

Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2023-2025) on 2023-06-27 1:30 PM - Reconvened from 06/26/2023 at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Time: 06-27-23 13:30

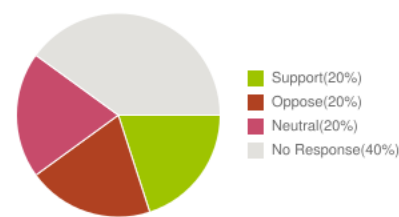
eComments Report

Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2023-2025) on 2023-06-27 1:30 PM - Reconvened from 06/26/2023 at 6:00 p.m.	06-27-23 13:30	2	5	1	1	1

Sentiments for All Meetings

The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment



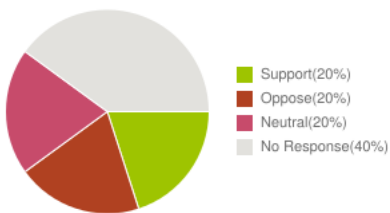
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2023-2025) on 2023-06-27 1:30 PM - Reconvened from 06/26/2023 at 6:00 p.m.
06-27-23 13:30

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
A G E N D A	2	0	1	0
BFED-74 CC 20-115 GENERAL EXCISE AND USE TAX SURCHARGE (BFED-74)	3	1	0	1

Sentiments for All Agenda Items

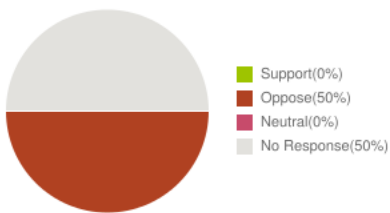
The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment



Agenda Item: eComments for A G E N D A

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:10pm 06-27-23

Bill 49 for a gen excise tax surcharge is a regressive tax that imposes an unfair burden on low income local residents who are already suffering. The impact this has on physicians is detrimental in that it could force them to possibly close their business. There is already a severe doctor shortage crisis here. We cannot lose more physicians. If nothing else, you should exempt physicians, and food and medications for the local residents.

Guest User

Location:

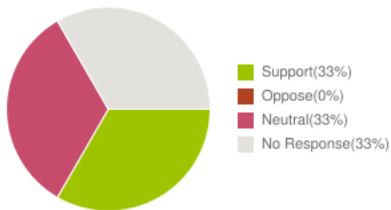
Submitted At: 7:31am 06-27-23

Members, this has to be the worst idea of the year. You don't increase taxes on the people you're trying to help. To say it's counterintuitive grossly understates the case. This bill should be forever buried and never again should

it rear its ugly head. There is no excuse for this kind of behavior. Once and for all, you must stop increasing taxes on us locals. It's wrong, it's regressive, and once again, it only results in more hardship for those who are in need of affordable housing.

Agenda Item: eComments for BFED-74 CC 20-115 GENERAL EXCISE AND USE TAX SURCHARGE (BFED-74)

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:36pm 06-27-23

BFED-74 GENERAL EXCISE AND USE TAX SURCHARGE – Bill 49 (2023)

Good afternoon, Chair and Members.

I strongly oppose implementing a general excise tax surcharge as proposed in BFED-74. I note that the majority of previous testimony seems to agree with my position.

I was previously supportive of this measure; however, I want to thank Dr. Zachary Thielen for doing the math. His analysis changed my mind about the proposed tax increase, and I sincerely hope it will change yours. It appears that, contrary to statements made by Finance Director Scott Teruya, much of the tax burden will be borne by the residents of Maui County, NOT visitors to our islands.

According to Dr. Thielen's calculations, on average, each visitor to Maui County would pay additional tax of approximately \$10 per year, whereas each resident will pay additional tax of over \$300 per year. This tax as proposed will not be felt by the visitor industry, but will most certainly be felt by our residents.

The issue cannot be any clearer. The way the surcharge is currently proposed will hurt the residents of Maui County, for example, by unfairly taxing kupuna on fixed low incomes, and also by further discouraging healthcare providers from settling in the county.

Instead of a GET surcharge, why not take up the long-proposed Impact-Fee ordinance for Maui County, for which studies were completed in 2013 by consulting firms, with an advisory committee of community members.

Please do not pass this version of the bill. If you find that you must pass a bill to add a GET surcharge, I urge you to protect our most vulnerable by exempting food, medicine and healthcare from the payment of a surcharge.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Livit Callentine

Wailuku, Hawaii

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(808) 268-5568

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:35pm 06-27-23

June 27, 2023

Aloha k_kou,

Mahalo for accepting testimony on Bill 49, establishing a general excise tax fund that would be used to fund infrastructure projects needed for housing. As you know from previous testimony, House Maui is an initiative of the Hawai_i Community Foundation. Our mission is to create a sustainable housing system that generates and keeps homes affordable for our kama__ina, enhances natural and cultural resources, and enriches our quality of life.

We strongly support this bill and encourage the County Council to adopt it. This bill matches the intent of Hawai_i State Act 48 and we support the County in joining O_ahu, Kaua_i and Hawai_i counties in collecting funds and directing them to address a significant barrier to housing development in Maui County — infrastructure.

Maui County is experiencing a housing crisis and one of the biggest barriers to producing the housing we need continues to be the lack of available infrastructure to support housing construction. Roads, sewer, water, drainage, waste disposal, and waste treatment systems are all expensive and necessary requirements of any housing project. Historically, this infrastructure was required to be constructed by project developers, adding to the cost of producing the development. As a result, high-end and luxury homes have become easier to produce and affordable and workforce homes are not being constructed at the rate our kama__ina need them.

As the governmental entity tasked with protecting the health, safety and general welfare of our residents, it is the County's kuleana to plan for, construct and maintain critical infrastructure. With this bill, the County is taking its rightful position within the system that creates housing.

In order to fund the full range of needed infrastructure, we ask that the Council add “roads and sidewalks” to the list of infrastructure that can be paid for with these funds. Roads are vital and expensive infrastructure that can increase the cost of a project. Adding them to the list of approved purposes will ensure that this cost will not be passed on to future residents.

Sidewalks are often dismissed as an unnecessary component of a new project, and developers frequently request exemptions from this requirement to save cost. For the people that live in these new homes, however, sidewalks offer safety for pedestrians. According to the Hawai_i Department of Transportation, since 2015 30 of our neighbors have been killed walking on our streets, often in places with inadequate sidewalks. The unintended consequence of inadequate sidewalks is increased traffic from residents who feel like its safer to drive than walk and added expense in fuel and vehicle maintenance because there's no safe alternative to accomplish daily tasks. Sidewalks are part of the roadway system and identifying them clearly in section 3.100.040B ensures that funds can be spent to facilitate their construction in the neighborhoods that need them most.

Mahalo for considering our testimony and for taking up this issue in the Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee.

Me ka _oia_i_o,

Kate Blystone

Program Officer, House Maui Initiative

Cheryl Kaupalolo

Location:

Submitted At: 7:50am 06-27-23

I am in agreement with all the reasons for NOT raising the general excise tax. As a family who is struggling to keep our grandchildren on Maui I also totally understand and applaud the need for affordable housing. As older residents the continued exodus of doctors on Maui is very concerning also. Most concerning is the effect on our local families who are already struggling with the high price of remaining on Maui. Please let's look at spending the available funds before taxing the people of Hawaii more.

My only reason for even considering this additional tax is due to my irritation at the State for mandating that you implement this tax or lose the ability to do so at a future time. That could be harmful in the long run. SO if you must use it or lose it, please raise it by the barest minimum they will allow, like 1/10th of 1%. Then when more specific affordable housing plans are available this could be revisited, hopefully with some concrete ways to offset these taxes for our struggling locals (and not just on food) and our medical service providers. Thanks for your hard work and diligence.