

**DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND
PLANNING COMMITTEE**
Council of the County of Maui

MINUTES

September 14, 2023

Online Only via BlueJeans

CONVENE: 9:03 a.m.

PRESENT: VOTING MEMBERS:

Councilmember Tamara Paltin, Chair
Councilmember Nohelani U‘u-Hodgins, Vice-Chair (In 9:09 a.m.)
Councilmember Tom Cook, Member
Councilmember Tasha Kama, Member
Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez, Member
Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci, Member

NON-VOTING MEMBERS:

Councilmember Gabe Johnson, Member
Councilmember Alice L. Lee, Member

EXCUSED: VOTING MEMBERS:

Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

STAFF:

Paige Greco, Legislative Analyst
James Krueger, Senior Committee Analyst
Sam Tanck, Legislative Analyst
Richard Mitchell, Legislative Attorney
Maria Leon, Committee Secretary
Jean Pokipala, Council Services Assistant Clerk
Lei Dinneen, Council Services Assistant Clerk
David Raatz, Director of Council Services
Richelle Kawasaki, Deputy Director of Council Services
Shelly Espeleta, Supervising Legislative Analyst
Nālani Fujihara, Hawaiian Language Communications Specialist

Zhantell Lindo, Council Aide, Moloka‘i Residency Area Office
Roxanne Morita, Council Aide, Lāna‘i Residency Area Office
Mavis Oliveira, Council Aide, East Maui Residency Area Office
Bill Snipes, Council Aide, South Maui Residency Area Office

Angela Lucero, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Paltin
Susan Clements, Executive Assistant to Councilmember U‘u-Hodgins
Jared Agtunong, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Cook

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

Evan Dust, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Kama
Lei Kama-Sickels, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Kama
Haunani Madela, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez
Sarah Sexton, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez
Dawn Lono, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Sinenci
Gina Young, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Sinenci
Don Atay, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Sinenci
Axel Beers, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Johnson
Kate Griffiths, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Johnson
Takamiya, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Lee

ADMIN.: Victoria Takayesu, Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation Counsel
Michael Hopper, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation Counsel

OTHERS: *Testifiers*
Dennis Ka'aihue
Jon Kinimaka
Ann Williams
Dick Mayer
Jeffrey Steven
Joe Ritter
Susan Pcola-Davis
Mario Vendetti
Kamana Gomes
Johann Lall
Lisa Darcy
Manuel Kuloloio
Leah Kirkman
Junya Nakoa
Bridget Mowat
Keola Koa-Ponce
Ken Chiate
Rosemarie Johnson

(34) additional attendees

PRESS: *Akakū: Maui Community Television, Inc.*
Peter Boylan, Honolulu Star-Advertiser
The Molokai Dispatch
Catherine Pactol, Hawaii Public Radio
KITV4

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

CHAIR PALTIN: . . . *(gavel)*. . . Will the Disaster, Resilience, International Affairs, and Planning Committee come to order. The time is now 9:03. If I can ask everyone to please silence their cell phones or other noisemaking devices, that will help our cause. Members, under the Sunshine Law, if you are not in the Council Chamber, please identify by name who, if anyone, is in the room, vehicle, or workspace with you today. Minors do not need to be identified. Also, please see the last page of the agenda for information on meeting connectivity. My name is Tamara Paltin, and I'll be your Chair for today's DRIP meeting. Also with us today is Councilmember Tom Cook. Aloha kakahiaka.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Good morning, Chair.

CHAIR PALTIN: And online we have Councilmember Tasha Kama. Aloha kakahiaka.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Aloha kakahiaka, Chair. And it's good to see everyone, although I'm coming in from home. And I am in my workspace, and I am alone. Thank you.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. We also have Councilmember Keani Rawlins-Fernandez. Aloha kakahiaka.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha kakahiaka kākou, mai Molokaʻi nui Ahina. I'm at the Molokaʻi District Office, alone on my side of the office, and we have our Community Outreach Specialist Zhantell Lindo and my EA Haunani Madela on the other side of the office.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. And in the Chambers we have Councilmember Shane Sinenci.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Aloha kakahiaka kākou, mai Moku Nā Wai ʻEhā. There are no testifiers at the Hāna District Office.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. And excused Voting Committee Members at this time is Committee Vice-Chair Nohelani Uʻu-Hodgins and Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura. We do have two Non-Voting Committee Members in our Chambers today. Aloha kakahiaka, Council Chair Alice Lee.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Good morning, Chair and everyone.

CHAIR PALTIN: Good morning. And aloha kakahiaka, Councilmember Gabe Johnson

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Aloha Chair, Councilmembers, Committee Members. There's no testifiers at the Lānaʻi District Office. Mahalo. Thank you so much.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. This meeting of the Disaster, Resilience, International Affairs, and Planning Committee of the Maui County Council is located on the traditional ʻāina of the Kanaka ʻOiwī, who never ceded their sovereignty to the United States. We recognize that Her Majesty Queen Liliʻuokalani yielded the Hawaiian Kingdom to the U.S. in duress under threat of a violence to avoid the bloodshed of her people. We further recognize that Hawaiʻi remains an illegally occupied nation-state by the United

September 14, 2023

States, as documented in a 2021 Scholarly Article for the National Lawyers Guild Review by Andrew Reid, Adjunct Professor of Law at the University of Denver, Sturm College of Law. Generations of Kānaka Maoli and their knowledge systems have sustainably cared for Hawai'i, and continue to do so. We are grateful to occupy this space and learn the ways in which we can contribute. As a Committee, we seek to support the varied strategies that the indigenous people of Hawai'i are using to protect their land and their communities, and commit to dedicating time and resources to working in solidarity. Our Committee Staff for today, we have Committee Secretary Maria Leon; Legislative Analyst Paige Greco; Legislative Analyst Trainee Samantha Tanck; Senior Legislative Analyst James Krueger; Legislative Attorney Richard E. Mitchell; Assistant Clerk Jean Pkipala. From Corporation Counsel, we have Corporation Counsel Victoria Hamilton Takayesu. Members, because we only have one item on the agenda today, I will have opening comments and presentations from Department representatives, if any are present, before reading...receiving testimony.

ITEM 2(11): POTENTIAL COUNCIL INVESTIGATION RELATING TO THE AUGUST 2023 WILDFIRES ON MAUI ISLAND (Rule 7(B))

CHAIR PALTIN: So, on the agenda today, we have DRIP-2(11), Potential Council Investigation Relating to the August 2023 Wildfires on Maui Island. Under Rule 7(B) of the Rules of the Council, the Committee intends to discuss a potential Council investigation relating to the August 2023 wildfires on Maui Island. The Committee may discuss a potential Council investigation relating to the August 2023 wildfires on Maui Island and other related matters. No legislative action will be taken. So, the main reason that I scheduled this item was that at the end of August, there was an incident in Kā'anapali where the sirens were sounded, and there wasn't good information about what was going on for folks. There was a County of Maui Facebook post that said Level 3 evacuation, go now, and then it...it names some obscure streets that a lot of people didn't know. And so, with that occurring so close to the previous wildfire, the concern is, you know, as a legislative body, any investigation should have a legislative purpose. And so, the question is, what is our process for alerting people of how to evacuate, and where to go, and all of those things. So, you know, anything that we post has to be posted a week in advance, and drafted even before that. So, at this time, the...the resolution on tomorrow's agenda is a little dated. We did invite the Police Chief, the Fire Chief, the Emergency Management Administrator, and we did receive correspondence back from them that they will not be able to attend and answer questions because of the current ongoing lawsuit. We also did communicate with the Attorney General on if she had any objections to us conducting an investigation. So, that correspondence is all online for anyone that would like to see the...what we sent out and what we got back. It's on maucounty.us/agendas. And if you look at today's date, September 14th, under the Disaster, Resilience, International Affairs, and Planning Committee meeting details, you can...you can access all of those documents. But, basically, the...the purpose is to kind of find out what are the emergency evacuation procedures, and how they are, and if...if there needs to be legislative action going forward to kind of make people feel safer that they will be notified if there's an emergency. And...and also, you know, to kind of find out the procedures as roads are closed for safety issues that there is a still way out for

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

people. If...I mean I guess you have to, in the moment or in the EOC, decide which danger is more and which is less to find people a way to get out of things. So, that's pretty much the point of today's meeting, is to look at legislative solutions going forward as to how people will be notified of evacuations. And...so, part of it is...is knowing what the existing policy is. And I'm not sure...I know...I can read to you a little bit of the letter that we received from the...I can...Attorney General, that she's in receipt of the letter dated September 6th, 2023 about a potential investigation. She appreciates us reaching out to her. She doesn't think this investigation would impede the investigator's ability to complete their investigation, and she details the scope of the investigation in the event that we do not want to duplicate efforts. She remains committed to this...her investigation being unbiased, independent, and transparent. And she goes on to state, the investigation will be completed in three phases, that she will issue the investigator's report at the end of each phase, along with the documents supporting their data and analysis. She does not intend to redact any material except under certain circumstances. For example, any material contained in the investigator's report, or data that is the subject of a separate investigation, or to protect the privacy of individuals. And by individuals, she doesn't mean State or County employees; individuals who have volunteered or agreed to be interviewed. Redacted material will be identified generally with a statement of the reason for the redaction. Fire Safety Research Institute has been selected to investigate Government agency, State and County actions up to and during the first 24 to 72 hours of the fire and its aftermath. And there is an attached copy of the FSRI Fact Sheet. So, Phase I is fact finding about how the fire incident unfolded. This phase will take approximately three months, and include data gathering on important aspects of the incident. This phase will yield a comprehensive timeline to be the foundation of that analysis. Phase II is analysis of the data, determining how various fire protection systems functioned in this fire incident. This phase should be completed in approximately six months, and will yield an incident analysis report that includes review of policies and actions of State and County agencies in preparing for and responding to the incident. And Phase III would be best practices that incorporate additional data and recommendations for Hawai'i to take action toward prevention. This phase will yield a forward-looking report to answer the question, how do we prevent this from happening again? It will include recommendations, strategies, and tactical considerations from subject matter experts. Once this phase is completed, approximately 12 months after the start of the investigation, a report of the findings and recommendations will be shared with the people of Hawai'i. And so, they go on to state if there is any questions, we can reach out to them. So, you know, it's kind of a year time frame, and...and to me, anything can happen within that year. So, if we can clarify policies and procedures related to evacuations for our public, or if they need to be legislated, that would...that would be the primary reason for scheduling this meeting. I also wanted to state that this is not anything towards our front-line workers. You know, our Police, our Fire, our Public Works...everyone that was in the field up to, during, and after the wildfires, you know, there is no doubt in my mind that they did the best under their ability of what they were seeing and information that they had at their...at the time available to them. You know, we talked previously about the redundancy of communication systems, as communications were down during that time, and the need to be able to rely on more than just one communication system. Personally, I'm aware of Police, Fire, Public

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

Works, lifeguards, people that lost their own houses, so this is nothing about a conspiracy theory or...or, you know, they wanted to...to have the town burn down because they lost their own houses too. It's just about how to...how to kind of restore trust that evacuations will happen in a timely and orderly fashion. And with that, if Ms. Takayesu has any opening comments before we open for public testimony.

MS. TAKAYESU: No, Chair, I do not. Thank you.

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay. So, we will now move on to public testimony for DRIP-2(11). Oral testimony via phone or video conference will be accepted. Please note that if you are signed in, you are on the list to testify, even if you did not request to testify. Please let Staff know in chat if you are signed on...if you are signed on and do not intend to testify. Testifiers wanting to provide video or audio testimony should have joined the online meeting via the BlueJeans link or phone numbers noted on today's agenda. Written testimony is encouraged, and can be submitted via the eComment link at mauicounty.us/agendas. Oral testimony is limited to three minutes. If you are still testifying beyond that time, I will kindly ask you to complete your testimony. Unless you want to testify anonymously, please clearly identify your name, organization, and items you would like to testify on in the chat. We ask that you state your full name, but if you prefer to testify anonymously, Staff will identify and refer to you as "Testifier" and assign you a number. Please also indicate the agenda item or items you are testifying on. You may indicate in the chat if you do not wish to testify; however, chat should not be used for discussion or comments. Please be courteous to others by turning off your video and muting your microphone while waiting for your turn to testify. Once you are done testifying or if you do not wish to testify, you can view the meeting on *Akakū* Channel 53, Facebook Live, or mauicounty.us/agendas. Thank you all for your cooperation. Before proceeding, may I please request that everyone keep their microphones muted unless it is your turn to speak. Decorum must be maintained at all times. Any person who behaves in a manner that disrupts, disturbs, or impedes the orderly conduct of any Council meeting can, at the discretion of the presiding officer or a majority of present Councilmembers, be ejected or banned from the Council or Committee meetings; or if participating remotely, muted or dropped from the meeting. Examples of disruptive behavior including heckling, shouting, use of profanity, threatening or slanderous remarks made to any Member of the Council, Staff, or general public. It'll be considered a breach of decorum for members of the public to use the chat for anything other than testimony signup. Staff has been monitoring individuals joining today's meeting by phone and by video, and we will do our best to take each person up in an orderly fashion. At this time, we will call testifiers. Oh, Member Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. I know that our rule has basically been that Staff would monitor whoever signs on and would automatically put them on the testifier's log. I've been seeing in the chat a lot of people requesting to not testify. So, I just wanted to check with you as, you know, you have the discretion, if you would like to ask people to request to testify, and then we would call them instead of like how we did yesterday, where we kept calling a bunch of names who never signed up to testify and just, you know, take up time.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

CHAIR PALTIN: Yeah. I...well, there's only...there's less than 20. So, I think it'll be okay. Yesterday they had like hundreds. And the first three are in the Chambers.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay.

CHAIR PALTIN: So, the first testifier signed up to testify would be Dennis Ka'aihue, to be followed by Jon Kinimaka, and then Ann Williams, to be followed by Max. So, each person has three minutes to testify, and...

. . . BEGIN PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

MR. KA'AIHUE: Okay. Aloha kakahiaka kākou.

CHAIR PALTIN: Aloha.

MR. KA'AIHUE: Good morning, everyone. I'm Dennis Ka'aihue from Ke'anae. And I'm lā'au lapa'au. I'm a medicinal healer. I'm here to share you my thoughts on this matter pertaining to our County leadership and Maui emergency response management. I'm not here to point finger, blame, or...or accuse, but I want them to be aware and mindfulness. Okay. I consider Maui County leadership and Maui emergency response management a failure to the Kula and Lāhainā wildfire because there was three issues that I'm still considering here. There was red flag warning conditions on August 7th, and no precautionary procedures in place. No public warning of any kind. Okay. And over 100 deaths, right. As a lapa'au healer, I ask everyone to focus all your energy in building back now, and be aware of scams and...scams and corruption. E hui 'o lapa'au. We are gathered as healers. E hui ai lapa'au. We gather for healing. Okay. E Hawai'i e aloha. So, my closing testament, I want to share you something that I also share with my students as well...even with the CEO, or even with my church members. Okay. It's called mantra meditation. Some of you heard this, but it works. Okay. The reason why we make so much pilikia is that we clog our mind with fear, with all kind. Okay. So, I want everyone do this exercise and see if it work. Breathe in deep, then gradually exhale slow. Okay. And do it again, but this time, feel if you can feel that breath coming out. If you cannot, then you are stressed, you are tension. What happens when you think on the job? You gonna make mistake, you going fail. Okay. That's lā'au lapa'au. It's time for do something else, then come back and continue. Our mind is like the surface of the ocean. We have two minds; the surface mind, and a deep mind. So, if we got so much involved in a surface mind where it's moving, okay, it's time to go back to yourself. Breath in, exhale. . . .(timer sounds). . . Okay. So, that I share you. It's good. It works. Thank you.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Ka'aihue. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Next up, we have Jon Kinimaka.

MR. KINIMAKA: Good morning, Councilmembers. My name is Jon Kinimaka. I just wanted to clear some things up because, you know, about the pointing of fingers. I had a

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

fireman friend of mine tell me that I need to get accurate information, so he sent me a message, and I'd like to share that with you. The fire in the morning wasn't raging, so yes, sometimes we don't use sirens in the early morning out of respect for the people sleeping. No one needed to be evacuated, and we got there. The fire was contained in the morning. It was out, but there are still many smoldering spots. I don't know if smoldering means it's out, but...which the crews stayed there until 2:00 trying to clean it up the best they could, dumping as much water as possible. Being that there were multiple fires going on throughout the island, those crews stayed. They stayed there. Tru.X came and cut dozer lines around the fire to ensure it was contained. Obviously it wasn't. I left that morning when it...living on Lahainaluna Road with my friend, and they lost their home. And at 5:00 in the morning, I felt the heavy, heavy gust of wind while I was sitting in my car getting ready to leave. And not very long after, I did witness the Fire Department going up without any warning of sirens to let us know that the...possible danger. Also, I wasn't there to experience what many people had experienced. I was north trying to get power, not knowing that my town was burning down. I want to share this with my friend Kirk Boes who left this on my...posted this on my Facebook page. We left our home after we decided to leave on our own at the bottom of Lahainaluna neighborhood. No sirens, no police or firemen. Just left on our own because it was getting scary smoky. Made it out to Lahainaluna Road through the fire, barely escape, one cop at the intersection waving us into town. Wouldn't allow us to turn either north or south on the highway. Got trapped by the outlet mall trying to turn north on Front Street. Meanwhile, the one policeman at the Old Chart House turns out...turns out was not allowing cars out at all. They had no plan, no communication, no preparation, no common sense either. Nearly killed us twice. We drove then, ran south down Front Street while people at outlet mall jumped into the water. Embers blowing under the car. Made it to 505, then ten minutes later, it all started burning. It's a miracle we are alive. I'm not pissed at the police or firemen. They did the best they could as people, but they are understaffed, underpaid, underequipped, and poorly-led trained and prepared for a real emergency. Also, I have a friend that was working at Puamana, and nobody evacuated her. She decided the...the smoke was getting really bad, and she was there at the south end of Front Street, . . .(timer sounds). . . was...was denied access to go south where she would have been safe. Was directed by the police to turn around and head back to the death trap in Lāhainā. She made it to the south...or the north end of Front Street, where she was gridlocked. After making it through a maze of gridlock to the end...or the north end of Front Street, turn back around towards Puamana. By the time she got back to the other end on the south side of Puamana, the police weren't there. Apparently they wouldn't let anybody through because the power lines were down, but at the same time, there were still vehicles coming from Wailuku bound...from Wailuku towards Lāhainā. Another thing I'd like to share is that...about tourists and them wanting to reopen Lāhainā. We don't need tourists helping, as we showed how our community can provide for our own community without Government aid from day one. So, we should stay away from West Maui. We still have to find the missing. We need to house the displaced. We need to process. We still need to grieve. We need to heal. We still need to find out what went wrong.

CHAIR PALTIN: Can you wrap it up, Mr. Kinimaka?

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

MR. KINIMAKA: We need to make a geographical restriction on all car rentals from cruising over to the West Side. We still need to prepare for and work on plans and prevention for the next potential disaster. Every Government action and inaction since the fire has been a complete failure. We need to stop these Government failures at some point. Now is the time. Mahalo.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Kinimaka. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Next up we have Ann Williams, to be followed by Max, and then Dick Mayer. Ann Williams, to be followed by Max, and then Dick Mayer.

MS. WILLIAMS: Okay. Hello. I'm Ann Williams, and I lived at 457 Lahainaluna Road. And I just...I definitely encourage this whole fire to be investigated further, not only for just legislation, but just on a criminal level. I...I'll just tell you my story. I live right there, about three blocks where the second...where the fires were going off. I immediately knew there was a fire because I...I had been watching it personally, but didn't even have time to get into the car and drive. The...the roads were already blocked. My driveway...I...I wouldn't be able...been able to get out of my driveway if I wanted to. My...luckily my key actually broke when I tried to get in, and so I had to run down. But thank you, God, that was my saving grace. If I was in my car listening to all the policemen that were out there, I would have been dead. Like most of our...my other friends and relatives got down...ran down to Lahainaluna Road, got down to the light. Luckily my...I found my daughter down there in her truck, so I did get into a vehicle at that point. We're being blocked right there, couldn't go anywhere, by a police officer. But I...I did...we just were one of the smarter people, disobeyed the cops. I just went down...we had to go down Front Street in order to save ourselves. I had a whole family in my car, including the two-year-old. There was no way I was going to sit there and listen to this cop telling us to stay put. Went down Front Street, total mess. So many cars, and we're...we're looking at 10,000 people trying to get out right away, all at the same time, in the tiny little streets of Lāhainā. Everybody being forced to Front Street. Not being able to drive on the highway because there were some power lines down in that immediate area. We went through Safeway parking lot, saw the power lines there. So, we ended up going out. Finally, we did escape out the Flemings Chart House exit to go north. We went north. Free sailing at that point. After Flemings, got out there. They hadn't blockaded us yet. I was one of the lucky few that got out that way. No power lines whatsoever. It was a safe exit. All the way north, and we got to Honokōwai that way. After me, though, they decided to block it, and there were still no power lines down because I did come out the next morning, and I saw the death trap. It was where there were no power lines still yet the following morning. Everyone could have gotten out. Everybody could have gotten out. It was free sailing going north, but the police officer there--quote, unquote--from direct other residents who have talked to him were walking, saw all the cars stopped. He finally walked all the way up to the front at the exit, a policeman standing there, and the guy said to the policeman, there's a fire. The fire is coming, you gotta let these people go. He said, I've got orders. . . .(timer sounds). . . We need to investigate that. Who is giving these cops orders? I mean if the police officer might be taking orders, it's not his fault personally, but there's somebody above him that did this. And they need to investigate that. They put...and then Jon said the far end of Front Street was blocked, bringing them in that way. And then blocked this way.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

It's obvious we were...we were intentionally trapped, and I hope that this gets investigated further. And I have the eyewitnesses have...who have spoken to that cop directly.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you --

MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

CHAIR PALTIN: -- Ms. Williams. Before you go, I just wanted to clarify. The purpose for a Council investigation would be for legislation to be written. There is other investigations going on.

MS. WILLIAMS: Oh, that's good.

CHAIR PALTIN: The Attorney General...that thing that I read in the beginning. They could find criminal liability, but that's not...I just wanted to clarify, that's not anything that just...

MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah, I kind of realized that too when I got here this morning. That's like more of your point. But I...but for everything --

CHAIR PALTIN: Yeah.

MS. WILLIAMS: -- I wanted to just share that...all that information so that you can do what you need to do for your legislation, and hopefully it helps the criminal investigation as well.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. And Members, did you have any questions for Ms. Williams? I did have one question. When you said that you got out through the Flemings Chart House Road --

MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah.

CHAIR PALTIN: -- you left via Front Street and went north.

MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah. That was the only way out. That was the only way out. Because everything else was blocked. We couldn't get up on the highway. From Lahainaluna Road going north on the highway, you cannot be on the highway. That was the only way you can get out onto the high...up onto the highway was that one exit --

CHAIR PALTIN: Front Street.

MS. WILLIAMS: -- Front Street where the Chart House is, Flemings.

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay. Thank you. Next up we'll have...oh, sorry. Just a moment. Oh, we're just adjusting the camera --

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

MS. GRECO: Yes, Chair. We're just adjusting the camera.

CHAIR PALTIN: -- on the testifier. Okay. So, next up we have Max on BlueJeans, to be followed by Dick Mayer on BlueJeans, and then Jeffrey Steven in the Chamber. Max, it's your turn to testify. Last call for Max. Okay. Next up, Dick Mayer. Go ahead.

MR. MAYER: Good morning, and thank you...I want to thank you for taking up this very important matter and getting legislation...and getting us prepared for future potential disasters. I noticed in your resolution that you have four departments of the County mentioned. I would urge you to add the following, the Water Department, to that list. They can do a lot of things in preparation. Everything from preparing reservoirs, to make sure the pipes are not plastic, et cetera, et cetera. And I think they should be included. The second one is the Planning Department. I've long urged the County to develop a comprehensive GIS system that will allow us to have all the information coordinated on one set of maps, rather than as we now have, disbursed among many departments. Every Department--the Police Department, the Management Office, the Planning Department--they each have their own GIS system. We need to develop one coordinated GIS system, so I'd urge you to put that on the agenda as well as a part of it, the coordination of information that will allow good dissemination of communications later on. And lastly, I would urge you to consider, even though it's not a government agency, it is regulated by the government, and that is Maui Electric. The role of the power lines and causing the fire, et cetera, I think should be part of this investigation, and...and hopefully maybe be able to coordinate the legislation, along with the PUC, to make sure that we have the necessary prevention measures. The second thing I wanted to say was, I think you should think of this as two phases. One is, let's find out what happened, and whether it's blame that's needed or...or just a discovery of issues that were not adequately prepared for, et cetera. And the second part is, find out what we need to do to prevent anything like this ever to happen again. And think of it in those two separate phases, and I think that's important. Lastly, I think we should...we should focus on this wildfire, and...and doing everything we can to prevent it from ever happening again, but also consider that we also have several other equally, maybe even more significant, potential disasters, namely the hurricanes, earthquakes...Maui has had an earthquake in 1938. Tsunami certainly, we know about flooding, that whatever we do, we don't put all our eggs in just stopping damage from wildfires, and short-change prevention of these other disasters. And I hope you keep that in mind, and maybe the degree to which we can develop disaster prevention...disaster initiatives, we can do it for all of the disasters, not just the wildfires. I think that will be important in the long run. Because they're all threats to us, and they're all different. The...the transportation issues, the water, the responses after the disaster, all of that are all different, but we need to . . .(timer sounds). . . have a very robust plan. Let me just remind you that the FEMA office has, every five years, prepared a master plan to handle disasters, and certainly the big question will be, what in that plan is good, and what we need to throw out so that we can handle it. It's a thousand-page document that was prepared a year or two ago. Five years before that, it was also prepared. My feeling was, in having worked on the committee trying to write that thing, that the plan gets prepared, but nobody is...feels that they have to implement it.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you.

MR. MAYER: So, I think you'll find a lot of good material there. Thank you.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Mayer. We do have a question for you from Member Sinenci.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Mahalo, Chair, and --

MR. MAYER: Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: -- mahalo, Mr. Mayer, for your testimony this morning. You know, I was...your...your testimony about, I guess, just resiliency and...and more towards evacuation. Each time...and...and this disaster is...has unique points that are different from all of our different communities, like me in East Maui. But as we...as we grow, or...or as we add another turning signal, or something like that, does...do you feel that every time we're influencing, or we're adding stressors on our evacuation routes, should we also be reviewing or revisiting our emergency evacuation plan each time we're...we're adding infrastructure?

MR. MAYER: Obviously we want to do things that will make sure that we don't have damages, and I think when many of the infrastructure items are done, there is a...an environmental assessment perhaps done on those things, expenditure of County funds. At that time, when you look at it and review it, making sure that the EA for that document, for that particular project, whatever it might be, is actually built into the EA process, so we don't create barriers, and that we actually facilitate effective disaster prevention measures. And so, I think...

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you.

MR. MAYER: And that even goes to your budget when you budget things, making sure that...that whatever you're budgeting, whatever that is, that also, you're doing your CIP budgeting, that you think, will this help us actually improve our disaster resilience.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you.

MR. MAYER: Let me...if I could. Excuse me for a minute. One more thing I want to say, just as a personal level, and that is, the communication out to the public was horrendous. And so I would urge you, as part of this consideration, to find out who it is that coordinates communication because Water Department was separate from FEMA, from the Mayor's Office. We got all these things...it did not seem coordinated, and I...that's a whole area that needs to be added to your list. Thank you very much for --

CHAIR PALTIN: Members, any further questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Next up we have --

MR. MAYER: -- and best wishes in doing this.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Next up we have Jeffrey Steven, to be followed by Jennifer Pederson, and then David Kobayashi, and Joe Ritter. So, Jeffrey Steven, to be followed by Jennifer Peterson, David Kobayashi, and then Joe Ritter.

MR. STEVEN: Aloha. My name is Jeffrey Steven of the House of Jarrett. Now you put a face with the name. I am the one that sues this group, and I'm holding you accountable. And the reason being, legislation will not bring back the dead, nor the harm. There are hundreds of people that are not allowed onto their property, except strangers through the EPA are sifting through their sacred property and sacred ground, and they are not being investigated. This same material is then removed from the site, and supposedly being sent to the mainland. That should be of high concern to you. Because if this Chamber, who addressed this same issue in 2018, is allowing people from out of our country, the nation of Hawai'i, or the State of Hawai'i, to abscond this information...because I guarantee you, none of you know exactly what's responsible for this fire. None of you do. And because of that, it's a crime scene. And if it's a crime scene, and they're removing the product or spraying product on it--the EPA is spraying product on it, and then they're removing product from it--you don't know if it's an accelerant from chemtrails, whatever those things are, or if it was malfeasance by the electrical department, Hawai'i Electric, Maui Electric, same company, or if it's malfeasance by maladministration because I, as a builder, I'm licensed in electrical, plumbing, general contracting. I'm licensed to remove asbestos, toxic metals, and lead. And I can guarantee you, I have seen pictures of these people doing their thing, and they are not in hazmat suits that qualify for them to remove lead from a house, let alone toxic waste. Yet, they are. You don't know what is going on. And they're...basically because of that, it's a crime scene, and they are manipulating, taking material from it. Under Title 18, USC 4, malfeasance and a form of fraud. You now know that this has gone on, and because of that, you must do an estoppel immediately so you can have a true investigation from outside sources that are not from someone that whether it's a directed energy weapon, or chemicals coming down, or the electrical department not having the correct size poles up, or the Administration not demanding that it's done right, or this group not demanding it's done right. You have a responsibility--not just to me. I come in the name of Yahshua. You are responsible before God. You're going to all account before a living God, and trust me...you see the scar on my face? I died at the age of 15 months. . . .(timer sounds). . . I drowned at the age of three. I've had other things that have happened. I know the other side exists. So, please, for the children's sake that did not get to speak because they were incinerated, investigate this whole thing. Have an estoppel. Go in immediately and take information out so you can find out exactly who, what, and how it actually happened so it doesn't happen again.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Steven. Members, any questions for the testifier? No. Okay. Thank you for your testimony.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Chair.

CHAIR PALTIN: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Could we have a five-minute recess?

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

CHAIR PALTIN: Five-minute recess?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Yeah.

CHAIR PALTIN: Let's see. Members, let's call a five-minute recess and we will return at 9:52.
Recess. . . *(gavel)* . . .

RECESS: 9:48 a.m.

RECONVENE: 9:58 a.m.

CHAIR PALTIN: . . . *(gavel)* . . . Will the Disaster, Resilience, and International Affairs, Planning Committee return to order. The time is 9:58. And next up to testify we have David Kobayashi, to be followed by Joe Ritter, and then Susan Pcola-Davis. David Kobayashi, Joe Ritter, and Susan Pcola-Davis. Last call for David Kobayashi, to be followed by Joe Ritter. Joe Ritter, it's your turn to testify, followed by Susan Pcola-Davis, and then Mario Vendetti.

MR. RITTER: Good morning. I couldn't hear you very well. Can you hear me?

CHAIR PALTIN: Yes. Is this Joe Ritter?

MR. RITTER: Yes. Hi, this is...this is Joe Ritter. I'm assistant to Representative Terez Amato, and she's listening in also. What she wanted me to bring up to you is basically, we want to help. And pursuant to House Rule 17, House Resolution 224, the Speaker of the House established interim House Working Groups and Committees charged with evaluating specific topics related to the Lāhainā wildfire to make recommendations for appropriate legislative action. And so, Terez is one of the Chairs of the Food, Water and Other Supplies. We understand the purpose of this is really...it's not to do a lot of public testimony like you are at the moment, it is to make recommendations for legislative action to help in the future. Some things worked, some things didn't work, some things could be improved. Our job is to generate legislation with input from the public to help in the future. And so, this may require...well, this...what we're saying is, we would like to collaborate, and if there is something specific that you need done at a State level that you think would be appropriate in legislation, please send it to Representative Amato. If there is a way that we can help our community over at the Capital, please get in touch with us, and I'll put her email in the chat. But she wanted to mention that this is going on. There are a number of committees. There's Wildfire Prevention; Food, Water, and Other Supplies; and...and wildfire prevention, and things like that. She's a member of several of these committees, also Business Committee. So, if there is a way that we can help work with you to make this better in the future, please reach out to us because we...we want to help. And...you know, and she is the Kīhei representative, but over in O'ahu, people need to hear what you guys have to say as well, so we're trying to establish this communication channel. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Ritter. Members, questions for the testifier? Seeing none.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

Thank you for your testimony. Next up we have --

MR. RITTER: Thank you.

CHAIR PALTIN: -- Susan Pcola-Davis, to be followed by Mario Vendetti, to be followed by Rosemarie Johnson. Susan Pcola-Davis, it's your turn to testify.

MS. PCOLA-DAVIS: Good morning, Committee. I've often thought of your Committee as being one of the number one Committees that first of all people, need to be able to testify at. We need to hear the stories. But as you all want to do, we need to seek some action. I just heard Joe's testimony. There's not a lot of information coming out to the public about these State working groups, and what they entail, and how the public is actually going to be involved in these groups. So, I pay my attention towards the Council. Maui Councilmembers, because by the time you are done, we will have finished what needed to be done anyways. I did prepare a testimony, but as I listen to people, I was wondering what would we do if something happened tomorrow? Have the powers to be even been talking about it? And I'm not talking about the Councilmembers, but more of the concerns about the Police Department, the Fire Department, et cetera. No blame, just what if? You...somebody brought up the Water Department, I think it was Dick Mayer. Department of Water Supply is going to be continuing to sample the water distribution center...system. But it is their policy not to test water from private homes, with the exception of lead and copper testing. So, guess what? Few hundred, \$400 coming out of people's pockets trying to get their water tested because Maui's water...

MS. TAKAYESU: I'm sorry, Chair. I'm going to interrupt. I believe this is off the agenda, discussing water issues.

CHAIR PALTIN: Can you stick to the agenda about investigation, Ms. Pcola-Davis?

MS. PCOLA-DAVIS: I would think that this would be part of an investigation where people should be (*audio interference*) without having to pay money out of their pockets. But I understand. That's fine. I think I said probably what needed to be said, and I guess I'll have to testify at the Department of Water on the 21st . . .(*inaudible*). . . Mahalo, Tamara. Thank you so much.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Next up, we have Mario Vendetti, to be followed by Rosemarie Johnson, and then Kamana Gomes. We're ready for your testimony.

MR. VENDETTI: All right. I'm Mario Vendetti, representing Pu'u Ho'olai [*sic*] Honokōwai. And if this Council wanted to solve any issues, you'd be listening to all of the issues. Because if you want investigations, we need investigations into the Water Department. We need investigations into the Police. Why, when we had two qualified sheriffs that were local, did we go hire a sheriff coming out of a scandal out of Las Vegas, placing him in power? Not only that, giving him a 20 percent raise. What's that about? And my friends are getting chained into the Lahainaluna back into the fire by these police brought from Vegas. I want an investigation into the Governor. The Governor is in charge of all of

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

this. And I want to know why the land hasn't been tested. Why am I, a citizen out of Honokōwai, having to try to get private tests on water and land? Because nobody in our Government will help us. The only person is Gabe Johnson. That's the only person I got respect for. And you silencing people when they're talking about real issues...we have water that is giving us leukemia. I am probably already infected with Benzene, and going to have leukemia because from day one, I've been doing runs into Lahainaluna, into Hawaiian Homes, into Wahikuli, covered in the dust. I have nowhere to clean myself off, it's just Benzene water cleaning me off. I'm breathing that in all day long. Because the County is not out there helping the people, so I'm developing a water transport system for me. I've got flatbed trucks coming, 1,000-gallon tanks, 300-gallon water buffalos in each neighborhood because nobody that was elected to take care of the people is helping. We weren't getting supplies from the County. We had to call in our brothers and sisters from other islands. From Kihei. I had to call my friends that were captains of Pac Whale boats, getting them to bring supplies. . . .(timer sounds). . . I didn't see one official...I set up a communication post in the Times parking lot because that was the safest place...food and water options, restrooms, concrete area. I didn't see one official for 48 hours. And then when they did come, when the Police did show up, they came to disburse our communication post when we had no information, no communication. And so, I hold all of you responsible...most specifically, the Governor.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Vendetti.

MR. VENDETTI: And you know what? I'm sure it goes to Biden. And if you actually gave me an hour, then I could tell you my theory. I could tell you what the people have been going through.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Vendetti. Members, any questions for the testifier?

MR. VENDETTI: Please.

CHAIR PALTIN: Seeing none. Thank you so much for your testimony.

MR. VENDETTI: All right.

CHAIR PALTIN: Next up we have Kamana Gomes, to be followed by Johann Lall, to be followed by Lāhainā Resident. And then Lisa Darcy, and Lea Kirkman.

MR. GOMES: Aloha kakahiaka kākou again.

CHAIR PALTIN: Aloha.

MR. GOMES: I'm here this morning just to tell you guys that I support a full investigation into this, even though it's just for legislation action. But I believe what could help is if you have the Attorney General here to get to the issues. I hear you guys are planning to do a meeting like this, a public meeting with the Committee in Lāhainā. I believe you guys better get ready for that. I believe you guys gotta get ready for that meeting. There's going to be a lot of riveting testimony about people's experience of what happened. But

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

I'm more here for a reason. I'm here because I asked the representatives of the pu'uhonua at Honokōwai, we're having an issue. We're keeping up the water supply. A lot of people are coming there because they need water. So, if we could somehow get help from the County to come and help, to...to come and check on...on the...on our water supply. Help to replenish our water supply at the pu'uhonua. Also, the water test that...that we've...that Mario's run on the water that we have...ultimately I'm looking at the water tester that he has, it's a little outdated, I think. If somebody could come down there and test the water...kids are taking a shower, they're jumping into the ocean, they're taking a shower, they're washing their hands, using the restroom over there, and stuff like that. You know, we even have like a water filtering system going there. I believe somebody gotta come out and check out the water. This is issues that's going on right now. Okay. You talk about an investigation. Ultimately people are trying to live normal lives. We're lucky we live on this side. We live in Central. You know, things are...things are semi-normal here. Once you cross into Lāhainā, it's a different world. Councilmember Paltin, I've been following all of her work at Nāpili Noho, they're doing a great job. You know, I believe Honokōwai needs a little assistance too. They're doing a great job there. They're helping to keep up morale, but a lot of people is going through tough issues in this time. There's a lot of frustration. And like I said, if you guys plan this meeting in Lāhainā, get ready for more riveting conversation. And I hope you guys no shut down what people have to say. This is their way to vent to you guys. You guys could get good information. I...I believe you guys can get in touch with the Attorney General, have her be there. Have...have her be there in the meeting, then we don't have to go to this, oh, you're not supposed to say this, or you're not supposed to say that. We want to just let it out, and let you guys know. I...I come here because I care about Lāhainā. I don't come here for any other reason than that. And I just...I ask you guys for your help with our water supply at Honokōwai, please. Okay. If you guys can send a truck with...with some water down there to get our supply up. You know, if you can get in touch with Uncle John or something like that, that's what I ask from you guys. Thank you very much. Have a beautiful day. God bless you guys all. Any questions?

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Gomes. Councilmember Sinenci has a question for you.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Mahalo, Mr. Gomes. Just for clarification, this is going up to the river, the Kahawai...the valley?

MR. GOMES: Oh, no. Where Times Supermarket stay, you take a left by Times, and it's at the Honokōwai Beach Park. It's a pu'uhonua now. A lot of displaced people.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Okay. Got it. Right, right.

MR. GOMES: There's also entertainment on the weekends. Today John Cruz and Irie Love is going to be playing, if you guys are interested.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Nice.

MR. GOMES: Come on down and check it out. But get lot of aloha over there.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Mahalo.

MR. GOMES: Thank you. Bring water. Bring water.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Gomes. Seeing no further questions. Next up, we have Johann Lall, to be followed by Lisa Darcy, and then Leah Kirkman.

MR. LALL: Aloha.

CHAIR PALTIN: Aloha.

MR. LALL: Johann Lall. I am speaking on my own behalf. First, I don't think Staff should be interrupting testifiers. I think if anything, the Chair would be the one to do that. And I have noticed that Chair's Committees have been really good about giving people a lot of leeway, which I think is appropriate in the wake of the very bad disaster. And I've seen that from Nohe, Tasha, I think Tom Cook, you know, so that's really good. So...and I think people appreciate it. And if they need to vent, then just let them vent. But really, a lot of things could be relevant and should be relevant . . . *(inaudible)*. . . You know, I want to encourage an investigation that's not, you know, 100 percent or 99 percent in executive session because I think this...this information needs to go to the public, and the people are really kind of...they're hungry for information. And in the absence of information, there's conspiracy theories, and I think that's not...that's not helpful. And, you know, openness is really good. And what I really don't want to happen is what happened with that . . . *(inaudible)*. . . assessment which was, you know, rather than investigation by the Council or, you know, an open...open body, was done by a company that was contracted for a lot of money. And, you know, in that instance, staff told me...staff from ZAED said that they were basically raising the alarm to the investigators about a lot of issues. And it ended up being glossed over, or put in terms where it wasn't clear to the public. You know, there's actual corruption described in that...in that report, and it kind of...it basically flew under the radar. So, I mean an open investigation that is actually looking for the actual causes and, you know, not necessarily assigning blame, but looking for structural causes of this disaster. I mean, it's important for the entire community in moving forward and making improvements in the future. Mahalo.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Lall. Any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Next up, we have Lisa Darcy, to be followed by Leah Kirkman, and then Manuel Kuloloio. It's your turn to testify.

MS. DARCY: Mahalo. Good morning *(audio interference)* --

CHAIR PALTIN: Oh, we can't hear you. If you could speak into the mic louder. I heard you say good morning, and then it...it was real soft.

MS. DARCY: Oh, okay.

CHAIR PALTIN: Oh, now I can hear you. If you can speak a little louder.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

MS. DARCY: I'm trying my new approach of softness. All right. I'll speak up. Good morning. Which I have been soft for a long time. However, my name is Lisa Darcy. I appreciate the time to be here. I'm the founder of Share Your Mana, and a Council...or a Commissioner on Healing Solutions for Homelessness, and I'm here to testify on my own behalf. The legislation is going to, of course, be very important. It will connect a lot of the dots that are not connected, which we all know are connected. My testimony today is really a challenge, I think, to this body, and to us as a community. And one of the most dramatic pieces of this puzzle that I always find somehow gets kind of pushed to the side is really our attitudes towards the laws and our following up. And I know Councilmember Sinenci knows that the drive that Share Your Mana has that every resident have water on the island, that it isn't just socioeconomic need. And the legislation, you know, to support this really also has to come from your heart and your mind, knowing the right thing to do. There's not really a lot of legislation that governs our mana, and where we really put our energy. It's really up to you to find ways to make the law work for everyone, and make communication work for everyone. What you will find in this investigation is so many people are not connected to standard ways of getting information. And so, they wouldn't get the informa--...like if you're disabled and/or elderly, low...low education, you may not have all the resources that other people have to get the information. And we have to put that into the legislation as well. It's got to work for everyone, and not just a handful of people. And so, my testimony today is really to urge you to go beyond even what you find in the reports, and to recognize how important it is that every resident needs the basic...basic fundamentals, the basic supports of life. And where you don't see that in your report, to try and find a way to make it so that every one of our people here--not my people, the people who live here--have safety, have access to getting out of a difficult situation, and more importantly, so more people don't fall into the cycle. . . .(timer sounds). . . I just want to say thank you. I just want to also acknowledge, I heard some of the earlier testimony about transportation, and how fundamental this is for people moving from space to space when there is an emergency, and to please consider how important transportation is. And I was once rewarded in doing a really good job at my job by being pushed out. And so, I think...you know, legislation has to really acknowledge when somebody is actually doing something that's right, to support that person and not push them out. So, you have a big job. Any way that I can help, I am here. Mahalo.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Ms. Darcy. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Next up, we have Leah Kirkman, to be followed by Manuel Kuloloio, to be followed by Junya Nakoa. Leah Kirkman, we're ready for your testimony. Last call for Leah Kirkman, to be followed by Manuel Kuloloio. It's your turn to testify. Manuel will be followed by Junya Nakoa, and then Steven West. Last call.

MR. KULOLOIO: Tamara, can you hear me?

CHAIR PALTIN: Yes. I can hear you.

MR. KULOLOIO: Aloha, Tamara. I can see Aunty Alice. I think that's Uncle Sinenci. Cousin U'u. Is that you Gabe? Mr. Cook.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

CHAIR PALTIN: I think he just stepped out.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Aloha.

MR. KULOLOIO: On 08/08, we were monitoring the frequencies here on O'ahu. We were told at 9:00 that the fire was contained. The weather here on O'ahu was honking. If any of you know what's the word honking, it's akin if you have ever listened to the NOAA weather station, where the highest winds are always from Mā'alaea Harbor. I didn't believe what I heard. I called my two sisters and I says, you guys need to find out where your families are at, stay close to home. In the afternoon, we intercepted U.S. Coast Guard reports that they were dispatched to Lāhainā to retrieve or pluck individuals...by the way, Auntie Alice, I would like a FOIA request to find out what did they really see. Okay? When we heard that dispatch, we knew something was wrong, Tamara. We set up a board on the wall, and had every intel that was coming out to find out what was going on. Didn't sleep until 2:00 in the morning. And then Wednesday morning, we see our Uncle Richie Olsen fly with his helicopter--I don't know, by the way, Auntie Alice--was it rogue, or did he have permission? Nonetheless, thank you, Uncle Richie, because our worst nightmares came true. Right, Auntie Alice? Our worst nightmares came true. Do you on the Council, when you look at the State Civil Defense website...tell me if I'm wrong. The Maui County representative to the State Civil Defense Advisory Council, now called HiEMA, has been absent for quite a long time. I was your representative from the events of 9/11 to the preparations for APEC. We have been wronged. The Lāhainā people have been wronged, Tamara. Siren. No siren. It's on the all hazards list. The road not blocked. KITV, okay, we shows this was blocked. Falling down fires [*sic*] poles. Put the blame. Electrical...electricity was out, HECO says. They caused the second one, not the first one. So, today the Republican-led House Committee has called...Energy Committee, Congress Committee has called a hearing for September 28. . . .(*timer sounds*). . . When Congress has a problem, they create a commission. Tamara, we got ATF out there. Got every alphabet soup agency that's out there. And for all the idiots, yeah, that say because there's no such thing as directed energy, I want all of you to go and visit the Air Force Research Laboratory at the Maui High-Performance Computing Center that you guys allow. Trust me. There's a lot of things going on you don't know. When I told them the President is coming to Maui, they laughed. When I told them the Speaker of the House is coming, they laughed. Well, you know what? You cannot take care our people, then we're going to have somebody come from the outside that perhaps not Democrat to do the right thing. Tamara, our people deserve better. . . .(*timer sounds*). . . From Launiopoko to Wahikuli, to Puamana...pulele.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Kuloloio.

MR. KULOLOIO: I hope you agree, Tamara. I hope you agree.

CHAIR PALTIN: Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. We'll be circling back to Leah Kirkman, to be followed by Junya Nakoa, and then Stephen West. Leah Kirkman, it's your turn to testify. We...we can't hear you.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

MS. KIRKMAN: Aloha.

CHAIR PALTIN: Oh, we can hear you now. Thank you.

MS. KIRKMAN: Aloha. I'm here to talk about the safety evacuation plan. I'm here to talk about the safety evacuation plans. The Department of Education...

CHAIR PALTIN: Yes, we can hear you. Go ahead. We can hear you.

MS. KIRKMAN: It's import--...it's important that parents and the schools are informed on the reunification processes of the school so that the children and the parents can be reunified in a future safe...in a future evacuation if needed. A lot of parents, especially who, with English as a second language, are not aware of where these reunification places are. It reserves safety places where, if the children are taken off campus, where the parents can go and reunite with them. Now, we have learned from this disaster in Lāhainā that there may not be the proper place of reunification. So, I urge the Department of Education to have a Plan A, and a Plan B, and for all parents understand where this reunification place is for safety of their children so that they can reunite with them. I have been contacting parents all over the Island of Maui. Many, many parents do not understand this process at all. This is a huge problem here. This needs to be addressed, and parents who are allowing the Department of Education to keep their children safe need to know the laws and their rights as parents . . . *(inaudible)*. . . Department of Education so that their child goes back to their parents. I'm sorry, there's a reverb here, everything is playing second over each other, so it's hard to speak again. But these are things that I would like to be addressed because this is a major problem. We also need the roads . . . *(inaudible)*. . . to be fixed so that if you can't evacuate out of the West Side going towards Olowalu, the back road needs to be fixed. Kihei needs a second road out to go up to Kula so that there's a second evacuation road. All of this needs to be addressed so that we can keep our communities safe during disasters. . . *(timer sounds)*. . . And if parents are scared of sending their kids to DOE, contact me. We can do homeschooling. We can do homeschooling hubs, and we can do it the way we want to do it. Thank you very much.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Ms. Kirkman, for your testimony. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Next up, we have Junya Nakoa, to be followed by Stephen West, to be followed by the testifier signed in as X. Junya Nakoa, it's your turn to testify.

MR. NAKOA: Morning. You guys can hear me?

CHAIR PALTIN: Yes.

MR. NAKOA: Yessah. Okay. Investigate, investigating, investigating. First thing first, investigate the Emergency Department, the one that Herman Andaya went resign, yeah. Go investigate those guys, yeah. They I guess you're not here and whatnot, and they never know what they was going do, and this and that. And so, go investigate 'em. I know the earlier part, one testifier said, are we ready if we have something like this

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

happen again tomorrow? I say, heck no. So, investigate that Department. Get 'em ready. Make sure they ready for this again. Gotta remember, Lāhainā still dry as shit...oh, my bad...still dry. And so, let's get ready. Let's prepare. Let's prepare. So, investigate those emergency preparedness whatever kind of guys, whatever. Investigate. I going say 'em plenty times so I no get cut off. Investigate the...the Departments, okay, and the Government, wherever we block the roads going to Lāhainā. And opening up the roads, and then closing the roads, and then opening up the roads, and then opening them up to tourists...try investigate those guys that when screw up everything from the beginning. Yeah. You guys heard my statement about it, we was trying to get supplies in to Lāhainā people, but they was getting blocked and turned around. So, go investigate those guys. I guess they're the EEOC. You guys get plenty letters and everything, you guys know. So, I get confused. So, go investigate that. Biggest one, go investigate the Water Department. Okay. Everybody talking about the Maui Electric and all this stuff, yeah. They the one, whatever, went start the fire. But go investigate the Water Department. You know, Upcountry, Yuki Lei, your...your place. How much times gotta...gotta...gotta shut down the water because the buggah not safe for drink--before the fire. Yeah. One bruddah got...got let go because he went go whistle blow about the kind stuff that's happening in the Water Department. And then he won his case, and he's back working. Go investigate the Water Department. Go investigate the quality of the water, the pipes, the hydrant...the water hydrant. Where the...or who get the water, you know, go investigate the Water Department. Go investigate who owns 75 percent of the water in Lāhainā, and the own...and the public only own 25. Go investigate all that. . . .(timer sounds). . . . And then we can prepare to put...to make our Lāhainā safer by making 'em greener. You know, gotta educate...I got educated that it used to be a small wetland. Yeah, I knew Lāhainā, Malu 'ulu o Lele was one water place, you know, was...was one swamp or whatever. But, yeah, go investigate the Water Department. And I going finish off. I going finish up right now. I not going get scoldings again. So, yeah, go investigate . . .(inaudible). . . went block the road. The EOC guys that went screw up everything...open, close, open, close. Go investigate the Water Department so they...well, whatever . . .(inaudible). . . . And feed that lady Sarah, the one got . . .(inaudible). . . talk story some more because water is a big issue. . . .(inaudible). . . Like Kamana said, water is needed at the hubs. . .(timer sounds). . . I gonna bring down at least 15 cases to S-Turns and I gonna see how much more I can grab at Boat Ramp and take them down to Honokōwai. Yessah. My bad.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Nakoa. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Next up we have --

MR. NAKOA: Yessah. Thank you for not giving me scolding.

CHAIR PALTIN: Next up, we have Stephen West, to be followed by Bridget Mowat. Stephen West, it's your turn to testify. Stephen West, we can come back to you if you're not ready at this time. Next up, we got Bridget Mowat.

MS. MOWAT: Hi. Can you folks hear me?

CHAIR PALTIN: Yes, we can.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

MS. MOWAT: Okay. Okay. You know, I just...I just turned on because I had another commitment at 9:00, and I'm not sure if we're plugged in to a certain topic. But I do feel moved to say this, that I'm very, very grateful for all of you folks and all the work you doing...from the...all the County workers, to all our officials, to the State of Hawai'i. Because you know what? This is...was an unreal event. Nobody was prepared because nobody knew it was going to turn into such a huge fire. And that wind, the wind; that was the thing that broke the lines, that...to me, that's what started the fires. It was all over the place. My...my son lost his home. Their family, their whole family lost their homes. Everybody lost their homes. But, it's done. Now we gotta go forward. And the bickering, the calling names, the pointing fingers...it's nobody's fault. It happened. And...and we wasn't prepared. Who is ever prepared for something this huge? Our resources is limited. So, we don't have plenty trucks, and plenty water trucks, and we don't...it just came so fast. The wind just went blow everything. Roofs were down. Lines were down. Even if the people were working when the...they couldn't have controlled this fire either. Let's be real, and let's come together, and work, and...and...to thank those who put their 'ōkoles on the line, who...and who are still doing it. Guys are still not sleeping. And to point fingers and blame, you can imagine all the hard work everybody doing, and still being accused of...of not doing their job. I just have to say this, that I'm very proud of you folks because I know you working hard, hard, hard. You've never had to do this before. None of the officials had to do this before, and it's day and night they working and trying to figure out because as you move along, you're finding out all the other things that have to happen. How...how...what has to go into place. So, please, be kind to one another. Help, no point fingers and say, you should have done--you shoulda, coulda, woulda--but help by not creating a fire within our County . . . *(timer sounds)* . . . within our State. Mahalo, and I thank you folks all, and...and we...we would be nothing without you folks. Mahalo, mahalo, and mahalo.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you.

MS. MOWAT: I'm not taking any questions. Aloha.

CHAIR PALTIN: Members, any questions? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Next up we have Keola Koa-Ponce, to be followed by the testifier with the last four digits, number 4006.

MS. KOA-PONCE: Hello, everyone. My name is Keolaokalani Koa-Ponce. I've heard all the testimonies, and I thank everybody for all of their stories. My sister-in...my sister-in-law, Ann Koa, Mr. Steven, Mr. Gomes. And it just so touches my heart every day listening to all of the stories of the Lāhainā people of what was taken of them. Especially our kūpunas...our families, our cousins, our children. An investigation needs to go on. It needs to happen. It does need to happen, and I beg all of you to please move forward. Think about the kūpunas, our tūtū kānes, tūtū wāhines, our keikis, our mo'opunas, as yours. What they need today. They need your help. They screaming. They're crying each and every day. As I drive home, I drive to work, I hear it all the time. I can hear their cries. I work in the medical field, I see children every day. I see adults every day. And I cry for them. I hear their stories. We treat the first responders. We

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

treat the people of Lāhainā. And to sit there and to listen to them, their stories, I cry. I cannot say I know how you feel. I know what you went through. All I can do is be there, be an ear, and just mālama pono. So, I beg each and every one of you, please, please, from the bottom of my pu'uwai, please be there for the people. We Maui No Ka 'Oi. The fire started, if you look at our island, on the head. They took our head away. But you know what? We going rebuild our head, no matter what, for our ancestors who is screaming out to fix the head. That's where our 'āina start from. Mahalo.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Next up we have testifier with the last four digits 4006. Testifier with the last four digits 4006, it's your turn to testify.

MR. CHIATE: Yes. This is Ken Chiate. I'm...my heart is out for all those in the fires who lost their homes, and I would call them survivors now, although they are victims. I urge the County and State to do all they can to immediately provide the best housing available and the most support they can for people who have suffered such a tragic incident. No quarreling, no argument. No contesting who's right or who's wrong, or should be sued, or who should be dependent. But rather, what can be done to provide immediate housing, temporary if possible, permanent if necessary. That's what I think the County should be spending its energies on at this time. It's a crisis, needs to be addressed. Thank you.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Do you mind repeating your name, please?

MR. CHIATE: The name is Ken, last name Chiate. C-H-I-A-T as in Tom-E.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chiate, for your testimony. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Next up, we have the testifier with the last four digits 0304.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER (*Audio interference*) unmute yourself.

CHAIR PALTIN: Testifier with the last four digits --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (*Audio interference*).

CHAIR PALTIN: -- 0304, it's your turn to testify.

MS. GRECO: Chair, they dropped from the call.

CHAIR PALTIN: Oh, they dropped, okay. Next up...last testifier...last call for testifiers. That's the last testimony that we had signed up. Making a last call for testifiers.

MS. GRECO: Excuse me, Chair. I think we have one in Chamber, Rosemarie Johnson.

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay. Last testifier signed up is Rosemarie Johnson.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

MS. JOHNSON: Aloha, and good morning, and thank you. Mahalo for having this meeting, and forgive me if I cry. Condolences to all the families who've lost souls. And I'm here today to testify in favor of investigation, and to urge all committees to do what they can within legislature to gain resources for the right positions, and the right...within the State and within the Counties. I agree with Dick Mayer. FEMA did have a five-year...does have a five-year plan, it comes out every five years. It's 1,000 pages. There is no Statewide or Countywide GIS system. That being said, there is no Statewide system in place for many things with regards to disaster control prevention, process improvement, search and rescue. There's a whole umbrella...I had a presentation. I will make sure that the Committee gets it. There's an umbrella that falls under search and rescue. As it stands now, a lot of those areas have been ignored for many years. This is not a current issue, this is a systematic issue for many years, and many Administrations. Change is hard, and unfortunately, it doesn't occur until it is forced upon us. And we are in a position now to create good processes, good controls, and a lot of prevention. One of the testifiers mentioned Kihei. If something happened tomorrow, there's no way out of Kihei. This is not unlike many areas and many counties on many...on all of our islands, right? So, you know, I've...I've worked in data collection for years. I'm a strategist, and I have been looking for data for the State for about five years. There's a lack of data. I have a whole root cause analysis done that I will share with you guys. And what I have found is that it always comes down to resources. So, whether it is the emergency control system, the...the speakers, the water, this, that...it's...always comes down to resources. The Federal Government has opened doors for our State and our County to ask for resources. So, it's important that we do that. . . .(timer sounds). . . . But we need to know...we need to ask for the right stuff. My presentation starts with we don't know what we don't know, and it ends with the more we know, the more we realize we don't know. And that is where we're at right now. The last thing I'd like to say is to please remember what Hawai'i is built on, and that is the spirit of aloha. And one day, the world is going to come and...come to Hawai'i to be healed, and they are going to see how Maui healed from this horrific event. We will heal. Thank you for your time.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Ms. Johnson. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. At this time, that was the last testifier that we had signed up to testify. Is there anyone else that would like to offer testimony? This will be the last call.

MS. GRECO: Excuse me, Chair. We had Ashley Garza join the call. She's unmuted on our end.

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay. Ashley Garza, if you wanted to testify, now would be your opportunity to testify. Ashley Garza, or anyone else on the line, making a last call for testimony. And so, if you do want to testify at this time, either come down to the podium or unmute your microphone in five, four, three, two, one. Without objection, I will now close public testimony for DRIP-2(11).

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

. . . END PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay. So, before we can take our morning recess, we have to do a little bit of discussion. And as I stated in the opening comments, the Attorney General is investigating the fire, and the purpose of this is a little bit so the community can feel safe going forward. So, we did post the draft resolution, and we're looking at some amendments before tomorrow's meeting so that it could be reflective of all the things that we learned, that this would be a prospective investigation going forward instead of going backwards. And is that enough discussion before we take a recess?

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Chair. It might be advisable to take a question or two from the Members --

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay.

MR. MITCHELL: -- and then recess after that.

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay. Member Sinenci?

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you, Chair. And mahalo to all the testifiers that came in today and shared their...their stories. I did think about...you know, there's both...and Mr. Ritter also came on for Ms. Amato's office. And so, he mentioned about legislation at the State. So, could we, Chair, maybe get a distinction between those thoroughfares that may fall under State jurisdiction, and those roads that may fall under our County jurisdiction? That was just an inquiry, if we could get...

CHAIR PALTIN: In terms of evacuation routes, or...

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Just moving forward where we have more jurisdiction over State roads and thoroughfares, highways. Thank you.

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay. We can look into that. And so, at this time we can take a recess. Let's come back at 11:05...about 14-minute recess, 11:05. Meeting is in recess. . . .(gavel). . .

RECESS: 10:51 a.m.

RECONVENE: 11:05 a.m.

CHAIR PALTIN: . . .(gavel). . . Will the Disaster, Resilience, International Affairs, and Planning Committee meeting of September 14th return to order. The time was 11:05, it's now 11:06. So, this...to continue on the discussion, this resolution is on tomorrow's Council agenda for referral, and per the Council rules, it would be referred to GREAT...the GREAT Committee. And so, my...my suggestion is that, you know, the...the purpose and intent of today's meeting and the resolution was to improve disaster response going forward from a legislative perspective. So, you know, the resolution isn't perfect, it's...it's a first draft. And so, the suggestion would be if Member U'u-Hodgins would accept it

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

into her Committee tomorrow, then we can work on the resolution to frame it so that it's super clear of the intent being to improve disaster response going forward from a legislative perspective. So, any discussion on that course of action for tomorrow? Member U'u-Hodgins.

VICE-CHAIR U'U-HODGINS: Thank you, Chair. I'm happy to have it be referred to my Committee, and then we massage it going forward.

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay. Anybody not okay with that? Okay. Consensus. And we won't be taking any legislation action today. So, that sounds like we did the Committee work in Committee, and not on the Council floor, and...and we have a course of action for tomorrow that we more or less agree on. So...

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Chair?

CHAIR PALTIN: Member Kama.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you, Chair. So, are you anticipating a couple of amendments coming over tomorrow on the floor?

CHAIR PALTIN: I think we'll not. Because the nature of the amendments might be pretty substantial, and we know how we don't like Committee work on the Council floor.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Yes.

CHAIR PALTIN: We'll be referring it to Committee to work on the reso so that it's --

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Okay.

CHAIR PALTIN: -- cleaner and clearer, and then possibly, as it comes out of Committee back to the Council, it could be passed.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Chair, if I may?

CHAIR PALTIN: Sure. Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you. Question for Member U'u-Hodgins. Any thoughts in terms of when this might come over...come out of your Committee for...for a meeting or a hearing? Any thoughts on that?

VICE-CHAIR U'U-HODGINS: Good question, Member Kama. I'm going to have to talk it over with my Staff. Right now we do have the...the...the big...the resiliency one that we have scheduled.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Yes.

VICE-CHAIR U'U-HODGINS: Both on the 18th, and then following up on the 27th.

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Yes.

VICE-CHAIR U‘U-HODGINS: So, I can talk it over with my Staff, and then talk stories with Member Paltin, and plan to move forward from there.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Okay.

CHAIR PALTIN: Yeah. And I mean...sorry, we can...we...this came out of my Committee kind of, so we can give time as well if necessary.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR PALTIN: Sure. Okay. Committee Members, if there are no objections, the Chair will defer this item.

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS (excused: YLS).

ACTION: DEFER pending further discussion.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. This concludes today's Disaster, Resilience, International Affairs, and Planning Committee meeting. Thank you very much, everyone. The time is now 11:10, and this meeting is adjourned. . . .(gavel) . . .

ADJOURN: 11:10 a.m.

APPROVED:



TAMARA PALTIN, Chair
Disaster, Resilience, International Affairs,
and Planning Committee

drip:min:230914:mll:ta

Transcribed by: Terianne Arreola

DISASTER, RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

September 14, 2023

CERTIFICATION

I, Terianne Arreola, hereby certify that pages 1 through 29 of the foregoing represents, to the best of my ability, a true and correct transcript of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not in any way concerned with the cause.

DATED the 6th day of October 2023, in Wailuku, Hawai'i.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terianne Arreola', written over a horizontal line.

Terianne Arreola