

PC Committee

From: hailey gill <haileygill.usc13@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2016 10:14 AM
To: PC Committee
Cc: County Clerk; Elle Cochran; Don Couch; Stacy S. Crivello
Subject: Written Testimony on PC-22-Seawalls-6/16/16
Attachments: WrittenTestimony_ PC22 June16_hailey gill.pdf

Aloha County Council Members,

Please find my written testimony on agenda item PC-22 for tomorrow's Planning Committee meeting discussion on seawalls attached to this email. Seawalls are short-sighted, costly, detrimental fixes to coastal erosion problems, especially in areas where managed retreat is still possible. The website [Save West Maui's Coastline](#) has peer reviewed literature and more information on the topic of seawalls.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Hailey Gill

June 15th, 2016

60A East Huapala Pl.

Lahaina, HI, 96761

PC-22: Testimony

Dear Maui Planning Committee and Council Members,

I am writing to ask you to reconsider the extensive shoreline armoring projects that are currently occurring over an 8 mile stretch along West Maui. Shoreline armoring, specifically seawalls, have repeatedly been shown to negatively impact beaches, nearshore ecosystems, and coastlines.

I grew up on the west side of Maui, and at age 24, I have already seen repeated reconstruction of the Honoapiilani Highway seawalls time and time again. This huge amount of time and money spent on the reconstruction of something that will ultimately always be temporary, is hard to understand. The constant waves of the ocean will always win. It is unnatural to place a rigid, man-made cement wall up against something that is as naturally dynamic as the ocean. Let the ocean have its shoreline back. Seawalls are incredibly detrimental to the ecological and recreational health of our shorelines. The Highway seawalls are eroding the beaches because the constant surge of waves that continue to crash into the wall, result in strong backwash out into the ocean, thus eroding the sand and shoreline unnaturally, and quickly. This unnatural rigid structure will always need to be refurbished, because the force of the ocean will always prevail. Continuing to maintain these seawalls, in turn, will continue to destroy beaches, surf, ocean life, natural wetlands, and more. Maui needs to implement alternatives to the shoreline highway seawall, and let the ocean have it's beaches back.

Specifically, we ask you to adopt a *proactive* approach to addressing West Maui's chronic shoreline erosion issue. A proactive, holistic approach includes:

1. **Look for innovative alternatives to planned shoreline armoring North and South of Olowalu** –Soft engineering solutions such as vegetative walls using native *hau* and anchoring sand dunes where appropriate are such alternatives to seawalls that may be considered in the short and mid-term. Other interim solutions may include collaboration with local landowners in the area to utilize cane haul roads and private roads.
2. **Get the "Honoapiilani Highway Problem" back on SDOT's Planning Horizons** – Encourage SDOT to reinstate a volunteer task force that will evaluate alternatives to coastal hardening solutions with regards to the "Honoapiilani Highway Problem".

Reference: PC-22

3. **Envision 8+ miles of coastal park from Puamana Beach Park to Papalaua Wayside Park-** A world class coastal park would be made possible should the regional transportation corridor be separated, and moved inland from the coastal access road. Residents and visitors alike would flock to recreate within the miles and miles of Hawaiian beach parks, nature reserves and open spaces.

We implore you to create a lasting legacy along West Maui's coastline, one that meets the community's needs in a manner that is forward thinking and sustainable.

Sincerely,

Hailey Gill