

Date: August 1, 2018

To: Water Resources Committee  
Maui County Council

From: Albert Perez, Executive Director  
Maui Tomorrow Foundation

Re: WR-18: Wellhead Protection Overlay District

Aloha Chair Atay and Committee Members:

The Maui Tomorrow Foundation SUPPORTS the proposed resolution, which would refer to the county's three planning commissions a proposed bill to amend Title 19 MCC to create a Wellhead Protection Overlay District. This would only apply to county wells.

When I left Maui and moved to Washington state, I had a chance to experience wellhead protection zones personally, in a couple of ways. First, I was elected President of my homeowners' association. I soon found out that this prestigious sounding title really should have been called Water System Manager, because that was my main job. In the mid-1990s, we received a notice from the state Department of Health that we needed to delineate the time-of-travel zones for our private well. At first, I thought this would be a hassle, but as I went through the process, and found that we didn't have any contaminant sources within our 10-year time-of-travel zone, I realized that it gave me a sense of relief to know that we didn't have to worry about our water.

The second experience I had with wellhead protection zones was when I was a GIS Analyst for the State of Washington. I was tasked with generating wellhead protection zones for several thousand public and private wells in the state, using the location of each well and a formula that was based on the pumping rate in gallons per minute. This dataset was adopted by the State Department of Health, and people's drinking water has been safer ever since.

Twenty years later, it is long past time for Maui County to protect our citizens in the same way. The proposed bill is a minimal step that will help to protect the health of county residents who rely on water from these wells. Clean water is a valuable resource that we may not fully appreciate until it is contaminated - as the people of Flint, Michigan will attest. We should have done this, and more, a long time ago. I urge you to pass the proposed resolution as soon as possible.

Mahalo.