

EACP Committee

From: Meredith Beeson <meredithbeeson2@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 08, 2020 2:13 PM
To: EACP Committee
Subject: SUPPORT of Maui County Code Chapter 2.50

Aloha,

My name is Meredith Beeson, and I live in Kahana. I'm testifying in support of the proposed bill that you are considering to establish Chapter 2.50, Maui County Code, relating to pesticide and fertilizer use on County property.

Having studied marine biology and now working in the marine conservation field, I support the ban of biocides on Maui County lands. I have been researching the impact of pesticides on nearshore coral reefs, and it is clear that they are harmful to coral, invertebrates, and marine plants and animals. Herbicides and pesticides can make it impossible for corals to reproduce, settle, and grow. Herbicides especially harm the important relationship of corals and their symbiotic algae, zooxanthellae. Without this algae, coral bleaching occurs and the corals cannot thrive and grow.

As stated in "Chemical Pollution on Coral Reefs: Exposure and Ecological Effects" by Joost W. van Dam et al., chemical pollution is one of the main proposed reasons for coral reef declines. Over time, chronic stress (from pesticides) decreases the resilience of coral reef ecosystems to other stressors such as climate change and ocean acidification which are rapidly becoming more prevalent.

Maui County has the chance to be a leader in the way that county, state, and federal lands are taken care of. Let's give our coral reefs a chance to fight against environmental stressors that we cannot directly control. Please push this bill forward to protect our people, plants, animals, and resources.

Mahalo for your time.