Aloha and Good Afternoon Chair Guzman and Councilmembers,

My name is Martin Brass. I am currently President of the Paia Town Association as well as a Paia business and property owner. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony once again regarding the proposed bill EAR-36 on Special Improvement District.

I have provided testimony on several occasions already regarding this topic and would like to take this time to reiterate a few important points.

The bill before you is an enabling legislation. Contrary to certain misinformed comments to date, no single community or property owner is being assessed under this bill, particularly any member of the Paia community.

What is being accomplished here is legislating a framework to allow our small towns and communities a means to raise funding on a sustainable basis to address specific needs and services. Two other counties in Hawaii have such a framework in place with broadly accepted success.

I believe it is to Maui's benefit to have innovative funding options available to its local communities. Participating communities will need to take ownership for the services that they want funded while remaining accountable to their local constituents. In a public context, I don't believe you can align the sourcing of funds any more closely to the use of those funds as is the case here. SID communities have a vested interest in how monies are being spent.

Lastly, the process to deal with implementing a community specific SIDs is a separate follow-on process where supporters and dissenters alike will have the opportunity to express informed opinions on the merits of such a district. I believe the fear that a SID can be pushed onto someone unknowingly is a groundless one.

By approving this bill, local communities will have the ability to determine for themselves whether a SID is appropriate or not to their needs.

I think that is a good thing for Maui.

I respectfully request you support the passing of this bill.

Mahalo and thank you for your consideration,

Martin Brass