

Dec. 5, 2024

Good morning,

My name is Sydney Smith and I'm the chair of the Ag Working Group. I'm testifying on behalf of myself and the Ag Working Group.

Ag Working Group worked with Council member Gabe Johnson and Council member Tom Cook and their staff to bring this bill before you.

Our water resources are dwindling and becoming more precious as the years go by. No one is more aware of this than a farmer or rancher. We've seen the changes in our environment first hand. Rather than receiving our rain steadily throughout the year, we now witness months with no rain at all and then flooding downpours. And hard, dry earth cannot absorb that flooding rain and it ends up causing mudslides and brown water advisories.

Bill ¹⁸⁰153 will make it easier for our farmers and ranchers to build higher volume catchment tanks to help support our plants and animals. The water in these tanks will reduce the stress on our potable water supplies. Even if it doesn't rain they'll collect water just from condensation overnight.

By making it possible to build these tanks without complicated and expensive engineering plans and spending time submitting permits to varying over-burdened County Departments, our agriculture community can begin building these larger tanks now.

With the stroke of a pen you can help Maui County become more sustainable without it costing the local taxpayer any revenue dollars for additional infrastructure.

Ag Working Group would like you to support this bill to help us survive these years of continuous drought and reduce the stress on our Department of Water Supply.

Mahalo!

Sydney Smith
Ag Working Group, chair
 Maliko Estate Coffee
 808-268-3646 call/text
 808-572-0072 farm

Ag Working Group was formed in 2013 by the Ag Chair of Council who needed input from the Ag community. Members must be Farmers, Ranchers or Government representatives. We are comprised of neutral representatives from:

Maui County Farm Bureau • Maui Farmers Union • Maui Coffee Association
 Maui Cattlemen's Association • Maui Flower Grower's Association • Hawaii Forest Industry Association
 Kula and Makawao Community Associations and include members from Hawaii State Department of Agriculture, Maui County Administration • East Maui Water Authority
 Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources and Maui County Council



RECEIVED AT WAI MEETING ON 12/5/24