

## EACP Committee

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**From:** Larry Stevens <lfstevens@earthlink.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 08, 2020 8:59 AM  
**To:** EACP Committee  
**Cc:** Robin Newbold  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of the proposed bill: "A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING CHAPTER 2.50, MAUI COUNTY CODE, RELATING TO PESTICIDE AND FERTILIZER USE ON COUNTY PROPERTY."

I support the proposed bill to establish Chapter 2.50, Maui County Code, relating to pesticide and fertilizer use on County property. The bill prohibits the County's purchase or use of certain pesticides and fertilizers.

Ending the use of these materials will have an important positive impact on Maui County's nearshore coral reefs and marine wildlife.

Scientific studies have long demonstrated that pesticides, insecticides and fungicides have an adverse impact on the survival and reproduction of coral and other marine invertebrates. Herbicides disrupt the life stage of coral that occurs shortly after coral eggs are fertilized, creating tiny planula larvae. These planula larvae drift among the plankton, where they grow and collect symbiotic algae to nourish themselves. They eventually find a hard substrate to settle upon and grow into an adult coral, a stage called metamorphosis. Even low concentrations of pesticides and fungicides interfere with metamorphosis, making coral reproduction impossible.

Without the ability to reproduce, corals are as good as dead, reports Dr. Bob Richmond, the head of our Maui Coral Recovery Team and the Director of the Kewalo Marine Lab at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Ending the County's use of synthetic fertilizers at County parks is also important. Synthetic fertilizers are petroleum based. They dissolve and release nitrogen when in contact with soil moisture, rain or irrigation. The dissolved nitrogen mixes with groundwater and flows into the ocean where it causes excessive algae growth that smothers corals.

Safe alternatives to pesticides and synthetic fertilizers have already been proven to be effective here on Maui, including at The Westin Maui Resort.

On Maui, reefs provide an estimated \$376 million in flood protection benefits each year, provide food for our people and support activities that we all enjoy, including snorkeling, surfing, diving and fishing.

Maui County can lead the way in demonstrating how landscaping and grounds maintenance can be achieved without toxic reef-harming pesticides, herbicides and synthetic fertilizers.

Thank you in advance for your leadership in moving this bill forward, for the future of our coral reefs.

Larry Stevens