

BILL048(22)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 520

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Dec 7, 2022 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 2

Oppose: 3

I wish to comment: 1

Name: Adam White	Email: awhite4000@yahoo.com	Zip: 96815
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Dec 2, 2022 @ 04:10 AM

Testimony:

Aloha.

I oppose this bill. BILL048(22) adds another area on Oahu that local tour guides can no longer guide our visitors. Adding Kokololio to the areas that we can no longer legally share with our visitors, will just push more visitor traffic to the last few remaining legal areas. This does not solved the underlying issue. I absolutely agree that both locals and visitors should have access to our public areas. If Tourism is going to remain an industry here on Oahu, then I support having respectful/well-trained/locals to serve as hosts to as many visitors as possible. If this task is completed effectively, then, in theory, we should be able to achieve a balance between locals and visitors around the island.

In addition, the more we steer our visitors away from local tour companies, the more we put them into rental cars. This not only puts more vehicles on our roads, but also sends more money back to US Mainland-based organizations. I would rather support local businesses whenever and wherever we possibly can.

Finally, we are currently averaging 25,000 visitor arrivals on Oahu each day. The average stay is 5-7 days. This equates to approximately 100,000-150,000 additional humans on this island on any given day of the year....this topic (maximum capacity for Oahu) has been debated since the 1960's. Nevertheless, in 2022, we are still looking for answers. In my humble opinion, until we can limit the number of visitors that arrive at the HNL Airport (this is currently unlawful under Federal Law) our capacity problems should persist. Otherwise, our leaders MUST get involved with REAL research at our public spaces and create a game plan(s). It is difficult to please everyone. However, there are solutions that will return the balance to the island.

Our Government was designed to allow the public's voices/opinions to be heard. This is a privilege that many citizens of the World do not have. I am so incredibly grateful for this opportunity to share my opinion. Now, as our leaders, please listen to our voices...

PLEASE, get out to these areas of debate and DO the actual quality RESEARCH that is required to find solutions that work for us all. There are so many of our local families that rely on Tourism (either directly or indirectly) as a way to pay their bills and thrive economically. In addition, there are so many of us (tour guides) that are doing our jobs the correct way, honoring the Aloha Spirit. I personally know many other local tour guides that consider our livelihood our Kuleana. We do our jobs sincerely. Please help support these good players and filter out the bad players.

Mahalo Ke Akua.

Name: Greg Arndt	Email: gregarndtinhawaii@yahoo.com	Zip: 96822
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Dec 3, 2022 @ 02:56 PM

Testimony:

Aloha everyone,

I work for a company providing tours in small private vans. Everywhere we go we support the communities and local businesses, respect Hawaii and it's people, inform our guests regarding safety, nature, behavior around turtles, etc.

These bills are so extreme that our guests must be trapped in our vans all day and are not even able to see a beach like the Pipeline for a simple ten minute stop. The wording "no commercial recreational stops" actually means a 100% ban to even stop and look out the window.

Where are the studies? Most of the places I go to are not crowded and are problem free. But instead of managing a couple hotspots on the north shore and a couple possible bad actors in a minority of tour companies, there is a 100% ban. Once visitors realize what is going on they will reluctantly rent cars, have no local relationships, no sharing of Hawaiian culture, and our companies will close. This is all so wrong.

We need an island wide reasonable plan which involves Parks, DInr, the Governor, communities, businesses, etc, an honest study of what really is going on, then a win-win solution that works for all. It's not that hard.

Name: Natalie Iwasa	Email: iwasajunk@mail.com	Zip: 96825
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Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Dec 5, 2022 @ 10:33 PM
Name: Choon James	Email: ChoonJamesHawaii@gmail.com	Zip: 96762
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Dec 6, 2022 @ 04:44 PM
Name: Desirree Madison-Biggs	Email: desirree@gmail.com	Zip: 96717
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Dec 6, 2022 @ 05:35 PM
<p>Testimony:</p> <p>I will be testifying in person but for the record...</p> <p>As you may recall from previous testimony, about a year ago, Kokololio began being inundated by 5-8 (sometimes more) commercial tour buses, most from a single company, that offload tourists and then park up the road while their customers use the park and beach. This happens 7 days a week including holidays. In the high season that means the park and beach accommodates about an additional 200 visitors daily or 6000 monthly – less in the off season. The communities of Hauula and Laie do not benefit from commercial tour operators, but we experience the impact daily.</p> <p>We have been accused of not sharing aloha with this bill. But the reality is residents here have always been happy to share with the many people visiting and vacationing in our area, and it comes from the heart, not because we must or are paid to. Our petition effort has garnered over 250 signatures and many comments of support in just two days. Why? Because having busloads of people dropped off in a park surrounded by residences for commercial purposes is not okay. It's not okay with locals that fish here and it's not ok with our recovering reef and animal population which are impacted by so many additional people in the water, and it's not okay for locals from other parts of the island who regularly come here for peace and gatherings with their friends and families.</p> <p>Finally, testimony and concerns have been expressed by tour bus drivers about this bill, many which we sympathize with. However, because of the limited scope of bill 48, it will not affect jobs, decrease numbers of visitors who opt for island tours, impact the ability for tour leaders to educate on Hawaiian culture, or cause increased traffic on island. This bill quite simply adds our community park and beach to a small list that are already protected here on the North Shore. Fortunately for them, this area is blessed with many diverse and publicly accessible beaches that are suited for tour stops.</p> <p>Until the Parks department creates a better alternative, we sincerely ask for your support in passing bill 48.</p>		
Name: Zhizi Xiong	Email: alohadivinedesign@gmail.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: CARES Community Advocacy Research Education Services	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Dec 6, 2022 @ 07:15 PM
<p>Testimony:</p> <p>Aloha Chair, Vice Chair & Members of the Committee,</p> <p>My name is Zhizi Xiong and I'm testifying to provide comments, I neither support nor do I oppose the bill. I'm testifying on behalf of my grassroots organization, CARES, Community Advocacy Research Education Services.</p> <p>In our first testimony, we testified about how the city could consider creating habitat conservations, which would subsidize the costs of maintaining the beaches by implementing an impact fee and creating conservation sites like Haunauma Bay. It could solve the problem of commercial activities destroying our aina because a designated sanctuary, like a monk seal sanctuary, is educational for the public. It is also an economical gain for the city while deterring commercial activities.</p> <p>In our most recent testimony, we testified about being fair to the businesses because only addressing residential complaints is not fair for entrepreneurs & business owners who contribute to the City's economy. A Civil Beat reporter contacted us after reading</p>		

our testimony and she had an idea about permitting. Granting permits is a considerable compromise because the permitting process can require applicants to attend a class to learn to respect nature and the indigenous practices of Hawaii. Permits are also an ideal management strategy because it will regulate the influx of commercial activities. This is a management problem. Commercial activities need to be regulated. It is only a quick fix to just ban it all together.

To ban commercial activities is in contradiction to the goals of Hawaii. And one can question if it is in contradiction of the city's goals after the creation of the newest office, The Office of Economic Revitalization. The City should be celebrating new & innovative economic ideas & commercial activities. Hawaii's economy is dependent upon tourism. For our advocacy, we spoke to a tour bus. They bring tourists to local farms to support our farmers. Healthy tourism should not be limited but instead regulated. In conclusion, it'd only be fair if the bill were to consider both residential complaints and the barriers for businesses.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

TO: Members of the Honolulu City Council

FROM: Natalie Iwasa
808-395-3233

DATE: Wednesday, December 7, 2022

SUBJECT: Bill 48, Banning Tour Companies from Kokololio Beach Park
OPPOSED

Aloha Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

Thank you for allowing testimony on Bill 48, which would ban tour companies from Kokololio Beach Park. I oppose this bill and have opposed every similar bill prior to it.

Whatever happened to the mayor's position that they were going to provide a uniform policy for the island? Banning commercial activities at one park after another simply invites more requests for bans and penalizes those who attempt to make a living by provide certain services.

Rather than continuing to ban activities, please look at overall management of our island's beaches and perhaps regulation via permit.

Please vote "no" on Bill 48.

STRONGLY SUPPORT BILL 48(22)

Measure Title: RELATING TO COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES AT PUBLIC PARKS.

Aloha Chair Waters. Vice-Chair Kia'aina, and City Council Members:

I strongly support adding the following sentence relating to Commercial activities, including recreational stops by commercial tour companies, but excluding movie or television filming activities permitted under Sections 10-3.2(a)(1) and 10-3.2(a)(2), are not allowed at any time at the following parks:

(4) Recreational stops by commercial tour companies are not allowed at any time at Kokololio Beach Park.”

Bill 48 is not an action to be anti-business or anti-tourism or preventing personal profiteering. Bill 48 is an action to not allow the entire island of Oahu to be invaded, intruded, and turned into a playground for all visitors.

As the tourism count escalates to 10 million and more on this little island with limited resources and capacity, Oahu must come to terms as to how to manage and regulate tourism.

Oahu is a small island of only 597 square miles.

We must consider CARRY CAPACITY and whether local residents must continue to be invaded in their own communities and whether to lose their traditional open and recreational spaces that are critical to their well-being, happiness, and mental health.

We must put Residents First by ensuring basic peace and tranquility for our kama'aina and protecting open spaces in perpetuity.

Beaches like Waikiki and other recreational spots have already been overtaken by tourism. Oahu must draw a line in the sand to protect its local residents' sensitive places.

In the late 1980s, the Honolulu City Council worked with Ko'olauloa communities and *KEEP THE COUNTRY COUNTRY* to protect and preserve Kakela Beach Park aka Kokololio Beach Park for compelling reasons.

Residents, City Council and others banded together to keep this 14-acre beachfront park open - - to **preserve this open space and recreational area for our local residents.**

Then Zions Securities Corporation (ZSC), now known as Hawaii Reserves, Inc (HRI) wanted to develop condominiums on this parcel. The Catholic Youth Camp was also magnanimous in selling (consolidating) their smaller acres to this preservation effort.

Kakela hosts a long-standing tradition for many local family camping. It was dubbed as the "Hawaiian Vacation" because many took time off from work during the summer to camp with families and friends. This tradition continues.

Community enjoyment was the main compelling reason why we fought in the 1980s to preserve Kekela Park or Kokololio Beach Park open space - - for local residents' enjoyment and recreation.

It's in the best public interest to adopt Bill 48 (22) as Oahu becomes more congested.

This local area is meant for peaceful and relaxing recreation for our local residents. Residents must not to have to fight or argue, or report infractions or try to bird-dog or help the city regulate tourists or growing commercialism in these public beach parks.

Besides, trying to please every sector is untenable. The City (and DLNR) does not have a good record of prompt response or enforcing its regulations either.

Please adopt Bill 48 in favor of the overall public interest and public good.

Mahalo,

Choon James
ChoonJamesHawaii@gmail.com