier 1. You can have a lower rate for them, and raise the rates on tiers 2 and 3 accordingly. For the STR class, ask Finance to run a hypothetical tier 1 threshold at the median, and tier 2 at the average. Then if your STR is in the bottom half of all parcels, it's in tier 1. If it's above average, it's in tier 3. Tier would contain those parcels above the median but below average.

One other note: it is useful to think of the "effective" tax rate in tiers 2 and 3. Even were you to set the top rate on NOO and STR to 15.00, at 1.5%, the owner would pay an effective rate closer to 10.00, or 1%, because that owner pays the lower tier 1 and tier 2 rates on much of the parcel's value.

Mahalo.

C. Ka'uiki Lind

PO Box 468

Hana, HI. 96713

**April 2, 2025**

Maui County Planning Commission  
Maui County Planning Department  
Maui Nui a Kama

Dear Members of the Maui County Planning Commission,

As a Native Hawaiian and a firm believer in the preservation of our cultural and environmental heritage, I am writing to strongly oppose the proposal to allow mobile food trucks and trailers on agricultural lands in Maui County. While I understand the intention to support local farmers, this proposal, as written, poses a significant threat to both our traditional subsistence practices and the natural resources we, as Native Hawaiians, have relied on for generations.

East Maui, where I call home, is a sacred place, rich with abundant resources that sustain both our food systems and our cultural practices. The waters surrounding this land provide us with vital fish species like **moi**, **ula** (lobster), and native seaweed, all of which are deeply tied to our identity as Hawaiians. These species are not merely food; they are part of our spiritual and cultural practices that have been passed down through generations. As a result, any overexploitation of these resources—whether through increased demand from commercial food trucks or otherwise—poses a grave threat to our community's subsistence and our way of life.

East Maui is home to the highest fish biomass on Maui Island, making it essential to the sustainability of our fisheries. Allowing mobile food trucks to operate in agricultural zones—selling seafood from our local reefs—will undoubtedly increase demand on these already vulnerable fish stocks, further endangering our local marine ecosystem. It is crucial to recognize that these resources are not infinite, and overfishing could disrupt the delicate balance of our marine environment, which many of us depend on for our daily sustenance.

The **Pa'akai analysis** should be directly applied in this situation, as this proposal threatens our traditional and customary rights to access and manage our marine resources. The interests of Native Hawaiians must take precedence over commercial tourism interests. Our rights to practice subsistence fishing, gather seaweed, and uphold the traditions of our ancestors are not negotiable, and any decision that disregards this should not be made lightly.

Furthermore, the sourcing of proteins for food trucks raises serious concerns for local farmers and our subsistence practices. While seafood may be sourced locally, other proteins like chicken, lamb, pork, goat, and beef are not available through sustainable, local practices due to the lack of

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EAST MAUI MEETING ON 4/02/25

USDA-approved slaughterhouses on Maui. It is highly likely that these food trucks would source their meats from large mainland distributors or commercial outlets like Costco. This undermines the whole idea of promoting sustainable, local agriculture and directly contradicts the principles of **mālama 'āina** (care for the land) that are central to our identity as Native Hawaiians.

If food trucks are to be allowed, I propose that strict regulations be implemented to ensure that **100% of the food served must come from the farm**, thereby ensuring that these businesses support local agriculture and maintain integrity. However, I also strongly urge the Commission to consider a **special use case permit** system, where each operation would be reviewed and approved based on its alignment with the principles of sustainability, local sourcing, and cultural respect. Permits should be granted on a **case-by-case basis**, ensuring that each food truck is thoroughly vetted for compliance with the values that protect our land and waters.

Additionally, I respectfully recommend that food trucks be restricted to operating only from **one hour after sunrise to one hour before sunset**. This would help minimize disruptions to the natural rhythms of East Maui, ensuring that these businesses do not interfere with the needs of local farmers or the preservation of our environment.

As tourism continues to grow in Hana and East Maui, we must remain vigilant in protecting our lands, waters, and traditional practices from commercialization that undermines the long-term sustainability of our community. This proposal, if approved, risks turning our sacred spaces into a commercialized area that no longer reflects the values of **mālama 'āina** and **mālama kai** (care for the sea). Our lands and waters are not commodities to be exploited but precious resources that sustain our people's culture and future.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Planning Commission to reconsider this proposal and instead explore alternatives that honor our Native Hawaiian heritage, protect our environment, and ensure that our children and grandchildren can continue to live in harmony with the land and sea as we have for centuries.

Mahalo nui loa for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,  
Ka'uiki Lind

Meleana Kurokawa  
P.O. Box 422  
Hana, HI 96713  
March 7, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

Aloha! I am writing as a concerned high school student and resident of Hana, Maui, in regards to the urgent need of a playground for our community. Hana, Kipahulu, and Keanae all currently lack a public playground for keiki who are not old enough to attend school. Additionally, the only playgrounds in East Maui that are provided on campus are outdated and pose numerous safety risks.

Playgrounds are essential for the well-being and development of children. They provide a safe environment for physical activity which is crucial for combating childhood obesity and developing skills such as: coordination, balance, muscle strengthening, and hand eye skills. Studies show that children living near parks with playgrounds have better mental health than children living near parks without playgrounds. Furthermore, playgrounds help children develop social skills, build friendships, and learn to share with others. There are also cognitive benefits of play that teach keiki problem solving skills, thinking critically, and even help with exploring cause and effect. Playgrounds positively impact emotional development by building confidence, self esteem, and even communication skills. The advantages of play are endless. Our East Maui communities currently do not have a dedicated space for these activities that would allow growth and development for our young ones.

A new playground would also serve as a place for Ohana's to come together while bringing a sense of community pride. It would provide a safe and enjoyable place for children to play and offer parents a space to socialize. Gathering parents/caregivers allows them the opportunity to support each other. This sense of community is particularly important in small towns like Hana, where social connection greatly enhances our quality of life and allows us to thrive together.

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EAST MAUI MEETING ON 4/02/25

If the Department of Parks and Recreation were able to develop Pa'ani Mai Park, Kipahulu Point Park, and Keanae Park, it would greatly enhance the well-being and healthy development for the children of our community. Not only our children but the community as a whole would benefit from a place to gather outdoors together. A playground falls clearly under your mission statement to "Provide safe, satisfying and cost effective recreational opportunities for the residents of and visitors to Maui County". I am confident that with support, we can create a space that will benefit current and future generations to come.

Mahalo for your attention to this important matter. I am looking forward to your response and sharing blueprints or ideas for the possible facilities. In the meantime I will reach out to our community and hear their opinions about my proposition. Together we can make this dream a reality for the children, families, and visitors of Hana. I have created a petition and have collected 410 amount of signatures and will continue to reach out to hana residents.

Sincerely,

Meleana Kurokawa

(808)-856-6777

[Meleanahiva@gmail.com](mailto:Meleanahiva@gmail.com)



Aloha,

My name is Maya Ross. I am a secondary teacher here in Hana at Hana High & Elementary. I was first introduced to Lalaine Pasion of STEMworks a few years ago through our school counselor. Lalaine was reaching out to Hana School for any teachers that would be interested in taking students to a young ladies' STEM based camp, called EXCITE. I am an English teacher, so it wasn't a natural choice of an educational excursion. But I thought, what a great opportunity for my students to experience and be exposed to STEM opportunities. I reached out and agreed to be a chaperone for two students. I've taken girls two summers now, and it's been transformative for our girls to experience. They are exposed to professions and areas of study they would otherwise not know about.

Lalaine has always understood and been a champion for our rural students to have these kinds of opportunities. And it isn't without the support of the Maui Economic Development Board funding these experiences for our students. Lalaine called me up in February and told me about the STEMWorks Convention that would take place on Oahu. Students from all over the state attend this major event and a lot of them compete, bringing their STEM projects with them to enter. On March 25, myself and three students woke up at 2am, drove to the airport and went to Oahu to live this experience. My students were intimidated, overwhelmed and had no idea the scale of the event. They begged for us to leave, feeling as if the other kids were smarter than them. By the end of the day, we were engaged in the break out sessions and by the next morning, my girls were excited to see the friends they made and engage further into the STEM opportunities they were given. One student wrote to me, "It made me think about college and explore my choices for a new major." She's in the 6th grade. Her classmate said it changed her life. And I can tell you it did. She had never slept away from her Papa before this trip. To see her growth in real time over the course of the two days brought me back to the reason of why I do what I do every day. A now 8th grader who I took on an Excite Camp trip wrote to me, "I always

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find myself applying what I learned at STEM in my classes. It affected my thinking about learning new subjects.”

None of these experiences would be possible without the funding and support of the Maui Economic Development Board. I ask that you please consider them in your budgeting decisions as I can tell you it's created a huge impact on our students, particularly in the future of women in STEM. These grants help support outreach programs like Excite Camp and STEMworks, especially for rural areas. I pray the budget cuts does not affect our kids ability to learn beyond what our rural school can offer.

Jerome Kekiwi, Jr. - President  
Norman Martin, Vice-President  
Kupa'a Luat - Hueu - Treasurer  
Jessie Kekiwi-Aweau - Secretary  
Radford Ka'auamo - Sgt. at Arms



Kanani Fredrick  
Earl Inouye  
Jennifer Kekiwi-Brown  
Guy Mahilani Namahoe

## **Testimony Requesting County Budget Support for Infrastructure, Historic Sites, and Community Initiatives**

Aloha Esteemed County Budget Committee members,

My name is Jessie Kekiwi-Aweau, and I am honored to speak on behalf of **Nā Moku Aupuni o Ko'olau Hui**, the kalo farmers of **Wailuanui and Ke'anae**, and the broader community who depend on these spaces for **agriculture, education, cultural preservation, and community well-being**. Today, I respectfully ask for your support in **funding critical infrastructure repairs, restoring historic sites, and investing in long-term sustainability for our shared spaces**.

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## **Conclusion**

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Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Jessie Kekiwi-Aweau

Na Moku Aupuni o Ko'olau Hui

Secretary/Lineal Descendant of Ke'anae and Wailuanui

[kapekaaweau@gmail.com](mailto:kapekaaweau@gmail.com)

(808)319-1972



## **BFED Committee**

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**From:** Dawn Lono  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 3, 2025 1:02 PM  
**To:** BFED Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Na Moku Ko'olaule'a - Testimony Attached  
**Attachments:** 2 Testimony for East Maui Public Budget Hearing 4.2.25 (1).pdf  
  
**Categories:** Processed