

EACP Committee

From: Robin Newbold <robin@mauireefs.org>
Sent: Tuesday, September 08, 2020 7:39 AM
To: EACP Committee
Subject: Testimony in support of proposed EACP bill relating to pesticide and fertilizer use on County Property
Attachments: MNMRC Testimony to EACP Committee 9.8.20.docx

MAUI  NUI
MARINE RESOURCE COUNCIL

To: Maui County Council's Environmental, Agricultural and Cultural Preservation Committee

Committee Chair: Shane M Sinenci; Vice Chair: Tasha Kama; Members: Kelly Takaya King, Alice L. Lee, Michael J. Molina, Tamara Paltin, Yuki Lei Sugimura, Riki Hokama and Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez

From: Maui Nui Marine Resource Council

Date: September 8, 2020

RE: **Testimony in support of the proposed bill: "A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING CHAPTER 2.50, MAUI COUNTY CODE, RELATING TO PESTICIDE AND FERTILIZER USE ON COUNTY PROPERTY."**

Maui Nui Marine Resource Council is a Maui-based nonprofit organization recognized for our ability to work in partnership with our community toward our vision of clean ocean water, healthy coral reefs and an abundance of native fish for all of Maui Nui.

We are pleased to provide our support of the proposed bill to establish Chapter 2.50, Maui County Code, relating to pesticide and fertilizer use on County property. We applaud this bill's goal of safeguarding the health and welfare of County of Maui employees, residents, and visitors and conserving and protecting the County's waterways and natural resources by prohibiting the County's purchase or use of certain pesticides and fertilizers.

As a marine conservation organization, we hope you are aware of the positive impact that this bill would have on the nearshore coral reefs and marine wildlife of Maui County.

Scientific studies from as far back as 1982 demonstrate that pesticides, insecticides and fungicides have an adverse impact on the survival and reproduction of coral and other marine invertebrates.

Researchers have found that pesticides (herbicides) interrupt reproduction in coral. Even low concentrations of pesticides interfere with metamorphosis, making coral reproduction impossible.

We also support the language in this proposed bill that would prohibit the County's use of synthetic fertilizers at County parks. Synthetic fertilizers are petroleum based. They dissolve and release nitrogen rapidly when in contact with soil moisture, rain or irrigation. The dissolved nitrogen quickly enters the groundwater and is transported into the ocean. In the ocean, the nitrogen causes excessive algae growth that smothers corals and causes coral reef loss.

There are safe alternatives to pesticides and synthetic fertilizers which have been proven to be effective here on Maui, including at The Westin Maui Resort.

On Maui, reefs provide an estimated \$376 million in flood protection benefits each year, provide food for our people, and support activities that we all enjoy, including snorkeling, surfing, diving and fishing.

Maui County has the opportunity to lead the way in demonstrating how landscaping and grounds maintenance can be achieved without toxic reef-harming pesticides, herbicides and synthetic fertilizers.

We thank you in advance for your leadership in moving this bill forward, for the future of our coral reefs.