

## WASSP Committee

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**From:** Maui Rapid Response <admin@mauirapidresponse.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 18, 2024 10:57 AM  
**To:** WASSP Committee  
**Cc:** Leslee Matthews; Holomua Outreach  
**Subject:** Re: Bill 111(2024), To Establish Procedures for the Removal and Storage of Personal Property in Public Places and a Right to Shelter (WASSP-13)  
**Attachments:** Letter to CM Johnson Re Wahikuli Sweep.pdf

Aloha,

Attached is our initial response to Bill 111 based on our response to the July 2024 sweep of Wahikuli Park in Lahaina. With such short turnaround time in relation to our community kuleana we were not able to do a deep dive into the line items for the bill. We will submit that feedback before the Council meeting and have planned to give testimony on the 24th.,

Please keep us updated with anything else that is needed, like being a subject matter testifier.

Me ke aloha,  
Nicole and the Maui Rapid Response Team  
Mo'i and the Holomua Outreach Team  
Leslee and the Sou Law Firm team

On Mon, Oct 14, 2024 at 1:52 PM WASSP Committee <[WASSP.Committee@mauicounty.us](mailto:WASSP.Committee@mauicounty.us)> wrote:

**Ms. Huguenin:** Please refer to the attached letter from the Maui County Council's Water Authority, Social Services, and Parks Committee Chair Shane Sinenci, dated October 14, 2024. **Please respond by October 17, 2024.**

Mahalo,

WASSP Committee Staff



August 1, 2024

Councilmember Gabe Johnson  
Maui County Council  
200 S. High Street  
Wailuku, HI 96793

Dear Councilmember Johnson,

I am writing to you on behalf of Maui Rapid Response, deeply concerned about the planned “Park Beautification” or what we believe to be a sweep of the unsheltered community at Wahikuli Beach Park scheduled for August 1, 2024. This action encompasses a community composed of fire survivors still grappling with the aftermath of the devastating Maui wildfires. The timing of this sweep, just one week before the August 8th anniversary of the wildfires, compounds the trauma these individuals have already endured.

The Maui wildfires left a significant number of our residents without homes, displacing families and individuals who are now struggling to find stability and safety. Many of these fire survivors have sought refuge in Wahikuli Beach Park, forming a community that offers some semblance of support and security amidst their continued hardship. The planned sweep threatens to dismantle this fragile sanctuary, exacerbating their vulnerability and distress.

We implore you to call on the County of Maui Administration to reconsider and halt the planned sweep. Displacing these individuals without providing viable, humane alternatives is not a solution but rather a further victimization of those who have already suffered profoundly. Instead of a sweep, we propose a collaborative and compassionate approach that honors the dignity and worth of every individual and respects their right to shelter.

Maui Rapid Response stands ready to play an integral role in this collaborative effort. We are prepared to work with Maui County officials, local organizations, and the broader community to develop and implement supportive measures that address the immediate needs of the unsheltered fire survivors while working towards sustainable, long-term housing solutions.

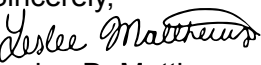


Our proposed collaborative approach includes:

1. Immediate Moratorium on Sweeps: A halt on all sweeps to prevent further displacement and trauma.
2. Resource Allocation: Deployment of essential resources such as food, water, hygiene kits, and medical care to support the unsheltered community at Wahikuli Beach Park.
3. Comprehensive Needs Assessment: Conducting thorough assessments to understand the specific needs of the fire survivors and other persons who are unsheltered, tailoring services accordingly.
4. Housing First Initiative: Prioritizing permanent housing solutions without preconditions, ensuring stability and support for those affected.
5. Safe Outdoor Space: Establishing a designated safe outdoor space where individuals can live temporarily with access to basic amenities and services. This space will provide a stable and secure environment while long-term housing solutions are developed, ensuring that fire survivors and other unsheltered people are not left without shelter during this transitional period.

We believe that by working together, we can find solutions that protect the well-being of our most vulnerable people while upholding the values of compassion and human dignity. We respectfully request a meeting with your office to discuss these proposals further and to work towards a collaborative solution.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We trust that you will consider our plea with the gravity it deserves, recognizing the immense impact your decision will have on the lives of many.

Sincerely,  
  
Leslee D. Matthews, Esq., MSW  
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