

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director

JOHN STUFFLEBEAN, P.E.
Director

JAMES A. LANDGRAF
Deputy Director



DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
<http://www.mauicounty.gov/water>

March 20, 2026

Honorable Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
and Members of the Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee
County of Maui
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793

Dear Chair Sugimura,

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY'S FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET

The Board of Water Supply has reviewed the Department of Water Supply's (DWS) proposed FY 2027 budget and supports the Department's requests for the following reasons:

- **Rates:** We recognize the need for additional revenue for the Water Fund and support the continued strategy of maintaining affordable residential lifeline rates while increasing the rates, especially for high water users and the hotel/resort sector. There is no proposed increase for Tier 1 (under 5,000 gallons per month) and Tier 2 (under 15,000 gallons per month) residential rates, nor for multi-family rates. We also support the addition of a Tier 5 rate for very high use residential accounts (over 50,000 gallons per month).
- **Operating Budget:** The operating budget remains essentially flat, with decreased costs for professional services due to the completion of several major initiatives, and increased costs for long-delayed equipment replacement.
- **CIP:** Revenue from the proposed rate increase would be used entirely to fund additional capital improvement projects. Although needs exceed available funds, we support the Department's approach of prioritizing projects for new water source development and essential infrastructure

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improvements and seeking outside funding. Notably, DWS was able to deliver nearly all capital improvement projects in FY25 and FY26.

- **Housing:** We recognize that DWS's mission is critical to supporting the development of additional affordable housing on Maui. The budget emphasizes infrastructure maintenance, efficient operations, and increased water supply.
- **Staffing:** DWS is not proposing any new positions in FY27. DWS has worked very hard to achieve full staffing.
- **Watershed Protection:** We strongly support the Department's continuing efforts to fund the watershed protection grants at 4% of the budget.

We appreciate your support and look forward to working together to further better our community.

Sincerely,



Donna Sterling, Chair
Board of Water Supply

cc: Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor
Josiah Nishita, Managing Director
John Stufflebean, Director, Department of Water Supply

BFED Committee

From: Sherilyn C. Otsubo <Sherilyn.Otsubo@co.maui.hi.us>
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2026 11:46 AM
To: BFED Committee
Cc: Richard Bissen; Josiah K. Nishita; John Stufflebean
Subject: FY 2027 Budget
Attachments: FY 2027 BWS letter of support.pdf

You don't often get email from sherilyn.otsubo@co.maui.hi.us. [Learn why this is important](#)

BFED Committee,

Please see the attached letter from the Board of Water Supply.

Thank you,
Sherilyn Otsubo
Secretary to the Board of Water Supply
County of Maui
200 S. High Street
Wailuku, HI 96793
Phone: (808) 270-7304

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