

GET Committee

From: De Austin <dezireenaustin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2020 9:35 AM
To: GET Committee
Subject: Proposed changes to the County Charter - put them ALL to a vote this Fall
Attachments: Agenda.pdf

Dear Chair Molina, Co-Chair Rawlins Fernandez and Committee members,

I have reviewed all of the proposed changes to the County Charter and they each make sense at varying levels. I believe all of them should be put on the countywide ballot this Fall.

Here are my own reasons for asking for a vote.

Item (GET-10(4)): After reviewing the extensive responsibilities of the Department of Housing and Human concerns, I believe that it would definitely operate more efficiently as two entities instead of one.

Item (GET-10(2)): On this change, I am pretty much neutral but I think that the ability to call for special meetings as described will not diminish the ability for the council to meet as frequently as needed. This change seems to be just a point of clarification.

Item (GET-10(13)): This is an **essential change** to minimize if not eliminate cronyism at the county level as well as to prevent stagnation in leadership. Kudos.

Item (GET-10(8)): On this change, I am neutral only because I do not have the background information necessary to understand why this is a proposed change.

The change is lengthy and detailed. It appears that the change would effectively require county counsel to submit a request for a judicial review of an ambiguous interpretation of the charter which has caused a conflict within county government. The timeline of 30 days may be an attempt to quickly rectify any conflicts in an expedient manner.

Item (GET-10(10)): I am supportive of this change because our taxes pay for counsel already. Our county council members should be allowed to receive legal aid from counsel which is already in place, rather than be expected to hire at his or her own expense, when such aid would assist them in the function of their capacity as a council member. Otherwise, why do we have a county counsel at all?

Item (GET-10(14)): I am more positive than neutral on this. Upon reading, it appears that the proposed change would move appointment powers into the hands of counsel, director of council services and council members. I do not know the history of it but it reads like the appointment powers, which can be abused in a nepotistic way, would be managed more democratically than if one person had the power to appoint people to paid positions within the county government.

Item (GET-10(15)): I am absolutely supportive of this change. In order for Maui to move forward toward sustainability and self-reliance we need to have a designated, county-supported department focused on this topic.

Item (GET-10(16)): As per (GET-10(13)) and (GET-10(14)), this change would effectively minimize potential nepotism and be more inclusive of various viewpoints when it comes to Maui planning. There is the possibility, in its current state, that the nine members appointed by the Mayor may share similar viewpoints and/or residencies, which may disallow healthy discussion on topics of planning, and forego including ideas from various parts of Maui. A variety of viewpoints is essential for healthy leadership, especially when it comes to the limited natural resources on Maui.

Item (GET-10(9)): I am neutral on this topic of simple majority vote for termination or hiring of special counsel, though it does appear to be an effort for the council to work more expediently.

Item (GET-10(1)): **This makes absolute sense.** I am very positive on this. It makes no sense for a person who was denied a position by council to be permitted to continue to serve in a 'temporary' position as appointed by the mayor. It is especially disconcerting when these temporary positions are paid.

Item (GET-10(7)): On this, I am slightly more positive than neutral. Longer term positions would allow council members the time they need to complete projects, goals. Short terms like we currently have means that we have one year or so of focused work, and then potentially several months of time burdened with campaigning details.

Item (GET-10(11)): **Yes.** For reasons stated above with (GET-10(13)), (GET-10(14)) and (GET-10(16)), this would promote a democratic rather than autocratic government at the county level.

Respectfully,

Dezireen Austin

GET Committee

From: John and Christel Blumer-Buell <blubu@hawaii.rr.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2020 9:36 AM
To: GET Committee
Cc: Maui_County_Council_mailbox
Subject: Consideration of all Charter Amendment.

June 21, 2020

Subject: Council GET Committee, Charter Amendments Meeting.

Aloha Chair Molina and Committee Members,

Please carefully consider the legal form and substance of all the proposed amendments. Please, no more after the election controversial "interpretations". What a waste.....

PLEASE LET THE VOTERS DECIDE.

I have heard some council members previously underestimate the voters with statements like, "There are too many proposals...." and "The voters will be confused....". **Nonsense!!!**

Please don't underestimate the voters. We take the time to read and understand all the proposals. These are important to our future. And, don't forget, we elected you!!!

The term limit version I prefer is for 10 years total. Because, the voters have previously supported two year terms, rather than 4 year terms. I would not support term limits of 12 years. If you decide to let the voters decide between two scenarios, that is fine with me.

I have submitted separate testimony regarding the proposed creation of a Department of Agriculture. Please read and carefully consider.....If not properly framed and implemented, this has the potential to be another controversial waste of time and resources. That would be a tragedy, at a time we desperately need to make tangible progress toward Peace In Hawai'i and globally.

Mahalo,

John Blumer-Buell, Hana