

April 22, 2025

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MEMO TO: Members of the Budget, Finance, and Economic
Development Committee

F R O M: Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair *Yuki Lei K. Sugimura*
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee

SUBJECT: **WEST MAUI RESIDENCY AREA MEETING REGARDING THE
FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET** (BFED-1)

On April 10, 2025, the Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee held a public meeting at the Lahaina Civic Center Social Hall regarding the proposed FY 2026 Budget. Present for the meeting were: Committee Chair Yuki Lei K. Sugimura and members Tom Cook, Gabe Johnson, Tamara Paltin, Keani N.W. Rawlins Fernandez, and Shane M. Sinenci. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. and adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

The meeting began with a brief overview from Marcy Martin, Director of Finance, who assisted individuals with questions about their real property tax assessments.

Your Committee received oral testimony from 30 individuals. Unless otherwise indicated, the following oral testimony was received in support of funding for the organization, program, or project noted:

1. Five individuals testified in support of continued funding for the West Maui Hospital Foundation, Inc., and its role in community health and recovery. Board member Jo Anne Johnson Winer expressed support for the \$113,000 grant request included in the Mayor's Proposed Budget under the Office of Economic Development.
2. Maria Michel Ramos testified in support of continued funding for Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. and its Head Start After School Programs & Summer Programs in Lahaina, highlighting the importance of early childhood education in post-disaster West Maui communities.
3. Five individuals testified in support of funding for Boys & Girls Clubs of Maui, specifically for the Lahaina Clubhouse and the importance of programs such as Keystone Club and volleyball,

which help to provide safe, structured environments for local children.

Thomas Daya also requested a five-percent increase in funding in future years.

4. Hedy Udarbe testified in support of the Lahaina-Honolua Senior Citizens Club and emphasized the need for continued support of programs for seniors, especially transit services for seniors no longer able to drive.
5. Six individuals testified in support of the Lahaina Community Land Trust, specifically for more funding for affordable housing and open space. They supported the Trust's critical role in equitable recovery and long-term housing solutions for displaced families.
6. Rick Nava, Board Member, West Maui Taxpayers Association, testified in support of funding to upgrade the Lahaina Aquatic Center and Lahaina Recreation Center playground, and expressed concern over decreased funding for Maui County Emergency Management Agency from \$17 million to \$3 million. He also noted the lack of small business grants and stressed the need to restore bus service from Lahaina to Kahului.
7. Four individuals testified in support of the West Maui GreenCycle Composting Facility, including a request for \$350,000 in funding to expand school-based composting programs in partnership with Princess Nāhi'ena'ena Elementary School and the Maui Huliau Foundation.
8. Patty Copperfield, Transportation Director, Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc., testified in support of continued funding for the organization, reinforcing earlier calls for continued and expanded transportation services, especially for vulnerable populations such as kūpuna.
9. Six individuals testified in support of Kaiāulu Initiatives, a program seeking support through the West Maui Economic Development, Environmental, and Cultural Programs Fund.

Shannon Ifi also supported a \$60,000 request to the fund, while Yayoi Hara, Gretchen Losano, and Mikey Burke expressed strong

support for the program's role in cultural preservation and climate resilience.

Jeremy Delos Reyes also advocated for the reallocation of funds from County pay raises to hire more building inspectors.

Katie Austin also requested \$30,000 in assistance for cultural and environmental programming.

10. Three individuals testified in support of MEO, Inc.'s Head Start Afterschool Programs & Summer Programs and kūpuna services, and the importance of maintaining wraparound services for children, seniors, and low-income families throughout West Maui.
11. Theo Morrison testified in support of the Lahaina Restoration Foundation, including a \$191,000 for a Historic Groundskeeping Grant and a new \$1.8 million grant from the Office of Recovery for architectural drawings and planning permits related to the Old Lahaina Courthouse, Old Lahaina Prison, and Hale Aloha.
12. Kanani Pu'ou also testified in support of the Lahaina Historic Foundation's historic preservation efforts.
13. Peter Fard testified about the need for additional rental assistance and community housing support, particularly for indirect fire victims.
14. State Representative Elle Cochran, testified in support of a Green Building and Resilient Building Grant, highlighting an experimental housing demonstration project, community land access, and alternative housing options. She also advocated for investments in senior centers, bus stops, and shelters in Lahaina.
15. Autumn Ness, Executive Director, Lahaina Community Land Trust, testified in support of raising Real Property Tax rates for hotels, framing it as a revenue solution to better fund community recovery and climate adaptation needs.
16. Two individuals testified in support of continued funding for the Department of Parks & Recreation, emphasizing the importance of maintaining accessible and safe recreational spaces, especially

shaded playgrounds for Kelaweā Mauka Makai Park to protect keiki from sun exposure and heat.

17. Adam Lee testified in support of a 201H affordable housing project, advocating for the creation of permanent, long-term rental housing for displaced and low-income families in West Maui.

Your Committee also received the attached written testimony.

For questions relating to the West Maui residency area meeting, please contact OCS staff (Keone Hurdle at ext. 7659, Ellen McKinley at ext. 7661, Maria Leon at ext. 7866, or Lori Ann Tengan at ext. 7147).

If you have any questions relating to the FY 2026 Budget, please contact the Committee staff (Kirsten Szabo at ext. 7662, James Krueger at ext. 7761, Jarret Pascual at ext. 7141, Clarissa MacDonald at ext. 7135, or Pauline Martins at ext. 8039). Thank you for your cooperation.