

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Council of the County of Maui

MINUTES

June 1, 2022

Online Only via BlueJeans

CONVENE: 1:33 p.m.

PRESENT: Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez, Chair
Councilmember Tamara Paltin, Vice-Chair
Councilmember Gabe Johnson, Member
Councilmember Tasha Kama, Member (out 3:56 p.m.)
Councilmember Alice L. Lee, Member
Councilmember Michael J. Molina, Member
Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci, Member
Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Member

EXCUSED: Councilmember Kelly Takaya King, Member

STAFF: Lesley Milner, Legislative Analyst
Jerry Paredes, Legislative Analyst (back up)
Richard Mitchell, Legislative Attorney
Yvette Bouthillier, Committee Secretary
Jean Pokipala, Council Services Assistant Clerk

Dawn Lono, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Shane Sinenci
Kate Griffiths, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Gabe Johnson
Axel Beers, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Kelly Takaya King
Mahina Poepoe, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Keani Rawlins-Fernandez
Kainoa Kaumehelwa-Rego, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Keani Rawlins-Fernandez
Davideane Kama-Sickels, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Tasha Kama
Evan Dust, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Tasha Kama

Zhantell Lindo, Council Aide, Moloka`i Council Office
Denise Fernandez, Council Aide, Lāna`i Council Office
Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros, Council Aide, Hāna Council Office
Daniel Kanahele, Council Aide, South Maui District Office
Anabelle Hernandez, Council Aide, Pā'ia District Office

ADMIN.: JoAnn Inamasu, Director, Office of Economic Development (BFED-32(9))
May-Anne Alibin, Deputy Director, Department of Finance (BFED-32(8))
Lance Taguchi, County Auditor (BFED-32(8))

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Christie Trenholme, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the
Corporation Counsel

OTHERS: Ruth Kanani Edmund Costales (BFED-32(9))
Todd Yamashita (BFED-32(9))
Walter Ritte (BFED-32(9))
Napua Hueu (BFED-32(9))
Lori Buchanan (BFED-32(9))
Christopher O'Brien (BFED-32(9))
Kai Nishiki (BFED-32(9))
Junya Nakoa (BFED-32(9))
Carol Lee Kamekona (BFED-32(9))
Mahina Poepoe (BFED-32(9))
Zhantell Lindo (BFED-32(9))

Resources

Meagan DeGaia, Destination Manager, Maui Visitors and Convention
Bureau (BFED-32(9))
Sherry Duong, Executive Director, Maui Visitors and Convention Bureau
(BFED-32(9))
T. Ilihia Gionson, Hawaii Tourism Authority (BFED-32(9))

PRESS: Akaku: Maui Community Television, Inc.
Kehau Cerizo, Maui Now

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Aloha `auinalā kākou. `Eholu minuke i ka hala o kahola `ekahi ma `ekahi o Inue i ka makahiki `elua kaukani iwakāluakūmālua. E `olu`olu mai, e ho`omalū ke Komike Mo`ohelu Kālā a me ho`omohala Waiwai. `O wai kaluna ho`omalū o kēia Komike o Keani Rawlins-Fernandez. Aia au ma`ane`i i ka Moloka`i District Office ke noho ho`okahi nei no au ma kēia au au. It's 1:33 p.m. on June 1st, 2022. Will the Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee please come to order. I'm your Chair, Keani Rawlins-Fernandez. I am at the Moloka`i District Office, alone on my side of the office, and we have our community outreach specialist Zhantell Lindo, Legislative Analyst Mahina Poepoe, and community member Lanakila Dela Cruz on the other side of the office. I keia lā...oh, and we have no testifiers. . . .*(Inaudible)*. . . me ko kākou eia hope luna ho`omalū o Tamara Paltin. Aloha.

VICE-CHAIR PALTIN: Chao buoi trua, and aloha `auinalā kākou. I'm broadcasting live and direct from my house in Nāpili, and we got the whole family home right now. My husband George Vierra, my two small interns, Kalehua and Nahiku Paltin-Vierra, and our pocket pit. So if you hear people arguing in the background, that's them. And we have no testifiers at the Lāhainā District Office.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo. Okay. Councilmember Shane Sinenci. Aloha.

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COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: And chao buoi trua, Chair. [*spoke in Hawaiian*] kākou mai Maui Hikina. Today, we're broadcasting from the Hāna Cultural Center with East Maui Staff Mavis Medeiros and EA Dawn Lono. Currently, there are no testifiers at the Hāna District Office. Aloha.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo. And Committee Member Mike Molina. Aloha.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Aloha, Madam Chair, and my colleagues, and everyone else viewing in today. First day of June, my goodness, how fast time flies. For the record, I'm transmitting under the virtual bridge at my residence here in Makawao, and I am home alone. And to my knowledge there are no testifiers at the Pā'ia District Office. Mahalo.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo. Committee Member Alice Lee. Aloha. Sorry, you're muted.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Chao buoi trua, everyone.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Go ahead.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Chao buoi trua again. Home alone in my workspace, and I too have a pocket pit.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo. And Committee Member Kelly King is excused or might be late, but might also be excused. Okay. And Committee Member Gabe Johnson. Aloha.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Good afternoon, Chair, Councilmembers, community members. Chao buoi trua to all of you. There are no testifiers at the Lāna'i District Office, and I'm alone in my workspace with another pocket Pitbull, Hokuchan (*phonetic*). Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Any...wait, did you say if there's any testifiers?

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: There are no testifiers in the Lāna'i District Office, once again.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo. Sorry about that. Okay. And Committee Member Yuki Lei Sugimura. Aloha. Do you have a pocket pit there too?

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: No, but I do have this glass here handmade from a bottle...a wine bottle, but it's not too cuddly. I'm here in the Council Chambers with Ms. Bouthillier and Mr. Paredes. I hope I said that correct. It feels like Budget Committee meetings where I would sit in the Chamber and...and spend the day with him, so...spend the day with them. Looking forward to this meeting. Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo. And Committee Member Tasha Kama. Aloha.

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COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Aloha, Chair, and chao buoi trua to all my fellow colleagues. I am in my home in my workstation, and I am alone. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo. Okay. From Corporation Counsel we have Christie Trenholme, Deputy Corporation Counsel. Aloha. And our Committee Staff, Yvette Bouthillier, Committee Secretary. Aloha.

MS. BOUTHILLIER: Aloha. Good afternoon, Committee Chair and Committee Members.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Budget Committee Analyst Lesley Milner. Aloha.

MS. MILNER: Aloha, Chair. Aloha, Members.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Legislative Analyst Jerry Paredes. Aloha.

MR. PAREDES: Aloha and chao buoi trua, Committee Chair and Committee Members.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Legislative Attorney Richard E. Mitchell. Aloha.

MR. MITCHELL: Aloha, Chair and Members.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: And Council Services Assistant Clerk Jean Pokipala. Aloha. Please see the last page of the agenda for information on meeting connectivity. We have two items on today's agenda, BFED-32(8) Intergovernmental Agreement Between the Mayor of the County of Maui and the Office of the Auditor, State of Hawai'i, Relating to an Audit of the Employees' Retirement System of the State of Hawai'i; and BFED-32(9), Fiscal Year 2022 Tourism Management Grant Fund. Okay. Members, if there are no objections, I would like to take up BFED-32(9) first today. It was my fault, an oversight when I posted the agenda. Are there any objections?

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Also, I would like to begin our meeting by hearing from the Maui Visitors Bureau before we move on to public testimony. Are there any objections to receiving a presentation before receiving testimony?

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Mahalo, Members. Okay.

ITEM 32(9): FISCAL YEAR 2022 TOURISM MANAGEMENT GRANT FUND

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: BFED-32(9), Fiscal Year 2022 Tourism Management Grant. The Fiscal Year '22...Fiscal Year '22 Budget included 500,000 in funding for the Tourism Management Grant Fund under the Office of the Mayor, Economic Development Program, grants and disbursements for visitor industry. Today we are joined by the

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Director of Economic Development, who we'll hear from later, and the destinations...Destination Manager from the Maui Visitors Bureau, provide an update on the...on the use of these funds. Okay. Let's see. At this time, if there are no objections, I would like to designate Ms. Meagan DeGaia, who is the Destination Manager of MVB, and Sherry Duong, who's the Executive Director of MVB, and Ilihia Gionson. Did I...did I butcher it?

MR. GIONSON: Hauoli mai kai.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay.

MR. GIONSON: Mahalo.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: No objections, Chair.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Public Affairs Officer for HTA...in accordance with Rule 18(A) of the Rules of the Council. Mahalo, Member Kama. Any other...any objections?

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. All right. Aloha, Ms. DeGaia. Mahalo for joining us today.

MS. DEGAIA: Aloha, Chair and Members of the Council. Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak with you today. Is now a good time for me to share my screen? Okay.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yes. Please proceed.

MS. DEGAIA: Can you see this?

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yes.

MS. DEGAIA: Great.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Perfect.

MS. DEGAIA: All right. Thank you again for this opportunity to speak with you today about the Maui Nui Regenerative Tourism Management initiative and the work that we've been doing thus far. Please allow me to take just a moment to briefly introduce myself. My name is Meagan DeGaia, and I serve as the Destination Manager with the Maui Visitors and Convention Bureau. Just a little bit about me and my background. My background is in conservation, environmental education, and youth service. And I've dedicated the majority of my career to nonprofit work with a focus on voluntourism, how tourism can radiate wealth back into our community. And also I, for a period of time, published some community magazines here on the Island of Maui as well. So I'm thankful for this opportunity to bring my experience to the Maui Visitors Bureau and to fulfill the

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performance measures outlined in the grant that you've given us. An overview of our presentation today. First, we'll be talking about regenerative tourism activities here in Maui Nui that are available. We'll be touching on the hotspots that have been identified throughout Maui Nui that the grant calls us to articulate. We'll also be going into the partnerships that we've been working on and fostering to support visitor education programs here on the island. And we'll go into our messaging efforts to appeal to a mindful visitor and educate that mindful visitor. As you know, the focus of this grant is regenerative tourism. So our work here is to rebuild, redefine, and reset the direction of tourism, and of course, that's with a focus on regenerative tourism, so bringing things back into balance where kamaaina, the 'āina, and malihini can all benefit. And of course we're also working to strengthen the economic contribution of Maui County visitor industry itself. Really, the heart of regenerative tourism is mālama. So this value that we have to take care of and bring this light to this beautiful place that we're...have the responsibility to take care of here. So the Mālama Hawai'i program is very much at the heart of what we'll be talking about in this presentation. This program itself serves as a bridge between the visitor industry and our local nonprofit communities, where it gives visitors the opportunity to really be stewards of the land, and be transformed into volunteers in a sense, and to learn about this place. And this is a wonderful program because it really radiates wealth back into the community when a visitor arrives here. So first we're going to be touching on regenerative tourism activities here on the Island of Maui, and also how this relates to the Mālama Hawai'i program. So we have 17 Mālama Hawai'i nonprofit partners here in Maui. And so here is the list of these different opportunities, places that visitors can volunteer and learn more about Hawaiian culture, ecological restoration, cultural restoration, and really just get to know the residents here and what life is like here. But ultimately, it's the opportunity to give back. So this grant calls us to identify a number of regenerative tourism activities that are available to visitors, and here is what we have established so far as opportunities for visitors to partake in. We're also working with GoFarm Hawai'i, and they've identified a few other farms here on the island and have been working to grow the capacity of these agrotourism opportunities. So Pueokea Farms, Hashimoto Persimmon Farm and Malolo Protea Farm is another...are additional regenerative tourism activities here on the island. So now that we have this list, we continue to grow and strengthen the Mālama Hawai'i program and a list of agrotourism opportunities here on the island. We'll be creating a comprehensive list and map of regenerative tourism activities which we can provide to the visitor industry, including tour operators so there's clarity on places that visitors are welcome and invited to come and tour or volunteer and be of service. Additional regenerative tourism activity on island is we're working to retrofit beachgoing as a regenerative tourism activity to support the marine ecosystem. So in support of the unanimous ruling by the County Council to outlaw all chemical sunscreens, which goes into effect October 1st of this year, we're working closely with the County right now on a permitting process to install a minimum of 20 mineral-only sunscreen dispensers on popular beaches here on the island. And so this will be a free amenity to visitors and residents alike, and we're really following in the footsteps of other organizations on the island that are doing the same thing, such as the Maui Nui Marine Resource Council, Maui Ocean Center, and DLNR. We love what they've been doing. We were first inspired by what we saw happening on the Island of Hawai'i at Hapuna Beach in the same vein. This is something that we're dedicated to realizing because it educates visitors about

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proper sunscreen usage, supports marine life ecology and human health. You're probably well aware that once toxic chemicals are flushed out of the ocean environment, the coral reef can actually recolonize, and fish and marine life is actually able to reproduce again, which is vital to our shorelines and the intrinsic value of the marine ecosystem. We'll also be offering incentives to hotels. So in addition to installing at beaches throughout the islands, we'll also be offering a dispenser, the educational headboard, and the first bag of mineral-only sunscreen for free to hotels and condo complexes. One positive thing for local business here on the island is that when these free dispensers are provided to the public, it drives sales at local retailers. And so this is a good example of how tourism can be a driver of positive social change because this is maikai for the 'āina, kamaaina, and malihini that can all benefit from this free amenity. And just want to also say mahalo to the legislation that brings everybody onboard in guarding our natural resources in this sense and causing this shift. Due to the...the quantity of mineral-only sunscreen dispensers that we'll be seeking to install, seeking permitting for currently here on the island, we needed folks to monitor these dispensers. So of course, this requires quite a bit of attention, either daily or weekly monitoring. And so we are so thankful for this opportunity to partner with nine community organizations to bring forth the volunteers and coordinate a volunteer schedule where we can ensure that these dispensers will be maintained on a daily or weekly basis. And so we're very thankful for all of these partnerships, including private partners such as the Whalers Village, which really stepped up in wanting to offer four dispensers to the...the public there. We're also working with Pūlama Lāna'i and have received permission from the Hulopo'e Beach Council on the Island of Lāna'i to install a dispenser there as well. So this has been a fantastic opportunity to grow our relationships in the community. Now, we'll be touching on the hotspots, particularly in Maui. and then progressing to the other islands. So a hotspot is an area or a site that attracts visitors. It's a popular place that can sometimes then result in overcrowding, congestion, and then, as you can imagine, degradation to the natural resources there as well for both visitors...residents and visitors might have a more negative experience at such a place. We've worked with our Maui steering committee to identify a number of different hotspots here on the island, and most of them, as you can imagine, are located in East Maui. Hotspots are really our focus now that we've entered phase two of our work. And so we've been speaking for the past few months with individual community members in Keanae, Wailua, Hāna, and Kipahulu to gather more information about hotspots and suggested management. So working with the community to really learn what the concerns are, what the issues are, what the needs are, and then what the community wants to see. Really at the heart of our work is that these efforts be community driven and directed by the community. We're also working with the Office of the Mayor on this issue. And in the same vein, we're working to eradicate illegal tour companies, so those that are operating without the required PUC license, without GET license, without other licenses that are required by Parks and DLNR. We're also working with Fare Harbor, which is the number one online booking system here in the State of Hawai'i, to incorporate onboarding processes that requires verification of required permits and licenses. We'll also be working with them as well to bring their current clients onboard with compliance with laws. We'll be working with other visitor-facing websites. And we'll of course be working with concierges to ensure that they're no longer selling illegal operators. And really, the...the main point of this

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work is to provide education, to bring tour operators into compliance with the current laws. We'll also be working closely with the Hawai'i Tourism Authority to host tourism community collaborative workshops. This will be taking place later in the summer to increase the community's capacity to develop stewardship programs. Our focus with these workshops will be in East Maui, and we'll be inviting nonprofit organizations from East Maui to attend these capacity-building workshops. After these workshops are over, Maui Visitors and Convention Bureau will be releasing an RFP to nonprofits in that area to support their community-driven tourism management programs. And so we'll be inviting them to submit comprehensive and coordinated management programs, and then we'll be administering the contracts and supporting those community-driven initiatives with funding and messaging to visitors, both pre- and post-arrival. And in the sense, a visitor is defined as anyone outside of East Maui. So I myself, who resides in Nāpili, I would be considered a visitor to East Maui with regard to this RFP. Okay. Looking at the Island of Lānaʻi, we've been working closely with the Island of Lānaʻi's advisory group to identify the regenerative tourism activities as they see them for the island. What they've identified as their highest priority to focus on as an advisory group is rebranding Lānaʻi and Lānaʻi City. So really digging deep with them on how they want visitors to view their island, what...how they want people to feel about their island, the images, the...the messaging that they want to be shared, what they don't want to be shared out. So it's been a really great opportunity to work with them and redefine how they want their island to be represented. We've created detailed messaging through several working meetings with them, a directory of resource...resources and sample day trip itineraries outlining the local businesses that are available over there to support the local economy, which is very important to them. And also even just transportation options so that visitors know how easy it is to go up to Lānaʻi City, go to the cat sanctuary, go to the adventure park. And we've been working closely with them to receive ongoing input and feedback, and even to...to take in all of their guidance. And we're actively working to revise Expeditions ferry's website so that the messages that are on there, which is, of course, pretty much the primary source of information for visitors and day trippers going to the Island of Lānaʻi where they're receiving their information. So we have a good opportunity there to change the narrative as the Lānaʻi community sees fit. As we move forward, we'll also be working with the Hawai'i Tourism Authority to revise their website accordingly as well. And HVCB is developing visitor messaging which will be going out to concierges who are booking day trips for Lānaʻi, and other partners. We'll also be working closely with the Island of Lānaʻi, their advisory group, to develop community-driven social media campaign based on what they want to be going out on social media for them. Another activity that we've developed, Maui Visitors and Convention Bureau has initiated and has been facilitating conversations with a new tri-partnership between Sail Trilogy's Blue 'Āina campaign, Expeditions ferry, and Pūlama Lānaʻi. So in this day trip, which...the goal that it'll be taking place quarterly, is where visitors, including kamaaina visitors, are able to go over on Trilogy boat and receive food and beverage. They'll also be hearing messaging such as ecological, cultural, and historical orientations that have been created expressly by the Lānaʻi Advisory Group. Then upon arrival, the group will be part of and essentially bear witness to cultural protocol and orientation surrounding Hawaiian cultural protocol upon arrival to ask permission to arrive on the island. And from there, Pūlama Lānaʻi transports the group via vans to a site where then the group gets to experience ecological

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restoration, and continue to learn more about culture and history of the island. From there the group goes down to Lānaʻi City, support the local economy, and then we receive permission from the group to have the option of going to Hulopoʻe and Puʻu Pehe. We've received that permission from the Hulopoʻe Beach Council. So we've been working very closely with the advisory group on the development of this...this offering, this day trip, which is something that the advisory group...or the Lānaʻi steering committee rather said they wanted. It was more day trips to the island where the...the economy and the ecology is supported. For our first trip, it was held on Saturday, May 7th. We had 32 attendees. We provided amenities bags filled with reef-safe sunscreen and other zero-waste items that we received from the County. We also distributed pre-surveys and itinerary, and right now what's in progress is we're debriefing with our stakeholders such as the Lānaʻi Advisory Group, Hulopoʻe Beach Council, and the tri-partnership. We're finalizing a 30-second and a 60-second educational video for social media and websites about this day trip in hopes of attracting more groups and visitors to attend future events, with the next date scheduled for September 10th of this year. Additional regenerative tourism activities on the island. The Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary has joined our Mālama Hawaiʻi program earlier this year, 2022, where visitors can redeem a mahalo at a participating hotel when they volunteer with the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary on their trip. And we're working to incorporate the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary into our next Mālama Lānaʻi restoration day. So the next time that we head over there, our next site will likely be adjacent to the Lānaʻi Cat Sanctuary. So after working to restore the ecology, planting native plants, and removing invasive species, we're working with the cat sanctuary on making a stop there as well. We'll also be part of the 30x30 discussions with the Division of Aquatic Resources this summer. So in these discussions, DAR will be working to manage 30 percent of Hawaiʻi's nearshore waters by the year 2030. So in these discussions, we'll be advocating for management of Lānaʻi nearshore waters, specifically regarding Maui's commercial use of their wahi pana. The Lānaʻi advisory group advises that their wahi pana in the ocean area there be designated as a marine life...marine life conservation district that prohibits motorized commercial vessels. So we'll be advocating on their behalf. At our last Lānaʻi Advisory Group meeting, which was just a couple weeks ago, last week on the 24th, we had a working meeting where we combed through a spreadsheet and identified the needs, concerns, and solutions for each location that the Lānaʻi steering committee had identified as hotspots. Here is that list. Let's take a closer look. Hulopoʻe Beach is the hotspot of most concern to the advisory group, and Hulopoʻe Beach Council, the last handful of months their meetings have been focused on public testimony and reviewing plans for a new fee-based reservation system to manage that area. So we'll be working with the Hulopoʻe Beach Council to educate the public on what's decided to inform visitors of all kinds, kamaaina visitors included, on the new requirements once they're decided. We're also working with Pūlama Lānaʻi on the installation of a mineral-only sunscreen dispenser, as I've mentioned, and revising visitor-facing messaging to encourage visits to Lānaʻi City, again, educating visitors about transportation options and removing messages and images that encourage beach visits alone. Okay. Now, let's focus on the Island of Molokaʻi. We have a handful of regenerative tourism activities that have been identified for this island. One is the Molokaʻi Land Trust, where visitors are invited to plant native plants in Mokio Preserve to restore vital seabird habitat. Hotel Molokaʻi recently joined our Mālama Hawaiʻi program as well. And Ka Honua Momona is a loko ia on the Island

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of Molokaʻi that is interested in joining the program also. Molokaʻi Outdoors is a locally owned and operated tour company providing cultural and outdoor tours, so this is a perfect example of a regenerative tourism activity over there, as is Purdy's Natural Macadamia Farm, which is family owned and operated also. And we've spoken with one of the family members of this farm, and they're interested in developing farm tourism on fellow homesteaders in that area. Hallelujah Hou Fishing is another locally owned and operated company on the island offering experiences to visitors. And so what all of these have in common here is embodies what we've heard the community of Molokaʻi wants, which is tourism that embodies maximum community control, maximum community benefit, and no negative impacts.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Two-minute warning.

MS. DEGAIA: Here are the list of hotspots that Molokaʻi steering committee had identified. I have quite more to present here, I'm not exactly sure how to accelerate this. So we'll be working with the Molokaʻi task force to dive deeper into these hotspots and get their input on what the needs and management suggestions are for the different hotspots on their island. And the Molokaʻi task force has also created a subcommittee which will be focusing on messaging to educate visitors about rules and what is allowed, acceptable behavior for a visitor on their island. We have a number of visitor education programs that foster some wonderful partnerships that we're very excited about. One is our partnership with the Surfrider Foundation's Rise Above Plastics program, and this reduces single-use plastics at condo complexes. MVCB has been facilitating conversations with the Surfrider Foundation and Kahana Falls to bring them onboard into this program. We're also working with Maui Nui Marine Resource Council to support their reef-friendly landscaping program, which entails application of locally made compost tea to revitalize soil microbiology, soil tests, and a NOFA certification. So we'll be helping to provide incentives to industry to...for the industry to join this program by removing cost-related barriers. And we're working...we're part of a working group with Maui Nui Marine Resource Council to support and move this forward. We're also working with Maui Ocean Center to support them in their conversations with boat operators to reduce their ecological footprint. We're also dedicated to educating a mindful visitor through responsible stewardship, really, at every stage of their journey, whether that be when they're planning to come here, while they're in transit, on the airplanes, upon their arrival, and then throughout their stay. These are some of the touchpoints that we are reaching the visitors on their way here. Encourage everyone to watch our Mālama Maui County Pledge video. Here's an example of our Maui...Mālama Maui County pledge. Our video is playing on Expeditions ferry, reaching about 100,000 passengers yearly, YouTube, *Akakū*, and Spectrum TV. It's going throughout these other outlets as well. Featured on *Maui Now* leaderboard, received over 400,000 impressions on our KHON2 digital campaign, and we've done quite a bit to showcase our Mālama Hawaiʻi partners, such as the Hawaiʻi Wildlife Foundation, Kipuka Olowalu, Kaehu, Na Mahiai o Keanae, Sierra Club Maui featuring Lucienne de Naie and Clare Mawae. We're also sharing mālama initiatives with 50,000-plus distribution through AFAR. Another one's going out in June. So mālama is our main message, whether you're on YouTube, on social media, watching TV at the airport, and we're very thankful to share that our mālama campaign's been recognized nationally by the American

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Advertising Association, winning ten gold Pele awards and best in show. Be happy to share this presentation with everyone via email after because I rushed through quite a few of these slides. And again, I just want to say mahalo for the opportunity to speak with you today about our dedication to regenerative tourism, and encourage anyone to reach out to me. Also, if anyone would like to get involved with the Maui Nui Destination Management Action Plan, you can find it online simply by Googling Maui Nui Destination Management Action Plan, or you can email me. And would love to collaborate with anyone listening today to further the efforts in ways that you're already moving it forward, or if you'd like to work with us on moving it forward. Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. DeGaia. And we did share it in the chat as well, the presentation, so if you would like to click on that, you'll have access to the presentation. And then we'll have questions, Ms. DeGaia, so that we can kind of cover some of the things that you may have gone over quicker than you would have preferred. Okay. So we'll now continue with public testimony. Oral testimony via phone or video conference will be accepted. Please note that if you are signed in, you are on the list to testify, even if you did not request to testify. Please let Staff know in chat if you are signed on and do not intend to testify. As noted on today's agenda, in-person testimony will be accepted in the Council Chambers and at the six courtesy testimony sites. Testifiers wanting to provide video testimony, please join by going to the BlueJeans meeting link noted on today's agenda. Testifiers wanting to provide audio testimony, please call the phone number and enter the meeting code, also noted on today's agenda. Written testimony is highly encouraged. Instructions on how to submit testimony can be found at mauicounty.us/testify. Oral testimony is limited to three minutes. When testifying, please state your first and last name. If you are testifying on behalf of an organization or are a paid lobbyist, please inform the Committee. Staff has posted the link to the testifiers' log in the chat so that testifiers will be able to see where they are on the list. Please be mindful of the use of chat during the meeting. Chat should not be used to provide testimony or chat with Councilmembers or other testifiers. If providing testimony, please be courteous to others by muting your microphone and video while waiting your turn to testify. We'll proceed with public testimony, starting with Ruth Kanani Edmund Costales, followed by Todd Yamashita.

. . .BEGIN PUBLIC TESTIMONY. . .

MS. COSTALES: Aloha, everyone. Do I put on my camera now?

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: You can, yes.

MS. COSTALES: Okay. Aloha, everyone. I am Ruth Kanani Edmund Costales, and I live on the Island of Moloka'i. Forgive me if...if I going sound like I stay delivering one message to you guys taking 80 days around the world, but I will kind of put it all together within five minutes. First of all, I would like to thank all of you for giving me this opportunity to come on and testify. Secondly, Meagan DeGaia, I hope I never say that wrong, I hope I never kill your name, but thank you for sharing all of what you folks have worked so hard on. That's a hard message to deliver in...I don't know how long you had, but

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anyway, thank you for delivering as much of the message as you did. So here I go with my testimony. As a resident of Moloka'i, born on the Island of O'ahu, raised here on Moloka'i, I'm 52 years old, I think I left Moloka'i only 30 days out of my life to go and try live somewhere else in...in the big USA, and I couldn't hack it to make you guys...to...to tell you guys all the truth. I had to come back here because my feet was really deeply rooted here. The first thing is, I have a problem with \$500,000 being allocated to a tourism plan. For me, when you say regenerative, tourism is one...is one word that...that leaves...leaves it open for a broad amount of anything to happen. Tourism, from what I've seen from...from my days of growing up, tourism has been exploitation, tourism has...has cheated our islands, has cheated our lands. I work for the Department of Education, and I had the opportunity to travel off island back and forth for four years out of my career with DOE. It's funny how you meet and come across the different walks of life and different people; however, when COVID-19 came down, I stopped traveling, but the panic, the panic was on. And I met...I knew...I know an uncle who...who works for Department of Education and also does a side...they have a wedding...a wedding business where they go from doing the wedding, performing the wedding, officiating over the wedding, all the way to the whole luau big time. And I never seen one Hawaiian...well, one...one native of Hawai'i who also has Hawaiian and other ethnicities within his blood, I've never seen one man panic so much about tourism. Here on Moloka'i, tourism is part of our economy, but it is not the biggest part. It is not our survival. Our survival here depends on each other. It has always depended on each other. Between farming, between small mom and pop businesses. As much as we love McDonalds, it's not here. Lucky today we get Uber where we can have it . . . *(timer sounds)* . . . flown here. Oh, that's my time up? But...but I sorry, I so sorry. But anyway, I'll make it real fast. Before we...before we think about the word tourism in this, how about re-educating the people to come here what Hawai'i is all about? For instance, at the same time while we're doing this, figuring out this tourism thing, we sit on different committees trying to defend our island and trying to get back our island and three points of our island. The Kalaupapa Peninsula; Moloka'i Ranch, which is at the west end of our island; and Halawa Valley, where we're...we're continuously trying to keep a valley a valley. We're...that place was the beginning of life, and it can also be the ending of life. Before...before we...we try...before we...we look at tourism or use tourism, think of another name. That's...that's all I asking. If I had more time I would tell you guys the story about the three points of our island which would make it short, but I know get other testifiers. But anyway, mahalo nui once again. Nice to meet all of you. I hope to be part of...I hope to be a part of...of this movement, as far as management. Anyway, yeah. So mahalo nui, everyone, and nice to meet all of you. Aloha. A hui hou.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. Costales. Members, any questions for our testifier? Member Sinenci, followed by Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you, Chair. And aloha, Kanani. Mahalo for your testimony this afternoon. You mentioned about renaming, and I know sometimes, you know, just a word kind of encompass, you know, everything about us, our hospitality, particularly on Moloka'i. But if you...could you sum up if you had an idea to share with us?

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MS. COSTALES: I have three, I have three different ideas. It could be regenerative education for visitors, or regenerative resourcing, or rejuvenating of the past generations for future generations.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Maikai. Thank you for that. Thank you, Chair.

MS. COSTALES: Aloha.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Member Sinenci. Member Paltin?

VICE-CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Ms. Costales, for your testimony. In the context of today's meeting and the presentation on destination management, I just was wondering, for Moloka'i, were you ever approached to be a part of the task force, or give your input as you're giving to us to the Maui Visitor and Convention Board in how they are messaging?

MS. COSTALES: To tell you the truth, no. Actually, the first time I see this was probably a couple months ago, and of all places, social media Facebook. The funny thing is, you know, they have Maui Visitors Bureau, but Moloka'i had its own. It was started by the mule train. My aunty Eugenia Sasada, the late Eugenia Sasada, who is a descendent of R. W. Meyer, who had started the Moloka'i Mule Ride with Uncle Buzzy...with Uncle Buzzy Sproat, the late Uncle Buzzy Sproat, and the late Erwin (*phonetic*)...I forget his name, but he was...they were...these three had come together and had made...had made an agreement. And...and the whole reason of the mule ride to...has started to...going down to Kalaupapa was to educate those about the leper colony and the importance of why the nation needed to know...or the world needed to know about Kalaupapa. That was his mindset. Aunty Eugenia was the...the...because she was a descendent of the Meyer family, she and...and those kupuna that were still living had many stories to share about Moloka'i as a whole. And that is how Moloka'i Visitors Association became to be. And then later on I think we umbrellaed under Moloka'i Visitor...I mean the Maui Visitor Bureau, and then of course, later on, became the Hawai'i Visitors Association, which kind of...which kind of gets me going when we...it...it got renamed to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. I mean, you know, kind of...yeah, there we go with words again. But yes, this is like quite a few...actually this is like the second time I seen it. And when I seen all the different phases that they're going through, it kind of got me a little confused. I no like say angry because I wasn't never at any of those meetings so, you know, I not going...I not going just whip anybody with my words until I really find out the whole information about that. But yeah, so thank you.

VICE-CHAIR PALTIN: And...thank you. And I guess the...the follow-up question is, would you be willing to become involved in it if...if that was an option, to kind of help to shape the vision you want to see for your island?

MS. COSTALES: I would. That would...that is a question that you don't have to ask twice.

VICE-CHAIR PALTIN: Awesome. Okay. I...I think Ms. DeGaia did leave her contact

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information at the end of slide, so maybe that can happen so...so it can be a full...oh, and she also typed it in the chat as well.

MS. COSTALES: There it is.

VICE-CHAIR PALTIN: She's open --

MS. COSTALES: Sure.

VICE-CHAIR PALTIN: -- to it as well. Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Member Paltin. Seeing no other questions. We'll thank you very much for your testimony today, Ms. Costales. And I also know how to get ahold of her.

MS. COSTALES: Yes, you do. You got me on speed dial, girl, right down the road.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Aloha. Our next testifier is Todd Yamashita, followed by Walter Ritte.

MR. YAMASHITA: Chao buoi trua, Councilmembers. As always, a for real mahalo for holding this space for this community building exercises, and this really important discussion. I...you know, I'm a volunteer community member, probably in around a dozen different boards and committees and stuff like this. And I just want to say my intentions here today, I've been part of the DMAP process here on Moloka'i and, you know, when you talk about tourism, to me there's a real potential for healing to happen here. But instead, you know, this DMAP process, unfortunately, it's a very dysfunctional process. And not only is it not working, but it's...it's doing an injustice to the overall dialogue. So you know, I...I...I'm also working on the Maui economic development, and lots of metrics and data from...from that workgroup. And what it...what it shows us is that tourism makes us particularly vulnerable to displacement, homelessness and job loss, and you can see that in the metrics. Maui had some of the worst metrics during the pandemic, and Moloka'i, for a brief moment, had the lowest unemployment for a little while. And I would argue that that's because we're not so heavily dependent on tourism. And so really, I want to talk about this approach, tourism in general, right? And by definition, tourism is extractive, it commodifies our culture, and you can see that from the presentation we had today. It's just a process of how do we commodify this, right? And so I'm here because, you know, it...it...this is important to me. I live here in this community. All the decisions we make, just like you guys, we got to live here for the rest of our lives. And what's happened in this process, what I've seen over the past couple years, Auntie Julie Bicoy, who has been our face for Moloka'i visitors, she lost her job. And then the funding that would have been available for her was attributed to someone not from this community. I look on Instagram, and there is a Moloka'i post on behalf of Moloka'i that show people rock climbing on waterfalls. And you know, I no need to tell you guys how disrespectful that is, right? So that's a mainland, you know, contractor, right? So where we trending, we giving everything away. We commodifying everything, we trending away from locals and...and it's really failing us. And so what

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we need is we need liaison here on Moloka'i, a partner here that's based in community service and culture, yeah? And I just want to report on...on, you know, if you look in the...the news of what was reported in *Maui Now*, you know, it...it's all the shiny stuff about, you know, what DMAP has succeeded on Moloka'i. The last meeting I went to, which was the one before this last one, it was really clear, you know, Moloka'i said pause the marketing, take us off the map. We don't...we no more seats on the plane already, right? People can't even fly here, to and from here, whether you're here or not. So pause the marketing. Partner with us. Partner with us. Be part of this community that wants to understand the impacts of tourism to our community. Help us understand how bad it's...it's really making things. And then number three, return our position, our Moloka'i position because that person can help us manage this...this process of understanding the impacts of tourism. And...and I think that will...you know, Kalaupapa has a maximum number, 100 people, and that's because the peninsula cannot handle, the infrastructure no can handle, and it's also out of respect. And I think if you look at all of Moloka'i, we're a special place. We should be treating all of Hawai'i the way we want to treat Moloka'i, right? This is a place for culture, this is a place that is very sensitive. And you know, if we just forget about this idea of selling ourselves as a tourist destination . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . and get really furious, get really furious about rolling our sleeves up. Divert that \$500,000 to, you know, shoring up conservation, you know, shoring up workforce development. Put that money to work so that we can under...put our Hawaiian contractors to work to study the impacts of tourism. Anyway, I've said a lot. Thank you for letting me be passion...passionate about this. I say this wearing my community hat. And I appreciate your time.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Mr. Yamashita. We also received your written testimony. Members, it's on Granicus. Member Paltin, I see a question for Mr. Yamashita.

VICE-CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Mr. Yamashita, for your testimony. I was also reading about where you say that the level of...lack of transparency, high level of disorganization, dysfunction and alienation caused by lack of leadership. I just was wondering, do you have ideas on, I guess, whatever the example is of disorganization, dysfunction, and alienation of how it should have been done instead?

MR. YAMASHITA: Sure, sure. So very simply, it was explained to us as a cohort last year that help identify, you know, these key points that we want to work on. So we start asking questions because we're like whoa, this is kind of interesting. Well, where did the, you know, where...where was the bigger pool of things selected from? And indeed, it was from a Moloka'i, you know, focus study that was done years ago. But it was actually HTA that...that cherrypicked which ones. Like you know, okay, like this idea of volunteering at the airport. You guys, gas is almost \$7 a gallon over here. We all just chasing our tails trying to make it month to month, and they want us to go wait on privileged people taking our...our flights at the airport? It's preposterous. It's just unkind, it's out of touch. You know, there's the...you see the signs on Moloka'i, visit, spend, go home. There's people getting beat up over here. They getting false cracked. People getting run off the road because they riding bicycles because they don't look like they're from here. You know, and it's not okay, this is not okay, it's trending in the

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wrong direction. And I'm sorry, but it...it...it's...it is tourism. It's in the data and it's in real life.

VICE-CHAIR PALTIN: To clarify, when you were saying voluntourism for...the definition of the voluntourism that you were saying just now is for the locals to volunteer to help tourism? Because I guess my interpretation of...

MR. YAMASHITA: There's a couple different programs. So there's one, right, they want people to go wait at the airport and greet tourists, local people, right, and they want us to volunteer to go do that, right? And then there's another...there's the other programs, right, like hey, have all these volunteer programs that work in the fishponds, et cetera, have them take time out of their day to host these malihini to come over and get muddy so that they can have fun. All of that focus is on the tourists, right? We have to babysit these guys, that's a liability for us, right, that's not from our culture, and we got to do that every day out of the year just to hold our ground? It's...it's not the right focus. We got to be focused on us.

VICE-CHAIR PALTIN: Okay.

MR. YAMASHITA: I not saying we got to be anti, I just saying we got to change the focus.

VICE-CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Member Paltin. Members, any other questions for our testifier? We'll thank you for your testimony today, Mr. Yamashita. Aloha.

MR. YAMASHITA: Aloha.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Our next testifier is Walter Ritte, followed by Faith Chase. Aloha.

MR. RITTE: Howzit. Aloha, everybody. It's very rare that I get an opportunity to come talk story, especially in the middle of the day. We stay trying to fix our fishpond and get the farm going and stop the dirt from coming down the ahupua'a and all that kine stuff. But this one caught my...my attention because Moloka'i and tourism has always been pretty sketchy. And then these guys come up and they started saying that they're going to form committees and do things on Moloka'i, they want to hear from Moloka'i. And then Meagan, I know she had a hard time. I think she's from someplace in the mainland, so she had to start from scratch in trying to understand Moloka'i. Can you imagine that? That's a hard one for her. So we tried our best to work with them. First they started off with this one committee, then the committee went go pick the guys for the next committee, and then we have two committees, making the community all confused about which committee was saying what, and it was all handpicked kine stuff. So finally we got down to one committee, and then we started telling them what our concerns were, and then the responses was yeah, that's...that's your concern, but that's...that's not what this thing is all about. They couldn't address the concerns that we've been living with all these years, and why Moloka'i had to go yell at tourists because they was

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bringing these huge ships to our wharf that had only one bathroom and all these kine problems. And we had to deal with them as a community because we had nobody to speak for us. Everybody wanted to us give us more money, more money, and bring more people, more people, but infrastructure couldn't hold. So long story short, this thing went nowhere. And to be giving these guys \$400,000 [sic] or whatever you're doing, it's not going to do Moloka'i any good. They have no clue. All the things we told them was important, they said we cannot do that, that's not what we're here for. So there's a big disconnect going on right now. And the...the problems are serious problems. So if we cannot connect with these guys, then we just got to go back on the streets again. So I think it all came to a head today. It's interesting because today we supposed to go on the...on the County program since...I think it said C-E-D-S [sic] or something, so we can come up with a really good idea about our economy on Moloka'i, what is your economy going to look like, Moloka'i? Oh, right on, so we get plenty guys all like join in on this one. And then we get this female saying oh, no, we going have one...what you call these guys, the D-A-A-P, whatever, they...they making the meeting for the tourist stuff the same time. So it's a no. Can you guys change the time because the CEDS one is a really important one for our community? And the answer was no. I don't know who this...I think this Japanese lady, I'm not too sure what her name, Caroline (*phonetic*) or somebody, hardhead buggah. She said no to everybody, no, and how many guys was telling them no, change the time. Well, the last straw, so I says you know what, I ain't wasting my time with this anymore. So I told them take me off the committee, and Todd did the same thing, told them take me off the committee. So these guys over here spending all this money, but they ain't getting nowhere on Moloka'i. So I'm here to say that something got to change, man, it's not working on Moloka'i, and we have a definite vision and not the same old, same old. You know the stuff the lady been talking about for the last half hour, I've heard that so many times before . . .(*timer sounds*). . . coming from the State level. It's the same old stuff that not going work. So...but also on Moloka'i, we are not supportive of what is going on, and how the money is being spent, and who they hiring for come over here and help us figure out this tourism problem. And they not seriously about trying to figure out the problem, they trying to figure out how they going to sell us without making us mad. Mahalo.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Mr. Ritte. Members, questions for our testifier? Member Sinenci, followed by Member Kama.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Mahalo, Chair. And aloha, Uncle Walter. Nice to see you guys this afternoon. You know, I've...I've...and listening to some of the Moloka'i people, you know, some of the families have run kind of successful hospitality programs on their own, yeah. And...and sometimes without a middleman, like a tourism agency come...coming in between, you know, the...the families of Moloka'i might get more out of their, you know, whatever grassroots that they're doing. Do you see that, you know, maybe continuing what some of the Moloka'i families are doing as far as hosting the visitors on their own?

MR. RITTE: Yeah, because...yeah, we all...we all live...we all live here, we all know each other, we know who supports tourism, who doesn't support tourism, who going do what. And when they do what...whatever they going do, they know they got to answer to their

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neighbors and their aunties and their uncles. So we have our own way of...of doing what is right and...and what is wrong. So to be spending \$400,000 [sic] for somebody from the outside to come solve our problem makes absolutely no sense. If you guys going to be money spent to help us figure what we like do over here, it should be led by the locals on Moloka'i because we all know each other. We know who bullshit, and who no bullshit, we...we know. So it's not working, and the money is going to the wrong place for send guys from the mainland come over here tell us what is up and what is down.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Ae. Mahalo for that. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Member Sinenci. Member Kama?

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you for being here, Mr. Ritte. It's so nice to see you again.

MR. RITTE: Aloha.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: You know, I've heard the testimony of Kanani and Todd, and now I hear yours too, and I feel like I'm hearing something that you were saying, but also feel like what you were saying is not being heard or maybe understood by those people who are trying to do the regenerative tourism. So in your mind, what is...what is your solution?

MR. RITTE: My solution is to put the money into local hands over here to accomplish the same thing that they want to accomplish. Not somebody hired from Maui or from the mainland coming over here with their own things that say well, we can do this, but we cannot do this, and we not going to do this because the boss says we cannot talk about that. We got to talk about the essence of what is the problem and try to solve that. If we cannot get to the essence, we never going to solve the problem. We only...we sugarcoating this whole thing. Using words that they've been using for the last ten years that no mean nothing.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you. Thank you, Chair. I so do appreciate this opportunity to really find out what the issue is, what the problems are, and who can actually solve it. Many times the problem belongs to us, so we got to solve it. So I like that idea. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Member Kama. Sounds good. Okay. Seeing no other hands. We'll thank you for your testimony today, Mr. Ritte. Aloha.

MR. RITTE: Aloha.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Our next testifier is Napua Hueu...Hueu, sorry...followed by Lori Buchanan.

MS. HUEU: Aloha. My name is Napua Hueu. I'm going to leave my camera off just for optimal

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connectivity from East Maui. I am the Administrator and Community Coordinator for Hāna Highway Regulation, a civil volunteer organization that has been doing data collection in East Maui since 2016. I've testified many a times on a lot of visitor-related issues. Our organization had focused primarily on the Hāna Highway. When budget funding was earmarked for visitor management along the Hāna Highway a few years ago, our organization did not have a nonprofit status at the time, and we approached a number of Maui Island based nonprofits to serve as the fiscal sponsor of the funds, one of them being Maui Visitors Bureau, who was unable to work with us at that time for a various amount of reasons. We ultimately lost access to the funds when Kalani English appropriated them to a mainland-based nonprofit to build out the Wai'ānapanapa State Park reservation system, and I'm still unaware as to how County funds were used to serve State park needs. As you know, East Maui shoulders the brunt of impact related to the visitor industry on Maui. We are among the top three reasons why visitors choose to come to Maui. I'm exhausted to imagine that we will have to vie and compete for fiscal support among other nonprofits in East Maui to garner support for our solutions, which were curated from our data, which Meagan will confirm she relied largely on our reports to articulate the issues and hotspots presented in MVB's slides today. Linda Clark recently passed a resolution HCR 29 to calls for all the stakeholders of Hāna Highway to work with Hāna Highway Regulation in developing a holistic management plan for the Hāna Highway. And so I expect MVB to acknowledge the work we've put in over the years and figure out a way to collaborate. I would like to further encourage the Council to create a stipulation that these funds, if allocated to MVB, be made accessible to the most proven and effective direct action organizations across Maui County, regardless if these groups are a certified nonprofit or not. There are individuals in the field across our County who do more for visitor management every day than HTA and MVB combined. These are the individuals pointing out no parking signs to prevent traffic hazards before they happen. Individuals towing visitors out of ravines with their own vehicles, and discouraging them from hiking their children into sites with the largest counts for visitor rescues, injuries, and fatalities. For us here on the Hāna Highway, we have a list of prominent resident figures that take it upon themselves almost daily to render intervention for visitors at the various hotspots identified on MVB's presentation. The residents need creative funding support. We are tired of trying to convince MVB to work with us, it should be mandated. If the Visitors Bureau is to receive these funds, there needs to be a stipulation that they are to work with the subject matter experts in the field across Maui County, and not do with the funds what they think is best for our communities. I'm concerned with the recent efforts by MVB touted as solutionary in which they communicated . . . *(timer sounds)* . . . they'd be focusing on increasing visitor messaging and signage when we have already determined through years of field research that rules and signs don't work. I'm going to cut my testimony short. And I just want to say that I expect the County to help...can figure out a way to make funds accessible to the individuals across Maui County who are out in the field every day doing the work to save visitor lives and prevent tragedies from happening while they're on vacation. Mahalo.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. Hueu. Members, questions for our testifier? Member Sinenci?

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COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you, Chair. And mahalo, Napua, for your testimony this afternoon. I was just curious, Meagan...and Mahiai o Keanae, is...is that you guys, or somebody else?

MS. HUEU: That is somebody else, a group of farmers in Keanae.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Member Sinenci. And Ms. Hueu, if you'd...if you would like to submit what...what you were reading in written...in writing, that would be great too, to...to get your testimony in writing.

MS. HUEU: Will do. Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo. Okay. Our next testifier is Lori Buchanan, followed by Christopher O'Brien.

MS. BUCHANAN: Aloha, my most favorite and beloved Council in all of State of Hawai'i.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha.

MS. BUCHANAN: The most hardworking, underappreciated people I know. Boy, I love you guys. I...I going...I know we only get short time, so thank you for the opportunity to testify today. If you could see me now, my leg is shaking underneath the...the table. My husband always say that's when he know I stay irritated and fussy. So...stay busted. So anyway, I'd like to agree with the testimony you've heard up to this point today. I think my frustration as a community advocate really explodes when I find that I cannot participate, or I am thwarted in some way because of nontransparency of planning that is pertinent to Moloka'i. I found that to be true with the DMAP. And I had to look at DMAP and it says Destination Management Action Plan. So if mālama is...is a management plan, it's not a plan that I think of as a plan. Like...like when I write one plan, I going step one, two, three, four, five, this is what we going do, this the goal, this the objectives. And so I cannot say nothing because I was never invited to participate in a plan. I asked to participate in the plan, but found out that you had to be chosen or invited. And so I was like okay, that's fine, because like most plans without community input, you going go all the way to the end, and then you going get pushback from the community because they was never included, or a handful of people that didn't have a broad representation of your community participated, and if they did, their contributions were minimized or discarded. And I heard that from the members of this DMAP. And I heard two of them today that just said they quit. So when people start to stand up in one meeting and walk out, or they say you know what, you not listening, I quit. I'm not a quitter, I don't like to quit because that opens up the ability for other people to come in, and then there's no representation from your community about the negative impacts that a plan might hold. So that's my testimony today. They coming to you for money, don't give it to them because...at least for Moloka'i because it's obvious that they failing. Today we ask them...over a week ago . . . *(timer sounds)* . . . to please...please have their meeting one other day because the CEDS was more important

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for today. I no have CEDS meeting every day on Moloka'i, right? I have them once every five years. So for disrespect us and say oh, I sorry, we going do this anyway, we going split the five really active members in your community and they have to decide. Well, guess what? The decision was by your members that they quit. So that's...you know, we past the red flag already, we way past that. So some things working, I agree. And that's my testimony. Thank you very much for listening. Appreciate. Mahalo.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. Buchanan. Members, questions for our testifier? Seeing none. We'll thank you for your testimony today. Our next testifier is Christopher O'Brien, followed by Kai Nishiki.

MR. O'BRIEN: Can you hear me?

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yes.

MR. O'BRIEN: Aloha, Councilmembers. My name is Christopher O'Brien, I'm a resident of Moloka'i, and I've worked for a number of different nonprofits on Moloka'i, most of them geared around different community development, the economic development processes on our island. And I'm here to echo what has already been shared from everybody, especially Uncle Walter and Aunty Lori and Todd. I'm a part of the second committee for the Moloka'i DMAP. I was asked to join in part because I think of my connections to a lot of the different nonprofits that are doing work that would have benefitted from some of the suggestions in our proposals. And I've just kind of observed that from the beginning they...that we kind of got off to the wrong foot. Typically when we start a new community process, when you bring a new group of people together on Moloka'i, we spend some time going around introducing ourselves and learning about who you are...especially for people outside the community so that the people in the community can get an idea of their backgrounds and who they are. And it was only because of the pushback from a whole bunch of the DMAP members that we even did that process at that meeting, and it took almost a whole meeting. And I feel like from that sour note, it just...I felt like it was moving in a positive direction at first, but then, you know, it kept going south. And you know, I agree with the...with the emphasis that there's been a lack of transparency. I think one of the things that we've been pushing for is to open up these meetings to the entire community rather than making it a select few. We haven't been able to get that from...from what I know. And you know, the HTA presentation is saying that, you know, these processes are supposed to be community driven, but I don't see them putting their money where their mouth is. You know, when you have a bunch of DMAP members, including myself, who said...who told...who requested that the meeting today be changed, and it's a virtual meeting, it was easily changed, but their refusal to do that, I think, is a big, like Aunty Lori said, red flag. I haven't quit the DMAP process yet because I...I think I agree with Aunty Lori that if I leave at this point, I'll be one less voice for like making some of these changes, but I don't know how long I will continue to participate if this is how things are going to keep going for this group. And the other thing that I really want to stress is that, you know, the HTA really needs to ask permission before they talk about Moloka'i and its people and its organizations. I think in the presentation today that you guys received on Moloka'i they listed the Purdy Macadamia Farm as a site for regenerative tourism. I am

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close friends with the daughter of the owner of that farm, and she's...lives right...right near the farm, she said they were unaware that they were going to be included in the presentation today, and they did not give permission. And I feel like that's a huge, huge misstep on HTA's part in term...in terms of advertising about our Moloka'i community. And I think after this meeting today that the HTA should reach out and apologize to the Purdys for not asking permission. And that's all I have to share. Thank you for your time.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Mr. O'Brien. Members, questions for our testifier? Seeing none. We'll thank you for your testimony today. Aloha. Our next testifier is Kai Nishiki, followed by Junya Nakoa. Aloha.

MS. NISHIKI: Aloha. Hello, Council, Committee Chair and Councilmembers. Kai Nishiki testifying on my own behalf. So I am glad that the tourism grant was made open and available to more than one entity to apply for, but unfortunately, it seems like we're just getting kind of more...more of the same from Maui Visitors Bureau and HTA. And when they first came out with DMAP, I...I was a little bit hopeful, hoping that they really got that residents want management over just bringing more tourists here, but it seems like a lot of the...the efforts being made is kind of like more of the same. Just oh, let's make our residents better hosts to the tourists. Make...make...make residents better tourist greeters, and it's kind of disappointing to see that. And I think that a big part that is also missing out of visitor education is missing the...the biggest threat that we have, an existential threat, which is coastal erosion and sea level rise which, when we're talking about tourism, the reason why tourists come to Hawai'i and Maui County is for our shorelines, for...for our ocean, for our beaches. And if we're ignoring the elephant in the room in regards to tourism and not talking...not educating people about this huge threat, and partnering with the resorts that are on every part of our shorelines to remove their aging...these hotels were built in the '60s and '70s, and why are we not focusing on that we need to both stimulate our economy through all of the construction and planning activities that go along with strategic relocation of all of our roadways and buildings off of the highway, then you're not really addressing this huge problem that's going to affect every aspect of our lives here...here in Maui County and Hawai'i. So . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . I'll...I'll wrap up with my last sentence. I definitely feel that the...the plan moving forward, and money moving forward, needs to be kept and supporting people here in Hawai'i. There are...there are designers, there are advertisers, there are smart people, and once again, we're seeing all of...all of this money going to outside agencies to tell us what we already know. We want the tourists to stay in the resort areas, and out of our...out of our residential areas, and inundating all of our special shoreline areas. And so it's a bit disappointing. Mahalo.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. Nishiki. Members, any questions? Seeing no questions. We'll thank you for your testimony today.

MS. NISHIKI: Mahalo.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha. Our next testifier is Junya Nakoa, followed by Nicole Smith *(phonetic)*.

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MR. NAKOA: You guys can hear me?

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yes, loud and clear.

MR. NAKOA: Yes, sir. Okay. Yeah. This whole giving money to the Maui Visitor Bureau, yeah, you guys no need teach us how for tell the tourists the kine, yeah, what for do because we kine of do 'em. Us guys, we get canoe practice three days a week, and us guys trying to teach these keikis about our culture and everything yeah, and they get these tourists that walking by and they asking all kine questions. Tired talk to them because they no like listen. But you know, with the money, you know at the airport that when had the pandemic, those big screens, I said for use them, yeah, for go educate the tourists about all the safety issues, you know, no face your back to the ocean, you know, all the kind of stuff that the lifeguards got to deal with here in Kā'anapali. You know what they did? The freaking...oh sorry, watch my language. Sorry, Alice, my colorful language. But the kine, you know, they go put that...they put that ad, you know, inside the kine, in the airport, and what kine...what kine ad they put? Oh, come over here and go buy your second home. Your second home. You know, your second home over here. We no need that kind education, guys. We need the kine education on how to drive on the road safe to Hāna. How for go to Honolua Bay and go down there safely and respecting the ocean. How to go Kā'anapali and know that no more lifeguard over there. And...and that's where we should put the money into...you know, all that \$500,000. No need go...we no need tell the tourists for come Hawai'i, they coming already, whether we like it or not. Those buggahs just coming and coming and coming. So we no need give money for tell them for come. We need to go and make sure when they go swim at Black Rock. they no...they no get hurt or worse than that, you know. Yeah, just spend the money correctly, brah, you know what I mean? Go take care the lifeguard that take care us. And yeah, I just tired how...where they putting the money at and all that kine crap. So shoots. My bad, I wasn't going testify, but since you call my name, I went go talk. Shoots.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Mr. Nakoa. Seeing no questions. We'll thank you for your testimony...your unplanned testimony today.

MR. NAKOA: Mahalo.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha. Our next testifier is the caller with the last four digits 9385, followed by Tyler Tanaka (*phonetic*).

MS. KAMEKONA: Aloha.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha.

MS. KAMEKONA: Can you guys hear me okay?

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: (*audio interference*)

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MS. KAMEKONA: Hello?

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: You may proceed with your testimony. Is this Ms. Kamekona?

MS. KAMEKONA: Yes, it is. I guess you guys starting to memorized my phone number, huh? Anyway, yes, this is Carol Lee Kamekona. I am testifying on behalf of myself. I am not a paid lobbyist. I just wanted to say hi, everybody. Quickly, to me, tourism equals exploitation--exploitation of our culture, exploitation of our 'āina, and exploitation of our resources. We don't need to sell our islands, our islands sell themselves. Money shouldn't be allocated to what field trips touri [sic] should take. We need to allocate our funds to citizen patrol, to retired LEOs that can possibly do minor...minor enforcements, i.e., no parking on Hāna Highway. Maybe they can issue tickets for that. We don't need to give monies to tell people to come to Hawai'i because we have beautiful beaches, and we have clear waters, and you guys would enjoy it. We don't need that. The airports, I believe, need to advertise safety, as what Junya talked about. Safety with regards to don't turn your back on the water, like he said, drive safely, don't stop in the middle of the Pali because you want to take pictures during whale season. Even our bus drivers do that. I've seen that happen. I came back on Monday on an Airbus, Hawai'i Airlines Airbus that held 260 passengers. Counting the 260, lucky if there were maybe 12...12 of us locals on that flight. So 12 minus 260, that's 248 touri [sic] on one plane to come over here and disrespect our 'āina, disrespect our culture. I agree with a lot of the testifiers that have come forward today. What I would say, . . . (inaudible). . . Kanani talked about, rebranding...rebranding tourism? How about . . . (inaudible). . . how about education, how about awareness? That's what needs to be taught. I will say kudos to Hawaiian because they did have a video that talked about the safety, that talked about not climbing on the rocks, not turning your back on the water. So kudos to Hawaiian to that, Hawaiian Airlines. That should be played all over where touri [sic] congregates; airports, hotels. You know, what I didn't like when I landed in Maui was seeing a billboard, seeing a sign in baggage claim that said Pacaso, buy your second home for one-eighth the cost. . . . (timer sounds). . . That doesn't need to be advertised in an airport, I'm sorry. Mahalo. You guys have a good one. [spoke in Hawaiian] A hui hou. Aloha.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. Kamekona. Seeing no questions. We'll thank you for your testimony today. Aloha. And Mr. Tanaka is just observing and not testifying. So I will...oh, Ms. Poepoe?

MS. POEPOE: Hi. Hi. I was just trying to check for feedback. Is it okay now?

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: It's good.

MS. POEPOE: Okay. Hi. My name is Mahina Poepoe, testifying on my own time and on my own behalf. I would also love to participate in the DMAP process. If it were ever open to the public, I would be there. I did feel good at first that at least people that I trusted were included, but now hearing from those people, their discontent with the process, I'm very concerned at where it's headed. I used to own a small business in town, and we catered to locals, but we did get tourists, it was a surf shop. Something that I refused

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to ever do was rent out surfboards, and I had to put a sign up that said we don't rent out surfboards, and we won't help you find one, so don't ask. Something like that. And they were often very appalled and offended reading that sign because they felt entitled to that as a part of their vacation. But on Moloka'i, we do have a low threshold for how much we're willing to accommodate tourism, even among businesses that do benefit to some extent from them. I think the idea of regenerative tourism is great, but how do we prevent the nonregenerative stuff and the harmful activities? Like you can go to the land trust one day and pull out weeds and learn about native plants, but the next day you could be in Halawa trespassing through everybody's lois trying to get to the waterfall and, you know, getting into altercations when we're just trying to tell you, you have to go back across the river, go to the tour guide, and pay him to take you to the waterfall. We're not even saying you can't go to the waterfall. But yeah, so that kind of stuff. You know, one aunty was in the shower, a tourist walked up to her shower, opened the door looking for directions to the waterfall. So when I think of tourism management, it's those kinds of impacts that I think I'm trying to figure out how to manage in a management plan, not necessarily like how do we provide better experiences for tourists, but how do we manage it so that our lives aren't as impacted by them and our...you know, our environment too. I think it's...it is...education is great too, but I'd also like to see an enforcement piece if at all possible. By moving here, we...we need to stop tourists from becoming residents. I hear a lot of tourists say...or new residents say that they came here on vacation, fell in love with the people, the place, the lifestyle, and bought a vacation house or a second residence here. And I think that is a serious threat to our social fabric, especially in our very rural community. So that's just what was on my mind. I wasn't planning on testifying, but hearing, you know, so many people in my community that I respect speaking about the process, I just wanted to also express concern. And also, I think that the DMAP people, now hearing from the community . . .(timer sounds). . . still have time to reschedule their afternoon meeting today to allow people to participate in the CEDS. So I would still encourage them to consider doing that. Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Mahina Poepoe. Any questions for our testifier? Seeing none. We'll thank you for your testimony today. Aloha. And the next testifier is Zhantell Lindo.

MS. LINDO: Aloha, Council Chair and Councilmembers...my favorite Councilmembers too. I'm amazed at all the work you guys do. But I...I was sitting down listening...first of all, I'm testifying on my own behalf as a private citizen, and on my own time. And I just...I needed to speak my mind because there's two things that stood out to me; transparency of the current process that's going on, and the fact that I've been included, since 1996, on every single tourism group and discussion, and helped to write at least three different plans for sustainable tourism on Moloka'i, and at no time was I asked to participate in this. And I thought that was pretty nuts because I...I...I live here, I'm born and raised here, I have connections here, I was blessed to work in a position where I'm in touch with that, but there was no reaching out. And if...and to me, the worst way to waste taxpayer dollars is to keep writing up plans that you shelve and then you never do anything about it. So there's plans written for Moloka'i already that plenty people like me put heart and soul into and never got looked at, and never got asked to participate.

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That's one. Two, I just want to make it clear that tourism, I was in the industry for a long time, 20, 30 years ago, or 20 years, I...I was one of only three people who stood out on the Kaunakakai Pier welcoming in this well thought out cruise ship group of people that I believed could benefit the economics and not rake our culture and all that. Well, 300 of our Moloka'i residents rode boats and held signs, so it was a lonely place to be. Needless to say that in that realm, over the last 25-plus years, I've been educated that I was wrong. There is no right tourism. There is no way of controlling and planning sustainable or regenerative plans for sacred places. Our island is a sacred place, and the only people that can manage that sacredness is us. And there is no grounds for becoming a Disneyland of sacredness just because somebody saved up their life savings to come to Moloka'i. But I want to make it clear that I not speaking for Maui, okay. Because I...I know how much Maui and other places depend on tourism for economics, and I in no way want to take that away from them. Maui ohana, you guys got to figure out what your balance is. I saying as a Moloka'i keiki o ka 'āina, the balance is nothing. If we're going to have visitors, it's going to be because they really wanted to seek out this place, and they come because something is pulling them to this sacred place. I think the \$500...\$500,000 is just so sad because we work with MVB before they took away Julie's position to also delegate \$200,000 for a marketing plan that would help our locals be involved, and that got...I don't know where that money went either, but never got done. So in closing--because I know my time is up--the last thing . . .(timer sounds). . . I just wanted to say, some of my...my solution oriented thing is we...we need to look at capacity caps. Even buildings have fire...limited amount of people that can be in one building at a time because that's what we can sustain and manage for the best welfare of visitors, and people in general, and our environment. But the visitors industry has no Environmental Impact Study or...or any kind of thing or any capacity, like calculations to say that they not depleting the resources from the places they're allowed to visit. So maybe some of the \$500,000 should go into doing one Environmental Impact Study for Moloka'i, and then we see how many visitors we can actually receive. But mahalo.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. Lindo. Seeing no questions. We'll thank you for your testimony today. Okay. That was the last testifier on the list. If there's anyone signed on wishing to provide testimony, you may unmute at this time and proceed. Hearing no one speaking up, are there any objections to closing oral testimony and receiving written testimony into the record?

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS

. . .END OF PUBLIC TESTIMONY. . .

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Mahalo, Members.

ITEM 32(9): FISCAL YEAR 2022 TOURISM MANAGEMENT GRANT FUND

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. I...I...and I know that Ms. Duong and Ms. DeGaia need

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to leave soon, but I did want to allow Members to ask questions after the presentation.
Ms. DeGaia?

MS. DEGAIA: Hi. Do I have a chance to respond now?

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yes. I can...I can give you a few minutes, and then I will open it up to the Members to ask questions, but I know that you're also pressed for time. So I know you wanted to leave by 3:00 p.m., it's 3:09. What...

MS. DEGAIA: Thank you. Yes. I'd still like to have the opportunity to speak to some of the things that I've heard.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. I will put two minutes on the clock. And then would...would you or Ms. Duong be able to answer questions from the Members?

MS. DEGAIA: Sure.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Please proceed.

MS. DEGAIA: Thank you for the opportunity. And thank you to everyone who has spoken from their heart. I know it's a reflection of your dedication and care for your island home and the place that you come from, so I honor and respect that. Thank you for speaking your words. I'd like to clarify some of the misunderstandings that I've heard. The...or the...the destination management action plans for each of the islands in Maui Nui and throughout the State were created by local steering committees that were convened and comprised of residents of each island in 2020. And it was those local residents that created the actions that have been articulated in the action plan. So there's an action and then there's a series of sub-actions. So it was residents from each island that created and articulated the actions. And then with regard to Moloka'i and Lāna'i, in those action plans, it said that they wanted an advisory group, and so...because we don't know the community itself, the way we found the members of the advisory group or what later became the taskforce for Moloka'i was we asked the steering committee members for their recommendations. So that was how the...the advisory group was formed for Moloka'i. The advisory group that we convened said that they wanted it to be more of a taskforce and to take more of an implementation role. So we took a poll, and the majority of the folks on the advisory group said that they wanted it to be a taskforce, so we turned it into taskforce. Also, prior to the first meeting, I had an hour-long phone conversation with all but one person on the Moloka'i Advisory Group and got a sense of what everyone's priorities were for the first meeting together. One of the members said that they wanted the priority to be messaging, and so that was what we took to the first meeting, and it was then that we were told hey, hey, we want to slow things down, in which case we did. So we've been doing our very best from a place of humility to . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . have the...I'd like to respond to a few more things. So the Aloha Ambassador program at the airport, there's a paid position that is...we're waiting for the Governor to sign to staff that kiosk at the airport to provide information. And it wasn't our idea for volunteers from the community to...to sit at that kiosk, it was a Moloka'i resident that had that idea that volunteers from the community

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could come and share about their business or whatever it is that they offer. About the CEDS meeting taking place this afternoon at 3:30 coinciding with our taskforce meeting, we weren't aware of this meeting schedule conflict. So it wasn't something that we did maliciously, it's just we're human, and we didn't know that we were unfortunately scheduling the meeting at the same exact time. With regards to --

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay...

MS. DEGAIA: -- East Maui...well, there was a lot that's spoken, and I know people care about these issues, so I find it's important that we respond with...with truth. So about East Maui, the nonprofits won't be competing...

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Ms. DeGaia, I...I know you have to leave soon, so I...I've muted you just so that you can hear. I...I know the meeting starts at 3:30, and I...I want to give the Members an opportunity to ask questions before you have to leave, or if you can share with me what your plan is for the questions on the presentation, then at least the Members will know. But I also need to cap the time because there's only so much time for our meeting. Okay. I've unmuted you. Your...your plan for the Members to be able to ask questions?

MS. DEGAIA: Plan? I don't understand, plan for people to ask questions?

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: No, you...you provided your presentation, and the Members have questions --

MS. DEGAIA: Sure.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- but I know you have to leave soon.

MS. DEGAIA: Oh.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: So...

MS. DEGAIA: I want to be available for some questions. Yeah. This...this is very important to us, and what the community has to say is important, and any opportunity we can clarify and bring truth to the discussion, I find great value in that.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I'll give you two more minutes to provide your response to --

MS. DEGAIA: Okay.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- issues that were brought up during testimony, and then I'm going to open it up to the Members to ask questions, okay?

MS. DEGAIA: Okay. Great. So with regard to what Napua shared about East Maui, so we wouldn't be wanting the nonprofits in East Maui to compete by any means, we would be wanting them to collaborate with one another, and multiple nonprofits will be

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awarded. The idea is not that there be competition or to pit anyone against one another, but that people come to the table to create comprehensive, community-driven solutions based on what they want to see, and for funding and support to be provided. About Kilia's macadamia nut farm, she had...that farm...she's on our Moloka'i taskforce, and the grant that we're presenting on today calls us to identify regenerative tourism activities. So for the intents and purposes of this grant, these are things that we report on to the County. And Kilia's macadamia nut farm was included in GoFarm Hawai'i's recent regenerative tourism capacity building tour that took place at the end of May, I believe it was, and so we're not, you know, promoting the farm. The grant simply calls us to identify regenerative tourism activities, of which they had identified themselves with GoFarm Hawai'i's capacity building. And also, their farm is on Hotel Moloka'i's website, so this is...this is public knowledge. And I've spoken with her for more than an hour, and she has wanted more support. So we're...we're not promoting this out, it's just the grant asked us to report on this. Speaking to the person who was talking about messaging and education, that is our primary commitment is educating a more mindful visitor about how to behave with regard to the ocean, not to stop on the roads. I'm not sure if you saw those pictures that were posted, but that is certainly our dedication. About the Moloka'i task...taskforce, the group at our last meeting identified five of their highest actions from the DMAP that they wanted to work on in the form of subcommittees and organize themselves to work on these different subcommittees. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . We were also interested in two others, including carrying capacity and real estate, and so we added those. So at every step of the way, you know, with regard to public meeting, we're happy to have other people join the taskforce as well. This is not closed...these are not closed-door meetings. Keani, you and I have spoken about bringing the subject matter to your town halls. So we have good intentions here. You know, we're human, and we're doing our very best, and we're dedicated to bringing...

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I knew this was going happen.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Oh. Hot mic. Okay. Mahalo, Ms. DeGaia. Okay. Members, questions for Ms. DeGaia, Ms. Duong, or Mr. Gionson? Member Sinenci? And then I'll put two minutes on the clock.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you, Chair. And mahalo...

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Oh, Member Sinenci? Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Yeah. Thank you. And mahalo, Ms. DeGaia. I...what I liked about your presentation was seeing all of those...those ads at the airport, and I know Ms. Kamekona said that there was some for Pacaso and those types of things, but I was really happy to see that only because it kind of shares right when people get off of the airport [*sic*], you know, they...you can...they can see our codes of conduct when you're visiting our neighborhoods and coming through our communities. My question for East Maui, you mentioned...so...so MVB does have funding for...for some of our nonprofits, like Ms. Hueu, available? And only because Ms. Hueu has worked for a couple years and have identified those hotspots, and she had come up with some...some ideas of how

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she could address some of those things. So she would be able to apply for some...some of these funding?

MS. DEGAIA: Yes, absolutely.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Ms. DeGaia?

MS. DEGAIA: Thank for the question. So we would certainly welcome her participation in the RFP. So at the end of the summer, we'll be working closely with the Hawai'i Tourism Authority to facilitate capacity-building workshops so that the community in East Maui can increase their capacity to develop stewardship management plans. And so nonprofits from East Maui will be invited to attend. We'd love to work with you on this to get the word out, and we'll be doing our best to get the word out as well. And then after those capacity-building workshops, then MVCB will be putting out an RFP to the nonprofits based in East Maui. So to speak to her point, you know, it wouldn't...we wouldn't be making this invitation open to nonprofits located outside of East Maui. This is definitely going to be community driven, and then yeah, she can certainly participate.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Okay. Thank you. And nor would we be creating any steering committees? Not *(audio interference)*

MS. DEGAIA: Not to my...that's not in the DMAP, although I have been speaking with East Maui residents individually, and I've been wanting to put together a group just to gather more information about hotspots and get more guidance from the East Maui community itself because I know there's a lot of different areas out there to be addressed.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Okay. And then where can people see those committees on the DMAP, those DMAP committees? Are they public . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . noticed?

MS. DEGAIA: The...I encourage anybody to contact me. I'll put my email address in the chat again. And Councilmember Sinenci, could I contact you with regard to putting together...you know, just as we kind of move forward in this process and navigate it?

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Sure thing. Thank you.

MS. DEGAIA: Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. DeGaia. And Mr. Gionson, did you want to add anything before I call on the next Councilmember?

MR. GIONSON: If I could. Mahalo nui, Chair. Aloha. Councilmember Sinenci, talking to your...your point about the visitor education that we're displaying in the airports, mahalo for noticing that, and there were a few testifiers who mentioned that as well. You know, HTA, we've pivoted from marketing to branding and visitor education, so no longer do we put out any messages directly that say come to Hawai'i. It's if you come, here's how to be, here's how to act, this is what it's about. We understand that there's a long way to go in re-earning the trust of the community, we acknowledge that. And

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we mahalo, you know, this Committee and the various bodies that we're privileged to speak with. All that stuff in the airport, you know, one challenge is that the airport messaging is advertising. There's a concessionaire at the airports, and so we have to pay for that messaging to be there. Unfortunately, we cannot control what else is on there at this point. That's a longer discussion to have with the Department of Transportation if we wanted to see no advertising at the airports, and instead only those safety kinds of messages, but there's definitely a conversation to have at a later time. Also I wanted to quickly mention that the educational materials are available not only at the airport, many airlines have added them to the inflight entertainment systems. One testifier mentioned Hawaiian Airlines, we're on all the major airlines in the inflight entertainment systems, and many hotel partners as well. Mahalo.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Awesome. Mahalo. Okay. I saw Member Paltin with her hand up, followed by Member Sugimura.

VICE-CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. I got a lot to say in a limited amount of time. But you know, thank you for the pivot. It's a radically different story that we're hearing today than when I first go into office in 2019, and...and I can appreciate the...the long way that we've come in a few short years. You know, kind of listening to...to the testimony and...and things, and...and I did Save Honolulu Coalition up as a partner organization, as well as Mālama Maui Nui. And hear that, you know, mālama is the direction that you're heading in. And I guess the part that a little bit bothers me as...is that we as residents, me as the leader of a nonprofit, are still spending like a thousand dollars a year at least, actually maybe 3,000 that we raise ourselves to pick up other people's rubbish. We have to pay for tire disposal, we have to pay for the dumpsters. We get a waiver on the tipping fee. But here is a group that...sorry, but I didn't support funding, and...and they're giving...getting \$500,000 to make this campaign to mālama Hawai'i while we, the residents, working two or three jobs have to donate our own money to pick up somebody else's rubbish, you know? I mean there are certain privileged groups that can do cleanups once a month and not pay to clean up somebody else's rubbish, and all they have to do is show up and pick up the rubbish. But for the vast majority of us, Lāhainā Town Action Committee, Save Honolulu Coalition, when we do cleanups, we're not just talking about like picking up some cigarette butts on the beach, we're talking about really mālamaing for the sake of mālamaing. We don't get paid six-figure salaries like the Executive Director of Mālama Maui Nui. We're mālamaing Maui, Maui Nui, because it's the right thing to do, because it's where we live. And...and it is a little bit disheartening, you know, that...I'm...I'm not trying to say this to say like, you know, give me money or anything, I'm just trying to put it a little bit in perspective that we've been doing this since like at least 2010, 12 years of rubbish cleanup, thousands of dollars a year out of our own pockets that we're...not only are we picking up the rubbish, making the organizations, figuring out how to fundraise to pick up the rubbish. For many of those years, we also paid for the Port-a-Potties at Honolulu. . . .(timer sounds). . . I mean, I'm sure we got (audio interference) grants for some of them, but not all of it. And I'm just saying, you know, for many years, people that love Maui and love Hawai'i put all their effort into it with no...no recognition, and...and, you know, some people get \$500,000 to do it. So I'm...I'm glad for this new direction and messaging for Maui Visitors Bureau, but just wanted to show you a different perspective and a

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broader perspective of maybe why there is a little bit animosity because it's...it's much bigger than just coming in in 2020 with a plan. You know, some of us have been doing this our whole lives, 10 years, 20 years, and...and...and not for money. So there's that. Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Member Paltin. Member Sugimura?

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: And...and...

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Breath of fresh air.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Sorry, Member Sugimura, quick.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Yes.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Real quick. I...I've changed it from two minutes to three minutes because two minutes seemed a little too short. And then I wanted to make a quick clarification, the grant that MVB got for the DMAP was initially 300,000 and then they added on the 100,000, and that's something that we discussed during Budget Session this year as well. Okay. Ready, Member Sugimura? Go.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Yeah, thanks for that clarification. I was wondering where the 500,000 came from. I thought maybe was HTA. But I...I just want to say breath of fresh air. I think this is direction...the direction that this body, as well as the community, expressed, and they've done it. You know, they're walking that way. And I want to...I want to commend you. I'm not too sure what happened on Moloka'i. Unfortunately, there sounds like some communication that needed to be aired out, I think, in this Committee, and that's what we heard. But I...I just want to say in general, thank you, Maui Visitors Bureau. Thank you for destination management and...and what you're doing because it's no longer a marketing company, but it is...once the visitor comes here, it's education and trying to make our islands better. That group that does the once-a-month cleanup, which is Pulehu Posse that I'm part of, it's...we're...we are funded through Mālama Maui Nui to get the tires and rubbish disposed of, and it's through highway funds, just for explanation, because we're cleaning the road that is...that is qualified for the Highway Fund. But before we knew that, we were doing exactly what the Honolua group was doing, putting our pennies together and getting sponsorship from Pukalani Superette and whoever else, Ken Smith, who wanted to see, you know, cleaner streets. So it's...it's...we don't work in vacuums, but sometimes things happen like that. I just wanted to explain it for what...the cleanup that we do, which I think is a good thing on...on Pulehu Road once a month, the first...you know, usually the first Saturday. But it's a lot of work. I commend you for where you've taken it, and having to listen, I know because we all have to do constituency work, and everybody has important contributions to make. But for you to pivot and to...to make changes that you are, and trying to listen as many people as possible, I commend you for that, and thank you for taking the time to...to share with us where you are as an

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organization. And congratulations, MVB, for doing this...HTA, HVCB, all the acronyms that help us, you know, move this forward. It...it is a hot topic, we know that, and you know, please accept my appreciation. Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Member Sugimura. Member Kama, followed by Member Johnson.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Meagan, for being here today and for listening to, and I want to say the heart of the people from this place. I wanted to say that, you know, before there was an MVB, Hawaiians were already in the tourist industry way before there was even a tourist industry. And when people came, there was something special that they saw about this people, and about the place, and they liked it, and they kept coming and coming and coming and coming. And then somebody decided that oh, my God, we can make some money off of this, let's go do it, and that's why we're here today. And I think what the indigenous people of the land are telling us today is that we know how to do this, let us do this, and let us help you to do this. And I think that's the message that I heard today. And I would hope that we would hear that. Because a lot of times we...we hear words that are said, but we should also listen to words that are not said. And sometimes, in indigenous cultures, that's more important. And I just want to read a quote if I could, Chair, from our Queen Liliu. And she says "I could not turn back the time for political change, but there is still time to save our heritage. You must remember never to cease to act because you fear you may fail. The way to lose any earthly kingdom is to be inflexible, intolerant, and prejudicial. Another way is to be too flexible, tolerant of too many wrongs, and without judgment at all. It is a razor's edge, it is the width of a blade of pili grass. To gain the kingdom of heaven is to hear what is not said, to see what cannot be seen, and to know the unknowable--that is aloha." That you, Chair. Thank you, Meagan.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Member Kama. Member Johnson?

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Ms. DeGaia, for your presentation. I was really concerned about the...the slides on Lānaʻi because right now, we're suffering from a lack of workers, and it sounded like in the plan there was a big expansion, more areas at Awalua, more areas over here, and that was surprising me because of the idea of the big quit. So I have a question after I...after I give you a couple statistics, I have a question behind this. So 4 million people quit in April of 2021, they call that the big quit and it's ongoing, many of them in low payable and inflexible industries like retail. Right now, 30 to 45-year-olds is the biggest group of people who have not returned to these low-paying jobs. They...the...specifically, racial minorities, low wages, and frontline workers have the highest dissatisfaction rate. And yet we're coming into plans and expanding this. So I...I want to kind of look at your plan on...on its face and say well, how do you plan to even hire these people when no one wants these jobs anyway? You know, I know you were talking about how there's going to be somebody at the Molokaʻi Airport to greet and everything...I bet the turnover on that job is going to be pretty high. So how...how do we address this if...if we're going to create more low-paying jobs for these folks?

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CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Ms. DeGaia?

MS. DEGAIA: Thank you for bringing this up. So my work is to implement the Destination Management Action Plan for Maui Nui, and that...this issue, although very important and something I'm cognizant of, it's not...it hasn't been articulated by the Lānaʻi steering committee, and so therefore, it's not in the plan. In some way that this was, you know, emerged through the Lānaʻi Advisory Group, we could certainly take a look at it. And with regard to the position that we're waiting for the Governor to sign off on, which is paid to staff the...a future Aloha Ambassador program at the Molokaʻi Airport, we hope that, you know, it would be...someone would find it appealing and take the role, and that there would be...you know, someone would stay within that role, but not really...

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. Let me follow up with that question because I'm limited on time. I apologize. How much is that position being paid, do you know?

MS. DEGAIA: I...I don't actually know. I don't know what it's allocated for.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. So that's a very important point, right?

MS. DEGAIA: It's the Department of Transportation, I believe, or the...the airport is, I believe, more than willing --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MS. DEGAIA: -- to see that through.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Maybe at a later date you could send us an email and let us know how much that job is actually being paid for. So like for the Island of Lānaʻi, 400 positions are available at the...at the hotel, we have 3 of them...300 filled. So we have a missing 100 positions at our hotel at the Four Seasons. I don't know how much more you can squeeze. You know, that's...that's the part...that's the...that's the disconnection I'm seeing that like yeah, sure, if we have...if we double our workforce and people are more willing to work, you know, these...these jobs that just ain't paying the rent. We already know the housing crisis, right, we...I don't...don't get me started, right, I have limited time. How are these folks going to even pay for their life, you know, if we create more jobs? Yeah, sure, they...we can go show these tourists to go and volunteer and . . .(timer sounds). . . and I'm not seeing the...the...connecting the lines. So my time's up, if you want to respond. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Ms. DeGaia?

MS. DEGAIA: I certainly understand what you're saying, and I...I too have...you know, it's extremely expensive to live here, and I just understand what you're saying. It's not something within the Destination Management Action Plan that's been articulated, and that's my responsibility to...to work on that aspect.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah, I understand. It's...it's...it's a big burden. Thank you,

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Chair. I have no further questions.

MS. DEGAIA: Thank you again. And we can certainly get back to you about the rate of the position for the Moloka'i Airport.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you so much.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Committee Member Johnson. Member Molina?

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Madam Chair. And first of all, thank you, Ms. DeGaia, for...you know, you're...you're in the...the hotseat, I guess, if you will, and I appreciate your and applaud your courage and dignity to take the comments that were very honest, and just a combination of just a lot of frustration out there right now with tourism. I grew up at a time when, you know, Maui County was a different place, and the type of tourists we had generally stayed in the areas they were expected to. But now, you know, over time, Maui County just sells itself as...as one testifier said. So now our goal is now to educate and change the paradigm of if folks want to come to Hawai'i, be sensitive to the culture and be educated, and you know, not look at Hawai'i as a...or Maui County as a Disneyland, so to speak, but more as place for cultural reverence, holistic healing. And I think that's the message that we have to get out as well, and not so much to, you know, bring folks here, all kinds of tourists, you know, all different levels. And which leads to me ask you, what is the industry doing to bring back more of the tourists that will preferably stay in their areas and spend money, and not these other types of tourists that are not spending money and they're...they're, you know, they're living in campers and taking up all of our beach parks and spaces. Because that I know is a point of frustration for a lot of residents because, you know, it's all about quality of life. You know, I've always said tourism is a double-edged sword. I mean yes, it brings in money, but it has impacts on kamaainas or long-time residents' quality of life. So could you comment on that?

MS. DUONG: Thank you, Councilmember Molina. This is Sherry. If you wouldn't mind, I'd like just to...just to give you maybe a little bit of a comment on that. In terms of trying to bring, you know, the high-spending visitors, you know, we are working with County, and our messaging has been about trying to weed out the illegal permitted vacations here. Once we tackle that, and that has been addressed, there's no other way...there's nowhere else they can go but to...into the resort areas. As long as we continue to have these illegal vacations, bed and breakfasts that's allowed there, they're going to continue to be in the residential areas. So we're working on trying to identify that. We're working on messaging to the visitors to please, you know, stay in the resort areas, make sure that you're...what you are booking is legal and permitted. So it's all of that messaging that we're working on as part of the DMAP process.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Ms. Duong. And you know, one thing that really bothered me over the last few years when...I don't know, there's some guy wrote a book, come to Maui's secret hidden places, and that just opened up a can of worms and, you know, really upset not only myself, but a lot of locals, and that's where it all started, you know. And so...

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MS. DUONG: And I believe you're talking about the...the Maui reveal book; is that correct?

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Yeah.

MS. DUONG: We connected with him,, and we have told him about that book and the things that are in there that...you know, that are our concerns. And so, you know, he...the...the book that's published, there's nothing he can do about it, but he does have a digital, and he has been working with us on trying to correct the things that has been said that should not be. So that has been addressed as well too.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. Thank you. And Madam Chair, just one real quick question with regards to the concierges and the education to...educating the concierges as far as the legal businesses. Are you folks involved in making sure...giving them a list of these are the businesses that are permitted and legal that will help them? What...what...can I ask you to just elaborate quickly on that?

MS. DEGAIA: Thank you. Yes. So we do have a list of the tour operators that have PUC license, we do have a list of the operators that have the DLNR permit and the CORA permit to, you know, utilize the ocean commercially. And then we're also working on a list of the companies that do not have the...the required permits and licenses so that we can provide both. Because it's...what's come to our attention is it's not uncommon for concierges and activity desks to, you know, be selling these companies that are illegal, and they're doing it in good faith. So education and increased awareness is really key in this area. And then as I said, we're working with FareHarbor in that same vein, is if they can't, you know, have an online booking system which makes them appear illegitimate with their website, then they're not going to be able to book their tours, it's going to be much harder. And so we really want them to come onboard with compliance. And then we're also going to be reaching out...as we lay...lay a little bit more groundwork with FareHarbor, we'll be reaching out to Tripadvisor, Airbnb, the other major providers as well where people get their activities. So we're taking a multi-pronged approach, and this is all to lay the groundwork for those tourism community collaborative workshops, and then the RFP.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. Well, thank you for your responses. And again, please you know, do your best to try and mend whatever fences with some folks who've been, you know, I guess to this point very disappointed with what's happening, but do your best and pray for some healing down the road. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair, for the flexibility.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Member Molina. Okay. Members, it's far past our time for an afternoon break. I guess I just...I just had two questions to follow up for Ms. DeGaia, and then we can let you go...or you know, invite you, Ms. Duong, and Mr. Gionson, to provide any closing comments or remarks that you would like. My first question is regarding the comments that you made about Ms. Purdy. Yes, Ms. Purdy was invited to be part of the taskforce, but she has not attended any of the meetings. And so while you are accurate that she was invited, and therefore is on the taskforce, I

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think that was intentionally misleading to imply that she gave consent to be used on the presentation. And she hasn't attended any of the meetings. So I think that it's...it's the truth, but it's not the whole truth, and that is how I would characterize some of the responses that you...you gave in response to the testifiers' issues that brought up. I will stop there. I'll let you respond to my comments, and then I...I have another correction that I'd like to make.

MS. DEGAIA: Okay. Thank you. Yeah, so she had RSVP'd that she could possibly attend the meeting today, and she had agreed to be on the taskforce. It's certainly not my intention in any capacity to misrepresent anyone, least of all anybody on the Island of Moloka'i. And you know, to be honest, I didn't know that this was going to be such a public meeting, and I was just...created a presentation based on what we're reporting on, what we're called to report on through the grant. And that some of the information that we received from some of our partners, such as GoFarm Hawai'i who did work with the...the farm, and I've known Kilia for years. It's certainly not my intention to put anyone's name on anything that they don't want to be on, and I express my sincere apologies, and I ask for forgiveness.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. DeGaia. The second thing is regarding the DMAP being developed by local people. So I think...again, it's the truth, but it's not the whole truth. And the reason I say it's not the whole truth is because while it may have been drafted by local, you know, residents on each of the islands, it was then filtered through HTA. The final product may not have been exactly as the...those that participated may have liked the end product to have looked like. And so I think continuing to state that without any disclaimers is misleading. And I'll stop there.

MS. DEGAIA: So it was a...it was a year-long process, and the Hawai'i Tourism Authority didn't put words in anyone's mouth for each of the DMAPs that have been created Statewide, and the steering committee approved it on the Island of Moloka'i, and for each of the islands where it was finalized. And we've also been open to certain changes. For example, on the Island of Lāna'i, there's...the process has been very smooth and, you know, some of the things within their DMAP kind of became irrelevant throughout the course of time, and so they wanted to kind of adjust it and change it. And we've been flexible just in the same way with the Moloka'i taskforce, you know, other items have been brought to the table, and so we've integrated that in. So the folks on the Moloka'i steering committee included John Pele, Clare Albino, Butch Hasse, Greg Solatorio, Ui Kahue, Kanoelani Davis, Rob Stephenson, and I believe a few others. So if you look...you know, we met with a subset of the Moloka'i taskforce, of which you were one, and we...you know, folks who had some...wanted to bring some things to the table about the Moloka'i DMAP, and we combed through each action. We addressed each reservation. And you know, if you read the...the DMAP for Moloka'i, I mean, everything in there is maikai. It's about...it's about good stuff. There's nothing exploitive about it. And if there was something in there that, you know, Moloka'i didn't want to work on, or if language wanted to be adjusted, can certainly do that. It's not...can certainly, you know, work with the community on these things.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: That's great to hear. So I've heard from you today that one,

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anyone interested in participating in any of the steering committees, whether it's Maui steering committee, or Lānaʻi steering committee, or the taskforce for Molokaʻi can join by contacting you; and two, that if the DMAP is not exactly supported by the community, the community can provide feedback, and we can work together on adding or adjusting the DMAP as the community sees fit.

MS. DEGAIA: These are community-driven initiatives. So the steering committee for the Island of Maui and Lānaʻi is...you know, it was established in 2020, and so we meet quarterly with those groups. It's not open, there's not really a need for it. The purpose of the steering committees were to articulate the Destination Management Action Plan, and then we have those meetings to report back on our progress. So...and then as you know, for the Island of Molokaʻi, Molokaʻi Advisory Group wanted to combine the two, or the...the steering committee and the advisory group wanted to be combined. And so if folks from Molokaʻi would like to join the taskforce, our taskforce is already quite large, but if people have a burning desire to join, we're certainly open to that. We...we do want community participation. We also value transparency. And we know that, you know, these will be a success through community input. And we want to...we want to bring to life what the community wants. We're not seeking to exploit anyone, we're seeking...you know, we live here too, and we are...bump up against the same issues as everyone does here. And we want to support what the community wants, and we know that the solution is in the room.

MS. DUONG: Chair, I'd like to just to add on to what...about the...the goals and priorities of the DMAP. When we had...

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Ms. Duong?

MS. DUONG: I'm sorry.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Ms. Duong, please proceed.

MS. DUONG: When we had put this together in...you know, back in 2019, 2020, that was during the height of, of course, COVID, and these were the things that the steering committee had said was...was important to the community at the time. But as we move forward in time now, you know, we see that, and we hear from them, from the same steering committee that, you know, priorities have changed. And the DMAP is not set in stone, it's a document and it's a work in progress that's going to continue onto...after the initial third phase, which is supposed to be done in 2023, but this is going to continue moving forward. And these priorities and new actions are going to be created because of that. So again, you know, it's not that, you know, this DMAP has been set and these are the only priorities we're looking at. You know, as we move forward and hear from the community that, you know, things are changing, this is now more of a concern for them, then these are things that we would be handling and tackling and...and addressing. Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo...mahalo, Ms. Duong. Okay. And I'm really happy to hear both the...your comments and Ms. DeGaia's comments, and to see these meetings

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eventually become public because they haven't been public. I know that you...you've seen the testimony...you heard the testimony today. People would like to be able to be involved more and hear what's going on, and transparency is something that you value. So I'm really happy to hear that. I will provide you a few minutes to provide any closing remarks, and then we'll take a quick recess, Members. And then the last item is supposed to be housekeeping, so hopefully it'll be quick. Okay. Ms. DeGaia?

MS. DEGAIA: I would like to say thank you on behalf of Maui Visitors and Convention Bureau to the County Council for...and the County for the grant that you've provided us with, and the opportunity to do this important work. And we hope to continue to work with you and strengthen our relationship with you so that we can move this mountain together. We believe that the more unified we are, the stronger we are, and really value the diversity of opinions and perspectives that have been shared today. We know that all the passion that's been shared is a reflection of everybody's deep care and dedication to this place, and we share that sentiment with you. And we're dedicated to moving in a positive direction to transform these issues that are so challenging. They didn't arise overnight, and it's not going to be immediate that we solve them, but it will take all of us coming together and setting aside whatever differences. Really hearing and learning to trust one another's good faith that we all have to make this positive shift. And I just sincerely hope that everyone on this call can see that we're working from the bottom of our heart with humility and with persistence, with aloha to reset, rebuild, and redefine the direction of tourism, to mālama our...our home here.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. DeGaia.

MS. DEGAIA: And we ask for your patience and your grace as the shift takes place. And I thank you all. Thank you.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. DeGaia. Ms. Duong, and then Mr. Gionson.

MS. DUONG: Boy, I think Meagan actually really wrapped it up quite well. I'd just like to say that, you know...we, you know, have started this shift, and I've been, you know, sharing this with...for many past years to...I think since 2017 that we have stopped, you know, marketing quality, but we have been trying to message the how to respect our 'āina when you do come here. So again, you know, moving forward with HTA's messaging of mālama ku'u home, you know, caring for our beloved home, this DMAP is something that we really take to heart. So thank you for this opportunity to share with you the direction that we have been heading to. And we really appreciate the support that you can provide us. It takes all of us together to move this mountain, as Meagan say. So thank you again.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. Duong. Mr. Gionson?

MR. GIONSON: Mahalo nui, Chair, all the Members of the Committee. And I want to especially mahalo all of the testifiers who came today to share your mana'o. Whether we agree or disagree, but one thing we can all agree on is that there's some challenges that we need to get over for the benefit of our home, this place that we all love. And Members, you

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know, I...I really appreciate the immense nature of the challenge ahead of you. I mean, within Maui County you have places like Hāna and Keanae, places like Molokaʻi where, you know, clearly there's some levels of tourism that are not working in those communities. You also have places like Wailea, Kā'anapali, you know, with the thousands of jobs they support and, you know, all the tax revenues that happen there, and you guys got to balance all of that. So I don't envy your job at all. Mahalo for your commitment to serve. You know, from...on behalf of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, you know, Member Kama, you mentioned that blade of pili grass, right, that balance, it is that thin. Finding that right balance is that challenging. And so it's something that we spend a lot of time and energy thinking about, looking at how we can better find that balance, and going be different in every community. That's the genesis of those destination management action plan is to try to get the mana'o from those communities that have to live with the impacts and opportunities that tourism can provide. So as Meagan said, and mahalo to you, Meagan, for the presentation and for answering those questions. You know, we understand that these documents evolve, we understand that plans evolve, but a plan is just a plan without the people. So mahalo to everybody who's committed to working with us. And those who have decided not to at this time, I hope we can continue to kukakuka. It doesn't need to be in one DMAP meeting, call me up anytime, happy to talk story because we got to figure this stuff out together. Mahalo nui, Chair, for the opportunity to have this dialogue today. Appreciate it.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo nui, Mr. Gionson. Okay. Okay. Members, if there are no objections, we will defer item BFED-32(9). Any objections?

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS

ACTION: DEFER pending further discussion.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo. Mahalo, Ms. DeGaia. Mahalo, Ms. Duong. Mahalo again, Mr. Gionson. Okay. Members, we have the...the last item. Do you prefer taking a quick break, or shall we just finish?

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Power.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Break?

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: No, no.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Oh.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: No.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Conflicting. What do you want to do? What do we do? Quick, go?

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Your call, Chair.

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CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Okay. Okay. We'll do it...we'll do it quick. Okay.

**ITEM 32(8): INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE
MAYOR OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI AND THE OFFICE OF
THE AUDITOR, STATE OF HAWAII, RELATING TO AN AUDIT
OF THE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF THE
STATE OF HAWAII**

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: BFED-32(8), Intergovernmental Agreement Between the Mayors...Between the Mayor of the County of Maui and the Office of the Auditor, State of Hawai'i, Relating to an Audit of the Employee's Retirement System of the State of Hawai'i. We have Director of Finance on. Okay. We have our Deputy Director of Finance, May-Anne Alibin, and I also saw our Auditor, but Deputy Director...oh, okay, there. Okay. Mr. Taguchi. Okay. So we have both our Deputy Director Alibin first for comments, followed by Mr. Taguchi, our County Auditor. Ms. Alibin, aloha.

MS. ALIBIN: Chair, good afternoon, and Members, and it's nice to see you all. So I will defer to the County Auditor to provide more information on this; however, it...it is a transmittal from the Department of Finance. And this is with regards to the memorandum of understanding for the Mayor to enter into the intergovernmental agreement with the Office of the Auditor, and this is for the completion of the audit as it relates to the GASB, or what we call Governmental Accounting Standards Board statement number 68 for the Employee's Retirement System schedule of allocations. And I'm here if you have any questions.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Mahalo, Deputy Director. Mr. Taguchi, if you have any opening remarks. You don't have to have, but if...if you do.

MR. TAGUCHI: I'll keep it very brief. Basically this is necessary to complete the annual financial statements, it's a required disclosure. The only way to audit this effectively and efficiently is to go through the State Auditor's contractor, and that's the most efficient and cost-effective way to get this. That's it.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Mr. Taguchi. Okay. Members, I'll open it up to any questions from the Committee. And so we...we won't be taking any legislative action. This does have a deadline to it, so it's going to be, or has been...it will be posted to the Council agenda next week Wednesday, June 8th, for action there. So we'll discharge. And...and I look to take action at that time. But I wanted to bring it up in my Committee if any of the Members have questions. And here's the document that's associated with the item. Member Molina, question?

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. Question for Mr. Taguchi. So thank you for answering my...one of my questions, which was the reason for it. So it's something that's more standard, a standard procedure just to make sure everything is being followed according to plan. And how long will the process take once the audit...whoever we commission to do the audit, how long typically does it take to

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complete the audit and, you know, get the results to the Council at some point?

MR. TAGUCHI: Thank you, Member Molina. The audit is not really our audit, all we're doing is getting some schedules from the ERS. And the ERS has their financial statements audited. So what we're asking and what we're paying for is for the ERS auditor to take a quick look at the statements that has to be generated for our financial statement and attest to it. Because our auditors wouldn't be able to do it because it requires them to take a look at the ERS records, which they don't have access to. So it's a very standard thing. All the counties will be doing it. We've done it every year. If we don't do this, then what would happen is that on our financial statements, it would force our auditors to make a...a qualified opinion saying that everything looks okay except this one schedule within the financial statements of the County because they had no way to audit...audit that schedule. So it's pretty routine.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. Yeah, thank you for that response. Because sometimes, some folks out in the public when they hear audit, they think oh, my goodness, you know, maybe something wrong or is a suspicion that...

MR. TAGUCHI: No.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Yeah. So it has nothing to do with that then, yeah? Okay. All right. Thank you, Mr. Taguchi. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Member Molina. Okay. Members, any other questions for Mr. Taguchi or our Deputy Director? Okay. All right. You both did an excellent job. So again, this will be scheduled on the June 8th Council meeting for adoption. Wait, this is a resolution, yeah? Well, for action. Ms. Milner? Oh, was that not --

MS. MILNER: Chair?

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- Ms. Milner?

MS. MILNER: Sorry. No, it wasn't me, but this is a bill for an ordinance, so it will be posted for first reading.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo. Okay. So if there are no objections, we'll defer BFED-32(8). Are there any objections, Members?

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS

ACTION: DEFER pending further discussion.

CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Wonderful. Mahalo, Deputy Director Alibin, and mahalo, Mr. Taguchi, for making it to our meeting today. Aloha.

MS. ALIBIN: Okay. Aloha.

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CHAIR RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Members, that concludes our agenda today. Thank you so much for completing our meeting without an afternoon break, and for that, we'll end early. Okay. It's 4:00...any announcements before I close, before I adjourn? What, PSLU tomorrow at 9:00? And HCP at 1:30. Okay. All right. It's 4:03 on June 1st, 2022. The Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee is now adjourned. . . .(gavel). . .

ADJOURN: 4:03 p.m.

APPROVED:



KEANI N.W. RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ, Chair
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee

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Transcribed by: Daniel Schoenbeck

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CERTIFICATION

I, Daniel Schoenbeck, hereby certify that pages 1 through 44 of the foregoing represents, to the best of my ability, a true and correct transcript of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not in any way concerned with the cause.

DATED the 23rd day of June 2022, in Kula, Hawai'i

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Daniel Schoenbeck", is positioned above a horizontal line.

Daniel Schoenbeck