

IEM Committee

From: deakos <deakos@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2018 7:54 AM
To: IEM Committee
Cc: Elle Cochran; Donald S. Guzman; Alike A. Atay; Robert Carroll; Riki Hokama; Yukilei Sugimura; Mike White; Kelly King; Stacy S. Crivello
Subject: Please support resolution IEM-38 on Monday to encourage sustainable tourism here on Maui
Attachments: Maui_County_Resolution_IEM-38_Deakos_Support_Testimony_14SEP2018.pdf

Honorable Members of the Committee:

I want to take this opportunity to ask that you support the resolution to urge the Office of Economic Development to require the Maui County Visitor Association to incorporate specific environmental action items into grant objectives (IEM-38).

Imagine running an amusement park where the majority of efforts focus on promoting the rides, the restaurants, and the entertainment, but little focus goes towards maintaining the infrastructure of the park, the functioning and safety of the rides, cleaning the bathrooms, and food safety of the restaurants. This would be unsustainable. The fire department can not properly fight fires without maintaining their trucks and equipment. Maintenance is an integral part of any business.

Our tourism industry is no different. The Maui County Visitor Association relies on healthy, functioning, natural resources (natural beaches, coral reefs, healthy fish populations, humpback whales, flowing streams and waterfalls, rainforests, clean water, accessible shorelines, etc.) to attract tourists to Hawaii and Maui. These natural systems are the backbone of our primary economy, and critical components to the health and well-being of our residents.

“Sustainability” is defined as “avoidance of the depletion of natural resources in order to maintain an ecological balance.” “Sustainable Tourism” needs to embrace this definition into its business model. Promoting Sustainable Tourism involves understanding and educating the public and business owners on how we eliminate impacts and restore balance to our debilitated resources.

Given the current alarming trends of beach loss, coral reef loss, fisheries decline, and recently given the title of “worst water quality in the state” here on Maui, grants should focus more on promoting and educating the components of sustainable tourism. At a future time, it may be worth re-allocating some of the \$4M budget towards restoring the health and balance of our natural ecosystems.

When the amusement park rides are all dilapidated, the bathrooms unsanitary, and the restaurant food is unsafe, there is nothing left to promote. We certainly don’t want Maui to become an abandoned, dilapidated amusement park because we neglected sustainability in our business model.

Please encourage the promotion of Sustainable Tourism here on Maui by supporting this resolution.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mark Deakos, *Ph.D.*

Napili
808-280-6448

September 14, 2018

Infrastructure and Environmental Management Committee

RE: Testimony in support of the Resolution to Urge the Office of Economic Development to Require the Maui County Visitor Association to Incorporate Specific Environmental Action Items into Grant Objectives (IEM-38)

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Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deakos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" that loops back.

Mark Deakos, *Ph.D.*

Napili

808-280-6448