# BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**Council of the County of Maui**

# MINUTES

## April 9, 2024

## Lānaʻi High and Elementary School, Cafeteria

**CONVENE:** 6:09 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
Councilmember Tom Cook, Member
Councilmember Gabe Johnson, Member
Councilmember Alice L. Lee, Member
Councilmember Tamara Paltin, Member
Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez, Member
Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci, Member
Councilmember Nohelani Uʻu-Hodgins, Member

**EXCUSED:** Councilmember Tasha Kama, Vice-Chair

**STAFF:** Paige Greco, Legislative Analyst
Pauline Martins, Senior Committee Secretary

**Additional Staff**
Executive Assistants for Councilmember Gabe Johnson:
Kate Griffiths
Axel Beers

Executive Assistant for Councilmember Tamara Paltin:
Angela Lucero

Executive Assistant for Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci:
Don Atay

Residency Area Office (RAO):
Roxanne Morita, Council Aide, Lānaʻi Residency Area Office
Zhantell Lindo, Council Aide, Molokaʻi Residency Area Office

**OTHERS:** Kahau Siliga, Director, ʻE Mālama I Nā Keiki O Lānaʻi Preschool
Pamela Haban, Board Member, ʻE Mālama I Nā Keiki O Lānaʻi Preschool
Melody Villamor, Board Vice President, ʻE Mālama I Nā Keiki O Lānaʻi Preschool
Chantell Schilling
Joe Adarna, Director, Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary

Yu Batoon, Manager, Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary
Kathy Carroll, Founder, Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary
Kelli Medeiros
Anne Van Valkenburg
Robin Kaye
Dominique Lacerte
Martin Kruger
Mr. Coop DeRenne
Diane Preza
Erin Atacador
Helena Keller Twigg
Phoenix Dupree
Roger Alconcel
John Janikowski
Alberta de Jetley
Yvonne Urbas-Laboeuf
Butch Gima
Deborah Scarborough
Winifred Basques
Rose Jane Ancheta, Branch Manager, Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.
Chelsea Trevino
Others (7)

**PRESS:** *Akakū*: Maui Community Television, Inc.

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**ITEM 1:** **PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI** (BILL 60 (2024), BILL 61 (2024), BILL 62 (2024), BILL 63 (2024), BILL 64 (2024), and RESOLUTION 24-66)

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much for being here, and we always know how special Lānaʻi is, with your kind of nice weather, and warmth of your people, and we appreciate you opening up your hearts to let us be with you tonight. We are the Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee. Today is April the 9th, and this is being recorded right here, thank you very much, and it'll be played on public access television, because we wanted people greater than this audience to be able to hear what you have to say about what you think is important for the County of Maui. My name is Yuki Lei Sugimura. I'm the Chair of this Committee, and I'm going to…I'm going to let Gabe Johnson, your Councilmember, introduce the rest of the Councilmembers. Thank you, Gabe.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: We don't gavel in, or? Or do we --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(gavel)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: All right. Okay, everybody. So front…starting from the left, we've got Councilmember Tom Cook. Next, we have Councilmember Tamara Paltin, followed by Councilmember Keani Rawlins-Fernandez, myself, and your Budget Chair Yuki Lei Sugimura, and then, we have Chair Alice Lee, followed by Councilmember Shane Sinenci, and last, but not least, Councilmember Nohe Uʻu-Hodgins. Can I say a little bit?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. So, I know…before we get started, I just wanted to make a little bit of a sheet of specific Lānaʻi budget items, so this is just for our community, and Chair Sugimura allows me at this time just to kind of update you guys. So, I'll go real quick, so I can give you this and talk to you about this afterwards, but I just want to get this on record. So, from the Department of Environmental Management, we've got $100,000 to replace a Ford F-450 crew cab truck in the budget. We did get…we won an award for recycling grants for Lānaʻi. Just to let you know that since Hōkūʻao, our landfill's filling up from 22 years last year, to ten years…there's 10.1 years left in that landfill this year. So, this landfill is getting filled up quick. From the Fire Department, we got 88,000 for a compressor at the Lānaʻi Fire Station, 50,000 for a vehicle to be used for transportation, and 28,000 for the purchase of a Kawasaki MULE to provide access along ag roads in remote areas. From the Human Concerns Department, we had Lānaʻi Community Health Center funding remains flat at $82,610, Lānaʻi Kināʻole remains flat at 175,000, and the Lānaʻi Youth Center remains flat at $269,000. Interesting note, the Council supported my request for a grant for…of 250K for the Lānaʻi Kināʻole Adult Daycare Center design and permitting last year, and I'm happy to report that Brian Schatz recently earmarked 1.1 million of federal dollars for the construction of that project. So, that's a great example of different groups of the Government working together. From the Office of the Mayor, we had $140,000 for the Lānaʻi Economic Development cultural programs for events and festivals, 114,000 reduced from 120,000 for the Festivals of Aloha. So, this is the Mayor's proposed budget. So we can amend these. I'm just telling you what the Mayor's proposing. From the Parks and Rec, we have no changes to the 13 Lānaʻi PALS program. For the last two years, I fought hard to raise the PALS wages to a livable wage, so if you…please apply for those positions when they come up. Capital Improvement Programs, the…$2 million for 5th Street courts resurfacing. You know where the 5th Street tennis courts are? They're getting resurfaced. A million dollars additional funding for the Lānaʻi Youth Center and skate park, including funding for a HECO line extension for permanent power, and $1 million for Lānaʻi Wastewater Reclamation Facility plan for assessment, design and permitting, management, and construction of improvements upgrades to increase the capacity and reliability for the County affordable housing project. So, there's been some cuts to the Lānaʻi budget. The

Keiki ʻO Lānaʻi preschool funding of 86,000 that subsidized families' tuitions has been a line item for over 30 years, and was cut from the Early Childhood Programs grant this year, and they just found out only on April 5th, so we're going to be fighting that. And as many of you have heard, the Feral Animal Control Lānaʻi program was at originally $300,000 in FY 2023, was also cut. So, those are…those are the updates that we got from the Mayor's budget, and thank you for allowing me this time to speak, Councilmember.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay, thank you very much, Gabe. So, as we proceed, before we get into three-minute public testimony, I wanted to introduce Staff who works hard to get us here. Pauline Martins and Paige Greco on that side, and is Jennifer Yamashita here? Jennifer Yamashita, who else is here? Oh, just the two of you. Okay, thank you very much.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Zhantell.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Zhantell and Angela.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, Angela.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: And Angela.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay, that's…that's our Staff, Zhantell Lindo from Maka…Molokai, wrong place. Angela, who is also from…and she's from West Maui. Anybody else here?

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is Roxanne? And Axel and Roxanne.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay. Your whole…your full staff is here.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Full staff, well, except for Autumn Ness. But we got Kate Griffiths, Roxanne Morita, and Axel Beers, all of my staff, are here. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. So --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And Uncle Don.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, Uncle Don is from Hāna, with Councilmember Sinenci. All right. So, just so you know, this year, these meetings are only in-person. We're not doing online testimony, so that's why we have *Akakū* filming it, so that it can be seen after tonight. And your words are very important to us, so you can

submit written testimony always to our eComment. You can give us…give it to us tonight, and also the Staff, when you're speaking, they're taking notes and minutes, and that will be submitted to all the Councilmembers. So, if you don't see us writing fast as you're talking, it's because the Staff is taking care of what you say, and will be giving it to us, and will be part of the Budget, Economic Development and Finance Committee [*sic*] minutes, basically, so that we can always look at it later. So, if you wish to testify anonymously, you don't have to give us your name. That's really up to you. But I think everybody in this room, you probably know each other. Restrooms?

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Females' restroom is one building over, and we…we got to sort out the boys' bathroom because one's out of order and the other one's locked. So, if anybody in the audience knows how to fix that, please fix that.

*. . .(laughing). . .*

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Aw. Okay. Life happens, right? So, at this time, then, I'm going to turn it over to Staff, and first testifier, please?

***. . .BEGIN PUBLIC TESTIMONY. . .***

MS. GRECO: Kahau Siliga, followed by Pamela Haban.

MS. SILIGA: I'm short. Got it. Okay. Aloha, and good evening, my name is Kahau. I am the Director and teacher at ʻE Mālama I Nā Keiki O Lānaʻi Preschool. I'm grateful for this opportunity to…to speak, and thank you all for being here today. Our preschool program has been serving our island community for over 40 years, and we plan to continue to serve families and keiki on Lānaʻi with their early childhood and developmental needs. Our Board of Directors just handed you some of our testimonies from our families who couldn't be here today, along with the letter that we received about not being chosen for the…the grants for this upcoming two fiscal years. The County of Maui grant has been a significant source of subsidy for families in need of tuition…tuition assistance in our program…for our program. Each household is required to submit an application with supporting documents to the Maui County Early Childhood Resource Center. After a complete assessment by the Maui County ECRC, families are notified of their financial need they are eligible for. Funds are sourced directly to our preschool for the purpose of aiding each family's monthly tuition payment. For many families who are not eligible for subsidies from DHS, Preschool Open Doors, or other private subsidy organizations, the County of Maui funds has been a great relief for eligible families to be able to afford keeping their children in preschool. We were sent an email on Friday, April 5th, with a letter attached from DHHC that ʻE Mālama I Nā Keiki O Lānaʻi Preschool was not selected for funding for Fiscal Year '25 and Fiscal Year '26. We've been recipients of the

County of Maui grants for at least two decades. With less funds available to families starting next year, especially the families who are slightly over income…the income limits for a State subsidy, and unable to qualify for that, it would make me so sad to see a family turn down preschool because they can't afford it. I'm here to advocate for those Lānaʻi families in need of financial assistance, and to kindly voice that the County funds continues to support our youngest Lānaʻians, our preschoolers, so that they are able to participate in programs like ours, which is an extremely important investment in their future learning experiences. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Do you have a question, Chair Lee?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: . . .*(Inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Can't hear. Here.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: I push it up, down, and around. Hello. Yes. Sorry, she's…she's jet lag, yeah, from Molokaʻi? . . .*(laughing)*. . . Okay. So how much, again, were you getting?

MS. SILIGA: We were getting $86,335 for each fiscal year.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: 86,300 --

MS. SILIGA: 35.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: And then, the year before?

MS. SILIGA: So, it's been the same amount since Fiscal Year 2018.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: '18?

MS. SILIGA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: And you said this started about 20 years ago or more?

MS. SILIGA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Yeah. So, I would have been the first one to give you this grant, yeah --

MS. SILIGA: Wow.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: -- as Director of Housing and Human Concerns. Okay, thank

you very much. I'd be shocked that you don't get your grant again. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you, Kahau, and I was just following up with Chair Lee and the Director, and I am looking at the letter. The Director didn't ask you to submit for other grants. She just…this is what was your --

MS. SILIGA: That was pretty --

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: -- her response to you?

MS. SILIGA: -- short and sweet, yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Okay, all right, thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Aloha, Ms. Siliga, thank you for your testimony. I just was wondering if you had -- if you did follow up with them for technical assistance? In regard to your submitted application, did they give a reason?

MS. SILIGA: No. So, it's been a hectic year, and it's been quiet. Normally, every year, I mean, we just submit our application and then, you know, we get funded, so.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And you submitted…you didn't change anything in your submission from one year to the next?

MS. SILIGA: It's…it's the same. Pretty consistent, yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And…and so, that's all no explanation. You've just been --

MS. SILIGA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- submitting, submitting, and then all of a sudden, no more?

MS. SILIGA: Yeah. Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay, thank you.

MS. SILIGA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Sorry, but this isn't the end of the story.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: No. That's why we're here.

MS. SILIGA: Yeah, yeah, yes. Thank you so much.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Anybody else have questions? So, how many students do you have, if I could? And what is your tuition?

MS. SILIGA: Well, currently our enrollment as of today is 18, and our monthly tuition is $850. We plan to raise the cost for next school year to 995 a month.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: And how many students are on a, I don't know if you call it a scholarship? For the --

MS. SILIGA: Well, this year, we've been able to serve 23. We have…we've had 23 applicants. Out of the 23, County of Maui was able to subsidize 20 of those families.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: So, I -- my understanding is you had to do an audit, and the price of the audit went up. Can you explain that to the Councilmembers?

MS. SILIGA: So, we're required to have an audit every three years. So, the last audit we did was approximately $4,100. So, this upcoming audit that we needed to complete, it was 11…about $11,000. So it was…it was a pretty outrageous cost, which was very shocking and surprising to us. We've been shopping around, trying to find another firm that would be a reasonable cost to our small organization. We haven't found a firm yet.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay, thanks for clarifying that.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. We have a…Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, for your testimony. I'm sorry for all the bureaucratic hoops. So, last…so, you knew that you would have to update the audit this year when you put in the application?

MS. SILIGA: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay because the last time you did it was three years ago?

MS. SILIGA: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Okay. Mahalo.

MS. SILIGA: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay, thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: One more clarifying question. You need $86,335 for the subsidies, but do you need 11,000 for the audit?

MS. SILIGA: I mean, it would be great. You know, we're…you know, 86,000 is not enough to fund the families here, but we're always so grateful for what we have been getting, and you know, we utilize the funds as much as we can, and we almost always use it all. But you know, with the rising cost of living, you know, operational expenses rising, I mean, it's…it's…that's not enough.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you.

MS. SILIGA: But we are grateful for it.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much.

MS. SILIGA: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next testifier, please.

MS. GRECO: Pamela Haban, followed by Melody Villamor.

MS. HABAN: Aloha, and welcome, County Councilmembers. I am Pamela Haban. I am a Board Member of, and an advocate of, ʻE Mālama I Nā Keiki O Lānaʻi Preschool, and I just want to make sure that we…you all know that our preschool takes care of children ages three to five. Our enrollment, as Kahau said, is about 20, and I want to thank you for the years of support. I've been a Board Member for many years, and making sure that we continue forward with teaching our little ones. So, the subsidies has been great help, financial assistance, for many of the families that…that…so that we can provide the daycare…the quality daycare for the children. The funds have been provided directly to many of the young families who have chosen to make Lānaʻi home. So, it's really nice to see. I've been here for over 20 years, and as I…I've been working with many of the children, and now have become adults and have children. So, it's really, really…it…it just touches my heart to see that now they have children, and I get to be part of that growth. But so many of these families, when I talk to them, have to decide, and they struggle with the decision whether or not to put their children into the preschool, or stay home, but…or work. So, I do always advocate that, as we all know, the experts say 90 percent of our brain develops…occurs by the age of five. If we don't begin thinking about education in the early years, our children are at risk of falling behind by the time they start kindergarten. So, with that said, I just want to end with a quote, "If we want to invest in the prosperity of our nation, we

must invest in the education of our children, so that their talents may be fully employed." And I really thank you for allowing me to testify.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Beautiful. Anybody have questions? Go ahead, Councilmember Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Aloha, Pamela, thank you for your testimony. I just was wondering the hours of operation?

MS. HABAN: So, the hours of operation are, we open at 7:30 for the most parents that have to start work at 8:00, and we…pick up is at 4:30, so it's.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And…and it's year-round?

MS. HABAN: It is year-round, with one exception; with a break in July.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And holidays off?

MS. HABAN: Holidays off.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Weekends off.

MS. HABAN: Yeah, we try to match with the school, so families can be together on the holidays.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Got it. Thank you.

MS. HABAN: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any more questions? Seeing none. Okay, so before you do the next testifier, can you let everybody hear what the three-minute buzzer sounds like? Oh, you can sit down. Yeah, thank you. So, three minutes . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . and then if you need more time, then you'll be given another 30 seconds to complete. And just for your information, we operate under the Sunshine Law, which gives everybody a fair amount of time to speak. And then the Members can ask you questions if they have questions for clarifying questions. So, thank you. Next testifier, please.

MS. GRECO: Melody Villamor, followed by Chantell Schilling.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Equal amount of time.

MS. VILLAMOR: I'm sorry, I'm kind of short.

. . .*(laughing)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Good things come in small packages. . . . *(laughing)*. . .

MS. VILLAMOR: Thank you. Aloha, my name is Melody, and I am the Vice President of the Board Of Directors at ʻE Mālama I Nā Keiki O Lānaʻi, and I just want to thank you all for being here tonight. I want to say that as a former parent who received funding it was so helpful and needed, and I was thankful to be able to receive all funding, all the years my kids were in preschool. As a Board Member, I'm also so thankful for all of the funding we are able to get for the families and children who need it. All of the funding from the County goes towards the families and their tuition payments. If we don't get any funding for Fiscal Year '25 and '26, it would be such a huge hit to our community and to the families who rely on the funding to send their keiki to preschool, especially here with the cost of living on Lānaʻi. And I just also want to touch on the quick audit fact. Our audit has doubled since 2018, and we did not have it in our budget that we do at $11,000, because our last audit in Fiscal Year '18 was $4,115, and their current quote they sent us for Fiscal Year '21 was $11,375 with the same firm. I asked why there was such a huge difference in the audit pricing, and if there was any changes, and the only explanation, in short, I got was because of inflation. Thank you so much for your time. Mahalo.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. So, I'm just curious, if I could ask you for a clarifying question? We don't fund 2026. This is only one year, 2025.

MS. VILLAMOR: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: The budget we're looking at, just for your information.

MS. VILLAMOR: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: And the other thing is, do you get other sources of funding? So, is the County the only --

MS. VILLAMOR: So, the County is our biggest amount that we get. We do get Preschool Open Doors. We get the Kamehameha Pauahi --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: You know, I guess since you did your audit, you can maybe share it with us through that document.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We didn't do our audit. . .*(indiscernible)*. . .

MS. VILLAMOR: Yeah, we didn't do our audit --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, you didn't do it yet?

MS. VILLAMOR: -- for the 11 --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, maybe --

MS. VILLAMOR: We were trying to…we're trying to look for a firm who can do our audit --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: For less money.

MS. VILLAMOR: -- because we only…we only budgeted $4,000, but now the…the price they gave us with the same firm was $11,000. So, we have been trying to find another affordable firm, but it's --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MS. VILLAMOR: -- basically been, like, nonexistent.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. So, can you give us your list of who else funds your organization? Thank you. It sounds like you're very…you don't have to give it to me now. I just --

MS. VILLAMOR: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- we'll ask you through Gabe's…or we'll ask you through the Budget Committee if you could send it to us.

MS. VILLAMOR: Okay, yeah, we'll send it.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Anybody else? Any more questions? Oh, Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Aloha, Melody, thank you for your testimony. I just was wondering how many instructors you have?

MS. VILLAMOR: We have only one, but we have also had a second teacher position that has been open for years now, and we've had nobody who's wanted to be a teacher, also because our teachers don't get paid a lot, so it's not --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And what is the location? You guys rent?

MS. VILLAMOR: We rent at…under the Union Church.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Under the Union Church. And did you let the Department of Housing and Human Concerns know about the large increase in the audit price?

MS. VILLAMOR: I don't think we did, no.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay.

MS. VILLAMOR: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay, thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Anybody else? Okay. Thank you very much.

MS. VILLAMOR: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next testifier, please.

MS. GRECO: Chantell Schilling, followed by Joe Adarna.

MS. SCHILLING: Mahalo, mahalo. Aloha, mai kākou. My name is Chantell Kapiliana Schilling, and I am a parent of a child currently enrolled at ʻE Mālama I Nā Keiki O Lānaʻi Preschool. I'm a parent of five and a grandson, and he should be up in about two years attending our preschool here. I'm here to voice my support for continued funding for Lānaʻi families in need of financial assistance to attend preschool. County funding for tuition assistance has helped my ʻohana because of the rising cost of…of living in Hawaiʻi, especially here in Lānaʻi, my ʻohana's piko, and our center. Of course, you guys know, everybody…well, everybody behind me, you know the cost of living here is different from Maui. We have to go there to do all of our shopping and everything, so we have a little bit more, you know, with our living…our…our costs of living. So, childcare is very much needed for parents to work and make a living here. A preschool experience is important for children to learn social, educational, and early developmental skills, as well as preparing for kindergarten. Please continue to fund Lānaʻi programs to assure our island and community member voices are being heard and our needs are being met. Mahalo nui loa.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. Anybody have questions? Seeing none, thank you very much. Next testifier, please.

MS. GRECO: Joe Adarna, followed by Yu Batoon.

MR. ADARNA: Aloha, good evening.

MS. LINDO: Joe, you don't have to bend --

MR. ADARNA: Go higher? Perfect. Aloha, good evening. Thank you, Councilmembers, for letting me testify today. I'm a Director at the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary. I've been there for about five years. Today, we're requesting that the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary receive a $285,000 grant under the budget line of Feral Animal Control Lānaʻi for Fiscal Year '25. We received this funding that was allotted for Fiscal Year '23 late, so we utilized it in Fiscal Year '24, so we're currently using it right now. But we did not get any money in this Fiscal Year. We are the only animal rescue on Lānaʻi; we do not have a humane society. The community relies on us to take in all the feral and unwanted cats. Through partnerships with DLNR and Conservation, any cat that is trapped on Lānaʻi and in endangered bird areas come to us and do not die. We agree to never release these cats back onto the landscape. If they are caught in a bird-nesting area, they are adopted off-island. Since 2020, Conservation have reported to us that they have seen no evidence of cat-related bird deaths in their protected bird areas. On average, we take in 200 cats in from Lānaʻi alone. Aside from this grant, the majority of our revenue comes from visitor donation and off-island support. The Cat Sanctuary is the number one tourist attraction on Lānaʻi. We bring over 16,000 people to the island each year. They don't…they not only come to support the sanctuary, but they contribute heavily to the local community. After the COVID pandemic, it took us about two years to recover. In the months before the Lāhainā fire, we were seeing record visitor counts. Since the Lāhainā fires, our current visitor rates are down 40 percent, greatly impacting our donations received. In November of 2023, in partnership with the Maui Humane Society, we began rescuing 220 fire cats directly from the Lāhainā burn zone. These cats were considered unadoptable and had no live-positive outcome available to them. Since we are part of Maui County, we believe that it was, you know, our job to take in those cats. Due to the lowered visitor rates and the taking in of these cats, this funding is needed now more than ever. We request that the County provide this funding for Fiscal Year '25 and beyond, so we can continue to be the resource for feral cat management on our island. I want to thank the Council today for hearing from me, and I invite you guys to come and visit the Cat Sanctuary. It's a really cool place.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Joe. Anybody have questions for him? Member Johnson, then Chair Lee.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you. Joe, thanks for testifying. I appreciate it. Have you reached out to the Hawai'i Community Foundation for any of the funding that they offer?

MR. ADARNA: Yep. So, we did we did reach out for funding from Maui Strong, and we were denied because we're not directly impacted by the Lāhainā fires, according

to them.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. I'll follow up with you.

MR. ADARNA: Yep.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Chair Lee.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Hi. You mentioned that you received your 2023 funding late?

MR. ADARNA: Yep. So, the funding was originally for Feral Animal Management, and in particular, Axis deer management, on Maui, Molokaʻi, and Lānaʻi. It was not needed for the deer management on Lānaʻi, so we were able to apply for that grant. We found about…found out about it last minute, but we were able to get an extension and get our paperwork in, and we were awarded the…the grant. We were able to use it in this Fiscal Year.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: So how much was that grant?

MR. ADARNA: That it was for $300,000.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: 300,000? And then…so how much did you request for this grant…for this year? This coming year?

MR. ADARNA: So, we were under the understanding, and it might have been our mistake, that it would be the same 200…$300,000 as we got before.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: And…and so how much did you…did the Mayor give you --

MR. ADARNA: Zero.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: -- in this budget?

MR. ADARNA: Zero.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. All right. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Go ahead, Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Joe, for your testimony. I was wondering how you were under that understanding? Did somebody tell you?

MR. ADARNA: Yeah. Yeah, we're not…we're kind of new to accepting grants. For a long time, we were able to…to fund our…our activities on our own. But compounded with COVID, and the rising costs of everything, and the expansion for having to take in the 220 Lāhainā fire cats, we have decided to go through the grant avenue. And so, we were in communication with, you know, Councilman Gabe's office, and it might have been our fault that we did not apply for it on time, and assuming that we would get it.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And could you still apply for that 140,000 district funds?

MR. ADARNA: I'm not sure.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: *. . .(inaudible). . .*

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. Oh, but I mean if it's helping the environment, the 140,000 is for the environment, right?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: *. . .(inaudible). . .*

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. Wait, what?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: *. . .(inaudible). . .*

MR. ADARNA: It was a 285…so, originally in Fiscal Year 2023 and 2024, it was $300,000 allotted to Maui, Molokai, and ourselves. Since we received 2023 funding in 2024, we did not have to use it in 2024. I believe it went to a feasibility…the study about the ferry. And so, we…we thought that after that, since we wouldn't have funding the next year, that we would be able to get the funding for this year.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you very much. I've been to the Cat Sanctuary, by the way. Anybody else? No? Okay. Next testifier, please.

MS. GRECO: Yu Batoon, followed by Kathy Carroll.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Just for your information, Zhantell here, we call her the microphone concierge, so, she'll make sure it's perfect.

MS. BATOON: Okay. Okay. Is that good? Hi, my name is Yu Batoon. I'm Sanctuary Manager, and I've been at the sanctuary, well, with the sanctuary for over six years. Thank you for…thank you, Chair and Councilmembers, for allowing me to testify today. I'd like to request that the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary receive 285,000

grant under budget line item Feral Animal Control, Lānaʻi, for Fiscal Year ’25, for the Lānaʻi Feral Cat Management program. We are the only animal rescue on the island that accepts all the feral and unwanted cat on the island, 365 days a year, with no surrender fee. There are currently sixteen staff members that work on-site at sanctuary. They are all Lānaʻi community members. We provide high standard of care for our cats. We follow all the latest guidelines. All of our staff go above and beyond to care for the cats in the sanctuary. We know cats by name, and notice as soon as they need medical attention, and we all comfortable being advocate for all admissions to any visitors and locals. We don’t have that on this island, so we have…we set up usually mobile…mobile van on-site of the sanctuary, and we fly vet team with experience in shelter medicine to the island weekly from neighbor island, or the mainland if specialist is required. In addition to intake cats from Lānaʻi Island, mostly from the birds nesting areas, we received…we recently received 220 feral cats from the Lāhainā fire zone, and taking them all in within three months actually created a lot of additional work for the staff and the vet team, but we are really happy to do it because it aligns to the mission to save cats and protect the birds. Since 2009, all this amazing work has been paid for by donation from our community, visitors, and off-island supporters, at no cost to the taxpayers, aside…aside from the one County grant we received. We…we request the County provide this funding for Fiscal Year 2025 so that we can continue to be the resource for feral cat management on this island. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any questions? Seeing none. Thank you very much.

MS. BATOON: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next testifier, please?

MS. GRECO: Kathy Carroll, followed by Winifred Basques.

MS. CARROLL: Thank you. Oops, can you hear me? Okay. Oops. Microphone concierge? Thank you, thank you. Aloha. Thank you for being here, Chair and Councilmembers. As founder of the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary and owner of a small business here for 21 years, I respectfully ask that you add the $285,000 to the Fiscal Year 2025 budget for the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary to continue its Feral Cat Management program. This program is a win-win-win for cats, native birds, and our community. Lānaʻi’s native bird populations are precious. These birds’ nest on the ground or in wetlands, and most come back to the nest that they were born in, and lay only one egg, so they are predated on by cats, if feral cats are allowed to roam in the environment. If we did not have the sanctuary housing feral cats for their entire lives, they would jeopardize the future of these birds. Our island has never had a humane society. We have not had an on-island veterinarian for more than 40 years. Because there were no concerted efforts at

spay and neuter over those years, the feral cat population exploded here. Free-roaming cats were wandering all over town, at the resorts, and in the wild. Unsterilized female cats can have three litters a year, with an average of four cats per litter. Over the last 20 years, the sanctuary has spayed and neutered more than 2,800 feral cats. Without this sterilization program, there would be at least 100,000 or more feral cats running all over this island and completely out of control. The sanctuary has not only reduced the feral cat population, it's respected for our progressive approach to humanely housing feral cats in native bird nesting areas that are caught by the island's conservation department. Those cats trapped in nesting areas would otherwise be killed by gunshot. The sanctuary has a vital positive effect on our economy as well. It's rated as a top tourist destination on the island, and we attract visitors from Maui, the mainland, and beyond. Tourists coming to the island visit the sanctuary, but they also pump revenue into our family-owned businesses, like the shuttle service, the taxi company, and shops and restaurants around town. So, in my view, the community would suffer financial collateral damage, if you will, if the sanctuary does not have the funding to continue its feral cat management services and attract visitors from around the world, which otherwise would not visit Lānaʻi. If the sanctuary doesn't receive the funding needed to continue accepting feral cats in these very trying times, it will severely impact the ability to control the feral cat population and protect native . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . and endangered birds. Thank you for your consideration.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. Anybody have any questions? Seeing none. Thank you. Thank you very much. Next testifier, please.

MS. GRECO: Winifred Basques, followed by Kelli Medeiros.

MS. BASQUES: Thank you. Mahalo. Hui. Pehea ʻoe? Maikaʻi nō. ʻO ʻoe anuanu. Hawaiian means "cold". Welawela is "hot", right, braddah?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

MS. BASQUES: Okay. I . . .*(indiscernible)*. . . for the MEO, I'm talking about MEO. I love going to Maui for go shopping. Riki Hokama did it. He had appropriated $10,000 for the kūpunas to go to Maui to go shopping. This was years ago. After that, the kūpunas ʻaʻole the kālā; this. Hawaiian means "money". ʻAʻole kālā, ʻaʻole cannot go holoholo to Maui. We used to go to Lāhainā. I love going to Lāhainā. Now, aʻole pilikia, auē nohoʻi ē, Māʻalaea . . . *(indiscernible)*. . . , and that's a long way off. Takes about hour and a half to reach there, going. Okay, fine. But I love going shopping. Costco, Wal-Mart, Maui Mall, Kaʻahumanu Shopping Center; you name it, I've been there. I love it, going. The thing is, that when you have a man who did this, appropriate $10,000 for the kūpunas on this island to go over there, because nowadays over here, the shopping is so darned

expensive. One tray like that, one meat, guess how much? Almost $20 bucks. I go to Costco, I get this tray like this, remember now, the pork chop is like that thick. Guess how much it costs? You wouldn't believe it; $18, full on. Same like the meat. The shrimp like this, $14. Where you can go wrong like that? Over here, you cannot do that. Why? Because they…all the things come here on the barge. But like when go Maui, is there already. I go into…I get Costco, I go to that, I get my cart, and I go inside. I go hele on inside, straight to the meat area. That's where you go. You go shopping, buy food for bring home to your house, to your family. One more thing; I used to go hunting before on Lānaʻi. I carry one .30-06 high-powered rifle, 180-grain bullet, and I shot one Mouflon. This was in 1985. I not bragging, but the thing is, when you go hunt, you bring food home to your house, to your family. If too much for you, you give to somebody else. They can share it. Share the food. Don't be, you know what I mean, stuck up or whatever you can call that. The meat is so tender, man, you can barbeque, you can do everything with the meat. But I love going to Maui, and I just went Tuesday, and I had fun going over because I had my two friends that we go all the time. We enjoy . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . going. We come home, our cooler is full with food. Not the kind like this minor kind, you know, this…forget it, man, no way. No. And I love going Maui. My second item is please get with the money for the road. This road here is all big pukas. Going ruin you guys' wheel alignment. Who's going to fix it? Not you folks . . .*(timer)*. . . and the money coming out from you folks' budget, right, to fix the road. The road, I tell you, I used to work with my husband on the State highway. I know about that. Do you know what is slurry seal?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: 30 seconds.

MS. BASQUES: You know what is it?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Slurry seal?

MS. BASQUES: Slurry seal. So, a slurry seal is when the ua come down, where you patching up all the puka, you seal it, so it doesn't run away. If it runs away, there goes your taxpayers' money, right there, right?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

MS. BASQUES: So please get with it. Too much pukas on this island --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

MS. BASQUES: -- oh, my goodness. So, like I say --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MS. BASQUES: -- it going ruin your wheel alignment and your . . .*(indiscernible)*. . . Thank you very much for listening.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MS. BASQUES: I got to go home now. I just went pau work. . . .*(laughing)*. . . A hui hou.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: A hui hou.

MS. BASQUES: Mālama pono, ʻae.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Good…good to see you --

MS. BASQUES: And take care.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- year after year.

MS. BASQUES: Bye. . . .*(laughing)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you for coming. Bye. Any questions?

MS. BASQUES: Bye-bye.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. So precious. Next testifier.

MS. GRECO: Kelli Medeiros, followed by Anne Van Valkenburg.

MS. MEDEIROS: Hello, and thank you for allowing me to testify. Sorry, I'm never taller than anybody else. I'm requesting that the County Council include Lānaʻi in the budget for feral animal…animal management in the amount of $300,000. It's the same amount of money that was allotted to Maui and Molokaʻi, and it is not funded by a billionaire, contrary to popular belief, I think. It's run on donations, grants, and County budget…budget money. Lānaʻi has no animal shelter, and they have an open admission policy for all of the cats on Lānaʻi; feral, found, rehomed, whatever, they take them all, they don't turn cats away. They provide lifelong homes for cats as opposed to euthanasia. They provide medical care by flying vets in and doing with their own medical staff what they can do. If they need surgery, they have to bring vets from another island, which costs money. They find homes for the cats when possible and adopt them off-island. I would like to say that I worked directly with the fire cats while they were being taken out of the fire in Lāhainā, and they provided…by…by Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary taking that many cats away from Lāhainā, it provided, you know, animals in trauma

with a place to go, instead of being in a cage. Because they have taken this many cats, they've needed to expand the area of their sanctuary, so they're, right now, expanding behind what they already have to accommodate the amount of cats that they have now taken. It's cost money for material, workers, which is hard to get over here. I'm sure all of you took the ferry over here today, so you know that it's, like, generally, if you come over here, it's a 12-hour day. You come at six in the morning, and you get home at seven at night if you come from Maui. So, flights are very expensive and limited as well. So, they have had to spend more money to build, bring people over to build, food, medical costs for the more animals. Their staff's amazing. They provide jobs to people in the community, which I would hate to see go away because, like Kathy said, you go in, everybody knows the name of the animal, where it came from, its background. There's constantly people walking around in there, checking on the health of the cat, or cleaning out the litter boxes, or hosing where the cats live…houses. I don't believe that people realize how much Lānaʻi has been affected as well by the fire with our tourism, because you come over here, they're, like, I go to the cat sanctuary. I used to go several times a month. Now I can maybe go every six weeks because of the commute. And there used to be, you know, 100 people that I would see there throughout the course of the day of being there. Now there's maybe, like, 20. And…and, like, last time I went, there was, like, 10. So, they're not really being able to pull in the donation money that they had before. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . .Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you very much. Next testifier, please.

MS. GRECO: Anne Van Valkenburg, followed by Robin Kaye.

MS. VAN VALKENBURG: Aloha. My name is Anne. I'm a Lānaʻi resident of five years, I'm an animal lover, I'm a cat rescuer, I'm a cat mom, and I am happy to be a part of anything that will help the…the animal…Cat Sanctuary. Yeah, I'm very passionate about helping native birds besides the cats, and not only would this money help all of the animals, but it helps the people of Lānaʻi as well. I'm close with many people that own businesses here, and we have been truly affected by the fires. It's very disheartening to see less visitors here on the island. I've had the fortunate pleasure to teach yoga with the cats a few times from the Cat Sanctuary, where we livestream across the world, and to see the effect of the Cat Sanctuary to all those outside of the island besides those here, is pretty amazing. It takes a village and this community all steps in and does whatever it takes. Numerous times I've called Joe just to…I need help with a cat, and he's always there to help. So, they go beyond just helping the cats that are in the sanctuary, but they're a resource to everybody here on the island. So, I really sincerely hope that the Cat Sanctuary receives this grant. Thank you so much.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. Any questions? Thank you very much. Next testifier, please.

MS. GRECO: Robin Kaye, followed by Dominique Lacerte.

MR. KAYE: Got it. . . .*(clears throat)*. . .Excuse me. Thank you. Good evening, everybody. My name is Robin Kaye. I'm a long-time resident of this island. It's often said that Lānaʻi is a very difficult place to be born and a very difficult place to die, and the reason for that is that we have no long-term care facility and never have had one on this island. Well, a group of us in the community, including all of the health care providers and other community representatives, have been working to solve this problem for the last probably five years, trying to develop a long-term care facility. There were two major problems. One was the space in which to have that facility, and two was an operator who had the skill and the knowledge to manage that facility. But luckily, we've solved both of those challenges. The Hongwanji has agreed to lease its residence, not the temple itself, but the residence to form this long-term residential care facility, and Hospice Maui has agreed to be the operator of this facility. So, the two major problems have been…the two major challenges have been successfully addressed. We've made a lot of progress so far. We had a University of Hawaiʻi study done, a needs assessment, and it was undertaken with County funding, with private funding, with individual funding, with foundations from Honolulu funding. We've also had some architectural drawings in order to renovate the…the Hongwanji space. It's, as you can imagine, a very old building, not up to ADA standards or Health…Department of Health standards, so we've had some architectural drawings to look at that. Tomorrow, I'm picking up a surveyor to come and do the survey of the Hongwanji property, so we have a…a…a licensed survey to go along with the architect's drawings. We've worked out a number of governance issues with Hospice Maui. They've been terrific as a…as a collaborator. We…we will have someone on their board, they will have somebody…they'll be using several of the Lānaʻi residents on their committees, and we've begun the discussions of the lease. I'm not coming to ask you for funding for this year in the Mayor's budget. We are not quite ready yet to do that, as you can see since we're just doing the survey now. But I am letting you know we will be back again next year for your support. Any questions? Anything I can answer about this? There are…there will be…by the way, I should have said, there will be four beds in this facility. There are three bedrooms. We're going to convert it to a four-bed facility, and I've already put in my name for the first bed. . . .*(laughing)*. . . So, any…any questions from anybody?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Anybody have any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you very much.

MR. KAYE: Okay. Thank you. We'll see you next year.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next testifier.

MS. GRECO: Dominique Lacerte, followed by Martin Kruger.

MS. LACERTE: Thank you. Hello, Councilmembers, thank you for coming to Lānaʻi. My name is Dominique Lacerte, pronunciation was really close, and my partner, Martin Kruger, is going to speak after me. I'm actually going to read it if that's okay. We've been Lānaʻi residents since 2020, and we are cat lovers, cat trappers, and supporters of the Cat Sanctuary. We ask that the $285,000 be put back into the budget. I'm just going to tell you a little bit about the cats that we've trapped and…and what we've done. It breaks our heart to see the feral cats on the island. They're typically sick, often injured, and always malnourished. We love the local native wildlife as well, and the presence of these feral cats on island is catastrophic to our delicate island ecosystem and the native bird population. Over the past few years, we've spotted so many feral cats down at Mānele, where we live, that we began trapping them. We've trapped kittens abandoned by mothers and pregnant cats. To date, we have caught 34 cats--15 in 2023 alone and seven in just January of this year. Half of the cats trapped have been females. Kathy mentioned a little bit about the numbers of reproduction on the island, but I think this might give you a really clear idea of what will happen if the sanctuary is not funded and doesn't exist anymore. A female feral cat can have up to three litters per year, producing three to five kittens per litter. That's 9 to 15 offspring per year. For the seventeen females we caught using the low number of nine kittens, that would result in 875 offspring in three years. That's more than the current number of animals at the sanctuary. So, I think it was Kathy that said a number of 100,000. That's actually realistic. We did the math out five more years and it came to 20,000, but it's so astronomical that you almost can't even fathom it. So, without this population control, it's actually catastrophic for the island and the native bird populations. Without interventions, obviously, this is going to compound exponentially. All the cats we trap look like kittens because of their size. They are so little because they're starving. They're usually, like I said, sick. They need a lot of medical care as well. When they're in the sanctuary, they never have to scavenge again, they don't have to kill the birds, and for the rest of their lives, they're kept unless they can be adopted out. The Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary is the only hope for these feral cats and for preventing the decimation of the native birds of Lānaʻi. There's no humane society, as everybody comes up here and says the same thing. We're stuck with no support no support system for these cats. Every one we trap, they take in. Everyone at the sanctuary is so warm and wonderful to work with, and the entire island ecosystem has benefited from this. So, thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Sorry about that. Any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you very much.

MS. LACERTE: Thank you.

MS. GRECO: Martin Kruger, followed by Dr. Coop DeRenne.

MR. KRUGER: Good evening. Thank you, Councilmembers, for being here. I just have a quick clarifying question as far as feral animal control is concerned. In the budget, is it is it true that there's $285,000 for the Island of Maui and the Island of Molokaʻi? That is…that is correct? Okay, now, I can start. Excuse the redundancies, it's because I'm going near the end. So, the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary currently has 860 cats. Working with the Maui Humane Society, it took in 220 cats from Maui after the fires. Lānaʻi has also been negatively impacted from the fires. The sanctuary is the number one tourist destination on the island. Visitors are down more than 40 percent, and so are donations. Two weeks ago, we witnessed the groundbreaking for the expansion of outdoor enclosures to make room for the additional cats. The expansion of the facility will result in increased costs in addition to the normal operating costs that are going up, and the sanctuary does employ, I think it's 17--16 or 17 Lānaʻi residents. And one benefit from the expansion is that there is potential to hire additional residents in the future. So, the current operating budget of the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary is $1.7 million. 285,000 that we're asking for represents 17 percent, or one-sixth of that budget. A loss in the amount of this funding due to what we would consider an oversight would be devastating, and severely negatively impact all the positive work that the sanctuary has made in controlling the feral cat population. We are also Maui County, and it would be an injustice for Maui and Molokaʻi to receive funding while we don't. To recognize how significant the Cat Sanctuary is, we need to think of it as a wheel with four spokes. At the center of the wheel is the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary, and all the work that it does is each one of the spokes that I'm going to enumerate as follows. The first spoke is the rescuing of sick and starving cats; it's the humane thing to do. The second spoke is saving native and endangered bird population to protect our island's ecosystem. The third is providing jobs, currently employing 17 staff, and with a potential to add more staff in the future. And the fourth, which is central to the conversation we're having this evening, is controlling feral cat population. There simply is no other entity on this island that is doing this work. So, we strongly urge the…this committee to add 285,000 to the budget for Lānaʻi feral animal control and award it to the . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . sanctuary, so they continue to…to provide these essential feral cat services. Thank you for your time.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Martin. Anybody have questions for him? Seeing none…oh, Member Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha. Mahalo for your testimony. So, it's…it's a competitive grant process that you're talking about. It's not, you know,

for any specific organization; for Molokaʻi or…and I…and I didn't double check to see if it's still in the budget. But it was particularly for…for Axis deer. And so, for Molokaʻi, the organizations like Molokaʻi Hunting Club, they use that money to kill the deer. So, we're not using the money to feed the deer. We're…we're killing them and eating them, and then the community eats, you know? So, do you understand that…that's what --

MR. KRUGER: No, I understand what you're saying, but it all falls under the category of Feral Animal Control. And we have a cat problem on the island because they are…if…if we don't…if we don't trap them, bring them to sanctuary, and spay and neuter them, they will remain in the wild, and they do hunt the birds. And we will again see cats roaming the streets in Lānaʻi and roaming the hotels as they were in the past. So, that's the…that's the impact if…if we don't…if we don't provide the funding, and if the…if the sanctuary is not able to continue to do the work.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Anybody else? Okay.

MR. KRUGER: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next testifier. Thank you very much, Martin. Next testifier.

MS. GRECO: Dr. Coop DeRenne, followed by Diane Preza.

MR. DERENNE: Thank you. Thank you all for attending and coming to our precious island, Lānaʻi. Can you all…can you all hear me? Thank…thank you again. I came here a year ago last April, and you graciously funded the field houses, which is the concern that we have. It needs to be finished because we have a drainage problem, we have a rain problem, and we have a moisture problem, and it wasn't funded. Last year, you funded it, which I thank you all for, but somehow it didn't get in…into the budget under CIP as a capital improvement. So, I've been working with the Department of Parks and Recreation, and they're going to try to help you folks as well, to raise a CIP fund to finish the project. We need a new extended roof to help take care of the rain problem, and we need a gutter system. Now, fortunately, we don't need it around the entire building. All we're looking for is two sides of the building for an extended roof and for the gutter system. One side is already…it's a…it's a shed that we have, and we don't need any…any gutter system or the roof there, and the other side, we need it open for the sunlight to come in to help…so we don't need to turn the electric…electrical lights on during the evening, or during the day, I should say. So again, thank you for your consideration, and thank you again for the appropriation last year. And hopefully we can finish this because it's going to be used by generations, and it's one of a

kind. We've had already, the outer island coaches have come, and we've been hosting them when they've come, and they're all very impressed of what we had, and they're very jealous. But…and I thank the Committees and the County that funded this $1.3 million project three or four years ago, but it's not complete, so it'll be nice…this is the third mayor…Mayortorial [*sic*] group that I've been working with, and it would be nice if you all helped our Mayor fund it, and we can finally finish it. Do you have any questions?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. So how much…so how much were you…the estimate for this completion?

MR. DERENNE: I gave an estimate…I…last year's estimate was about $80,000, but that was for three sides, so I'm not…and I'm not an engineer. We need an engineer, civil engineer, to come…structural engineer to come in and help us get the bids that we need because I…I went to two firms and they were saying $80,000 to $100,000, but that's last year. And that was on for three sides of the facility, and now, we only need the two sides.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. Anybody else have any --

MR. DERENNE: Yes, ma'am.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- questions? Go ahead, Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you. I'm sorry, I missed your name.

MR. DERENNE: It's Coop DeRenne.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Coop [De-min]?

MR. DERENNE: Yeah, Coop DeRenne.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, Coop [De-Min]. Sorry about that. So, the money that we appropriated last year, did they use it? They didn't --

MR. DERENNE: No, they didn't.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh.

MR. DERENNE: It wasn't rolled over into the County…it wasn't rolled over into the Parks and Recs. So, I've been working with this Deputy Director, and he mentioned to me, we need to come up with a CIP fund. The reason is because the facility has been accepted. It was…it was accepted in 2022, but we had…what…it didn't have…we couldn't foresee the problems that we have now

at the time, and so now we're trying to correct the problems.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Would you…would you characterize the problems that you have now as repair and maintenance?

MR. DERENNE: Yes, it's repair.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Because --

MR. DERENNE: It's not repair. It wouldn't be…that's a good question because I know it wouldn't be repair, but it's an addition that we need.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, addition.

MR. DERENNE: Because we're getting rain problems with it and wind problems. If we don't take care of it, the water is going into the facility, and we've got a $35,000 carpet in there that's going to get wet.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I just was saying, because West Maui, all of our stuff that burnt, he said they don't need CIP because they're doing it under repair and maintenance. So, I don't…I don't understand why --

MR. DERENNE: Well, that's what Shane told me.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay.

MR. DERENNE: He's the Deputy Director, and he said we need a CIP fund for it, so that's why I'm here.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Sounds like --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- they just make it up as they go.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Okay, we'll check with Shane Dudoit.

MR. DERENNE: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Any other questions? Seeing none. Thank you very much. Nice seeing you.

MR. DERENNE: Thank you.

MS. GRECO: Diane Preza, followed by Erin Atacador.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: As they get set up, how many more testifiers? And I'm wondering if we should take a break at 7:30?

MS. GRECO: There's about 12 more.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: 12 more. Okay, so I'm going to do this, and then take a ten-minute break, and come back at 7:30. Okay, thanks. Go ahead.

MS. PREZA: Okay. Aloha, Councilmembers. Welcome to Lānaʻi. I'm Diane Preza, and I appreciate that you came all the way over here to spend the evening with us. I know it's hard to travel, so thank you. And I'm grateful for the opportunity to share with you some thoughts about the proposed budget. Please know that I come with utmost respect for you all, and I understand the challenges on Maui. I watched some of the testimony last night, and it's truly heartbreaking, and I'm so sorry. So…but my thoughts are with you all and the people of Maui, so. I'm here to ask you, please, to set…set aside funds for the Lānaʻi Affordable Housing Project. When Mayor Bissen came last year, he made a commitment to developing an extension down 5th Street, so…the site is adjacent to the DHHL property, so if…we're kind of about here, and so, well, I think we are. So, this is…this is 5th Street, right here, you go down 5th Street, and then, so you have…you have…5th Street is a major artery through Waialua Subdivision, Olopua Woods Subdivision, and then it goes into Hawaiian Homelands, which is here, Phase I, and then there's vacant land, Hawaiian Homelands Phase II, and then the County land is all in gray. So, that being said, I read an article in Maui…The Maui…*Maui Now* article and it's talked about the surcharge for the GET tax, and that…what I understood was 20 percent of it was to be used…actually, 20 percent of the 5…0.5 percent GET tax surcharge must be used to help DHHL develop homesteads, and that it raises money for housing infrastructure. So, the 5th Street infrastructure extension would benefit both the DHHL project and the County project. So, if the surcharge, according to the budget, amounts to 45 million, then 20 percent of it, or 9 million, could be used for DHHL. Could Lānaʻi, please, use a portion of the 9 million to extend infrastructure down 5th Street? That's what I'm asking. There could be a potential of 151 homes added to our community between the DHHL Phase II and Phase I of the County project. So, we pay a lot of property tax here on Lānaʻi, and we've waited over 30 years for this project, so I urge you to set aside funds for the project, and I appreciate your considerations.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. Anybody have questions for the testifier? Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Aloha, Ms. Preza, thank you for your testimony. I was wondering if you had been in contact with DHHL, if they were in support of moving it forward this fiscal year?

MS. PREZA: I haven't been in contact with DHHL personally.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay, thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Anybody else?

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: I guess I'll just clarify that, that Everett Dowling is one of the developers who is interested in that, and he has been talking to the Mayor, as well as another developer, Doug Bigley, for the Lānaʻi Affordable Housing Project. So, there is discussions going on, and hopefully…I agree, we need to make this happen, sooner rather than later.

MS. PREZA: Thank you. Thank you so much.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Diane. Nice seeing you.

MS. PREZA: Nice seeing you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next testifier.

MS. GRECO: Chair, did you want to take a break, or next testifier?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I was going to take a break at 7:30, but we can. So…no, that's okay. We'll take a ten-minute break, everybody, so this meeting is now in recess. We'll come back at 7:25. . . .*(gavel)*. . .

**RECESS:** 7:17 p.m.
**RECONVENE:** 7:30 p.m.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(gavel)*. . .Welcome back, everybody, to the Budget, Finance, Economic Development Committee. We're totally enjoying our evening here. It's now 7:30, and this meeting is back in order. We will now begin with the next testifier. Thank you.

MS. GRECO: Erin Atacador followed by Helena Keller Twigg.

MS. ATACADOR: Thank you. Good evening, everyone. Thank you for coming over to Lānaʻi. I know it takes a lot to organize all of your schedules and get here and everything. So I really appreciate it. Over the past several weeks, I've been trying

my best to follow the BFED Committee meetings. And observing the eight of you dissect the budget, I wholeheartedly feel that each of you and your voices, knowledge, expertise, skills, and backgrounds together are the individuals our County of diverse communities need to represent us and lead us into the future. I come before you today--sorry, I'm nervous--to humbly ask that when mapping out the future of Maui County, that you not forget Lānaʻi. The people of our community on Lānaʻi are deserving of the same considerations as people on the other…in the other communities of Maui County. Access to affordable, reliable, public health, affordable capabilities to access basic needs off island, we would appreciate that. Infrastructure improvements on our roads are also needed, and employment opportunities through creative ideas such as the potential for the Department of Personnel to consider certain administrative…administrative assistant or secretaries to work virtually from Lānaʻi. I think we have many competent and qualified individuals on Lānaʻi who would really impact the vacant positions the County is facing. Last, I would humbly ask that you commit to the affordable housing project on Lānaʻi, acknowledging that affordable housing is a dire need all throughout not only our County, but the entire State of Hawaiʻi. So, I echo my opening sentiment that please don't forget about our beautiful community of humble, hardworking individuals when shaping the future of Maui County as it relates to this year's budget. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Well said. Any questions? Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Ms. Atacador, for your testimony. I was wondering that virtual work from Lānaʻi, do you guys have your own dispatch?

MS. ATACADOR: I don't believe that we do. I think we're routed to Molokaʻi, actually.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. And Mr. Johnson said nobody was applying for…to…to do the PALS. Do you think that's because it's part-time only?

MS. ATACADOR: Seasonal, yeah, I think that it'd be challenging to find someone for the months that it's needed to give up what they're doing the rest of the year. I mean, even that, I found kind of interesting because if somebody, like, works potentially in, like, a later PM shift at one of the resorts, or…or another thing, that --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Or school.

MS. ATACADOR: -- they could do it for --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: That's out…when school's out.

MS. ATACADOR: Yeah. Yeah. I have other commitments, or I would do it myself. I…I

try to, yeah, be as helpful in our community as I can, but.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I see, clearly. The…the unemployment is high, then, is what you're saying, or?

MS. ATACADOR: No, not necessarily, but I think that a lot of our people here only see the two main employers, Four Seasons and Pūlama Lānaʻi, as the only options here. And County jobs are very coveted here on the island, you know, it's…it's hard to get a County job here. So, I…not recently, it's been probably over 12 months, but reached out to the…the Department of Personnel and asked, you know, if some of the secretary or clerk positions require the person to go…to be in Wailuku physically, and I was…they…they confirmed, yes, it would be. But…but if somebody's sitting behind a computer in Wailuku, they could sit behind a computer on Lānaʻi, Hāna, Molokaʻi, you know, we --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Especially when it's been vacant for five years.

MS. ATACADOR: Yeah, yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I like where you're coming from. Thank you.

MS. ATACADOR: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yes, thank you.

MS. ATACADOR: Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Just to let you know Erin, I went to Washington D.C. about two weeks ago and lobbied for congressional funds, Federal funds for infrastructure. And also, my office here on Lānaʻi is hiring part-time if you want to work around here.

*. . .(laughing). . .*

MS. ATACADOR: I wish there were more hours in the day.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any more questions? Seeing none. Thank you very much.

MS. ATACADOR: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next testifier.

MS. GRECO: Helena Keller Twigg, followed by Phoenix Dupree.

MS. KELLER TWIGG: Thank you. Thanks for having me. If you wonder what that noise is, it's the men's basketball championships. Hopefully, my husband's team is winning, but we'll see. But yes, thank you so much for letting me talk today. I am a community member here for the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary, asking for the $285,000 for the fiscal year. I haven't lived on Lānaʻi for very long, but what I've learned from living in Hawaiʻi is just the work that it takes for environmental sustainability and…however, with the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary doesn't receive funding needed to continue accepting all feral and unwanted cats in these trying times, it will severely impact the progress our island has made controlling our cat population and protecting our native and endangered birds. I currently work at the Lānaʻi Art Center and the local Gentry Boutique, and people that come in there, our guests, when I talk to them, they are here for the Cat Sanctuary, especially, slowly but surely, the day trippers that are coming back to our island. They are very excited to be there and support the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary. And so, the Lānaʻi community is strong and caring, and the Cat Sanctuary is a big part of what keeps Lānaʻi thriving, not only in our community, but the land that we respect and love. So, thank you so much.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Well said. Any questions? Seeing none. Thank you very much. Next testifier?

MS. GRECO: Phoenix Dupree, followed by Roger Alconcel.

MR. DUPREE: Thank you, I appreciate that.

MS. LINDO: You're welcome.

MR. DUPREE: Good evening. I, Phoenix Dupree, co-owner of Blue Ginger Cafe, here to advocate for Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary. Do you guys ever get tired of people always asking you for money? I was just wondering because, you know, I'm on my second wife and third teenage daughter, so I kind of get the feeling. I realize that the Cat Sanctuary received funding from you for the last fiscal quarter, and I just want to say I'm…I'm grateful for that, and for the investment that you've made in the Cat Sanctuary, because I think it has a multiplying effect in our community. And I don't know if you realize, but I think when you wrote that check for them, that you wrote it for all of us. Blue Ginger Cafe receives Cat Sanctuary guests every day, and almost every family with children, day tripping from Maui to Lānaʻi for the day, is here, is targeting those felines. These guys are on a mission. They're, like, they're crazy. I've met a couple that actually got married at the Cat Sanctuary, you know? And so, if you could see the gleam in their eye before they go and the smiles on their face when they return, you'd know, like I do, that is…that the Cat Sanctuary is the happiest place on Lānaʻi. And not surprisingly, it is the top tourist destination on Lānaʻi. It's a powerful magnet, before Lāhainā

fire, attracting 16,000 guests a year, which has a huge impact in our small business community, and delivers a very powerful economic thrust, like a multiplier effect. Now, in terms of national level, I don't believe trickle-down economics works, but on Lānaʻi, it is a real thing. It has a powerful impact here. Guests to Cat Sanctuary use off-island transportation to get to Lānaʻi, they use Lānaʻi transportation to and from the sanctuary, and then into town, and they shop at all of our stores, they eat at our restaurants. Sometimes, they rent vehicles and buy gas. And so, what they do is, well, like, for example, Blue Ginger Cafe, we've been in business now for 33 years. We're blessed to be serving the community and to be serving our guest population. But other than Richards, who we buy our ground beef from, Blue Ginger Cafe, unfortunately, does not lift up any other businesses in the Lānaʻi community because we buy most of our food and our dry goods from Kahului or from Honolulu. The same is not true for the Cat Sanctuary. It is . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . like a rising tide, where all boats in this harbor are lifted. Now, with the numbers being down 40 percent, and the number of cats increasing by 30 percent, and them expanding their physical operation, funding is as critical as ever. And so, I ask you to add them on to your budget. I respectfully and humbly ask for you to do that, and to realize that that investment will go to help our whole island to recover. And I just want to thank you very much for your time and for the opportunity to speak on behalf of Cat Sanctuary, the happiest place on Lānaʻi, . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . and keep in mind that every dollar you spend comes back to us, multiplied.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. We love your restaurant, too. Any questions? None. Thank you.

MR. DUPREE: Thank you very much.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next testifier?

MS. GRECO: Roger Alconcel, followed by John Janikowski.

MR. ALCONCEL: Thank you. Roger Alconcel, born and raised here on Lānaʻi, here to talk about affordable housing. Just like Erin and Diane that spoke earlier, we feel that affordable housing is very important to the community, and I know it feels funny because I'm always…we're asking for money from you guys. Just remember that Lānaʻi, we pay the third highest in real property tax compared to South Maui and West Maui. So, we provide 46 percent into the tax fund, so we…we just want our fair share of money. Don't fact check me. I don't know where I got it from, but I read it somewhere the last time, so.

. . .*(laughing)*. . .

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . . *(inaudible)*. . .

MR. ALCONCEL: Yes, yes. So, we want our fair share, and we also, for the affordable housing 5th…the 5th Street. We spoke with the Mayor. He said, yes, it's a great idea. I know Gabe is working on it, but we just want your continued support and help for all of us here on Lānaʻi. And just don't overlook us; that's all. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Nice seeing you.

MR. ALCONCEL: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Any questions? Seeing none. Next testifier. Thank you.

MS. GRECO: John Janikowski, followed by Alberta de Jetley.

MR. JANIKOWSKI: Hello, and thank you all for coming. I'm here to first testify on behalf of the skate park.

*. . .(laughing). . .*

MR. JANIKOWSKI: No, no. No, I'm testifying on behalf of Lānaʻi Kinā'ole, the home health agency. I've been a physician here, a family physician, for 15 years, and I can't…I can't tell you how much this organization has helped my patients and the community in general. People coming out of the hospital needing IVs, they can do that. Wound care of legs that you think should have been amputated, they fix. They've been instrumental in working with Hospice. They're instrumental in working to get this adult daycare, and for the long-term residency, and they make my job much easier, and they're an asset to this community that can't be measured. I thank you for funding them in the past, and at present, and for the future. Thank you very much.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much for all your good work, Doctor. Any questions? Seeing none. Thank you. Next testifier?

*. . .(laughing). . .*

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: . . . *(inaudible). . .*

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next testifier?

MS. GRECO: Alberta de Jetley, followed by Yvonne Urbas-Laboeuf.

MS. DE JETLEY: Aloha, Councilmembers. Mahalo for coming to Lānaʻi. I am going to be testifying. My name is Alberta de Jetley, and I am testifying as a private

resident of this island. When I saw that Maui and Molokaʻi were receiving funding for feral animal control in the upcoming budget, I wondered why Lānaʻi was not being funded at all. Then I reasoned the funds would not be for all feral animals. It was meant to be used for Axis deer control. As 98 percent of Lānaʻi is privately owned, it is reasonable that the island's owner should assume the costs of feral Axis deer control. However, the word animal includes cats. The Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary, which was established by a core group of volunteers of which I was one more than 17 years ago, has become a nationwide model of what can be done with feral cats to protect our native and endangered migratory seabirds. Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary is a major economic engine for our community. In addition to it providing well-paying jobs for our residents, visitors to the sanctuary bring their dollars into our island's businesses. What would have happened to Lāhainā's cats who lost their homes and families? They would have…they would have reverted into becoming feral animals. Instead, working with the Maui Humane Society, Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary has welcomed hundreds of Lāhainā's cats into our sanctuary, making it a refuge of safety for them for the rest of their lives. Please, please reconsider allocating the funds you have set aside for Maui and Molokaʻi to include funding for the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary to allow it to continue to help all animals in need. As of this month, Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary's population is 860 cats as of April 9th, 2024. Mahalo.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Alberta. Anybody else…anybody have questions for her? Seeing none. Nice seeing you.

MS. DE JETLEY: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next testifier.

MS. GRECO: Yvonne Urbas-Laboeuf, followed by Butch Gima.

MS. URBAS-LABOEUF: Aloha, Councilmembers, and thank you for being here. I'm yet another crazy cat lady.

*. . .(laughing). . .*

MS. URBAS-LABOEUF: No. There's a lot of snickering. All right. Really quickly, then. A lot has been said to support the cat sanctuary. And the line item, of course, is Feral Animal Control. And to just echo what others have said, cats do…and are under the category of animals. In the cat sanctuary, I've been here about 18, 19 years, and I started with Kathy. Kathy is our leader here, she built the cat sanctuary, and like everyone has said, when we move…when I moved here, the…I mean, there was cats everywhere. It was like, oh my gosh, overrun with cats. And it's true, the way they multiply it would be out of control. We don't have a humane society here. We much need that. And if we don't have the feral animal

money, you know, it…the…the cat sanctuary can't, you know, pull…pull money in, and they can't pay for everything. You know, we all know that the economy is out of control, especially on a remote island, and so the money is greatly needed. Not only it…it will protect the birds. It will protect our ʻāina. It…it, like everyone has said, it provides jobs. I want to give a quote by Gandhi, oh, great. my phone just closed. The great thing about a microphone or a brain is as soon as you put a microphone in front of it, I can't think. Anyway, so I want…all right. I wanted to share a quote that came to me, and I have to read it because I'm nervous. Gandhi. We all know Gandhi, yeah? The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated. Gandhi said, I hold that the…I hold that the more helpless a creature, the more entitled its…it is to protection by man, from the cruelty of man. And so, I think it's our…we…I think it's very important that we protect these helpless creatures. It is true what they said. I'm one of the animal care mamas. When they have feral cats or kittens that come in, they care for them, bottle feed them. They are so helpless and in need, and it's cruel to let them just suffer and die. And yes, I…I honor and appreciate what Molokaʻi is going to do, but if we could just get some of that and share it, like, I totally respect that everyone has needs. And so, I don't know. Thank you for your time, and I'll let the next person speak. Mahalo.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Next testifier, please.

MS. GRECO: Butch Gima, followed by Cindylou Figuerres.

MR. GIMA: Good evening, my name is Butch Gima, I'm a resident of Lānaʻi. I'll be testifying on three items today. One will be the adult residential care home, piggybacking off of Robin's testimony. Number two, the adult daycare, piggybacking off of John and Kināʻole's testimony. And number three, the affordable housing project. To give you some context for the care home and the adult day care, in 2011, Lānaʻi Changes was formed as a 501(c)(3) in hopes of helping to diversify the economy, and the focus was to develop an elder care infrastructure system. And the care home and the adult care were part of that dream, or the goal. Unfortunately, the Arakawa administration and the Office of Aging scuttled Lānaʻi Changes by cutting their funding. They erroneously accused Lānaʻi Changes of mismanaging the funds and felt that Lānaʻi Changes was doing the work of the Office of Aging. Now fast forward to 2021, '22, without Robin Kaye spearheading this effort, it wouldn't have happened. Had Lānaʻi Changes continued throughout the…2014 and on, we probably wouldn't have…wouldn't be coming to you tonight for…for funds. In terms of the adult daycare, I believe Lānaʻi is the only island without an adult care facility. And like Robin, Val Janikowski and her staff have spearheaded the effort, to now obtaining appropriation from the Federal government for their project. So, what we're asking you, is to support in concept and funding for the care home and adult

daycare when the request is made because this is an opportunity for your Council to make right what the Arakawa administration failed to do for our community. I'm testifying in support of Kināʻole and the adult day care because I'm intimately aware of what Kināʻole does. Kināʻole is the only home health agency on the island. I'm aware of what they do because they are the fiscal sponsor for the Lānaʻi Cancer Fund. They administratively help the Lānaʻi Cancer Fund provide funds to Lānaʻi residents who are diagnosed with cancer. Lastly, the affordable housing project. This is the third, fourth, or fifth iteration of this project. I hope you guys don't kick this down the proverbial road. We are well aware that Federal funding is possibly . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . pending, and this is not a shovel-ready project. We're aware of Doug and the Ikaika ʻOhana, and not…notwithstanding the Maui wildfire priorities, the Mayor has committed funds to extend 5th Street and the infrastructure, and this would be an excellent opportunity for the County Council to support this project in concept and with funding to make this an administration-legislative team effort, which rarely happens, right? So, I hope you take this into consideration and support this project. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Mr. Gima. Any questions for him? Seeing none. Thank you. Next testifier.

MS. GRECO: Cindylou Figuerres, followed by Deborah Scarborough. Cindylou Figuerres? Moving on to Deborah Scarborough, followed by Rose Jane Ancheta.

MS. SCARBOROUGH: Hello, Councilmembers, and thank you for coming here, and also hearing all of our testimony. I didn't get a chance to print this out. It was a busy day, so I'm going to read it off my computer. But I'm here to speak and to advocate on the behalf of the Cat Sanctuary, and to first acknowledge and thank you for past funding. And I ask you to respectfully…or I ask respectfully that the sanctuary continue to receive the $285,000 from County…County funding for the Fiscal Year of 2025. You may ask why. Well, you've heard a lot, but when I first arrived in Lānaʻi in the late '80s, there were feral cats everywhere, and the condition of the…of the feral cat population was just really atrocious. The vast majority of the feral cat population, and still it is, was riddled with eye infections, respiratory infections, mange, malnutrition, fleas, injury, parasites, and other health conditions, and it was just absolutely heart-wrenching, you know, and it was difficult sometimes if you're trying to have, like, a nice meal down at the hotel, and you see all these hurting cats. It was really difficult to see and experience. And so, I was disturbed to witness the suffering, and inquired about how to help because I was new to the island and I'm, like, what can I do? And the reply was, well, there is no help. We don't have a vet. We don't have a humane society. We don't have animal control. The only thing we can suggest for you is to capture those cats and take them over to Maui, which was a difficult process and expensive for me, personally. So then, you know, after some years

and please excuse me for not remembering the exact year, but Kathy Carroll started having vets from Central Maui Veterinarian come and spay and neuter our feral cat population. And again, she invited them from Maui because we didn't have a vet. And this program was a community event, and it was held at the stable…stables, and…and I…I was always volunteering…volunteering whenever I could help, to curb the unsterilization…the unsterilized cats from, you know, the continuous, unabated population of our island. It was out of control. So, after the cats were spayed and neutered, they were then, at this time, returned to the colony or the location that they were caught. So, it was really still done very humanely, but the cats were still out running around in our community. And we even had wonderful community members that would take care of these cat colonies. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . Okay. So, the profound positive results of this in a short time is I noticed that the health conditions were getting better and there was a reduction of…of young and baby cats. Fast forward now to 15 years ago, almost 15 years ago, when the cat sanctuary was first established, all I can say is when I saw it, wow. It was innovative. I felt it was a humane way to deal with our feral cat population, a great place to surrender our cat…our cats with no fees attached. If you couldn't take them with moving, a . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . lot of people just abandoned. Oh, is that it?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: That's it.

MS. SCARBOROUGH: Oh, darn. Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, we heard you.

MS. SCARBOROUGH: Yes, and I…and of course, the bird population. So, this is…I wanted to really focus on that.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MS. SCARBOROUGH: And it's so important for us to preserve our native, endangered birds. So, thank you so much for . . .*(indiscernible)*. . . testimony.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you for your passion. Any questions?

MS. SCARBOROUGH: Oh, questions.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Seeing none. Seeing none.

MS. SCARBOROUGH: All right. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay, next testifier.

MS. GRECO: Chair, the last two testifiers signed up at this time are Rose Jane Ancheta, followed by Chelsea Trevino. Rose Jane?

MS. ANCHETA: Okay, thank you. Good evening, everybody. Thank you for coming. On behalf of MEO, my name is Rose Jane Ancheta. I am the Branch Manager. Please…I do ask you to please continue to support and fund MEO, because here on Lānaʻi, our transportation is our big supportive here for our…especially for our kūpunas. We service our youth, disabled clients who needs a wheelchair access because we do have transportations that provide wheelchair lifts, and…and dialysis clients. Our kūpunas, especially, who relies on us every day to bring them to where they need to go, especially to their…to the stores, post office. They really depend on us. So, please continue to support and fund MEO. I also would like to testify as a private resident here on Lānaʻi. I'd to…I came here when I was seven years old, and I'd like to support the affordable housing. I'd like to plan, myself, to have my…to afford my own home, and plan to retire here. With the cost of living on Lānaʻi, with the housing that is provided that is on the market it's ridiculous. So, I am…I would like to support the affordable housing. And secondly, as a private testifier, I'd like to also testify to support Kināʻole, as Dr. Janikowski had mentioned. I am also used to work for the Straub Clinic, and I am a Medical Assistant as well as a CNA, so I have a firsthand experience of going to homes and helping our…our…our clients that needed in help, who's unable to go to their homes, I mean, to the clinic. So we were, you know, we're like angels to go to their homes and help them with their wound care with…alongside with Mrs. Janikowski, so I would like to, those three…those three are my testify. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Beautiful. Any questions? Thank you very much.

MS. ANCHETA: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next testifier.

MS. GRECO: Chair, the last testifier at this time is Chelsea Trevino.

MS. TREVINO: Good, good. Thank you. Thanks for coming everyone. Ooh, last one, woohoo. Okay, so first let me just say, I wasn't here to testify today. I came with my daughter, Erin, because I was like, oh, I'll come with you. So then, of course, I'm like, oh my gosh, I have to say something. So, on my paper it just says two items, but I'm going to talk about more than two. I've decided I'm going to go in age order, so first, preschool. We know we need to have the preschool here. I want to…I'm going to share this in story form. We have…how does…how does the preschool being open affect our community? Yes, people can go to work. We have Lānaʻi Raise teachers who are teaching in this school who have children in this preschool. So, let's just assume that if the preschool is not going, they can't

afford it, what are they going to do? We've taken away a Lānaʻi community member from servicing our children in our…in our community. Okay. Then, as a middle-aged woman, affordable housing. I'm raised on Lānaʻi. We moved here in 1977. I was four years old, so I grew up pineapple plantation, high school during the transition to hotel industry, I now work for the State of Hawaiʻi at our public library. As a 50-year-old woman, I am not single. I am unable to afford a home of my own on Lānaʻi. I have been fortunate enough to have worked for the company for many years and had really good rent back then. And then, I was able to get into low-income housing apartments that we have here, and that's where I live now. My mother owns a home. Once she's gone, I'll have the home, but maybe I would like to have the opportunity to buy my own place. Again, I'm 50 years old, and in my whole life, we have yet to have affordable housing offered to us, other than what Pūlama, or Lānaʻi Company, or Castle & Cooke, whatever names you want to give them, from all…all over. So, it's very important. And then, you know, we have, as Rose Jane mentioned, too, you have a lot of Lānaʻi-raised adults who cannot buy homes here, okay? Also forgot to mention, preschool; Erin was a Keiki O Lānaʻi preschooler, so you know, you were very impressed with her speech today, you know, and what…what would I have done without Keiki O Lānaʻi? Okay?

. . .*(laughing)*. . .

MS. TREVINO: Let's see. So affordable housing. Oh, my time is almost up. Okay. Last two. I didn't realize Kināʻole was here. Makes me want to cry. Okay, so…so Kināʻole and…and MEO, those are two high priorities. My father passed away a little over a year ago. My mother is still here. Without Kināʻole's support, my father would not have been . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . able to stay on Lānaʻi at the end of his life. I was on my own, working full-time, and taking care of him at home. He did not want to leave Lānaʻi. Twofold, right? The daycare and…and having some sort of services for families that cannot support their elderly to stay on Island. Super important. Lastly, MEO, as you know, helps with health access because I'm sure you all know, but it's not just this trip to Maui that…that . . .*(timer sounds)*. . happens. It's if someone needs help on Maui with transportation for doctors and so forth, right?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: We love them.

MS. TREVINO: So yeah, we have to have that.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Your 30 seconds are over.

MS. TREVINO: And that's my thing.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MS. TREVINO: Thank you. I know you guys are going to go Hotel Lānaʻi now.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: All right. Thank you. Any more testifiers?

MS. GRECO: Chair, there's nobody else signed up at this time. If anybody would like to testify that hasn't testified yet, please come to the podium. Seeing none, Chair.

***. . .END OF PUBLIC TESTIMONY. . .***

CHAIR SUGIMURA: All right. What a great evening we've had. So, thank you very much for sharing your thoughts, your love for the island, the people, and I guess there's a lot of cats we heard about.

*. . .(laughing). . .*

CHAIR SUGIMURA: But…so this meeting is now adjourned. And it is, what time is it? My phone just died. 8:04? Thank you. *. . .(gavel). . .*

**ACTION**: **DEFER** pending further discussion.

**ADJOURN**: 8:04 p.m.

APPROVED:

Yuki Lei Sugimura

YUKI LEI K. SUGIMURA, Chair
Budget, Finance, and Economic
Development Committee

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CERTIFICATION

I, Kaliko Reed, hereby certify that pages 1 through 41 of the foregoing represents, to the best of my ability, a true and correct transcript of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not in any way concerned with the cause.

DATED the 22nd day of April 2024, in Wailuku, Hawaii

Kaliko Reed