RES23-161
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 371

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Jul 12, 2023 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 0

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 2

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Natalie Iwasa	iwasajunk@email.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Jul 11, 2023 @ 06:15 AM
Name:	Email:	Zip:
Choon James	ChoonJamesHawaii@gmail.com	96762
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
CountryTalkStory.com	I wish to comment	Jul 12, 2023 @ 12:57 AM

TO: Members of the Honolulu City Council

FROM: Natalie Iwasa
808-395-3233

DATE: Wednesday, July 12, 2023

SUBJECT: Resolution 23-161, Proposed Charter Amendment
Capital Improvement Projects and Funding - **COMMENTS**

Aloha Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

Thank you for allowing testimony on Resolution 23-161, which is a proposed charter amendment that would set up annual funding for capital improvement projects recommended by neighborhood boards.

The bill includes no details on how projects would be selected, whether there will be dollar limits imposed on projects or similar details. Therefore, **please discuss:**

- **how priorities will be set between the competing proposed projects;**
- **how proposed projects will be evaluated by the city;**
- **whether boards will be limited in the number of projects they are allowed to recommend or the dollar amounts of projects;**
- **what happens if a recommended project is determined not to be acceptable by the city; and**
- **whether the council or mayor will be allowed to substitute projects.**



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REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER
10TH SESSION
FRIDAY, JULY 12, 2023
10:00 AM

Selected Agenda Item: RES23-161 INITIATING AMENDMENTS TO THE REVISED CHARTER OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU 1973 (AMENDED 2017 EDITION), AS AMENDED, RELATING TO COMMUNITY-BASED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.

ALOHA CHAIR WATERS AND CITY COUNCILMEMBERS:

MY APOLOGIES. MY KEYBORD IS STUCKED IN CAPITAL LETTERS FOR NOW.

THIS ISSUE NEEDS TO BE MORE CAREFULLY VETTED.

MAYOR FRANK FASI HAS AN IDEALISTIC DREAM TO SUPPORT AND ENGAGE THE GRASSROOTS AND ALSO TO HELP THE DECISION-MAKERS IN GOVERNMENT NOT LOSE TOUCH WITH THEIR CONSITUENTS.

HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN A GRADUAL DOWNGRADING OF THIS PUBLIC INTEREST IDEAL.

THERE ARE NEIGHBORHOOD BOARDS THAT ARE CONSTANTLY CONTROLLED AS AN EXTENSION OF THE GOERNMENT RATHER THAN ENCOURAGING GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION.

RECENTLY, THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN QUESTIONS RAISED ABOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION MEMBERS SEATED IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD BOARDS. THIS WARRANTS A SERIOUS DISCUSSION RELATING TO CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND THE FUNDAMENTAL IDEAL OF THESE AREA BOARDS.

ADDITIONALLY, NEIGHBORHOOD BOARDS MEMBERS INCLUDE OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND CORPORATE MEMBERS WHO ARE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN LOBBYING FOR THEIR OWN INTERESTS AT THE CITY OR STATE LEVELS.

IN OUR OWN NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD IN KO'OLAULOA, CHAIR PANE MEATOGA IS A LOBBYIST FOR THE OPERATING ENGINEERS LOCAL UNION AND ALSO THE CHAIR OF THE HONOLULU CITY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION. THIS TYPE OF ENVIRONMENT DOES NOT PROMOTE FAITH IN AN OPEN AND TRANSPARENT GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

ADDITIONALLY, IT APPEARS THAT THERE IS A GAP OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE BOARD AND THE GRASSROOTS WITH SOME BOARDS. SOME BOARDS HAVE VERY POOR ATTENDANCE AND SO FORTH.

I STRONGLY URGE MUCH MORE VETTING ON THIS BILL. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD BOARDS? IS THIS BILL STEERING THE BOARDS FROM ITS FUNDAMENTAL VALUE AND PURPOSE FOR THEIR EXISTENCE?

MAHALO,

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