

Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-04-02 10:00 AM

Meeting Time: 04-02-25 10:00

eComments Report

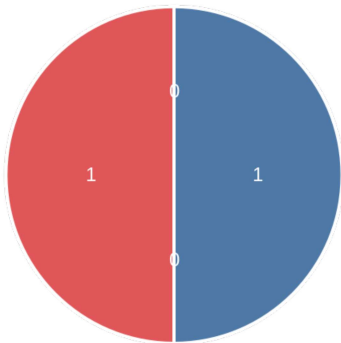
Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-04-02 10:00 AM	04-02-25 10:00	2	2	1	0	1

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 (50%) Oppose (0%) Neutral (50%)
No Response (0%)



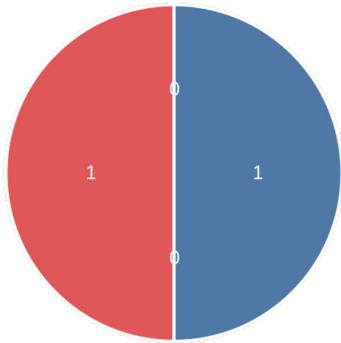
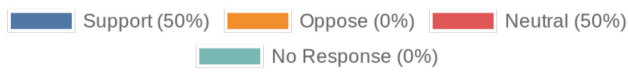
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-04-02 10:00 AM
04-02-25 10:00

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
A G E N D A	1	1	0	0
BFED-1 Bill 41 (2025) PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI (BFED-1)	1	0	0	1

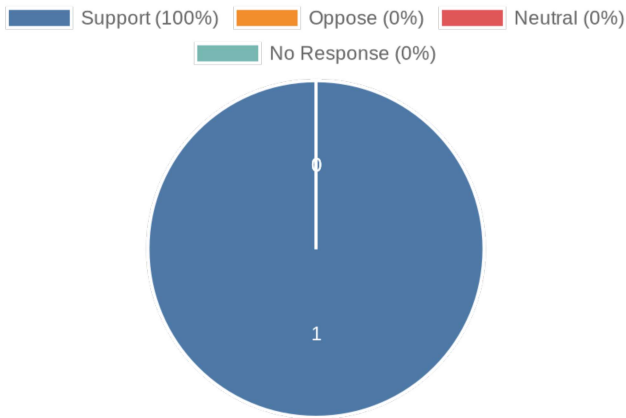
Sentiments for All Agenda Items

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

Overall Sentiment



Overall Sentiment



Brian Etheredge

Location:

Submitted At: 12:43pm 04-02-25

Aloha and thank you for your consideration today.

As a founding member and president of Maui Wedding and Event Association, I am testifying to our dire need of your assistance. We have been working in collaboration with MHLA, HTA, MVB, Mayor's office and all or any vested associations or organizations benefiting from tourism. Our association in under two years has grown to encompass over one hundred companies, representing thousands of employees. We, THEY, need your help. Our industry is in urgent peril. Since covid we are only retaining a fraction of our market share for events. A majority of our clientele are unsure if they can travel here or even if they are welcome. Our industry, at one point, was a leader in the destination event space and now we are losing our talent to the mainland. The companies are folding, employees are leaving and this will have far reaching implications for our economy as a whole and health of our community. I understand the need for housing and this is of great importance, our community also needs good paying jobs to be able to afford to live here. We are part of the ecosystem. Our "small" industry has traced back 1.5 to 2.5 billion dollars annually of taxable revenue to our islands. We do not have the expertise nor finances to execute an effective media campaign to welcome back our high value clientele. Those clients are mini marketing machines for Maui, pushing out professional and organic content to their families, friends and followers. They have substantially higher average guest spend per day. They develop emotional connection with Maui and destination loyalty returning for decades to come. They are also more pono stewards of our islands, attending ceremonies and gatherings with respect and reverence.

Not only does this industry increase the flow of high value tourists, we provide countless jobs and opportunities for our multi generational families to stay and prosper in our challenging economic environment. Our global competition is winning at showing up, marketing, enticing OUR talent to join them in expanding their economic future, not ours. If we do not act to mitigate the attrition of our workforce, we will no longer have an events industry on Maui.

Maui was once one of the top luxury destination wedding markets in the world. Now we are barely making the

list. I can promise you that every one of our members is scared for their future and most of them are planning their evacuation route. We cannot trust our rich historical reputation and trust that eventually the wedding and event economy will come back because every other destination is fighting for this business, OUR business. They are showing up, funding marketing initiatives and they will win. We won't have jobs and our talented craftspeople, some of the best in the world, will leave for more economic opportunity elsewhere. We all love Maui AND we all have to feed our families.

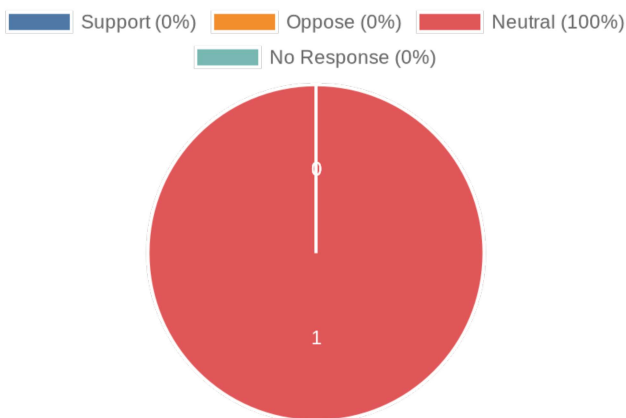
A true plan for Maui's economic recovery needs to include job opportunity. We are pleading for your support. We need your help before it is too late.

With Aloha,

Chef Brian Etheredge
MWEA

Agenda Item: eComments for BFED-1 Bill 41 (2025) PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI (BFED-1)

Overall Sentiment



Thomas Croly

Location:
Submitted At: 10:58am 04-02-25

RPT tax rates for Maui Homeowners

Maui County has approximately 27,500 properties that are Owner occupied. And all but 146 of these property owners benefit from a \$300,000 exemption and a much lower tax rate than any other property tax classification. To receive these benefits the owners of these properties must reside full time as Maui residents. The code defines this full time occupancy as 270 days per year.

Some of these owner occupied properties are strictly homes with no other uses taking place on the property. Many take advantage of Maui County code 19.67.40 and operate a home business that allows them to operate a variety of businesses like massage therapy, hair salons, professional services like law offices accounting,

bookkeeping, consulting and a host of remote workers operate from their homes. As defined in code these business must be operated by the resident/owner and may have up to 1 employee, may use upto 40% of the home for business purposes and serve upto 2 customers at a time up to 16 customers a day. All of these home based businesses are taxed as owner occupied.

Some owner occupied properties located in business zones are made up of multiple buildings with some offering full retail stores or even food service and the entire property, including the commercial buildings are taxed at owner occupied tax rates, provided that at least a partial owner resides somewhere on the property.

Some Maui residents operate daycare or preschools for their homes and are not only taxed as owner occupied, but provided an additional exemption on top of the homeowner exemption

The only Maui resident home owners operating a home based business that is not taxed at owner occupied tax rates are the 146 Maui residents who have gone thru the process to be granted a B&B permit to use a portion, sometimes as little as a single bedroom to host guests in their homes, for less than 180 days at a time.

I am asking the Council to establish fairness for these Maui residents by establishing the tax rates in the Commercialized Residential tax classification to mirror the rates that are provided to all the other home based business operators in Maui County. While you cannot restore the home owner exemption to these homeowners, because that would take a change in the Bed and Breakfast ordinance, you can tax them more fairly

Over the 16 years since the Commercialized Residential tax classification was established and applied to my home, the increase in property tax that I have been asked to pay has risen from double and in this budget is proposed more than to triple the total tax I would pay if I was provided the same tax treatment as any other maui resident home based business owner would pay.

Please amend the range of rates proposed for the Commercialized Residential tax classification in the resolution for the tax hearing. The range of rates proposed in the draft agenda on granicus are very punitive and only allows this year's rates to be increased over last year's rates and leaves the Council no room for adjusting the rates down to a more equitable rate for the Owner occupied, Bed and Breakfast permit holders.

I would like to suggest a range of rates for Commercialized Residential
Tier 1 \$0-\$1,300,000 - \$1.50 to \$4.00 (same tier and lower end as owner occupied)
Tier 2 \$1,300,000-\$3,000,000 - \$1.50 to \$5.00 (same tier and lower end as OO)
Tier 3 over \$3,000,000 - \$3.00 to \$8.00

I am advocating for Commercialized Residential tax rate to match the rates chosen for Owner Occupied, Since the property owners in the Commercialized residential classification are exclusively Maui County Residents who are REQUIRED to live full time in their homes, these residents should be eligible for an RPT rate that is the equivalent of any other Maui Resident Homeowner. The County Code requires that these resident homeowner lose their \$300,000 homeowner exemption, but it does not restrict them from being charged a tax rate any greater than the Owner occupied tax rate. So please allow the range of rates for the Council to consider to include at least the same lower rate range as Owner occupied.