

Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2023-2025) on 2023-10-31 9:00 AM

Meeting Time: 10-31-23 09:00

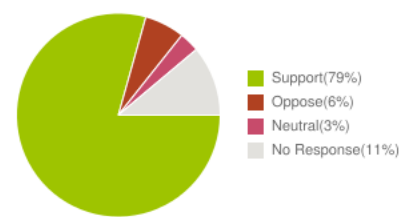
eComments Report

Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2023-2025) on 2023-10-31 9:00 AM	10-31-23 09:00	5	63	50	4	2

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

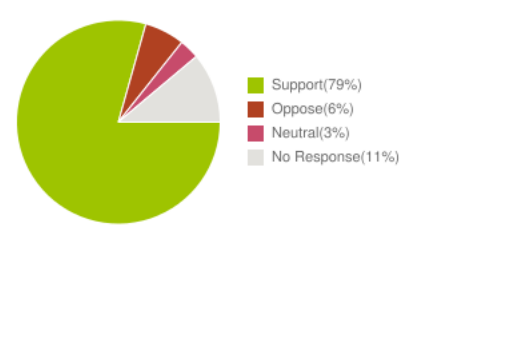


Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
A G E N D A	55	43	4	2
BFED-35 Bill 91 (2023) REAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR PROPERTIES IMPACTED BY NATURAL DISASTERS OR WILDFIRES (BFED-35)	8	7	0	0

Sentiments for All Agenda Items

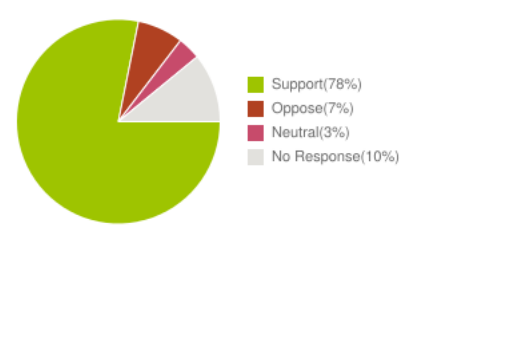
The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment



Agenda Item: eComments for A G E N D A

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 9:48am 10-31-23

Aloha,

I am writing to declare my support Bill 95 - specifically provision 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6.

Our property is located within this district and has been materially and significantly impacted by the devastation of the events of the Lahaina wildfire on August 8th.

The property, while still erect, is without water or sewer, is located in the middle of the disaster zone with limited access, and is most certainly impacted by the presence of toxic ash and material that is to be cleaned up in the future. It is not reasonable to treat these properties any differently than a property that was fully damaged, as our

properties are still not useable (and will not be for the foreseeable future as the recovery begins). These partially damaged properties have also suffered a significant devaluation as all of the infrastructure and amenities surrounding us have been destroyed.

Please help support our community and the recovery by providing this necessary relief.

Respectfully,
James Korth

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 7:58am 10-31-23

Aloha Mayor and fellow Council Members,

My name is Brittany Hudson, I am an owner of a condo in Lahaina Shores. Since the fires we still have not been allowed into our units and as I am sure you are aware we have no electric, water/sewer. I feel our taxes from 2023 should reflect that. Going forward I feel the taxes should reflect the state of use of the property for the owners. We are without places to live/income for an unforeseen time and when it comes to taxes I feel an assessor should be sent to the property every quarter to see how we should be billed. Obviously, as it stands at this time, our property is uninhabitable and should be billed accordingly.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,
Brittany

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 6:50am 10-31-23

Aloha Mayor and Council Members:

I support Bill 95 for a two-year exemption on property taxes. The wildfires have caused significant smoke and ash damage making our home uninhabitable, and our neighborhood has no water or sewer. There is toxic ash and smoke contaminating the soil and water, and it will be months, if not years, before the ground and water reservoirs recover. The property value of our and our neighbors' homes have been decimated, and it will be years before the infrastructure of our Lahaina Town is repaired and operational. Under these circumstances, it is imperative that our community be granted relief from property taxation.

Mahalo,
Dan Drohan
136 Pualei Drive, Lahaina

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 6:21am 10-31-23

1) Our Puamana primary residence of 34 years, 28-1, and our rental unit, 71-2 burned to the ground on 8/8/23. At Puamana Community Association, we have no water or sewer, and our properties are covered and filled with toxic smoke and ash.

2) Our homes won't be safely habitable until the Lahaina Town toxins have been cleared and removed.

3) Our home's property values have been decimated.

4) All of Lahaina Town needs Tax Relief including our unsafe uninhabitable smoker homes.
Additional talking points – smoker homes:

3. Property taxes are based on property values. Our property values have been decimated by the destruction of Lahaina Town and our neighborhoods.

4. Environmental assessments have discovered numerous toxic cancer-causing pollutants were released throughout Lahaina Town in the fire.

5. We have recently been told by experts in toxic cleanup that because our homes have been sitting in the Lahaina heat for months with toxic ash inside and out the porous walls and siding have soaked up the toxins requiring more than just mitigation cleaning. We will need to replace the insulation and drywall.

6. Our insurance companies will only pay once for cleaning, painting, and or replacement of drywall, siding, and insulation.
7. Cleaning and replacement of siding and drywall can't start until all the hazardous debris and toxins in Lahaina Town are safely removed or we might have to pay twice. Toxic mitigation cleaning is averaging \$35,000 per property.
8. The clean-up of Lahaina Town will take at least a year once it finally starts.
9. Once we have water it will take several months before the water is not toxic.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:13am 10-31-23

I support Bill 95 except for the provision in the second section which provides back dated tax relief for those Hotel operators and Property Managers who have profited by charging the Red Cross over \$20,000 a month to house our ohana. If you want to encourage short term rental owners to house the displaced for long term, I would suggest that the tax relief be for those who charge less than say 200% of median long term monthly rents. Owners have to apply to the property tax department for the tax relief and show proof that they housed the displaced, just check the rental rate that they charged.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:10am 10-31-23

Our home was destroyed in the wildfires and will not be able to rebuild for 2 years
I strongly believe that our property taxes should be extinguished until our home is rebuilt and lived in
Thank you. Bruce Baum 12-1 Puailima Pl Lahaina

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:16pm 10-30-23

I support Bill 95 and specifically the new section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6. My property in this area is not habitable and likely may not be for the next 2 years.

1) We have no water or sewer, and our properties are covered and filled with toxic smoke and ash. 2) Our homes won't be safely habitable until the Lahaina Town toxins have been cleared and removed. 3) Our home's property values have been decimated. 4) All of Lahaina Town needs Tax Relief including our unsafe uninhabitable smoker homes. 4. Property taxes are based on property values. Our property values have been decimated by the destruction of Lahaina Town and our neighborhoods. 5. Environmental assessments have discovered numerous toxic cancer-causing pollutants were released throughout Lahaina Town in the fire. 6. We have recently been told by experts in toxic cleanup that because our homes have been sitting in the Lahaina heat for months with toxic ash inside and out the porous walls and siding have soaked up the toxins requiring more than just mitigation cleaning. We will need to replace the insulation and drywall. 7. Our insurance companies, if they do support us in this area (many are unfunded for this) will only pay once for cleaning, painting, and or replacement of drywall, siding, and insulation. 7. Cleaning and replacement of siding and drywall can't start until all the hazardous debris and toxins in Lahaina Town are safely removed or we might have to pay twice. Toxic mitigation cleaning is averaging \$35,000 per property. 8. The clean-up of Lahaina Town will take at least a year once it finally starts. 9. Once we have water it will take several months before the water is not toxic.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:01pm 10-30-23

We support Bill 95, and specifically the new section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6 for the following reasons, among many others:

- 1) We have no water or sewer, and our properties are covered and filled with toxic smoke and ash.
- 2) Our homes won't be safely habitable until the Lahaina Town toxins have been cleared and removed.
- 3) Our home's property values have been decimated.
- 4) All of Lahaina Town needs Tax Relief including our unsafe uninhabitable smoker homes.

- 5) Property taxes are based on property values. Our property values have been decimated by the destruction of Lahaina Town and our neighborhoods.
 - 6) Environmental assessments have discovered numerous toxic cancer-causing pollutants were released throughout Lahaina Town in the fire.
 - 7) We have recently been told by experts in toxic cleanup that because our homes have been sitting in the Lahaina heat for months with toxic ash inside and out the porous walls and siding have soaked up the toxins requiring more than just mitigation cleaning. We will need to replace the insulation and drywall.
 - 8) Our insurance companies will only pay once for cleaning, painting, and or replacement of drywall, siding, and insulation.
 - 9) Cleaning and replacement of siding and drywall can't start until all the hazardous debris and toxins in Lahaina Town are safely removed or we might have to pay twice. Toxic mitigation cleaning is averaging \$35,000 per property
 - 10) The clean-up of Lahaina Town will take at least a year once it finally starts.
 - 11) Once we have water it will take several months before the water is not toxic.
- To not support this bill (specifically this section) is extremely inequitable.

Mahalo

Mark James 160-4 Pualei Drive, Lahaina

David Medina

Location:

Submitted At: 5:55pm 10-30-23

We support Bill 95 and specifically the new section

3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6. Our property in this area is not habitable and likely may not be for the next 2 years.

- 1) We have no water or sewer, and our properties are covered and filled with toxic smoke and ash.
 - 2) Our homes won't be safely habitable until the Lahaina Town toxins have been cleared and removed.
 - 3) Our home's property values have been decimated.
 - 4) All of Lahaina Town needs Tax Relief including our unsafe uninhabitable smoker homes.
- Additional talking points – smoker homes:

3. Property taxes are based on property values. Our property values have been decimated by the destruction of Lahaina Town and our neighborhoods.
4. Environmental assessments have discovered numerous toxic cancer-causing pollutants were released throughout Lahaina Town in the fire.
5. We have recently been told by experts in toxic cleanup that because our homes have been sitting in the Lahaina heat for months with toxic ash inside and out the porous walls and siding have soaked up the toxins requiring more than just mitigation cleaning. We will need to replace the insulation and drywall.
6. Our insurance companies will only pay once for cleaning, painting, and or replacement of drywall, siding, and insulation.
7. Cleaning and replacement of siding and drywall can't start until all the hazardous debris and toxins in Lahaina Town are safely removed or we might have to pay twice. Toxic mitigation cleaning is averaging \$35,000 per property.
8. The clean-up of Lahaina Town will take at least a year once it finally starts.
9. Once we have water it will take several months before the water is not toxic.

Please support and pass this very important Bill 95

Mahalo

David Medina

Resident of Maui and our property is in the disaster area.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:24pm 10-30-23

My name is Alan Schulman and I own 38-1 Pualoke Place in Puamana. My property was completely destroyed in the fire. I support Bill 95 and specifically the new section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6 for the following reasons: (i) Puamana, and my property, has no water or sewer and it is covered and filled with toxic smoke and ash; (ii) my home won't be safely habitable until the Lahaina town toxins have been cleared and removed; (iii) my home value has been decimated; and (iv) all of Lahaina town needs Tax Relief including my home. Thank you for your consideration of this important bill that will bring economic relief and comfort of mind to your neighbors who have lost so much.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:13pm 10-30-23

Aloha Mayor and Council Members,

We are Lahaina homeowners writing to express our support for Bill 95, and in particular section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from real property taxes for homeowners whose homes were not destroyed in the Lahaina August wildfire, but are located in the affected area and have been rendered uninhabitable.

Our home in Lahaina is located within the area impacted by the fires (zone 16A). While our home was not destroyed, it is not habitable due to the toxic ash and the damage to the surrounding infrastructure, as well as no access to water or sewer utilities. It is a significant struggle to pay the continuing expenses (mortgage, insurance, HOA dues, etc), and this exemption will provide some much needed relief. While our property is zoned for vacation rental use, there will simply be no vacation rental usage in the foreseeable future. Please consider giving us this specific financial relief during this extremely challenging time.

Mahalo,
Michael and Angela Leone
185-1 Pualei Drive, Lahaina

Thomas Croly

Location:

Submitted At: 2:23pm 10-30-23

Testimony for BFED committee regarding BFED-35

Submitted by Thomas Croly

I write in support of the policies in Bill 95 that would provide Real Property tax relief for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6 for the current tax year and the next. This is only fair! If those property owners are not able to use their properties for habitation, then they should not be required to pay Real property tax.

Hopefully, by June 2025, these areas will be cleaned of all hazardous debris and all County services, such as water and sewer and utilities of power and internet will have been restored, and all properties will be either be habitable or ready for reconstruction.

I would suggest adding to Bill 95, the provision in Bill 102 that would require repayment for this exemption should the property be sold prior to January 1, 2027. Maui should be providing tax relief to those intending to continue to own their Maui properties and not to benefit those who would take this opportunity to sell. I prefer the approach in Bill 95 to provide a blanket tax exemption for all properties in the burn zone, rather than assessing the habitability of each individual property, as would be required to administrate Bills 91 and 102.

For properties outside the burn zone, the provisions of 3.48.551 B might also be appropriate. But the administration should be allowed to set the provisions to qualify for the proposed exemption. Not every property may have insurance and the habitability of a given property may be difficult to assess.

Sections 3.48.551 C and D are an attempt to provide tax fairness and incentive for Bed and Breakfast, STR and Hotel classified properties to offer them as long term housing for displaced Lahaina residents. I fully support this intent, but it should also include non-Owner Occupied properties and should not include Hotel properties. The Hotel properties that the Red Cross has been using as temporary housing have been receiving market short term rent for temporarily housing displaced residents for the past 80 days and do not need any form of tax relief for this

period.

Going forward, the goal is find long term (6 months or more) housing for these displaced residents and this is not in Hotel classified properties. But please recognize that there are STRs, and non-owner occupied properties who have already been providing housing to displaced residents, sometime without collecting any rent or subsidy.

Maui County receives 86% of its tax revenues from visitor accommodations. In West Maui more than 93% of Maui County tax revenues come from visitor accommodations. And it is properties classified as Short Term Rental (STR) and properties classified as non-owner occupied, used as second homes, that account for the majority of these tax revenues and NOT hotel classified properties.

West Maui has 6501 properties classified as STR (mostly condos) and 3101 properties classified as non-owner occupied. The vast majority of these properties are used by their owners for a portion of the year as second homes. If those second home owners are going to forgo personally using their second home for the next one or two years to house displaced residents, they will need to be incentivized.

This proposed waiver of property tax is perhaps the ONLY thing that Maui County can do to incentivized them to convert their properties to long term rental use. But understand that it will take much more than this to actually create these new housing opportunities for displaced residents. A comprehensive program will need to be developed that makes financial sense to all involved. And the provisions of that program will need to be publicized to these 9,602 property owners in order to find enough who would be willing to participate.

Most of these second home owner's properties are not set up for long term rental use. Conversion to furnished long term rental and later back to short term rental will be costly for them. And the current property tax charged to these property owners makes it impossible for them to pay expenses and rent for anywhere close to a rent that a displaced family could afford. Even with the waiver of property taxes, some subsidy will need to be found to make this program successful. Hopefully FEMA can make up the difference. These property owners will need assurance that the rent will be paid and their units will be cared for.

When these properties are in short term rental use, they are meticulously cleaned, damages are promptly fixed and sometimes charged to the renting visitor, after each rental period. After a long term rental of years or more, substantial reconditioning would be expected before the unit would be ready for future short term rental.

Recognize that any rental of less than 6 months is subject to a total of 17.95% taxes (including Maui's new GET). So you are really trying to find long term rentals of 6 months or more. Also, the Real property tax department is required to classify all properties and exemptions by the end of the calendar year for the following fiscal year. So, for a program such as this to work, within the current restrictions found in the County code, an alternate way to fund it would need to be created. I would suggest creating a new fund from which tax rebates could be paid out of, rather than simply exempting the taxes as proposed.

How much would this program cost? Figure the average property tax bill for a short term rental is \$15,400/year, multiply this by the number of units that might be made available, say 1000 units. That would cost about \$15.4 million per year in lost tax revenue.

Jonathan Helton

Location:

Submitted At: 2:20pm 10-30-23

Please see attached testimonies. Mahalo.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:17pm 10-30-23

In regards to Bill 95 Section 3.48.551. I own a home at 272-Puaeli Drive in Lahaina, in the Puamana Community. We have not gotten access to our homes and will probably not have access for habitability for quite some time, There is damage from toxic elements as well as polluted water. We cannot use this property. Its value has plummeted. Please vote in favor of the Bill 95 and Section 3.48.551. It will provide much needed relief
Thank you

Jeffrey Sommers

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:37pm 10-30-23

Dear Budget, Finance and Development Committee,

I am writing to you to voice my support for the tax relief Bill 95 for homes in the Lahaina burn zone. Specifically the new section

3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6.

My husband and I have owned our home in Puamana for 25 years. We are one of the fortunate families whose home escaped the fire. That being said, our home is uninhabitable and may likely not be for the next 2 years.

We have no water or sewer and those services will not be restored in the near future. Our community is a toxic environment and will not be safe for quite some time.

Our home's property value has been decimated and our property taxes are based on our homes value.

These are very trying times and we appreciate all the hard work you and your council members have ahead. I hope you will support Bill 95 and specifically section 3.48.551.

Mahalo,
Bethany Knapp

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:36pm 10-30-23

Bill 95 section 3.48.551

David Houston

Location:

Submitted At: 1:09pm 10-30-23

Hello Moui County Representatives:

We own Puamana Unit 30-1 Pualoke Place that is an intact unit after the fires. I support Bill 95 and specifically the new section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6. Our property is rental property when our family is not visiting and working. I am retired and the rental income from our unit supports our living expenses. I may not receive any vacation rental income from our unit for up to two years because of the fire's impact.

- 1) We have no water or sewer, and our property is covered and filled with toxic smoke and ash.
- 2) We are located in the North end of Puamana which is surrounded by many of the 94 destroyed units.
- 3) Property taxes are based on property values, and ours has suffered.
- 4) The clean-up of Lahaina Town will take at least a year once it finally starts.
- 5) Once we have water and sewer, it will take several months before the water is not toxic.

Thank you in advance for your attention to my request.

Dave and Cheryl Houston
30-1 Pualoke PI Lahaina

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:09am 10-30-23

Aloha Maui Elected Officials,

My name is Eric Freeh and I am writing in support of Bill 95, specifically section 3.48.551 as well as Tax Bill 102, Section 3.48.465 which would provide an exemption from Real Property taxes for all Real properties destroyed or damaged in the August 2023 Maui wildfires. My family and I feel blessed to have our unit 201 at Lahaina Roads.

We are deeply saddened by the loss of life and property as well as the ecological damage caused by the wildfire that swept through Lahaina Town on August 8, 2023.

Even though Lahaina Roads is "still standing" it is completely uninhabitable. There is no power, water or sewer and the property is covered and filled with toxic ash and smoke. Our home won't be safely habitable until the Lahaina Town toxins have been cleared and removed and we are being told that this could take years. Property taxes are based on property values. Our property values have been decimated by the destruction of Lahaina Town and our surrounding neighborhoods.

We respectfully ask that the Budget Committee vote in support of Tax Bill 95, section 3.48.551 and Tax Bill 102, Section 3.48.465. All of Lahaina Town needs Tax Relief, including our unsafe, uninhabitable "standing" properties.

Mahalo for your consideration,
Eric Freeh
1403 Front Street, Unit 201
Lahaina, HI 96761

Gary Gless

Location:
Submitted At: 10:41am 10-30-23

Thank you for taking the time to understand our concerns. We support this bill because of the unforeseen hardship it has put us in. Personally the income from our unit was to help subsidize my mother-in-law's care in a San Francisco nursing center. Now that is gone but the bill's are just mounting. We desperately need some relief so we can survive. We have made Lahaina our home and have loved the aloha of the people
So please help us all.
Pono is all we ask.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 10:25am 10-30-23

We support Bill 95 as owners of 30-2 Pualoke Place in Lahaina.
We have no idea of the damages of the toxins that have seeped into our home rendering an unsafe and toxic interior.

In addition are the following concerns:

- 1) We have no water or sewer, and our properties are covered and filled with toxic smoke and ash so we cant even use our property.
- 2) Our homes won't be safely habitable until the Lahaina Town toxins have been cleared and removed.
- 3) Our home's property values have been decimated.
- 4) We have unsafe uninhabitable smoker homes.

Please consider this bill 95 as we can not use our property for several years.

thank you

Dan & Barb Schwalbe
30-2 Pualoke Lahaina

Leslie Gless

Location:
Submitted At: 10:24am 10-30-23

Ditto. I support for all the reasons .

Leann STRASEN-WEASLER

Location:
Submitted At: 10:20am 10-30-23

TO: Maui County Council

Subject: Support for Bill 95

From: Leann Strasen-Weasler Puamana Unit 272-3 Pualei Drive

I own Puamana Unit 272-3 Pualei Drive that is an intact unit after the fires. I support Bill 95 and specifically the new section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6. My property is rental property when I'm not there. I lived in the unit for 15 years until I moved to Las Vegas after my husband died. I am retired and the rental income from my unit supports me as my only other income is from Social Security. Given the damage of the August 7 fires to Lahaina town, the neighborhood and the 94 units, clubhouse and pools that Puamana has lost, I will not receive any vacation rental income from my unit radically affecting my standard of living.

Specific issues that affect my loss of rental income from my unit include:

- 1) We have no water or sewer, and our properties are covered and filled with toxic smoke and ash.
- 2) Our homes won't be safely habitable until the Lahaina Town toxins have been cleared and removed.
- 3) Our home's property values have been decimated.
- 4) All of Lahaina Town needs Tax Relief including our unsafe uninhabitable smoke-filled homes.
5. Property taxes are based on property values. Our property values have been decimated by the destruction of Lahaina Town and our neighborhoods.
4. Environmental assessments have discovered numerous toxic cancer-causing pollutants were released throughout Lahaina Town in the fire.
5. We have recently been told by experts in toxic cleanup that because our homes have been sitting in the Lahaina heat for months with toxic ash inside and out the porous walls and siding have soaked up the toxins requiring more than just mitigation cleaning. We will need to replace the insulation and drywall.
6. Our insurance companies will only pay once for cleaning, painting, and or replacement of drywall, siding, and insulation.
7. Cleaning and replacement of siding and drywall can't start until all the hazardous debris and toxins in Lahaina Town are safely removed or we might have to pay twice. Toxic mitigation cleaning is averaging \$35,000 per property.
8. The clean-up of Lahaina Town will take at least a year once it finally starts. 9. Once we have water it will take several months before the water is not toxic.

Thank you in advance for your attention to my request.

Leann Strasen-Weasler

808-280-7860

lweasler@gmail.com

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:38am 10-30-23

Aloha Maui Elected Officials,

Thank you for your thoughtful and supportive efforts in the wake of the August fire disasters.

My home was damaged in the fire and my family of 6 is unable to return for quite some time. As a Lahaina public school teacher and a small cleaning business owner, I am forced to support temporary housing along with my disaster damaged home while income dropped substantially. While we wait for repairs to be done, along with water and sewer to be repaired, we are financially strained a great deal.

Please strongly consider supporting Bill 95, offering tax relief to damaged and unsafe properties. Specifically the new section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6.

The inflated housing market has driven our taxes up while my State Teacher's income has increased ever so slightly. The added tax burden keeps me from my family while I look for other sources of income.

The value of my home has plummeted as it is surrounded by burnt buildings and toxic. I am grateful my home was only damaged and not destroyed, however it will be years before the clean up and construction is completed around me. The quality of life and safety of my homes location has been greatly diminished. Eventually bringing my wife and 4 small children back to my neighborhood has serious health implications and concerns me.

Thank you for supporting hard working taxpayers in a time of historic hardship.

Daniel & Anna Skousen
153 Pualei Drive, Lahaina

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:06am 10-30-23

I am Lahaina homeowner writing to express my support for Bill 95, and in particular section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from real property taxes for homeowners whose homes were not destroyed in the Lahaina August wildfire, but are located in the affected area and have been rendered uninhabitable.

My home in Lahaina is located within the area impacted by the fires (zone 16A). While my home was not destroyed, it is not habitable due to the toxic ash and the damage to the surrounding infrastructure. We have no water or sewer and we are not allowed to stay in our home. Our property values have been decimated. So it is unclear how the assessor could even establish a value for my home at this time.

As the future use is unclear and without the use of our home it is a struggle to pay the continuing expenses. Please consider giving us some financial relief in these challenging times.

Brad Ammann. 136-2 Pualei Drive

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:04am 10-30-23

Aloha Honorable Council and Mayor,

I am a property owner at 136-2 Pualei. Please support Bill 95 in particular section 3.48.551. My home is toxic and uninhabitable. We have no water or sewage and there is toxic ash. Furthermore, my property value has been decimated. We are struggling to keep up with all of the expenses plus fighting with insurance. We desperately need your help during these unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

Lorren Lotesta Ammann
136-2 Pualei, Lahaina

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:52am 10-30-23

Aloha Mayor and Council Members. We own in Honua Kai and were prevented from participating in the ARC because we were not managed by a property manager with more than 50 units so we were not eligible. We did however offer our places to our cleaning staff and others for free. We suffered from no income after August 8th through to mid October, with heavily discounted rates going forward and yet we have full expenses of tax and HOA fees etc. to deal with. We have no problem with tax relief for owners who lost their properties in the Lahaina fire but we oppose tax relief for owners at Honua Kai who have received large ARC income and now may receive property tax abatement while the 50% of Honua Kai owners who were not able to participate in the ARC program receive no tax relief whatsoever.

Respectfully,

Terry and Jill Gardiner

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:47am 10-30-23

Aloha Maui County Counsel Members,

My wife and I have been coming to Maui for more than 40 years and have developed close relationships with many wonderful local Hawaiian people. We were heartbroken at the devastation in Lahaina town and how so many families lost everything, including all of their possessions. We volunteered our condo at Honua Kai for immediate use without any compensation to help in the time of desperation.

While I generally support HB95 and the associated property tax relief for those who are providing shelter for displaced families due to the Lahaina wildfire, this Bill primarily deals with sole owners of properties such as Hotels and homes. I am one of 700 owners at Honua Kai and unlike a single ownership property, we have extenuating circumstances that make HB95 unfair for owners at Honua Kai.

During displaced family placement by the American Red Cross, only those owners renting their properties with one of the Big 3 property managers, about 50%, could place their units in the ARC program. All other owners did not have that option. ARC would not deal with owners or property manager with less than 50 units in its program. Therefore, we have a divided resort with 50% of the owners making "above market rate" at 100% occupancy rental income and 50% having little to no income from traditional tourist traffic.

All Honua Kai owners pay property taxes (which increased by 40%-60% this year) and HOA dues (which pay for resort services for all displaced families), but only those allowed to participate in the ARC program will have income to pay these large expenses. By passing HB95 as currently written will place an enormous financial hardship on those owners not allowed to participate in the ARC program while further rewarding owners in the program after receiving "above market rental rates" and who will be flush with income.

I strongly oppose HB95 as written and recommend that special property tax provisions be granted to properties like Honua Kai that have many individual non-ARC owners and need assistance due to total loss of traditional tourist income. Without assisting ALL Honua Kai owners with property tax relief, many owners do not have deep financial pockets and will be forced to sell their property and/or in some cases file for bankruptcy protection.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michael & Christine Wilde
Honua Kai Resort & Spa
H525

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:53am 10-30-23

Aloha Mayor and Council Members,

I am Lahaina homeowner writing to express my support for Bill 95, and in particular section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from real property taxes for homeowners whose homes were not destroyed in the Lahaina August wildfire, but are located in the affected area and have been rendered uninhabitable.

My home in Lahaina is located within the area impacted by the fires (zone 16A). While my home was not destroyed, it is not habitable due to the toxic ash and the damage to the surrounding infrastructure. As the future use is unclear and without the use of our home it is a struggle to pay the continuing expenses. Please consider giving us some financial relief in these challenging times

Trevor Guernsey, 19-1 Puamela place, Lahaina

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:32am 10-30-23

Aloha Honorable Council and Mayor,

Please support Bill 95 our Lahaina homes are toxic and our values have been decimated. The struggle with insurance and still paying all expenses without use of our properties is very difficult. We need your assistance in this unprecedented time.

Thank you,

Peter Whitbeck, 100-4 Pualei Drive, Lahaina

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:07am 10-30-23

Aloha Honorable Council & Mayor,

Please support Bill 95, specifically section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6. Our Lahaina home, while still standing, is filled with toxic ash and dust, which experts are telling us will necessitate replacing the drywall and insulation. We have no sewer or water, and even when water is restored, we are being told that it will be several months before it is safe to drink. Our values have been decimated, and the current property taxes are based on peak market, pre-fire values. The struggle with insurance and still paying all expenses without use of our properties is very difficult. Our family has owned a home in Lahaina for over 50 years, and we need your assistance in this unprecedented time.

Thank you,
Mimi Green
192-2 Pualei Drive

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:45am 10-30-23

Bill 95

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:20am 10-30-23

Aloha,

We are owners in the Puamana community (Tax Zone 4, Section 5 and 6) and our condo has been rendered uninhabitable by the hurricane and fire in August 2023. We have no water or sewage. What we do have is toxic smoke and ash. Our property taxes are based on our property value which has gone down considerably based on the destruction of the town and our once beautiful neighborhood. Our skylights were blown off on August 7 by the hurricane and we had two gaping holes in our roof for three weeks before anyone was allowed to go in and board them up. Consequently we have a lot of ash, soot and toxins in our unit. As of now, toxic mitigation cleaning is averaging about \$30,000 to \$35,000 per property. From reports we have, it is going to be a year at the very least, and upwards to two years, before we can even start to resume any habitation in our condo. We are, therefore, supporting Bill 95 and section 3.48.551.

Gerald and Arlene Bachecki

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:12am 10-30-23

We implore you to support Bill 95 and specifically the new section 3.48.551 which provides a 2-year property tax exemption for all properties in Lahaina Tax Zone 4, sections 5 and 6.

We are the owners of a property located in the Lahaina burn zone. Our property was not destroyed by the fire, but homes and cars just a few feet from our home (immediately across the street and others across a green space) burned to the ground. The home is now located in the midst of an enormous burn zone/ toxic

environment. We have no sewer services or potable water, and we have heard that it will be months before those services are restored. Our home will require extensive cleaning/remediation to remove soot and toxins. Remediation cannot be done until the toxic debris has been removed from the surrounding burn zone, and even then, our home will be located in the midst of a massive construction zone. Our home is uninhabitable and there is no timeline as to when it will be safe to live in.

In addition to property taxes, we are still responsible for paying our monthly HOA fees, mortgage, and insurance fees – all this for an uninhabitable home. Property taxes are based on property values which have been totally decimated by the destruction of Lahaina Town. It is unreasonable that owners of still-standing but uninhabitable properties be required to pay property taxes during a time when basic infrastructure (water, sewer) is not available and the property itself is not usable and surrounded by toxic debris. Please vote in favor of tax relief as outlined in Bill 95.

Mahalo,
Anne and Christopher Fender
87-1 Pualei Drive

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:04am 10-30-23

Aloha Honorable Council & Mayor,

Please support Bill 95 our Lahaina homes are toxic and our values have been decimated. The struggle with insurance and still paying all expenses without use of our properties is very difficult. We are in a position where we can't rent our property and therefore cannot afford all the current expenses and taxes. We need your assistance in this unprecedented time.

Thank you,
Trish Morelli 43-2 Puamana

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:14pm 10-29-23

I am an owner at Honua Kai and have significant concerns with the proposed bill. All owners at the Honua Kai continue to pay a full staff and utilities to keep the buildings running now and during the shutdown. Without the participation of all owners paying their monthly dues which is significant, the buildings would not be operational to house displaced families. The Red Cross would only

Contract with companies who had 50 or more units. 50% of the HOA were unable to participate. All owners at the Honua Kai have helped your/our community and continue to do so. If relief is given, it should be given to all owners as we all are helping, not a select few. There have been whispers that one of the big management would like to hold any GET/TAT/MCAT tax from the Red Cross contracts in the hope you rezone units to long term housing. This scenario cripples the community further and is shameful.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:26pm 10-29-23

I request passage of Bill 95's property tax relief measures.

I urge passage of Bill 95 and in particular section 3.48.551 that would provide a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all the properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6.

I own a unit in the Puamana development that has been used as a short-term vacation rental. It did not burn during the fire, but one can reasonably say that it has nevertheless been devastated, in effect.

The property is unusable at present, and some informed persons tell me it will remain that way for a long time, perhaps years.

I am told that there is neither water nor sewer service, though electricity has recently been restored. I have heard that the water will be non-potable for months after it begins to flow. There is concern that toxic ash inside and certainly outside may necessitate long and expensive cleanup.

Thus, as I said, the property is essentially useless for any purpose, and will remain that way for at least many months and perhaps much longer.

The property will be, to all intents and purposes, useless for vacation rentals for the rest of my life (I'm 80). Thus, I will be missing out on income on which I had been counting. Based on all of the above observations, the property's value is some small fraction of what it was a few months ago, so selling it is not a feasible solution for my problems. Even if there is an exemption from property taxes, the situation for me (and those many others in the same boat as I) is somewhat dire. It is decidedly dire if I must continue to pay real property taxes, especially as they are based on an assessed value that is no longer realistic, to say the least!

Thus I strongly urge passage of Bill 95, and especially section 3.48.551.

Mahalo,

Steve Plant

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:34pm 10-29-23

Aloha,

As a 45 year Maui resident, my home is situated at ground zero in Lahaina town. My heart goes out to those who lost everything in the fires and my home was spared. Given the fact that we will have no water or sewer for possibly 2 years or more and our property is surrounded by smoke and ash toxins in the air on the ground and throughout our home, we find ourselves in a similar situation, no habitable home. Additionally, we do have a mortgage payment, HOA dues and property taxes based on property value that is impossible to discern. Given that our home may not be safely habitable for several years and even that timeline is uncertain, I support Bill 95 and 3.48551 which provides a 2 year property tax exemption for all properties in Lahaina tax zone 4,5,and 6.

Laine Assid

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:30pm 10-29-23

Dear Councilmembers,

We are writing with official support for Bill 95. We are so grateful that our Lahaina home that we have owned since 1994 is still standing; however, it is right next to homes that are completely burned to the ground. There is no water or sewer to our home with no projected date for either to be restored. We also are aware that our home has been exposed to many toxins given its proximity to the fires, and we have no idea what restoration will be required as a result or when we will be able to use it again. We have been dutiful taxpayers all these years have no objection to continuing again when things have improved, but we and the others who cannot use their homes need tax relief. Having to pay taxes for homes that cannot be used creates such a hardship for the homeowners of Lahaina. Please support Bill 95, including the new section 3.48.551, which includes tax relief for all Lahaina properties in sections 5 and 6 of Tax Zone 4.

Thank you,

Phillip and Angenette Stephenson

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:57pm 10-29-23

Aloha

First, I'd like to say a heartfelt mahalo for introducing council bill 95. This whole process is a real challenge for every poor soul who has lost so much. At 73, visiting Maui for 55 years and living here for over 35, and retired this whole process is a bit overwhelming as well. If this bill passes there is hope and the light at the end of this very long tunnel is not a train.

Like many I was getting buried with the combination of mortgage payment, property tax payment and the whole insurance process. Like many I thought that I was fully covered by insurance, but the actual costs are mind boggling.

The time it will take to navigate and assist families in Lahaina will take years. Our homes won't be safely habitable until the Lahaina Town toxins have been cleared and removed.

After attending the community meetings and from what I read the actual potable water and sewer system challenge may easily take up to 18 months or more. I was starting to feel panicked. Your bill was like a huge weight was lifted. Thanks for your insight, level headedness and aloha!

Thomas Clements

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:08pm 10-29-23

I support Bill 95 and its exemption for TVR-STRH. These units are currently housing perhaps the majority of the 7000 displaced persons, but many victims may be forced out without such incentives. We are already encountering strong opposition from board members of my condo association. Half our homeowners want to house these victims but such action by the board combined with changing economics of lowering reimbursements and higher tourist demand are a recipe for disaster. This is a cost effective use of Maui County's resources because without these units, Maui will likely be unable to house thousands of citizens and the cost to create or pay for other housing will be far more expensive. While Maui County could not do anything to stop the first disaster, this is a second disaster which is entirely within the County's authority to prevent.

George Hu
130 Kai Malina Parkway
Lahaina, HI

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:02pm 10-29-23

As Lahaina residents, we are devastated by the fire thatg tore through our small beautiful community. While my home is still standing, it is ground zero on Front st. Fire and toxic ash burned in every single direction around my home and community. Our home has had no water, power, or sewage since the fire occured. Even when all of that is taken care of, my home is still filled with toxic poisounous ash and soot. I can't clean my home and remediate the interior and exterior until ALL of Lahaina is cleaned of the toxic ash. Every time a debris pile is picked up, the wind will spread those toxins over my home. By the time Lahaina is fully cleaned and I can remove drywall wtc it will be years. I am forced to pay a mortgage and HOA fees on a home that is uninhabitable for years while also paying rent. My buisness was also impacted by the fire. We deserve the same courtesy as other fire victims received. We support 3.48.551

Sincerely,
Matthew and Amanda

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:57am 10-29-23

Maui County Council Members,
Budget, Finance & Economic Development Committee
Meeting – October 31, 2023 Support of Bill 95, section 3.48.551

We are the owners of a property located in the Lahaina burn zone. Our property was not destroyed but is located next to an enormous burn zone of toxic unstable rubble. We still have no water or sewer services and estimates say it could be many months until those are restored. Our home will require extensive cleaning/remediation to

remove the ash and toxins but this cannot be done until the toxic debris has been removed from the surrounding burn zone which may take up to a year to complete. Our home is uninhabitable and there is no timeline as to when it will be safe to live in.

In addition to property taxes, we are also still responsible for paying our monthly HOA fees. Property taxes are based on property values which have been decimated by the destruction of Lahaina Town. It is unfair that owners of still-standing but uninhabitable properties be required to pay their property taxes during a time when basic infrastructure (water, sewer) is not available, the property itself is uninhabitable, and surrounded by toxic debris which may not be removed for many months.

We ask that you support Bill 95 and specifically the new section 3.48.551 which provides a 2-year property tax exemption for all properties in Lahaina Tax Zone 4, sections 5 and 6.

Respectfully submitted,
Peter and Donna Gibson

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:10am 10-29-23

Property tax relief for those strs receiving income, enough to cover all of their expenses and more should not receive additional help. Your creating a tax nightmare down the road for all but mostly those who have had no str income now for 3mos or more into the future.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:03am 10-29-23

I am writing in support of Bill 95, we have a rental and personal use condo in Lahaina Roads that stands, but in uninhabitable due to toxicity embedded in the drywall and throughout the condos. We have lost most of our income from this fire and were planning on living in this unit, as we are beginning our retirement. The continued HOA and taxes are destroying our retirement funds and for this reason we ask that you please vote yes to support Bill 95

Sarah Hall
Lahaina Road Unit 202

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:28pm 10-28-23

Aloha Maui Council Members,

I am writing in support of Bill 95, specifically the new section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax Zone 4, sections 5 and 6.

The deadly Lahaina Fire that caused so much destruction on August 8, 2023, continues to cause devastation for all of Lahaina, including those whose homes were fortunate enough to be "spared" from burning down completely but still remain uninhabitable and will be so for some time.

I am an elderly property owner and cannot live in my condominium since the fire in August. In Lahaina Roads, all units are uninhabitable as we have no water or sewer and the property is covered and filled with toxic materials, smoke and ash. It has come to my attention that the insulation and drywall will need to be replaced because the porous walls and sidings have soaked in the toxins. My home will not be safely habitable until all toxins have been cleared and removed. In addition, once the water is restored, it will take several months before the water is safe to use.

We are only being allowed one clean up from the insurance companies and I cannot start my clean up process until all the hazards and toxins are removed because I cannot afford to pay twice. They are saying that the toxic mitigation cleaning will average \$35,000 per property.

My property value has decreased tremendously due to this unfortunate disaster. I am respectfully requesting tax relief for all of Lahaina Town which includes the unsafe, uninhabitable smoke and toxic filled homes.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,
Fred T. Roseberry III
Owner, Lahaina Roads #302

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:22pm 10-28-23

Aloha Honorable Council,

My family lost three homes in the Lahaina Fire and our other three homes are smokers. We have lost jobs, and our businesses have been destroyed. Our three smoker homes do not have water or sewer and are filled with toxic ash. We cannot live in them, yet we are paying mortgages, property taxes, maintenance fees, and insurance in addition to paying rent.

Thus, we pray you will help us and grant the property tax exemption for our smoker homes. Our lives, homes, and the values of our homes have been decimated by the destruction of Lahaina Town and our neighborhood.

Please vote to support Bill 95 and specifically the new section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6.

Thank you,

Mark & Vicki Marchello

Michael Learned

Location:

Submitted At: 8:09am 10-28-23

Council of the County of Maui

Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee

October 31, 2023

We support Bill 95, an attempt to lower Property Taxes for those buildings that survived the Lahaina wild fires of August 8, 2023.

Our property at 48 Puailima Place, #4, in Puamana, did survive the fires but damage was done to the property and the use of the property. We intend to clean up our unit and rent to the local population for the immediate future. We do not expect to get anywhere near the real value of our property in the local rental market for the next few years. For that reason we ask that you support the proposal to exempt our property from Real Property Taxes for the next couple of years. We know of many homeowners who will not be able to pay their Property Taxes or their HOA fees without the draw of a healthy rebuilt Lahaina Town. It may take four or five years or more for the restoration of Lahaina.

Please vote yes on Bill 95, especially section 3.48.551 that provides exemption from real property taxes for homeowners like us.

Michael and Karen Learned, property owners on Maui since 1986

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:20am 10-28-23

I support this bill!

I am an owner in Puamana and although my unit is still standing I have no water or sewer.

Our properties are covered and filled with toxic smoke and ash. Our homes won't be safely habitable until the Lahaina Town toxins have been cleared and removed.

All of Lahaina Town needs Tax Relief including our unsafe uninhabitable homes that are standing.

Property taxes are based on property values. Our property values have been decimated by the destruction of Lahaina Town and our neighborhoods.

Environmental assessments are discovering toxic cancer-causing pollutants that were released throughout

Lahaina Town in the fire.

Some have recently been told by experts that because Lahaina homes have been sitting in the heat for months with toxic ash inside and outside, the porous walls and siding could have soaked up toxins, requiring more than just mitigation cleaning. Many will need to replace the insulation and drywall, a potentially lengthy process.

Most insurance companies will only pay once for cleaning, painting, and or replacement of drywall, siding, and insulation, and this should be done once the toxic debris is removed from the neighboring environment.

Cleaning and replacement of siding and drywall can't start until all the hazardous debris and toxins in Lahaina Town are safely removed or we might have to pay twice. Toxic mitigation cleaning estimates are averaging \$35,000 per property.

The clean-up of Lahaina Town will take at least a year once it finally starts.

Once we have water it may be toxic for several months.

Sanford Pearl
Unit 226-4 Puali Drive
Lahaina

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:59pm 10-27-23

RE: Bill 95; "3.48.551. C

C. Real property classified as commercialized residential or TVR-STRH and used to temporarily house a person or family displaced by the August 2023 wildfires is exempt from real property taxation for each month a displaced person or family is housed in the property, whether the displaced person or family uses the property for a partial or complete month, from August 1, 2023 through July 1, 2025 . . ."

Writing in strong support of Bill 95. My name is Rann Watumull. My wife Gina and I are the trustees of the Albert G. Oaks 2012 Dynasty Trust which owns the home located at 5187 Lower Honoapiilani Rd in Napili. We have been housing up to 2 families with a total of 10 people, who lost everything in the Lahaina fire, since August 10, 2023 two days after the fire. We have been housing these families at no cost to them.

However, we are being charged over \$58,000 per year in property tax as a legal short term vacation rental house.

We strongly support this bill as it would provide much relief from the burdensome property tax expenses while we are helping victims of the fire.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Rann and Gina Watumull
(808) 255-4353

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:23am 10-27-23

My wife and I own a home in Lahaina that was not destroyed in the wildfire. We were able to see it first-hand late October. While our property did not burn, the damage is significant. The fire came within 40 yards of our home, leaving deck furnishings strewn about, a layer of ash covers everything both outside and inside.

We support Bill 95, particularly section 3.48.551 that provides exemption from real property taxes for homeowners like us.

Our home is located within fire (zone 16A). As I stated, our home did not burn but several neighbors' homes as close as 40 yards away were destroyed along the essential services. We cannot live in our home and have no timetable as to when we can. The nearest estimate to return to our home is 1-2 years. Remediation to restore our home could include replacing all furnishings and taking the home to the studs and starting over with

everything. These are expenses that extend well beyond what my insurance will cover.

While in the past we have enjoyed our home during some of the year, it was a vacation rental for the majority of the year and zoned as such. And therefore, our property taxes are assessed as such as well. We will not be able to use or rent our home for the foreseeable future due to its location and condition, leaving my property's value severely negatively impacted.

We urge you to pass this bill as soon as possible.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:38am 10-27-23

Aloha Mayor and Council,

I am an owner of a home in Lahaina that was not destroyed in the August wildfire. Notwithstanding that my home did not burn down, the personal financial impact of the event- in totality- is proving to be catastrophic.

I am writing in support of Bill 95, and in particular section 3.48.551 that provides a two year exemption from real property taxes for homeowners like myself.

My home is located squarely within the area impacted by the fires (zone 16A). Many of my neighbours' homes were destroyed, along with services in my community. My home is not habitable. I have no reliable information about when it will be habitable, but various sources advise it will be at least many months, if not over a year, until even basic water and sewer service is restored. My home is full of toxic ash. The full extent of the remediation required is unclear at this point, but the preliminary advice I've received is that I may be required to replace drywall, wall insulation, paint, carpet and other floor coverings, exterior cladding, and of course most or all of my home's furnishings. I am not even remotely fully insured for my loss.

Even after my home might be made liveable in the coming year or longer, it will in effect be an "island" surrounded by devastation and a long-term multi-year cleanup of a massive toxic area and eventual rebuilding.

My property taxes are substantial, in particular because my home is zoned for vacation rental. Vacation rental of my home will not be reasonably viable for years, given its condition and location. And as a result, the property value of my home has been devastated.

Bill 95 would offer at least some mitigation of my loss. I respectfully urge you to pass it as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

Sean George
Ariel Holdings
176-1 Pualei Dr.
Lahaina, HI
96761

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:21am 10-27-23

Re -Bill 95

I am a homeowner in Puamana, Lahaina and I have been affected adversely by the fire of August 8th. Since the fire, I have not been able to occupy my home and it is likely that it will not be habitable for the foreseeable future. Though power has been restored, there is no sewer or water service and until the ashes are removed, there is an

inhalation risk from the remaining fire debris.

It is for these reasons that I strongly support the new section 3.48.551 that provides a a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6..

M Bradford Henley
226 Pulalei Dr. #2
Lahaina, HI 96761

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 8:54am 10-27-23

Council:

My name is Gary Wetsel. My wife and I have owned 150-3 Pualie Drive, Lahaina for 10 plus years. I have previously sent a letter in support of Prop.95 to the Council. I strongly urge support for the proposition. I believe the owners of this property have suffered substantial financial loss as a result of the Lahaina fires and need the County help ease the pain of this disaster. Please see my previous letter to Council Member Tamara.

Respectfully Gary Wetsel

Irene Yamagata

Location:
Submitted At: 8:23am 10-27-23

Bill 95 and specifically 3.48.551. I hope you pass this bill and give the two year exemption for property taxes. Our unit at Lahaina Shores Hotel is still not habitable since we do not have water, etc. We continue to have to pay HOA dues even though our unit cannot be lived in.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 3:58am 10-27-23

My name is John Sims and my wife is Pam Sims. We are (or were) permanent Hawaii residents at 1403 Front St, Unit 307 until the August 8 fire. Since then, we are having to live elsewhere. While we are blessed that the cement structure is still standing with some minor damage, the building and our unit is still not usable as intended and assessed for property tax purpose. Our unit, along with the other 41 units do not have water, sewer, or electricity. The unit is filled with ash, soot, and toxic smoke. Even when we get utilities, I will not be able to clean my unit of the ash and smoke until all the neighboring homes that were burned are cleared and their dust and ash settle.

This was our retirement dream and we started it full time in October 2021. That has now been decimated just like the wonderful people around us lives have been decimated. It will be years before I will be able to return to live at Lahaina Roads. My property value has been decimated and is nowhere close to what it was assessed at for tax purpose. I ask your grace on this following statement. While my building and unit didn't burn to the ground, I'm equally unable to use it. It might as well have burned.

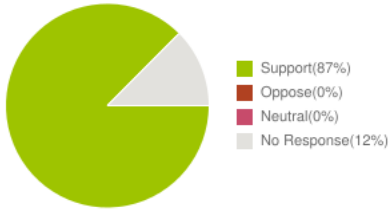
My wife and I are humbly and respectfully asking you, the Budget Committee, to pass Bill 95, especially the new section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption, not only for Lahaina Roads, but for everyone that is in the burn zone. All of Lahaina needs this relief.

Mahalo for all your work and efforts during these difficult times,

Aloha,

John and Pam Sims
1403 Front St, Unit 307

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:21pm 10-30-23

Due to uninhabitability, toxic waste problems, polluted water, plummeting value and no real definable end to this nightmare, I hope you can vote positively to provide us with this much needed relief. Thank you.

Jeffrey Sommers

272 Pualei Drive, Lahaina

Richard Bridges

Location:

Submitted At: 2:02pm 10-30-23

I wish to strongly encourage the committee to recommend passage of this bill. I am a homeowner in Puamana. Although my home did not burn down, it is unusable now and will be for some time. I have no water or sewer and the property is likely contaminated and will need extensive decontamination. The value of my property has plummeted and I cannot use it myself nor am I able to rent it out. Furthermore, I expect that I will have considerable other costs that may not be covered by insurance.

For these reasons, I urge you to recommend passage of this bill. We, as many others, will need financial relief in the coming years and clearly our property taxes will be paying for something that, at least at present, we cannot use. Thank You.

Richard and Jill Bridges

31-1 Puamelia Pl., Lahaina, HI

Peter Horovitz

Location:

Submitted At: 12:20pm 10-30-23

My name is Peter Horovitz. I am a Wailuku based attorney and live in Makawao. While I have many long-term clients and friends who were impacted by the fires, I offer my thoughts on my own behalf. I feel all three bills are very good, and each have something to add. I would suggest that they be combined as follows:

1. I would start with the bill 91 language. That encompasses all properties, regardless of zoning, and includes properties that may still be standing but can't be used.
2. I'm not sure how B(1) of bill 91 works - I know that County has a "Destroyed" designation, but they would need to create an "uninhabitable" designation.
3. I would then add subsection (b) from Bill 102. I like the sunset provision in the event someone sells to a speculator, etc.
4. I would add sections C and D from Section 2 of bill 95. That provides reasonable and appropriate tax incentive for properties that have opened themselves up to disaster victims - many of which are condos taxed at the STRH or Hotel rates. Again, appropriate and necessary.

5. I would also include a provision that those short-term/tvr/hotel properties that do house fire victims and obtain tax benefits will do so without jeopardizing their short-term/tvr/hotel permits or permissions. The County Code does contain various provisions relating to use that are "use it or lose it" We don't want someone with a permit or allowed use who would otherwise open their property to a fire victim to decide not to out of concern that they may lose an existing permit or use. I would suggest the following language: "Any property used to house persons or families displaced by the August 2023 wildfires on a temporarily or on a long-term basis shall be entitled to do so without the loss of, or jeopardy to any existing permit, permission, or allowed non-conforming status."

I thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and for your efforts on this important matter.

Peter Horovitz

Leann STRASEN-WEASLER

Location:

Submitted At: 10:26am 10-30-23

TO: Maui County Council

Subject: Support for Bill 95

From: Leann Strasen-Weasler Puamana Unit 272-3 Pualei Drive

I own Puamana Unit 272-3 Pualei Drive that is an intact unit after the fires. I support Bill 95 and specifically the new section 3.48.551 that provides a two-year exemption from Real Property taxes for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6. My property is rental property when I'm not there. I lived in the unit for 15 years until I moved to Las Vegas after my husband died. I am retired and the rental income from my unit supports me as my only other income is from Social Security. Given the damage of the August 7 fires to Lahaina town, the neighborhood and the 94 units, clubhouse and pools that Puamana has lost, I will not receive any vacation rental income from my unit radically affecting my standard of living.

Specific issues that affect my loss of rental income from my unit include:

- 1) We have no water or sewer, and our properties are covered and filled with toxic smoke and ash.
- 2) Our homes won't be safely habitable until the Lahaina Town toxins have been cleared and removed.
- 3) Our home's property values have been decimated.
- 4) All of Lahaina Town needs Tax Relief including our unsafe uninhabitable smoke-filled homes.
5. Property taxes are based on property values. Our property values have been decimated by the destruction of Lahaina Town and our neighborhoods.
4. Environmental assessments have discovered numerous toxic cancer-causing pollutants were released throughout Lahaina Town in the fire.
5. We have recently been told by experts in toxic cleanup that because our homes have been sitting in the Lahaina heat for months with toxic ash inside and out the porous walls and siding have soaked up the toxins requiring more than just mitigation cleaning. We will need to replace the insulation and drywall.
6. Our insurance companies will only pay once for cleaning, painting, and or replacement of drywall, siding, and insulation.
7. Cleaning and replacement of siding and drywall can't start until all the hazardous debris and toxins in Lahaina Town are safely removed or we might have to pay twice. Toxic mitigation cleaning is averaging \$35,000 per property.
8. The clean-up of Lahaina Town will take at least a year once it finally starts. 9. Once we have water it will take several months before the water is not toxic.

Thank you in advance for your attention to my request.

Leann Strasen-Weasler

808-280-7860

lweasler@gmail.com

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:59pm 10-29-23

Aloha

First, I'd like to say a heartfelt mahalo for introducing council bill 95. This whole process is a real challenge for every poor soul who has lost so much. At 73, visiting Maui for 55 years and living here for over 35, and retired this whole process is a bit overwhelming as well. If this bill passes there is hope and the light at the end of this very long tunnel is not a train.

Like many I was getting buried with the combination of mortgage payment, property tax payment and the whole insurance process. Like many I thought that I was fully covered by insurance, but the actual costs are mind boggling.

The time it will take to navigate and assist families in Lahaina will take years. Our homes won't be safely habitable until the Lahaina Town toxins have been cleared and removed.

After attending the community meetings and from what I read the actual potable water and sewer system challenge may easily take up to 18 months or more. I was starting to feel panicked. Your bill was like a huge weight was lifted. Thanks for your insight, level headedness and aloha!

Thomas Clements

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:38pm 10-27-23

Totalmente de acuerdo en apoyar con vivienda completa cocina y lavadora e invitar a la personas afectadas a buscarles una vivienda para que urea quedar el o los hoteles disponibles para los turistas

Karen Nierhake Nierhake

Location:

Submitted At: 5:48pm 10-27-23

I support property tax exemption for short term rentals that house fire victims.

Carl Hu

Location:

Submitted At: 5:25pm 10-27-23

I support Bill 95 because it will incentivize owners of STR condos with kitchen and laundry to rent to fire survivors. The lack of inventory of residential dwellings is the single largest crisis Maui County faces right now. Bill 95 is a step in the right direction to solving this critical problem.

Testimony for BFED committee regarding BFED-35
Submitted by Thomas Croly

I write in support of the policies in Bill 95 that would provide Real Property tax relief for all properties in Lahaina Tax zone 4, sections 5 and 6 for the current tax year and the next. This is only fair! If those property owners are not able to use their properties for habitation, then they should not be required to pay Real property tax. Hopefully, by June 2025, these areas will be cleaned of all hazardous debris and all County services, such as water and sewer and utilities of power and internet will have been restored, and all properties will be either be habitable or ready for reconstruction.

I would suggest adding to Bill 95, the provision in Bill 102 that would require repayment for this exemption should the property be sold prior to January 1, 2027. Maui should be providing tax relief to those intending to continue to own their Maui properties and not to benefit those who would take this opportunity to sell. I prefer the approach in Bill 95 to provide a blanket tax exemption for all properties in the burn zone, rather than assessing the habitability of each individual property, as would be required to administrate Bills 91 and 102.

For properties outside the burn zone, the provisions of 3.48.551 B might also be appropriate. But the administration should be allowed to set the provisions to qualify for the proposed exemption. Not every property may have insurance and the habitability of a given property may be difficult to assess.

Sections 3.48.551 C and D are an attempt to provide tax fairness and incentive for Bed and Breakfast, STR and Hotel classified properties to offer them as long term housing for displaced Lahaina residents. I fully support this intent, but it should also include non-Owner Occupied properties and should not include Hotel properties. The Hotel properties that the Red Cross has been using as temporary housing have been receiving market short term rent for temporarily housing displaced residents for the past 80 days and do not need any form of tax relief for this period.

Going forward, the goal is find long term (6 months or more) housing for these displaced residents and this is not in Hotel classified properties. But please recognize that there are STRs, and non-owner occupied properties who have already been providing housing to displaced residents, sometime without collecting any rent or subsidy.

Maui County receives 86% of its tax revenues from visitor accommodations. In West Maui more than 93% of Maui County tax revenues come from visitor accommodations. And it is properties classified as Short Term Rental (STR) and properties classified as non-owner occupied, used as second homes, that account for the majority of these tax revenues and NOT hotel classified properties.

West Maui has 6501 properties classified as STR (mostly condos) and 3101 properties classified as non-owner occupied. The vast majority of these properties are used by their owners for a portion of the year as second homes. If those second home owners are going to forgo personally using their second home for the next one or two years to house displaced residents, they will need to be incentivized.

This proposed waiver of property tax is perhaps the ONLY thing that Maui County can do to incentivized them to convert their properties to long term rental use. But understand that it will take much more than this to actually create these new housing opportunities for displaced residents. A comprehensive program will need to be developed that makes financial sense to all involved. And the provisions of that program will need to be publicized to these 9,602 property owners in order to find enough who would be willing to participate.

Most of these second home owner's properties are not set up for long term rental use. Conversion to furnished long term rental and later back to short term rental will be costly for them. And the current property tax charged to these property owners makes it impossible for them to pay expenses and rent for anywhere close to a rent that a displaced family could afford. Even with the waiver of property taxes, some subsidy will need to be found to make this program successful. Hopefully FEMA can make up the difference. These property owners will need assurance that the rent will be paid and their units will be cared for.

When these properties are in short term rental use, they are meticulously cleaned, damages are promptly fixed and sometimes charged to the renting visitor, after each rental period. After a long term rental of years or more, substantial reconditioning would be expected before the unit would be ready for future short term rental.

Recognize that any rental of less than 6 months is subject to a total of 17.95% taxes (including Maui's new GET). So you are really trying to find long term rentals of 6 months or more. Also, the Real property tax department is required to classify all properties and exemptions by the end of the calendar year for the following fiscal year. So, for a program such as this to work, within the current restrictions found in the County code, an alternate way to fund it would need to be created. I would suggest creating a new fund from which tax rebates could be paid out of, rather than simply exempting the taxes as proposed.

How much would this program cost? Figure the average property tax bill for a short term rental is \$15,400/year, multiply this by the number of units that might be made available, say 1000 units. That would cost about \$15.4 million per year in lost tax revenue.

Oct. 31, 2023, 9 a.m.

Maui County Council Chamber

Budget, Finance and Economic Development Committee

Comments on Bill 102 (2023)

Aloha Chair Sugimura and Vice-Chair Kama,

Thank you for considering [Bill 102 \(2023\)](#), which would exempt from Maui County's real property tax all real property damaged or destroyed by the August 2023 wildfires and deemed uninhabitable or unsafe.

Mayor Richard Bissen's waiver of fiscal 2024 property taxes applied only to improved structures "completely destroyed" in Lahaina, Upcountry and Kihei. This waiver did not help the many owners whose properties were damaged in the fires, but they are equally deserving of tax relief, since their buildings may not be inhabitable or in a condition that is safe to use for business purposes.

Bill 102's exemption would run from Jan. 1, 2024, through Jan. 1, 2027, and would apply to delinquent taxes and penalties as well as actual property tax bills.

The property tax waiver would terminate if the property were to be sold between the bill's enactment and its expiration.

Many of the homeowners and businesses that would be affected by this bill will not have significant earnings for the foreseeable future, so they will be unable to afford their property tax payments. People in this tragic situation should not face the possibility of losing their properties to foreclosure because they could not pay their taxes.

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii believes this measure would be a good way to provide relief to property owners affected by the wildfires. It should be the preferred vehicle for fire-related tax relief because it provides business owners tax relief and runs for a longer period than Bill 91.

However, the Institute does recommend that a provision be added that would allow owners of damaged properties to claim retroactive tax relief for the first half of fiscal year 2024, i.e., the taxes that were due Aug. 20, 2023.

The County would stand to lose several million in revenues, but this would not handicap its ability to perform core functions. The mayor's previous waiver cost the County just \$19 million — less than 2% of its \$1.07 billion fiscal 2024 budget.¹

Further, whatever revenue loss this bill might cause might be offset by federal and state disaster assistance to the County.

However, regardless of the revenue implications, the County should help people keep their properties as they wait for cleanup and insurance payments to allow rebuilding.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Jonathan Helton
Policy Researcher
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

¹ Christine Wilson, "[Maui mayor details budget cuts to offset revenue shortfall](#)," Honolulu Star-Advertiser, Oct. 7, 2023; and Melissa Tanji, "[Council gives final approval to \\$1.07 billion budget](#)," The Maui News, June 7, 2023.

Oct. 31, 2023, 9 a.m.

Maui County Council Chamber

Budget, Finance and Economic Development Committee

Comments on Bill 95 (2023)

Aloha Chair Sugimura and Vice-Chair Kama,

Thank you for considering [Bill 95 \(2023\)](#), which would exempt from the Maui County property tax all residential real property in Lahaina and other residential real property that was damaged or destroyed by the fires in Kihei and Upcountry.

It would also provide tax relief to hotel and short-term rental owners who use their properties to provide shelter to residents displaced by the fires. These exemptions and relief programs would cover fiscal years 2024 and 2025.

Mayor Richard Bissen's waiver of fiscal 2024 property taxes applied only to improved structures "completely destroyed" in Lahaina, Upcountry and Kihei. This waiver did not help the many owners whose properties were damaged in the fires, but they are equally deserving of tax relief, since their buildings may not be inhabitable or in a condition that is safe to use for business purposes.

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii believes providing property tax relief to residents affected by the wildfires is a good way to help residents recover. However, rather than approve Bill 95, Bill 102 would be the better option because Bill 95 does not provide tax relief to business owners.

Many of Lahaina's business owners lost all their sources of income to the wildfires, and like the home and rental owners in the area, they too are at risk of losing their lands to foreclosure for nonpayment of taxes. Please consider bringing these Lahaina-area business owners under the County's tax-relief umbrella.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Jonathan Helton

Policy Researcher

Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Oct. 31, 2023, 9 a.m.

Maui County Council Chamber

Budget, Finance and Economic Development Committee

Comments on Bill 91 (2023)

Aloha Chair Sugimura and Vice-Chair Kama,

Thank you for considering [Bill 91 \(2023\)](#), which would exempt from Maui County's real property tax all real property damaged or destroyed by the August 2023 wildfires and deemed uninhabitable.

This exemption would apply to fiscal year 2025 and allow property owners to extend the exemption an additional year if their properties were still considered to be uninhabitable.

Mayor Richard Bissen's waiver of fiscal 2024 property taxes applied only to improved structures "completely destroyed" in Lahaina, Upcountry and Kihei. This waiver did not help the many owners whose properties were damaged in the fires, but they are equally deserving of tax relief, since their buildings may not be inhabitable or in a condition that is safe to use for business purposes.

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii believes providing property tax relief to residents affected by the wildfires is a good way to help residents recover. However, rather than adopt Bill 91, Bill 102 should be the preferred option because Bill 91 applies to only fiscal 2025 — and possibly to 2026 — while Bill 102 applies to the second half of fiscal 2024 through the first half of fiscal 2027.

Rebuilding Lahaina will likely take several years, so this property tax waiver should offer existing residents and businesses the maximum degree of tax relief possible to protect them from foreclosure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Jonathan Helton

Policy Researcher

Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Council of the County of Maui
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee
October 31, 2023

We support Bill 95, an attempt to lower Property Taxes for those buildings that survived the Lahaina Wild Fires of August 8, 2023.

Our property at 48 Puailima Place, #4, in Puamana, did survive the fires but damage was done to the property and the use of the property. We intend to clean up our unit and rent to the local population for the immediate future. We do not expect to get anywhere near the real value of our property in the local rental market for the next few years. For that reason we ask that you support the proposal to exempt our property from Real Property Taxes for the next couple of years. We know of many homeowners who will not be able to pay their Property Taxes or their HOA fees without the draw of a healthy rebuilt Lahaina Town. It may take four or five years for the restoration of Lahaina.

Please vote yes on Bill 95, especially section 3.48.551 that provides exemption from real property taxes from homeowners like us.

Michael and Karen Learned, property owners on Maui since 1986