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DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA PĀKA A ME NĀ HANA HO'ONANEA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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March 30, 2026

The Honorable Andria Tupola, Chair
and Members
Committee on Housing, Homelessness & Parks
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street, Suite 202
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Tupola and Councilmembers:

SUBJECT: Testimony on Bill 30 (2026), Relating to Public Parks

The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) supports the intent of Bill 30 (2026), and respectfully recommends the following amendments:

- In Section 2, remove the proposed language exempting farmers' markets as a "Commercial Activity" and insert the following language in Section 3:

  "(a) *Required*. Any person using the recreational and other areas and facilities under the control, maintenance, management, and operation of the department of parks and recreation must first obtain a permit from the department for the following uses:

  (13) Farmers' markets operated by a non-profit organization, provided that they are:

  (A) Subject to the Department's administrative rules and regulations governing recreational activities;

  (B) Not located on property where People's Open Markets are operated; and

(C) Not located in highly utilized park locations including, but not limited to, District Parks, Regional Parks, and other City parks regularly used for athletic events, youth activities, and Department programs, including Summer Fun."

DPR does not support commercial, for-profit farmers' markets in City parks. DPR recommends that permits be limited to farmers' markets operated by non-profit organizations only.

To ensure that farmers' markets are located at appropriate sites that benefit surrounding communities and are managed under existing park administrative rules, DPR suggests the following amendments be included in Bill 30 (2026) which would allow:

- Farmers' markets as a suitable use to help activate underutilized, smaller park parcels where appropriate for the community and where they do not compete with existing People's Open Market locations;

- Consistency with existing park administrative rules by limiting operators to non-profit organizations, as defined under DPR's administrative rules governing recreational activities; and

- Enable the Department to impose reasonable operational conditions pursuant to administrative rules to ensure health, safety, and proper management. Examples include requiring off-duty police officers for traffic management where necessary and portable restrooms where park facilities are insufficient or unavailable.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Bill 30 (2026).

Sincerely,

Laura H. Thielen
Director

APPROVED:

Michael D. Formby, Managing Director
Office of the Managing Director