

TESTIMONY FROM LINDA PUPPOLO
Testifier's name

RE: Testimony in Support of Maui AIDS Foundation's grants from the
COUNTY OF MAUI Mayor Richard T. Bissen Jr.'s Budget Proposal for Fiscal
Year 2026

Aloha Council Members Lee, Rawlins-Fernandez, Sinenci, Sugimura, Kama,
Johnson, Paltin, Cook, and U'u-Hodgins,

At last year's budget hearing, MAF requested expanded grant funding and you responded by increasing our funding by \$221,000. We were able to finally get contracts in place in December for the \$70,000 expansion for prevention/harm reduction and in March for the extra \$151,000 for expansion of the Free Clinic. For that we want to give you a big Mahalo.

It hasn't been in place for very long but is already increasing our capacity for the following objectives:

- Expansion of MAF's free clinic services.
- Expansion of MAF's prevention and harm reduction education to set a path toward elimination of HIV, Hepatitis, and other Sexually Transmitted Infections.
- Increase training and distribution of Narcan to assist Maui County residents with the ability to administer life-saving opioid overdose treatment
- Expand capacity to enable staff to begin some vaccination services by hiring an RN or LPN to support our one Provider, Dr. Bryan Chin

Collaborations:

1. Aloha House
2. Champ Clinic (opioid treatment)
3. MCCC
4. CORE Bus – is in Kihei right now.
5. Hana, Lanai, Molokai, Lahaina
6. Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement – Kako'o

Successes:

99% eligible enrolled clients in our Ryan White Program (99% now have medical insurance),
97% have maintained an undetectable viral load- no new HIV cases)
Neuro-Syphilis processed and in hospital

Challenges: no free mpox vaccine available – no nurse to help in clinic and implement vaccine program yet. Cannot expand but Dr. Bryan has been maintaining service
Client fear over the current federal administration

Town Hall for interested parents of Maui Prep Academy – Trans & Mahu people and their new policies.