

BF Committee

From: Mark Deakos <deakos@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Monday, August 01, 2016 11:09 PM
To: BF Committee
Cc: Elle Cochran; Riki Hokama
Subject: Testimony on
Attachments: Maui_County_Budget_Committee_Testimony_Haz_Waste_Recy_1AUG2016.pdf; ATT00001.htm

Dear Budget and Finance Committee,

I want to take this opportunity to express my concerns for the direction of the Department of Environmental Management.

When people think of Hawaii, they imagine clean blue oceans, lush green mountains, cascading waterfalls and thriving coral reefs. This is not surprising considering this is what we market Hawaii as to draw in our 8 million visitors each year. Humans have an innate connection to the natural world, we love our ocean and mountain views, we love the sound of water. In our high-end resorts we create lush, tropical landscapes and at our new airport we are putting a \$3M waterfall. And when those tourist dollars start flowing, we have no trouble picking that fruit. So how much of that revenue actually goes back to watering the tree that gives you fruit? How much actually goes towards protecting, preserving, and restoring our natural resources. When all we do is take fruit from the tree and nobody takes the time to water or feed the tree, the tree eventually dies. Our fish populations are dying. Our reefs are dying. Our native species are dying. Our streams are dry. Our natural waterfalls are dry. Our islands are dying.

You know how incredulous visitors are when I tell them we have no curbside recycling here in Maui, no waste diversion program and we actually bury our trash, perfectly good raw materials that could be converted into products. And it is my understanding that this committee will be proposing to eliminate a program that keeps hazardous waste materials such as toxic batteries and paints out of our landfills?

Malama Maui Nui stated they recycled more than 20 tons of batteries and more than 13,000 gallons of reusable paint. Picture a truck carrying almost 300 of those fifty-gallon drums full of paint, which the World Health Organization has linked to cancer, and they pour it all into the ground. Is this part of our "it's the next generation's problem" sustainability program? Is this the kind of stewardship we plan to show the world in September, when Hawaii takes front stage hosting the IUCN World Conservation Conference?

Please reconsider keeping the hazardous wastes out of our landfills, hire a dedicated sustainability coordinator and follow the lead of other island nations that have a successful, cost-effective, zero waste strategy. We just need to water the tree once in a while so all generations can enjoy the fruits.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mark Deakos, *PhD*
Lahaina

August 1, 2016

Maui County Budget and Finance Committee

**Subject: Submitted Testimony to the Maui County Budget and Finance Committee
pertaining to County Communication 16-146**

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deakos', written in a cursive style.

Mark Deakos, *PhD*
Lahaina