

MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

Testimony on EACP-16

Re: Restricting the Use and Sale of Single-Use Plastic Disposable Foodware
Tuesday, February 18th, 2020

Dear Chair Sinenci, Vice Chair Kama &
Members of the Environmental, Agricultural and Cultural Preservation Committee,

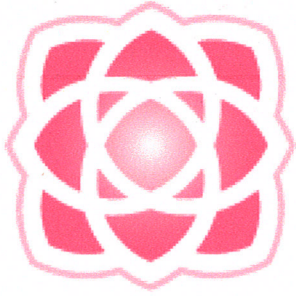
Aloha and Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

We understand the Council is looking at the bill that the Honolulu City Council recently passed. We have concerns with this bill and the impact it would have on businesses.

Before this bill moves out of committee, we feel the Council should do more to understand the repercussions to businesses. When the ban on polystyrene was first being considered, a task force of members from various industries, government officials and environmental groups was created to discuss the effects and make recommendations before legislation was introduced. We are not aware of any recent activity to reach out to the business community, like a survey, to identify who has already migrated to making the switch and who has not, the reasons for not making the change and the impacts to those businesses. If the Committee will provide time for a survey to be done, we would be happy to assist with that effort.

While we appreciate the exemption on significant hardships due to no reasonably affordable alternatives, we feel the definition of reasonably affordable is too high at 40% and does not allow for consideration based on individual circumstances, including size and operation of the business. Given the margins that many restaurants have to run on to stay in business, this would be damaging. At a time when small businesses are already facing a potential increase in the Maui County GET and a possible minimum wage increase, now is not the time to add another expense without understanding the effects it will have.

RECEIVED AT EACP MEETING ON 2/18/20
Jeanette Tanielu



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We support taking care of our environment and realize each neighbor island has different resources available to solve challenges. As an example, Honolulu has very different landfill management and waste conversion options than we do in Maui County. Our understanding is we do not have the necessary landfill management processes to fully allow the compostable containers to breakdown as they can and in the timeframe they are supposed to. However, that may have changed. We also feel that the Council should hear from the Department of Environmental Management to understand the full effects of the polystyrene ban and whether that ban has resulted in significant landfill and environmental benefits and to hear their thoughts on the opportunities, challenges, and impacts of this ban.

Finally, the current date of 2021 on the proposed bill is too soon for businesses to get rid of their current quantities of single-use plastics and would result in them essentially throwing money away, so the timeframe should be extended.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on the bill and we ask that this bill be deferred so necessary research and discussions can be had. We also hope that the County will work to address litter control and expanded recycling programs which can be positive steps moving forward and help to avoid the need for bans.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.