

Agriculture, Diversification, Environment, and Public Transportation Committee on 2024-10-10 1:30 PM

Meeting Time: 10-10-24 13:30

eComments Report

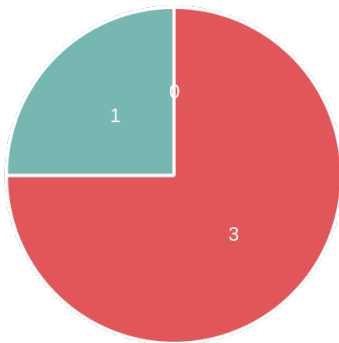
Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Agriculture, Diversification, Environment, and Public Transportation Committee on 2024-10-10 1:30 PM	10-10-24 13:30	2	4	0	0	3

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 (0%) Oppose (0%) Neutral (75%)
No Response (25%)



Agriculture, Diversification, Environment, and Public Transportation Committee on 2024-10-10

1:30 PM

10-10-24 13:30

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
A G E N D A	1	0	0	0
ADEPT-1(26) DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, DRAFT MAUI COUNTY FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY PLAN (ADEPT-1(26))	3	0	0	3

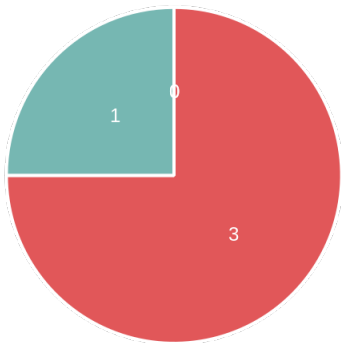
Sentiments for All Agenda Items

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

Overall Sentiment

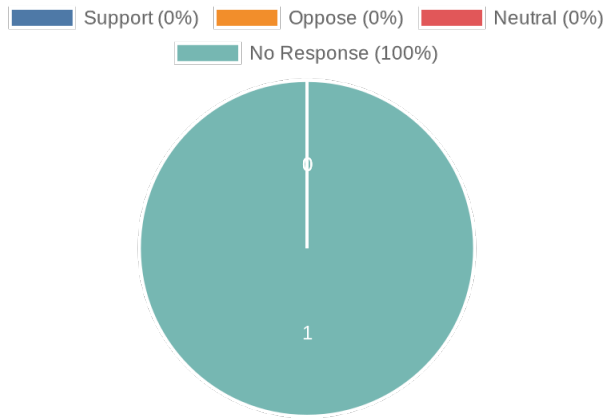
Support (0%) Oppose (0%) Neutral (75%)

No Response (25%)



Agenda Item: eComments for A G E N D A

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:14pm 10-06-24

Aloha,

Please do not reverse the anti pesticide bill that has kept Maui kids and Golfers from having poisons (pesticides and herbicides) from off gassing in their faces when they use Maui County Parks and Golf Course.

The platform for such poisons is OrganoPhosphates which are Estrogen mimickers and can be used to keep breast cancer cells alive in a petri dish.

The Golf Course and Parks are in great condition since they stopped using poison. Poison is expensive, use that money to give County Workers an increase in pay.

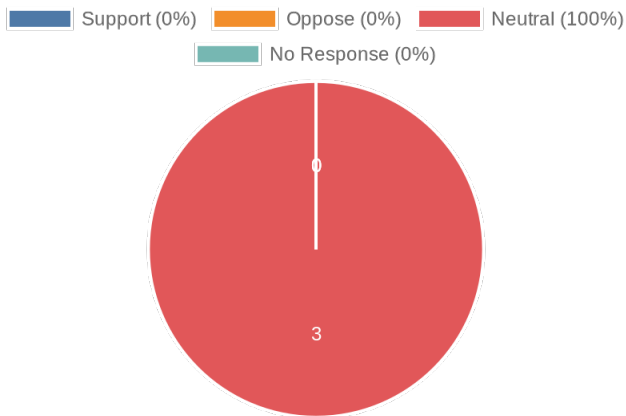
BILL 131 (2024), RELATING TO PESTICIDE AND FERTILIZER USE ON COUNTY PROPERTY (ADEPT-16)

The ADEPT Committee heard testimony and this item was deferred. Bottom line is, we don't need Poison. What we need is people who value the Keiki by using Regenerative Ag practices that build soil health versus spraying poison that kills the life in the soil and off gasses into the air we breathe. Poisons are making our kids sicker and we need to wake up and do better.

Thank you.

Aloha,
Mila

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:51am 10-10-24

Aloha Chair Johnson and ADEPT Committee members,

My name is Sydney Smith and my husband and I own a coffee farm below Makawao and I also advocate for farmers and ranchers.

The Maui County Food And Nutritional Security Plan is very aspirational. I'm sure it took a lot of work and I appreciate everything that went into it.

However, I had some issues with it. I'll try to be brief.

In the problem category, The Plan does discuss invasives which is a significant problem. But there's not a single mention of ag theft. Every farmer and rancher I know has had significant losses from ag theft. And often times the police don't give it any attention. If someone shoplifts a \$25 handbag from Macys they're all over it. But if a farmer reports their entire avocado or banana crop was stolen they act like they don't care or they have more important things to do. Most farmers I know don't even report Ag theft anymore. This is a real problem.

Adding things like rent control as one of the aspirations, when even a brief dive into researching if rent control even works will inform the researcher that it never works. In fact it has the opposite effect. Increasing supply is what makes rental prices come down.

Providing insurance to large land owners indemnifying them from liability would increase lands for axis deer hunting. Without that most will not risk that extreme liability. That wasn't listed in the plan.

Encouraging the Planning Department and ZAED to treat farmers and ranchers with respect instead of someone they perceive as gaming the system would be a huge step forward. I know there are people who do game the

system but painting everyone with the same brush just encourages people to avoid both departments at all cost.

A legal defense fund for farmers being sued by wealthy non-farming newcomers would be extremely valuable. A rancher I know lost access to a 75 acre field for his cattle ranch. A wealthy landowner blocked his easement and refused to let him access his own land over that easement. Police told him it's a civil matter. Lawyers wanted a \$10,000 retainer fee which he did not have. He got his access back years later when that person sold and moved away. The new landowner decided to abide by the recorded easement. Another had his fencing ripped out when an adjoining non-farming neighbor dumped many cubic tons of boulders and dirt down onto his farm. It's been in court for over ten years. But he could only afford an attorney who worked on contingency and has lost any hope of winning his case. Estimates to remove the material and replace the fence is in the six figures. The same guy who dumped the material cut off another neighbor's water supply and all her cattle died. My own non-farming neighbor is suing myself and four other farmers attempting to block our recorded easement. I'm paying the legal fees for everyone. I've paid over \$310,000 so far. If I was not there to pay the legal fees my neighbors would lose their access to our jointly owned and County mandated fire protection system.

And I've heard from many farmers who sold out and moved away due to not being able to afford legal representation. It's just sad.

So, all the hopes and dreams of what ag could be in a perfect (and well-funded world) were beautifully presented. I just think there was some important missing reality.

Sydney Smith

Maliko Estate Coffee
808-268-3646 call/text
808-572-0072 farm

Jonathan Helton

Location:
Submitted At: 10:38am 10-09-24

Please see attached.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 4:12pm 10-04-24

I applaud the efforts of the MDOA to develop this draft document for discussion on such an important topic for Maui County. It is clear that a lot of work has gone into its development. But while it is dense on Objectives and supporting activities, it is all over the place without a clear focus and few, if any of the objectives or activities are actually measurable. Some suggestions: 1) Separate the objectives and activities under each goal into short-term (1-5 years), medium term (6-10 years) and long term (11+ years); or follow the years of the Strategic Plan to help give this more focus and to give the reader an idea of the priority of all these items and when we can expect to see them acted upon or completed. 2) Some of these objectives/activities seem to fall within the purview of other Maui County Departments--clarify which ones these are and indicated they have buy-in to what is being proposed. 3) Remove activities related to Federal Agencies in which the County isn't likely to have much impact. 4) Include baseline data for every objective that is trying to "Increase" or "Expand" something so the outcome is actually measurable. 5) What does "Support" mean--how will it be measured? 6) Some of these activities are already being done--either remove them or clarify that they are already ongoing and by whom. 7) Make them all measurable and attainable within the specific time period. 8) Address the "elephant in the room"--FUNDING--How much funding is anticipated to be available from the County or MDOA to put toward addressing these goals, objectives and activities each year. Will the MDOA grant solicitation require that one or more of these are addressed in order for the grantee to receive funding? Thank you so much for moving this discussion forward and I hope these suggestions are helpful as begin to revise this draft!

Oct. 10, 2024, 1:30 p.m.

Council Chamber, Kalana O Maui Building

To: Maui County Council, Agriculture, Diversification, Environment, and Public Transportation Committee

Gabe Johnson, Chair

Shane Sinenci, Vice-Chair

From: Jonathan Helton, Policy Researcher

Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

RE: COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT MAUI COUNTY FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY PLAN (ADEPT-1(26))

Aloha Chair Johnson, Vice-Chair Sinenci and other members of the Committee,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii would like to offer its **comments** on the draft of the [Maui County Food and Nutrition Security Plan](#).

Specifically, we suggest the final version of the plan address Maui's zoning rules for beekeeping. This recommendation could fit under the objective labeled "Support producers in navigating regulations and reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens."

Maui County should look to revise its rules about where beekeeping is permitted. Currently, beekeeping is included in the definitions of "Animal and livestock raising" and "Agriculture" in the code.¹

These uses are only allowed in the Agricultural and Rural zoning districts. Beekeeping is also a permitted use in the Maui Research & Technology Park District and in Interim districts and certain project districts.

Section 19.04.020 provides that, in general, "Any use that is not expressly listed as a permitted principal, accessory, or special use is prohibited."² A reasonable inference is that beekeeping is not permitted in any county residential or commercial districts, absent a variance or other type of special approval.

¹ "[19.04.040 - Definitions](#)," Maui County Code, accessed Oct. 8, 2024.

² "[19.04.020 - Compliance](#)," Maui County Code, accessed Oct. 8, 2024. The Cooperative Extension of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa has a similar understanding of Maui zoning code. See: "[Compliance with Beekeeping Laws in Hawaii](#)," accessed Oct. 8, 2024.

Grassroot has been involved in two pieces of beekeeping-related legislation this year, and these bills have highlighted the importance that beekeepers and honeybees play in Hawaii’s ecosystems, economic diversification and even the world’s food system.

First, Hawai’i County lawmakers passed a sweeping bill that removed outdated permits and legalized beekeeping in all zones, subject to reasonable setback limits and health and safety rules.³ Second, the Honolulu City Council decided against proposed limits on beekeeping that would have denied many Oahu homeowners the ability they now have to keep a few hives in their backyards.⁴

The Big Island Beekeepers Association has testified that Hawai’i Island alone supplies 75% of Canada’s queen bees and 30% to 35% of the mainland’s queens. Queen sales, in addition to hobbyists selling honey and wax, make beekeeping a \$20 million industry on the island.⁵ Because certain mainland crops, nuts and fruits depend on commercial pollination, it’s no understatement to say that Hawaii’s bees help feed the world.

Oahu, Maui and Kauai counties do not have as many beekeepers or hives, but their bees play an important role in pollinating flowers and crops and providing alternative income sources for beekeepers.

Maui’s beekeepers and prospective beekeepers could further contribute to the economic and ecological sustainability of the county if current zoning rules were relaxed as they are in other counties.

We would welcome dialogue about this important topic.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Jonathan Helton
Policy Researcher
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

³ [“Hawaii Island beekeepers rejoice at Council’s passage of Bill 144,”](#) Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, Sep. 8, 2024.

⁴ Keli’i Akina, [“To bee or not to bee?”](#) Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, Oct. 7, 2024.

⁵ June 20, 2024 meeting of the Leeward Planning Commission. See the [5:29:20 mark](#).