

Date: November 1, 2016

The Honorable Don Guzman, Chair
Economic Development, Energy, Agriculture, and Recreation Committee
2200 South High Street
Wailuku, HI 96793

RE: Support for Special Improvement Districts for Maui County EAR 36

Aloha Chair Guzman and Committee Members:

My name is Noelani Sugata, and I am the Executive Director for the Paia Town Association. We are in strong support for Bill EAR 36 relating to Special Improvement Districts, commonly known as SID's.

As an organization, the PTA is dedicated to creating a clean and safe environment that meets the needs of its residents and is welcoming to its visitors. We believe a SID is what Paia needs to in order to provide services such as physical improvements, small business support, community building, and advocacy for proper planning.

I have worked with our board for a little over a year, and we have completed many of our short-term goals despite being on a very limited budget. Currently, we are funded by membership dues and rely on a grant from the Maui County Office of Economic Development. For example, we have made physical improvements in our town. We implemented a rubbish removal program, installed a new Paia place marker, and painted a beautiful mural in the Lower Paia parking lot. Long-term beautification projects could be to continue improving the Lower Paia lot by creating curb appeal and providing an area for people to gather and sit.

Also, the PTA provided small business support to our merchants. We used very simple, but effective marketing strategies to encourage our residents and visitors to "shop local" stores. Paia merchants have been in local and national publications, and we have an active online presence. Advertising is changing, and we have been able to keep up with the newest digital marketing trends.

More importantly, we want our merchants and visitors to feel safe. A long-term goal of ours is to fund a hospitality and safety program. We would also like a greater police presence in the community and have met with our community police officers this past year.

Finally, SID funds in the long term could be used to establish parking management for Paia. We have discussed different options, however without long term funding it is hard to take the next steps improve Paia's parking situation.

Before I conclude, and I want to thank the council for hearing my testimony time and time again. I once saw a movie trailer that said, "Can you do big things from such a small place?" After working for the PTA and getting know the community during my tenure I'd like to think so. I humbly ask the committee to support Bill EAR 36.

Mahalo,

Noelani Sugata,
Executive Director

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