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2022 JUN -7 AM 9: 09

May 26, 2022 (updated June 6, 2022)

9 a.m.

Maui County Council Chamber and Videoconference

OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY CLERK

To: Maui County Council

Alice Lee, Chair

Keani Rawlins-Fernandez, Vice-Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Joe Kent, Executive Vice President

RE: Bill 69 — The Fiscal Year 2023 Budget

Comments Only

Aloha chair, and committee members,

My name is Joe Kent, and I am the executive vice president of the Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, a 501(c)3 nonprofit policy research organization. We are a taxpayer watchdog group that promotes the values of individual liberty, economic freedom and accountable government.

I am here today to testify about the county operating budget, as represented by Bill 69, and to give a broader and independent look at the budget.

The golden rule of government budgeting is: "The government should not grow faster than the economy."

That's because the government gets its revenues from the economy, so it is more sustainable in the long run if the economy grows faster than the government, not the other way around.

Maui County's fiscal 2023 county spending plan has just reached a record-high \$1 billion,¹ which is 38% higher than in fiscal 2019, before the COVID-19 lockdowns.² The budget proposal would add 309 employees to the county payroll, an increase of 12% over 2019.

Most of the new employees, 63, would be for the Department of Public Works. The Department of Parks and Recreation would add 47, the Fire and Public Safety Department 47, the Police Department 35, and the Department of Finance 27.

¹ Melissa Tanji, "Nearly \$1.07B county budget proposal advances," The Maui News, April 30-May 1, 2022.

² Ordinance No. 4861 of 2018, "Fiscal Year 2019 Budget."

The proposed budget indicates these increases would be paid for partly with \$37 million in increased transient accommodations taxes, plus \$99 million in increased property tax revenues that are mostly from higher tax rates on high-end real estate, hotels and short-term rentals.³

But county lawmakers should be cautious about using the current bonanza to permanently grow the size of its government, especially since Maui County's economy is still lagging.

Maui's private sector has 2.6% fewer employed workers compared to fiscal 2019 and the jobless rate is still relatively high: 4.3%, compared to 2.6% in 2019.⁴ That means Maui's economy is still lagging while the proposed budget proposes to grow the county government by leaps and bounds.

The good news is that Council members this month lowered property tax rates for fiscal 2023 across nearly all categories, including owner-occupied homes, apartments, commercial and industrial properties.⁵ Unfortunately, they also hiked property tax rates substantially on short-term rentals and non-owner-occupied homes.

It's not clear how the reshuffled tax rates will affect future tax revenues, especially if the economy should experience another downturn. Such a scenario might see Council members once again increasing tax rates to support the increased level of county workers.

If county lawmakers want to follow best practices for budgeting, they should keep the number of county employees at their fiscal 2019 levels and use its windfall funds to pay down debt and unfunded liabilities; fix up the county's roads, bridges and parks; save for a rainy day and lower taxes even further.

The point is to make sure Maui's private sector is growing before allowing the county government to expand.

Mahalo,
Joe Kent
Executive Vice President
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

³ "Selected real property statistics for budget consideration, fiscal year 2019 - 2020," Maui Department of Finance, Real Property Assessment Division, 2019, p. 3. "Selected real property statistics for budget consideration, fiscal year 2022 - 2023," Maui Department of Finance, Real Property Assessment Division, 2022, p. 3.

⁴ "Monthly Economic Indicators (MEI) through March 2022 was released on April 28, 2022," Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, April 28, 2022, Excel spreadsheet comparing labor force of 87,350 on March of 2022 with 89,700 on March of 2019, a 2.6% decrease. Also comparing the unemployment rate of 4.3% on March of 2022 with 2.6% on March of 2019. GDP numbers for Maui County are not yet available for 2022.

⁵ "Notice of public hearing and notice of intent to fix real property tax rates," Council of the County of Maui, May 13, 2022. The rates have since been fixed.

County Clerk

From: L Harbo <loraharbo@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 7, 2022 9:15 AM
To: County Clerk
Subject: Testimony for June 8 meeting in support of full Funding of Ma'alaea Wastewater Reclamation Plant

June 7, 2022

Please fully support the FY2023 County budget and the funding of \$9.5 million to build the Ma'alaea Wastewater Treatment Plant. The time is now to protect Ma'alaea Bay by replacing injection wells with an environmentally friendly and economically affordable solution in the form of the proposed WWTP; taking advantage of any available federal funding programs, as well. Please maintain the current funding as it is stated in the FY2023 budget.

Please also continue to support the purchase of the 257 acres of Ma'alaea Mauka to protect and conserve the open space for Maui families in perpetuity.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these important matters.

Best regards,

Lora Harbo and David Liebersbach
Ma'alaea owners, community members

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County Clerk

From: Maalaea Village Association <maalaeavillageassociation@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 7, 2022 9:23 AM
To: County Clerk
Cc: Kelly King
Subject: Testimony for June 8 Council Meeting

Ma'ala'ea Village Association wishes to thank Council members for their hard work in crafting the FY2023 budget. MVA is particularly pleased that Council has supported critically-needed infrastructure for the Ma'ala'ea community through its \$9.5mm in funding for a modern wastewater treating system. We also thank and recognize you for funding the continuing efforts to acquire Ma'alea Mauka for public benefit.

We encourage Council to pass the budget on this final reading without any changes to these items.

Mahalo,
Lyndon Ibele,
MVA President

With Warmest Aloha!
Ma'ala'ea Village Association (MVA)
P.O. Box 2122
Wailuku, HI 96793

MaalaeavillageAssociation@gmail.com

 www.maalaeavillageassociation.org

Join us on Facebook at:

 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MaalaeaVillageAssociation/>

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June 7, 2022

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2022 JUN -8 AM 7: 43

RE: MAALAEA WASTEWATER RECLAMATION SYSTEM SRF FUNDING IN FY 2023 BUDGET

OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY CLERK

Aloha Council Chair Lee and Members,

June 8 is an important day – it's the second and final reading of the FY 2023 budget. It's also the fifth anniversary of the Maalaea Village Association (MVA). MVA is proud to be able to carry on the work of our predecessor, the Maalaea Community Association, which served Maalaea since 1988. We are also proud to report our total membership is now over 200 members.

Mahalo for your hard work in crafting the FY 23 budget that attempts to address many of our county's current needs and in taking important steps toward preserving Maui's future.

The \$9.5 million for SRF funding for a modern Maalaea wastewater treating system is a major step toward restoring Maalaea Bay. You've heard from long term residents and testifiers outside of Maalaea Village on how important this is for the future health of Maalaea Bay. Three-mile Maalaea beach is a vital natural resource enjoyed by Maui families for its calm, shallow waters and easy access. Maalaea Harbor is a major economic engine for Maui's visitor industry. The Maalaea conservation corridor is home to the National Humpback Whale Marine Sanctuary, Kealia National Wildlife Refuge, Maui Ocean Center, the Maui Ocean Center Marine Institute and Pacific Whale Foundation. It is not possible to distinguish between residents and visitors – all have easy access and equal enjoyment of Maalaea Bay's rich natural resources.

The SRF funding in today's budget isn't the final step toward creating this critically-needed infrastructure, it's just the beginning based on the most current estimates gathered from possible vendors for the proposed state of the art MBR system. Everyone has a part to play. All Maalaea property owners – condominiums, Harbor Shops and Maui Ocean Center will have to decommission their wells, and cover the cost to connect to the conveyance system that will take sewage to the plant outside of the SMA. Long time Maalaea Bay Place owners will happily disconnect their cesspools and connect to such a facility if made available. They too are concerned about the health of the Bay and are supportive of this project.

Federal infrastructure funds are available NOW for this and other county projects. They may not come again so easily. With \$250,000 State Grants in Aid, MVA can hire a project manager to manage the next steps. MVA and the committee will keep the Council informed on our progress.

Please pass the FY 23 budget on final reading including the \$9.5M SRF for a critically needed and long overdue regional waste water facility for Maalaea.

Mahalo for your support,
Lynn Britton
MVA Founder and Immediate Past President

06.07.2022

Maui County Council Meeting: Written Testimony

L. Low

June 7, 2022

Maui County Council
Kalana o Maui Building, 8th Floor
200 South High St.
Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793

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2022 JUN -8 AM 7: 43

OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY CLERK

RE: Wednesday, June 8, 2022 Maui County Council Meeting Testimony

- **Bill 100 (2022)**

Aloha mai kākou,

‘O au nō ‘o La‘akea Low. No ka mokupuni ‘o Maui mai au ma ka moku ‘o Hāmākuapoko. Ke noho nei au ma ka ahupua‘a ‘o Ha‘ikū ma Koakomo i kēia manawa.

- **Bill 100 (2022): "FIRST READING of Bill 100 (2022) to amend Chapter 2.98, Maui County Code, to: add a definition for "family"; amend the definition for "organization" to include a reference to a family; and list the information required to name a County park or facility after a family"**

Writing in **OPPOSITION** to Bill 100 (2022).

I am opposed to County parks and facilities being named after individuals and/or families. Current events from around the world are filled with the toppling of statues that honor individuals and families who have proven to be colonial/imperial-minded in their deeds and tasks. While Hawai‘i is incorrectly, naively, and/or arrogantly viewed as a cultural melting pot full of sunsets and rainbows, Kānaka Maoli - who suffer under the boot of oppression, dispossession, and occupation by settler-colonial aims of Manifest Destiny - continue to struggle in our own homeland. I challenge each Council member to name a Maui County park or facility named after our Mō‘ī. Where is Kalākaua Park, Lili‘uokalani Community Center, Kauikeaouli Field?

Meanwhile, settlers have numerous parks, community centers, and fields named after them. It is my belief that the County of Maui should refrain from the troublesome and disrespectful nature of assigning settler names to parks and facilities. Instead, if the County of Maui continues to neglect the storied histories and legacies of Kānaka Maoli kūpuna, then it is imperative that we honor the original place names of the areas where our parks and facilities now stand.

‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i place names are constantly replaced, mispronounced, and willfully ignored by settlers who refuse to embrace Hawai‘i and its aboriginal people. Even when land is supposedly donated by so-called benevolent settler families, their claim to title of these lands must be challenged. As Kānaka often cite - "if no more the seal, it ain't real" - meaning that if the

seal of the Hawaiian Kingdom is absent on a claim of title to land in Hawai‘i, it is likely to be illegally-occupied lands.

Please, just keep it simple and use traditional place names for County parks and facilities. In doing so, we honor our kūpuna, the reasons why an ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i name was assigned in the first place, and commit to embracing Kānaka Maoli culture. Besides, we have enough schools, parks, and facilities named after pilau settlers. We would hate to have to tear down more monuments to individuals and families who have benefitted from the oppression of our people.

Me ka ‘oia‘i‘o,
La‘akea Low
Koakomo, Ha‘ikū, Maui

County Clerk

From: Leilani Smith <leiloveskai06@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 8, 2022 6:24 AM
To: County Clerk
Cc: Leilani Smith
Subject: Maunaolu Junior College

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2022 JUN -8 AM 7:43

OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY CLERK

[You don't often get email from leiloveskai06@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Hello. My name is Leilani Smith and I attended Maunaolu Junior College from Fall 1965 and graduated in June of 1967.

I have been trying to obtain a copy of my academic transcripts .. as I have been accepted back to the University of Hawaii to complete my BA degree.

I understand the school was acquired by the County of Maui, therefore, I am hoping you may have transcripts going back that far or can guide me as to who may have them (if they even exist).

Thank you for taking the time to look into this .. and any questions please let me know.

Thank you again ..

Sincerely, Leilani

Sent from my iPad

June 7, 2022

The Honorable Alice Lee, Chair and Members

Maui County Council

200 S. High Street

Wailuku HI 96793

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2022 JUN -7 PM 3: 49

OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY CLERK

RE: SUPPORTING THE \$9.5M FOR MAALAEA SRF FUNDING IN FY 2023 BUDGET

Aloha Chair Lee and Members;

I am writing today in support of the \$9.5M funding request for a critically needed and long overdue regional waste water facility for Maalaea in the FY2023 budget.

As a (off and on) 60+ year resident of Maalaea, I have seen first hand how the reef and shoreline has changed there over the years as the area has become more and more developed. My family has had a residence in Maalaea since I was a very young child and I've been continuously living there for the last 15 years. Over that time, I've seen the decline of many areas of reef and, especially recently, how the shoreline has eroded. Much of these declines can be attributed to the lack of proper waste water treatment as the nutrient overload in the waters of Maalaea Bay has grown steadily over the years. Once a sleepy little harbor who's largest boats were a pair of commercial tuna boats, the area now sports daily tourist counts of many hundreds of people who surge through harbor to enjoy the waters of the Bay. Once where a handful of single family homes were the only long term occupants of the area, now stand over a dozen large condos with hundreds of occupied rooms. Long term planning, including how to handle the current large amount of waste water generated daily, was not done "back in the day". The day of reckoning has come as fish stocks continue to decline, the lobsters are almost gone, the taco are no longer in abundance as they once were and sand has slowly replaced many of the areas once occupied by healthy reefs. The surf is still good when it comes up, but look at the reef at the famed spot named "Freight Trains" and you'll see the large rock ripped off the bottom during a large swell in late 1990's sitting in the middle of the wave line-up. This had never happened before and many of us who surfed there were convinced it happened due to the (already) deteriorating condition of the reef. Man's impact on the environment there has been obvious and detrimental.

We now have an opportunity to address many of these problems. An opportunity is before the council which may never be repeated. The Federal and State funding currently available is a gift we would be foolhardy to walk away from. The community is supportive, local land owners are willing to help with land donations and the time is right to implement the planned waste water facility to return Maalaea Bay to a more natural condition. I will happily disconnect my cesspool and process my home's waste through such a facility if made available. I speak now only for myself, but I know my neighbors are concerned about the health of the Bay and are supportive of this project. Please don't let it go to waste!

Mahalo for your time on this matter.

Paul Gammie

Maalaea Resident.



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

Bill 69
Second & Final Reading of the FY23 Budget
Wednesday, June 8, 2022

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Rawlins-Fernandez, and
Members of the Maui County Council,

We want to thank you for all your hard work on this FY23 Budget and see the tremendous effort put into reviewing our revenue, expenses, County priorities and programs, and input from the administration, departments, and our community.

There are many things we support in this budget as previously shared. We applaud the priority of affordable housing and rentals and appreciate the efforts to create safe zones to protect the homeless, continued support of agriculture and feral animal control, and the investment in the new Halau of 'Oiwī Arts. We feel it is important to continue to support our visitor industry and better manage tourism, which our community has relied upon for decades and continues to help shore up our economic health. We wish more funds were put toward this effort as it is one of the community's top priorities and we hope to see additional funds put toward this effort in the future.

In this new fiscal year, we would like to see an emphasis on developing strong economic diversification and sustainability plans, expanding investments in existing programs that deliver significant returns on investments (ROI), as well as looking at new opportunities than can do the same, leverage our unique assets and create rewarding job opportunities.

As new projects, programs and directions are put forth by the administration and council, it is critically important for research to be conducted and a cost-benefit analysis completed for each in advance for full transparency and public education. This information should be shared with the public at the beginning of the budget process for review and consideration. Further, we feel it is important to review the cost and size of our government, which taxpayers directly pay for, and look for areas that can be streamlined or outsourced for cost savings. With such an analysis, taxpayers can better understand and ring in on new projects and programs, continued funding of existing efforts and shifts in the way the county does business. There are some areas of the FY23 budget where an analysis on the fiscal impacts and ROI would have been extremely valuable and we hope to have reasoning and clarity provided moving forward.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our thoughts on the FY23 Budget and want to thank you again for the many and long hours put into creating it.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.