

EACP Committee

From: Anne Rillero <annerillero@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 07, 2020 2:38 PM
To: EACP Committee
Subject: Testimony from Anne Rillero re: County Communication INTEGRATED PEST AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ON COUNTY PROPERTY (EACP-1)
Attachments: AnneRilleroTestimony.pdf

Please see attached testimony for your 9/8/20 meeting. Thank you!

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104 Malapua Place
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September 7, 2020

Councilmember Shane M Sinenci, Committee Chair
Maui County Council's Environmental, Agricultural and Cultural Preservation Committee

Dear Chair Sinenci and Committee Members,

My name is Anne Rillero and I live in Kula with my husband Arnie Koss. I'm testifying for both of us in support of the proposed bill that you are considering to establish Chapter 2.50, Maui County Code, relating to pesticide and fertilizer use on County property.

Back in the 1980s, Arnie and his twin brother co-founded the nation's first organic baby food company, Earth's Best Baby Foods. It was the first nationally distributed packaged organic food product. The bigger conventional baby food companies – Beech Nut, Gerber and Heinz – didn't make it easy. I can testify that the two brothers went to hell and back to start their company, but they did so because they were motivated to make a difference for our planet and babies. They had reviewed the research that showed that many of the toxic chemicals used for conventional farming were carcinogenic and mutagenic and dangerous to human health and safety, and were contaminating the environment and public drinking water supplies.

Today, organic is the fastest growing sector of the food industry. But the change to landscaping practices is lagging behind. The National Coalition for Pesticide Free Lawns reports that of 30 commonly used lawn pesticides, 19 are linked with cancer or carcinogenicity, 13 are linked with birth defects, 21 with reproductive effects. Of those same 30 lawn pesticides, 19 are detected in groundwater, 20 have the ability to leach into drinking water sources and 30 are toxic to fish and other aquatic organisms.

Research shows that some commonly used landscape chemicals are harmful to corals, and interfere with their ability to reproduce. Think about this. If corals can't reproduce, the result will be no more coral reefs. Synthetic fertilizers compound the problem; they quickly release nitrogen which gets carried by groundwater into the ocean, where the nitrogen causes algae blooms that smother corals.

As an avid ocean swimmer and someone who has worked in the marine conservation sector for more than 23 years, I can attest that our coral reefs desperately need our help – there is so much bleaching and dead coral out there. Banning these toxic chemicals will make a difference... Launiupoko, Kahekili, Kamaole I, II and III, Ulua, Polo, Wainapanapa, Hookipa and so many of Maui's parks are right on the ocean! As Maui residents, we have a collective responsibility to protect our coral reefs and our reef fish and other wildlife, as well as the health and safety of our County workers, our keiki, and all the people who love and enjoy our County parks. Arnie and I urge you to move this bill forward and to take pride in doing so.

Sincerely,
Anne Rillero