BILL022(26)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 216

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Jun 3, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 16

Oppose: 4

I wish to comment: 18

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Daniela Spoto	daniela@hiappleseed.org	96815
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii Appleseed	Support	May 29, 2026 @ 01:06 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
James Gauer	jamesjtz@aol.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 29, 2026 @ 01:34 PM

Testimony:

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee.

My name is James, I live in Salt Lake Moanalua neighborhood and I am testifying today in support of bill 22 because we still need more traffic control solutions around school zones, a vibrant dog park to further activate Keehi lagoon, increased security at parks and ride facilities to protect our vehicles and loved ones, and a drone that would better serve stream maintenance observations rather than risking human life to enter hard to reach areas.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

James Gauer
96818

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Thomas Brandt	tbhawaiiowan@aol.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 29, 2026 @ 05:23 PM

Testimony:

Strong support.

The need is obvious, in my opinion.

Thanks for your consideration!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Rev. Sam Domingo	revsamdom@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii Workers Center	I wish to comment	May 29, 2026 @ 06:03 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Tommy Waters, Vice Chair Andria Tupola, and Members of the Council,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of appropriations for response and recovery efforts related to the Kona low storms, including the proposed funds for flood control studies and improvements, stormwater and watershed monitoring, and the proposed $41-million emergency response and recovery fund.

Farmers and farm workers are among those most severely impacted by the recent Kona low storms and flooding on O‘ahu. Beyond the damage to crops, seeds, equipment, and infrastructure, many agricultural workers face continuous and immediate threats to their livelihood, housing and tenancy, and resilience against future disasters. Their need for kōkua is therefore urgent and time-sensitive.

As the City considers how these resources will be deployed, priority should be given not to large landowners and developers, but to small farmers and agricultural workers — Hawai‘i born, migrant, and immigrant workers who are already among the most economically vulnerable and marginalized members of our communities even before disasters occur.

Farmers play an essential role in feeding O‘ahu, sustaining local economies, and strengthening the island’s resilience. Yet for many impacted workers and small operators, the City may be the first, and sometimes only, avenue through which aid is accessible. It is therefore critical that emergency response and recovery programs are inclusive, multilingual, culturally accessible, and designed with low barriers to participation and assistance.

I also urge the Council to thoroughly investigate the causes and contributing factors behind the recent floods and to hold accountable those whose actions or negligence may have worsened a disaster that many community members believe could have been mitigated or prevented. This includes examining the responsibilities of both public agencies and large private landowners, including corporations such as Dole, whose land management and drainage practices many in the community feel have contributed to downstream impacts on farming communities and residents.

Mahalo for your consideration and for supporting investments that protect both our communities and the people who help feed us and take care of our land and water resources.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Boyd Ready	readyboyd@gmail.com	96712
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 30, 2026 @ 07:32 AM

Testimony:

Aloha, Council members,

As a past-USDA State Committee member I know that many small farmers in Waialua have been left out of national Farm Program disaster and insurance programs. They are constrained by land tenure, small business organizational constraints, and, many are new farmers with 'specialty crops' not the primary focus of USDA help.

I strongly support the provision of disaster recovery grants to Waialua's small farmers. Just as our farmers' many neighbors jumped to immediately bring equipment and rescue help in the midst of the flood, the City's direct help now to our flooded out farmers would be a hand up, not a handout.

Please support funds in the budget to help flood-affected Waialua's farmers.

Boyd Ready

Local historian

Haleiwa - Waialua

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Nanea Lo	naneaclo@gmail.com	96826
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	May 30, 2026 @ 11:27 AM

Testimony:

Hello Chair Tommy Waters, Vice Chair Andria Tupola, and Members of the Honolulu City Council,

My name is Nanea Lo, and I am writing in support of Bill 22 CD2 and the proposed relief efforts for farmers and farm workers impacted by the recent Kona low storms and flooding on O'ahu.

I am also a Board Member of the Hawai'i Workers Center, an organization that advocates for the rights, safety, and well-being of workers across Hawai'i, particularly low-wage workers, immigrants, migrants, and other communities that are often underserved and disproportionately impacted during times of crisis. Through our work, we see firsthand how natural disasters can devastate working families, disrupt livelihoods, and create long-term economic hardship for those who are already struggling to make ends meet.

The recent flooding caused significant damage to farms across our island, affecting crops, equipment, infrastructure, housing, and the livelihoods of farm workers and their families. Many agricultural workers are among the most vulnerable members of our community and often face barriers to accessing relief and recovery resources. For these workers, the impacts of the Kona low storms extend far beyond damaged fields—they threaten financial stability, food security, and their ability to remain in Hawai'i.

As a Board Member of the Hawai'i Workers Center, I strongly support efforts to ensure that recovery resources reach those who need them most. Small farmers and agricultural workers are essential to Hawaii's food system, local economy, and resilience, yet they are too often overlooked in disaster recovery efforts. The City has an opportunity to provide meaningful support that helps workers recover, rebuild, and continue contributing to our communities.

I urge the City to ensure that all emergency response and recovery programs are accessible, multilingual, culturally appropriate, and designed with low barriers to participation. Relief programs should be structured in a way that recognizes the realities faced by working families, including those who may not have easy access to government services, transportation, internet connectivity, or English-language resources.

I also support continued investment in flood control improvements, watershed management, and stormwater

infrastructure to help reduce the impacts of future disasters. As climate-related events become more frequent and severe, protecting our agricultural communities must be a priority. This includes examining the causes and contributing factors behind recent flooding events and ensuring accountability where preventable actions or negligence may have worsened the impacts on farmers, workers, and surrounding communities.

Mahalo for your leadership and for supporting relief efforts that help protect Hawaii's farmers, farm workers, and local food systems. I respectfully urge you to support Bill 22 CD2 and ensure that recovery assistance reaches the workers and families who need it most.

me ke aloha ʻāina,

Nanea Lo
Board Member, Hawaiʻi Workers Center

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Pikachu Shelby Billionaire	presidentbillionaire@gmail.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Ohana Unity Party	Oppose	May 31, 2026 @ 07:47 AM

Testimony:

Public Testimony in Strong Opposition to Bill 22 (2026), CD2

Executive Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2027 (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027)

Submitted for the Honolulu City Council Regular Meeting – June 3, 2026

Aloha kakou e nā Councilmembers,

My name is **Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM**, Chairman of the Ohana Unity Party, a Honolulu resident, taxpayer, and fierce advocate for fiscal sanity, accountability, and putting our ohana first. This is my **third time** testifying in strong opposition to this unsustainable budget approach. You have heard these concerns before — yet the pattern continues.

I submit this testimony in **strong, unequivocal, and unyielding OPPOSITION** to **Bill 22 (2026), CD2**, the Executive Operating Budget that appropriates **nearly $4.85 billion** in total funds (with a net General Fund impact of approximately **$3.97 billion** after interfund transfers).

The Raw Numbers That Should Shock Every Taxpayer

According to the bill text itself:

- **Total Operating Appropriations**: **$4,849,111,918**
- **General Fund (Taxpayer) Share**: Heavily dominant, with massive reliance on property taxes, GET, and other resident-funded sources.
- **Previous Year Context**: This represents continued growth in a city already facing chronic problems — hundreds of police vacancies, lapsed millions in prior budgets, and infrastructure decay.

HPD Context (Critical Failure Point):
Despite this enormous spending, the Honolulu Police Department continues to operate with **~448 sworn vacancies** (over 21% of authorized positions as of early 2026), hundreds more retirement-eligible, and extreme overtime (100+ officers exceeding 1,000 hours, some over 2,000 hours in FY2025). Billions flow through the system, yet core public safety remains critically under-resourced.

Rail / HART Drain:
This operating budget continues feeding the Honolulu Rail Transit Project — a money pit that has exploded from original ~$4 billion estimates to over **$12–15 billion+**. HART's own FY2027 request was around **$1.07 billion** combined operating + capital, with ongoing debt service, federal tranches, and massive ongoing subsidies from City taxpayers. This is not "investment" — it is a **structural black hole** that diverts resources from police recruitment, cesspool upgrades, road repairs, homelessness solutions, and basic services.

Historical Waste Indicators:
- Prior years saw **$50 million+ lapsed** from HPD and other departments — meaning the City couldn't even spend what was already allocated efficiently, yet demands ever-larger budgets.
- Rail delays, change orders, lawsuits, and contractor claims (e.g., hundreds of millions in disputes) continue while residents pay the price through higher taxes and declining services.

This is taxation without results. The people of Honolulu are not an unlimited ATM for rail-centric fantasies and bureaucratic bloat.

"I ka wā ma mua, i ka wā ma hope" — Looking backward to see forward. The history of this rail project is one of broken promises, massive cost overruns, and repeated requests for more taxpayer money with little accountability. Approving yet another bloated operating budget that normalizes this cycle is fiscal malpractice.

What This Budget Fails to Prioritize

- **Real solutions** to police staffing (no bold retention bonuses, housing stipends, or aggressive recruitment at the scale needed).
- **Cesspool upgrades** and environmental protections without unfunded mandates on homeowners.

- **Road maintenance** and flood mitigation in existing neighborhoods.
- **True affordability** for working families instead of feeding development interests tied to rail.

Instead, it entrenches a culture where billions are expected every year from the same overburdened taxpayers, with diminishing returns on public safety, infrastructure, and quality of life.

My Demand

Vote NO on Bill 22 (2026), CD2.
Send it back for major revisions that:
- Freeze or cut non-essential spending.
- Prioritize filling police vacancies and core services.
- Impose strict accountability metrics on HART spending.
- Protect taxpayers from endless rail subsidies.

We are not fools. We see the numbers. We feel the burden. Enough is enough.

Mahalo nui loa for your kuleana — now exercise it with courage and fiscal responsibility. I respectfully request this testimony be entered into the official public record.

Me ke aloha pumehana,

Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM
Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.I.
Ohana Unity Party, Chairman

Presidentbillionaire@gmail.com
X: @AmericanpartyOG
YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/@theXXXfiles

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sherry Heiser	keliakai01@gmail.com	96791
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	May 31, 2026 @ 01:12 PM

Testimony:
I urge you to support amendments to Bill 22 CD2. that would provide $5 million in Farm Disaster Recovery Grants for those impacted by the March 2026 Kona Low flooding. I am a resident who lives on Waialua Beach Road. Although I was lucky and did not substain substantial damage, my neighbors around me, especially the farmers working the fields across

the street and neighboring areas, did.

The day after the first Kona Low, I witnessed farmers at Thompson Corner on Kaukonahua Road desperately trying to scrape up a few dollars by flagging down cars for people to purchase laulau. It reminded me of a trip I had taken with my parents to Mexico City many years ago when street children were running up to our taxi begging for pennies. After the second Kona Low storm hit, flooding conditions on the North Shore, as you know, were much worse.

Farmers devote their lives toward making our islands more self-sustainable. They provide healthy and fresh food for our tables. Their contributions to our community cannot be underestimated.The floods devastated not only their homes, but also their fields, crops, equipment, seeds, and infrastructure — the very things they depend on to survive. These are the same farmers who used their own machinery and fuel to go up and down our streets to save people who were trapped when the recent storms hit.

Traditional disaster relief often focuses on damage to homes, but farm losses are just as urgent. Without direct help, many farmers may not be able to recover, replant, or continue to provide food for our tables. Please support these amendments and help ensure our farmers are not left behind.

Name: Barbara Ritchie	Email: blritchie01@gmail.com	Zip: 96712
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: May 31, 2026 @ 07:12 PM
Name: Carol Philips	Email: carolphilips1@gmail.com	Zip: 96712
Representing: North Shore Chamber of Commerce	Position: Support	Submitted: May 31, 2026 @ 08:44 PM
Name: Kima Hardy	Email: kima@earth-innovation.com	Zip: 96734
Representing: Ho'opili Hua - HI Farmers Mutual Aid Network	Position: Support	Submitted: May 31, 2026 @ 09:02 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Members of the Honolulu City Council,

My name is Kima Hardy. I am an urban agroecologist, food sovereignty advocate, and co-founder of Hoʻopili Hua, a Hawaiʻi farmer mutual aid network. I strongly support Bill 22 (CD2) and the proposed $5 million in grants to assist farmers recovering from the recent Kona Low flooding.

Through our work supporting farmers across Oʻahu, we have seen firsthand the devastating impacts of these floods. Farmers have lost crops, seeds, equipment, soil, infrastructure, and in some cases their primary source of income. Many

are still struggling to assess damages and begin recovery.

These funds are urgently needed to help small farmers and agricultural workers rebuild and continue feeding our communities. Recovery assistance must be accessible, trauma informed, culturally responsive, multilingual, and designed with low barriers so that those most impacted can receive support quickly.

Food growers—whether commercial producers, subsistence farmers, community gardeners, or cultural practitioners—are the backbone of a resilient Hawai'i. They nourish our communities, steward our lands and waters, preserve 'ike kūpuna, and strengthen our collective ability to withstand future food supply disruptions. When our farmers suffer, we all do.

As climate disasters become more frequent and severe, investing in farmer recovery is an investment in O'ahu's food security and resilience. I urge the Council to prioritize small-scale farmers and farm workers, while also addressing the underlying challenges that increase vulnerability, including inadequate flood infrastructure, insecure land tenure, and the lack of sustained support for local agriculture.

Mahalo for your leadership and for supporting the people who care for our lands and feed our island communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ted Kefalas	tkefalas@grassrootinstitute.org	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii	I wish to comment	Jun 1, 2026 @ 08:02 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Julianna Davis	julesdavis228@gmail.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Jun 1, 2026 @ 01:15 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Tommy Waters, Vice Chair Andria Tupola, and Members of the Council,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of appropriations for response and recovery efforts related to the Kona low storms, including the proposed funds for flood control studies and improvements, stormwater and watershed monitoring, and the proposed $41-million emergency response and recovery fund.

Farmers and farm workers are among those most severely impacted by the recent Kona low storms and flooding on O'ahu. Beyond the damage to crops, seeds, equipment, and infrastructure, many agricultural workers face continuous and immediate threats to their livelihood, housing and tenancy, and resilience against future disasters. Their need for kōkua is

therefore urgent and time-sensitive.

As the City considers how these resources will be deployed, priority should be given not to large landowners and developers, but to small farmers and agricultural workers — Hawai'i born, migrant, and immigrant workers who are already among the most economically vulnerable and marginalized members of our communities even before disasters occur.

Farmers play an essential role in feeding O'ahu, sustaining local economies, and strengthening the island's resilience. Yet for many impacted workers and small operators, the City may be the first, and sometimes only, avenue through which aid is accessible. It is therefore critical that emergency response and recovery programs are inclusive, multilingual, culturally accessible, and designed with low barriers to participation and assistance.

I also urge the Council to thoroughly investigate the causes and contributing factors behind the recent floods and to hold accountable those whose actions or negligence may have worsened a disaster that many community members believe could have been mitigated or prevented. This includes examining the responsibilities of both public agencies and large private landowners, including corporations such as Dole, whose land management and drainage practices many in the community feel have contributed to downstream impacts on farming communities and residents.

Mahalo for your consideration and for supporting investments that protect both our communities and the people who help feed us and take care of our land and water resources.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Tia Pearson	tia.pearson@gmail.com	96786
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jun 1, 2026 @ 02:14 PM

Testimony:
These would provide much-needed aid to two vulnerable populations: impacted farm workers and kūpuna living on fixed incomes.

These two amendments would provide:

$5 million in Farm Disaster Recovery Grants to support farm workers impacted by the March 2026 Kona Low storms.
$1 million in direct funding to the City's Elderly Affairs Division to fund critical kūpuna feeding programs, such as Meals on Wheels.

I'm elderly myself and am very concerned about the welfare of this population as well as those farmers that provide us

food.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kami Yamamoto	kami@hawaiiworkerscenter.org	96786
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawai'i Workers Center	I wish to comment	Jun 1, 2026 @ 02:42 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jacob Wiencek	jacob.m.wiencek@pm.me	96815
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jun 1, 2026 @ 05:19 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

This budget contains meaningful investments for our community that deserve recognition. The $200,000 appropriation for a temporary restroom facility in collaboration with the Waikīkī Business Improvement District Association addresses a longstanding gap in basic public amenities for one of the most heavily visited corridors in the state. The new stream maintenance positions, equipment, and flood mitigation technology funding added by the Council speak directly to the safety of the Ala Wai watershed, which sits at the heart of Waikīkī's residential and commercial life. The expansion of Community Policing Teams across all eight patrol districts and continued investment in ocean safety personnel reflect a genuine commitment to public safety in a district where residents and visitors share the same streets and shoreline. I am also grateful for the $1 million appropriation directed to kupuna feeding and social support programs, and for the Council's attention to pedestrian safety improvements like the Nenue Place crosswalk. These are concrete commitments to the people who live here, not just those who visit.

Two structural issues concern me in this budget: retirement system contributions and debt service together consume over $1.4 billion, roughly five and a half times the entire direct infrastructure maintenance portfolio. I understand this city faces challenges over how to allocate its public resources and we need to have the right budgets with the right investments for Honolulu to prosper.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand	carolynwhildebrand@gmail.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jun 1, 2026 @ 07:49 PM

Testimony:

Aloha.

Please pass this bill that includes an amendment that would appropriate $5M in Farm Disaster Recovery Grants: I fully support providing help to farmers and farm workers affected by the recent Kona Low storm. The losses go far beyond agricultural businesses and jobs. Small farms often have very thin profit margins, and farm workers are among the lowest

paid. Most cannot recover from a disaster like this without help (unlike for example, large global companies that can spread out their risks). When local crops, infrastructure, and livelihoods in our designated island food basket are destroyed, it hurts our whole community. It weakens our local food supply, our economy, and our connection to agriculture. This loss is not just for our farmers; it affects all of us and our shared goal of building a strong, sustainable, and self-reliant city.

Mahalo.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Katherine Ozawa	katie.ozawa@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Jun 1, 2026 @ 08:46 PM

Testimony:

Aloha mai kakou Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

As their former office manager, I wish to express my deep concern regarding the budget for the Office of Economic Revitalization, and 18 of my hardworking, dedicated colleagues who love Honolulu and wish to serve her people.

During my time at OER, I watched as all of the wonderful people who shared office space with me work tirelessly on innovative programs to bring access to the internet to homes that did not have it, assistance to members of our community who want to start small businesses, and even worked to coordinate the city's response in the aftermath of the COVID pandemic - when our city's economic needs were at it's highest.

This current budget includes the elimination of a $500,000 initiative supporting 100 farmers' markets across O'ahu over the next 2 years, which directly supports local vendors selling fresh, local produce. It also kneecaps coordination and support for farmers impacted by the Kona Low storms due to the elimination of key OER positions involved in disaster recovery assistance.

It would mean the loss of valuable relationships between the City and trusted community organizations, the loss of potential private grants and congressional delegated earmarks focused on transit-oriented development and food access, some of which I had the privilege to assist in applying for.

The Office of Economic Revitalization deserves the budget that they have been operating with previously, and my colleagues - your constituents - deserve to keep their jobs.

Please restore OER's operating budget.

Mahalo nui loa,

Kate Ozawa

Mililani, 96789

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dale VanderBrink	sandmandfgh@gmail.com	96814

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Jun 1, 2026 @ 09:49 PM

Testimony:

My name is Dale VanderBrink. I strongly oppose bill 22 in its current form. In a time when the Trump administration is still actively cutting federal jobs, the City and County of Honolulu does not need to join in such an effort. I urge the council to restore the full funding for the office of economic revitalization. Do not kick city workers onto the streets.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Keala Fung	kealadancer@gmail.com	96822

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Jun 2, 2026 @ 08:44 AM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Tommy Waters, Vice Chair Andria Tupola, and Members of the Council,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of appropriations for response and recovery efforts related to the Kona low storms, including the proposed funds for flood control studies and improvements, stormwater and watershed monitoring, and the proposed $41-million
emergency response and recovery fund.

Farmers and farm workers are among those most severely impacted by the recent Kona low storms and flooding on Oʻahu. Beyond the damage to crops, seeds, equipment, and
infrastructure, many agricultural workers face continuous and immediate threats to their livelihood, housing and tenancy, and resilience against future disasters. Their need for kōkua is therefore urgent and time-sensitive.

As the City considers how these resources will be deployed, priority should be given not to large landowners and developers, but to small farmers and agricultural workers — Hawaiʻi born, migrant, and immigrant workers who are already among the most economically vulnerable and marginalized members of our communities even before disasters occur.

Farmers play an essential role in feeding Oʻahu, sustaining local economies, and strengthening
the island's resilience. Yet for many impacted workers and small operators, the City may be the first, and sometimes only, avenue through which aid is accessible. It is therefore critical that emergency response and recovery programs are inclusive, multilingual, culturally accessible, and designed with low barriers to participation and assistance.

I also urge the Council to thoroughly investigate the causes and contributing factors behind the recent floods and to hold accountable those whose actions or negligence may have worsened a disaster that many community members believe could have been mitigated or prevented. This includes examining the responsibilities of both public agencies and large private landowners, including corporations such as Dole, whose land management and drainage practices many in the

community feel have contributed to downstream impacts on farming communities and residents.

Mahalo for your consideration and for supporting investments that protect both our communities and the people who help feed us and take care of our land and water resources.

Keala Fung

Honolulu

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brittney Akai	bakai@pidfoundation.org	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Partners in Development Foundation	Support	Jun 2, 2026 @ 09:09 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Micah Cockett	hoopilihua@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Ho'opili Hua	Support	Jun 2, 2026 @ 09:27 AM

Testimony:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF BILL 22 CD2

TO: Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee

FROM: Micah Cockett, Founder and Coordinator of Hoʻopili Hua

POSITION: Strong Support

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

My name is Micah, and I am the founder and coordinator of Hoʻopili Hua, a grassroots agricultural mutual aid program born directly out of the devastating Kona Low storms that battered our farming communities. I am here today in strong support of this bill to allocate $5 million in aid money for our local farmers.

When the emergency sirens fade and the floodwaters recede, a second, quieter disaster begins for our agricultural community. Through Hoʻopili Hua, we operate on the front lines of ground-level resource distribution. We work side-by-side with independent, small-scale, and diversified growers—the very people who feed our islands but are so often left out.

The harsh reality is that traditional, top-down disaster assistance comes with rigid, bureaucratic barriers that many of our small farmers simply cannot navigate or qualify for. While they wait weeks or months for paperwork to clear, their soil is washing away, their crops are rotting, and their livelihoods are slipping through their fingers.

A $5 million investment is a vital lifeline, but it must be accessible. For this funding to truly save our agricultural sector, it must reach the ground quickly and flexibly, supporting the community-led initiatives and independent growers who lack corporate safety nets.

Investing in our farmers isn't just about disaster recovery; it is about our collective food security and island resilience. When our farmers hurt, our whole community feels it.

I urge this committee to pass this bill and ensure these funds are deployed with the urgency and accessibility our food producers deserve.

Mahalo for your time and for your dedication to protecting our agricultural community.

Sincerely,

Micah

Founder & Coordinator, Ho‘opili Hua

808-557-1107 hoopilihua@gmail.com

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Amanda Shaw	amanda@agstewardshiphawaii.org	96759
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i	I wish to comment	Jun 2, 2026 @ 10:12 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Patrick Williams	patwill9@yahoo.com	96817
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	I wish to comment	Jun 2, 2026 @ 10:23 AM

Testimony:

I urge the Council to provide full, uncompromised funding to the Office of Economic Revitalization. Our local economy is at a critical point. Sustaining our current momentum requires a dedicated, fully funded agency that directly supports our small businesses and local workforce. OER has consistently proven that it is uniquely equipped to design and deploy agile solutions to our island's distinct economic challenges.

OER's track record speaks volumes about its vital role in our community. Programs like the Oahu Business Connector have been absolute game-changers, bridging the gap between vulnerable local businesses and the resources they desperately need to survive and scale. From technical assistance to navigating complex federal grants, OER acts as a central hub for economic resilience.

Cutting or reducing funding for OER at this pivotal time would jeopardize these highly successful initiatives and stall Oahu's business progress. Full fiscal backing ensures they can expand their outreach, stabilize more families, and foster a more robust, self-reliant island economy. Investing in OER is an investment in Honolulu's future. I respectfully ask that you protect their full budget allocation in Bill 22.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Alex Tam	act647@gmail.com	96706
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	I wish to comment	Jun 2, 2026 @ 01:03 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Tommy Waters, Vice Chair Andria Tupola, and Members of the Council,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of appropriations for response and recovery efforts related to the Kona low storms, including the proposed funds for flood control studies and improvements, stormwater and watershed monitoring, and the proposed $41-million emergency response and recovery fund.

Farmers and farm workers are among those most severely impacted by the recent Kona low storms and flooding on Oʻahu. Beyond the damage to crops, seeds, equipment, and infrastructure, many agricultural workers face continuous and immediate threats to their livelihood, housing and tenancy, and resilience against future disasters. Their need for kōkua is therefore urgent and time-sensitive.

As the City considers how these resources will be deployed, priority should be given not to large landowners and developers, but to small farmers and agricultural workers — Hawaiʻi born, migrant, and immigrant workers who are already among the most economically vulnerable and marginalized members of our communities even before disasters occur.

Farmers play an essential role in feeding Oʻahu, sustaining local economies, and strengthening the island's resilience. Yet for many impacted workers and small operators, the City may be the first, and sometimes only, avenue through which aid is accessible. It is therefore critical that emergency response and recovery programs are inclusive, multilingual, culturally accessible, and designed with low barriers to participation and assistance.

I also urge the Council to thoroughly investigate the causes and contributing factors behind the recent floods and to hold accountable those whose actions or negligence may have worsened a disaster that many community members believe could have been mitigated or prevented. This includes examining the responsibilities of both public agencies and large private landowners, including corporations such as Dole, whose land management and drainage practices many in the community feel have contributed to downstream impacts on farming communities and residents.

Mahalo for your consideration and for supporting investments that protect both our communities and the people who help feed us and take care of our land and water resources.

Name: Sherry Menor	Email: smenor@cochawaii.org	Zip: 96813
Representing: Chamber of Commerce Hawaii	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Jun 2, 2026 @ 01:12 PM
Name: Donald Sakamoto	Email: cylonone@aol.com	Zip: 96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Self	I wish to comment	Jun 2, 2026 @ 02:27 PM

Testimony:

Oral testimony via video conference only.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
James Tokioka	james.tokioka@hawaii.gov	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Dept. of Business, Economic Dev & Tourism	Support	Jun 2, 2026 @ 04:40 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Charmaine Doran	chardoranhawaii@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Jun 2, 2026 @ 04:43 PM

Testimony:

Recently, the World Meteorological Organization announced that El Niño is likely to form. We know what that pattern has meant here — the two worst hurricanes in our history, Iniki in 1992 and Iwa in 1982, both hit during strong El Niños, and the last strong El Niño in 2015 put Hawai'i on edge when Kilo, Ignacio, and Jimena were spinning at the same time. We are heading into this next El Niño already worn down: almost every area of our island was hit by the heavy rains this year. And some neighborhoods are still recovering now.

DFM is critical to this recovery. At every neighborhood board meeting across O'ahu, the importance of DFM is felt month after month, with requests for stream and culvert clearing, road repairs, and flooding - consistently forwarded to this department. The capacity of DFM and the resilience of our city are directly tied together.

We all know that budget cuts happen every year. It’s part of the budgeting system. But every cut and every add should reflect our larger priorities. Right now, proposed floor draft TW1 does not reflect the needs and priorities of our communities. The budget isn't just numbers on paper — it impacts us in ways that can be crippling, or lift us as a collective. That is why the proposed salary reduction to DFM does not fit this moment. Please restore DFM funding by removing that reduction.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Terry George	TGeorge@hcf-hawaii.org	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii Community Foundation	Support	Jun 2, 2026 @ 05:40 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Eliza Talbot	eliza8482@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Jun 2, 2026 @ 08:12 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Johnnie-Mae Perry	waianaenb569@gmail.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jun 2, 2026 @ 10:18 PM

Testimony:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, FUNDING FOR DISTRICT 1 PROJECTS

BILL022(26) RELATING TO THE EXECUTIVE OPERATING BUDGET AND PROGRAM FOR THE FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2026 TO JUNE 30, 2027.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Benjie Yogayog	bhenj.yogayog@gmail.com	96791
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Jun 2, 2026 @ 10:21 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Tommy Waters, Vice Chair Andria Tupola, and Members of the Council,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of appropriations for response and recovery efforts related to the Kona low storms, including the proposed funds for flood control studies and improvements, stormwater and watershed monitoring, and the proposed $41-million emergency response and recovery fund.

As a farmer on O‘ahu’s North Shore in Waialua, nearly two months after those back-to-back March 2026 Kona Low storms, the challenges are still very real and evolving every day. The initial destruction was bad, but the long tail of recovery is where it gets especially tough for small operations like mine.

Farmers and farm workers are among those most severely impacted by the recent Kona low storms and flooding on O‘ahu. Beyond the damage to crops, seeds, equipment, and infrastructure, many agricultural workers face continuous and immediate threats to their livelihood, housing and tenancy, and resilience against future disasters. Their need for kōkua is therefore urgent and time-sensitive.

As the City considers how these resources will be deployed, priority should be given not to large landowners and developers, but to small farmers and agricultural workers — Hawai‘i born, migrant, and immigrant workers who are already among the most economically vulnerable and marginalized members of our communities even before disasters occur.

Farmers play an essential role in feeding O‘ahu, sustaining local economies, and strengthening the island’s resilience. Yet for many impacted workers and small operators, the City may be the first, and sometimes only, avenue through which aid is accessible. It is therefore critical that emergency response and recovery programs are inclusive, multilingual, culturally accessible, and designed with low barriers to participation and assistance.

I also urge the Council to thoroughly investigate the causes and contributing factors behind the recent floods and to hold accountable those whose actions or negligence may have worsened a disaster that many community members believe

could have been mitigated or prevented. This includes examining the responsibilities of both public agencies and large private landowners, including corporations such as Dole, whose land management and drainage practices many in the community feel have contributed to downstream impacts on farming communities and residents.

Mahalo for your consideration and for supporting investments that protect both our communities and the people who help feed us and take care of our land and water resources.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kiran Polk	kiranpolk@gmail.com	96707
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Kapolei Chamber of Commerce	I wish to comment	Jun 3, 2026 @ 01:26 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brian Miyamoto	brian@hfbf.org	96759
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii Farm Bureau	I wish to comment	Jun 3, 2026 @ 05:27 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Hunter Heaivilin	hunter@supersistence.org	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii Farmers Union	I wish to comment	Jun 3, 2026 @ 07:58 AM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

We support the farmer disaster recovery grant and OER staff restoration in CM Weyer's proposed FD1 and urge this Council to adopt those provisions.

Farmer Disaster Recovery Grants.

Councilmember Weyer's proposed FD1 includes $1.5 million in OER current expenses specifically for grants to support farmers recovering from natural disasters.

Hawai‘i Farmers Union and partner organizations have now collected damage reports from over 260 O‘ahu farm operations impacted by the March 2026 Kona Low storms (report.agstewardshiphawaii.org), representing nearly $20 million in losses. The median farm lost $30,000. Eighty percent of affected farms carry no form of crop or disaster insurance, not by choice, but because federal crop insurance is essentially unavailable to diversified farms in Hawai‘i. In 2025, less than 4% of Hawai‘i's farms had a federal policy, nearly all on Hawai‘i Island, mostly for coffee and macadamia. On all of O‘ahu, one farm had federal crop insurance in 2025.

These farms supply O‘ahu's farmers markets, restaurants, and school lunch programs. Most disaster relief programs are structured around either households or businesses, and farmers fall through the gap. HI Dept. of Ag & Biosecurity and SBA disaster loans are debt instruments that do not work for producers who have lost their entire productive capacity and have no near-term revenue to service a loan. Direct grants allow farmers to clear fields, replace equipment, cover rent and

operating costs, and restart production.

Beyond immediate recovery, these grants help unlock federal dollars. USDA disaster recovery programs such as FSA's Emergency Conservation Program require cost-share from the applicant. Farmers who have lost their equipment cannot provide in-kind labor or machine time. City-funded grants that enable a farmer to hire an equipment operator can simultaneously satisfy the federal cost-share requirement, turning a single local investment into matched federal recovery funding.

To date, Hawai'i Farmers Union Foundation has raised nearly $700,000 for impacted producers statewide, but private fundraising cannot match the millions in reported damages on O'ahu alone.

Restoring OER's Agricultural Capacity.

Neighbor island counties have maintained dedicated agricultural staff for decades, many since the 1980s. Honolulu did not create its Agricultural Liaison position in OED until 2011. When OED was reorganized into OER, that function was rebuilt as the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems program. Having come late to this work, the City should not now walk away from it, especially when O'ahu's farmers have been so impacted by the Kona Low storms.

Chair Waters' proposed FD1 restores two of OER's 24 positions, one earmarked specifically for the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems program, recognizing the importance of OER's agricultural work. But one planner cannot administer the full extent of farmer disaster recovery grants, farmers market initiative, and the disaster recovery funding this Council has already authorized. CM Weyer's draft restores 20 positions and $411,669 in operating expenses. CM Dos Santos-Tam's draft restores 17 positions with the same operating budget. Both provide the staff capacity required for OER to function. Hawai'i Farmers Union supports the farmer disaster recovery grant proviso in CM Weyer's proposed FD1 and the restoration of OER's agricultural staff capacity. We urge this Council to adopt those provisions.

Aloha,

Hunter Heaivilin

Advocacy Director

Hawaii Farmers Union

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Gregory Kim	gregoryrkim@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Jun 3, 2026 @ 08:36 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Racquel Achiu	rhachiu@gmail.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Jun 3, 2026 @ 09:49 AM

Testimony:

Aloha council Chair & Council Members. Racquel Achiu of the Waialua Moku, North Shore, O'ahu. I am submitting comments on Bill 22.

I urge you to reconsider the proposed budget impacts to OER. The negative impact this cut could have on our communities is severe. This is especially evident having seen the significant support and work that OER continues to provide after the Kona Low Storms.

OER's engagement and support has been invaluable.

We are in a time where the interest and well being of our communities must be prioritized.

MAHALO

HAWAII APPLESEED
CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony in Support for Bill 22 (2026), CD2
Relating to Kupuna feeding and social support programs
Honolulu City Council Regular Meeting
Wednesday, June 3, 2026, at 10:00AM

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and members of the Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT of Bill 22 (2026), CD2, specifically for the amendment adding funds to Elderly Affairs for kupuna feeding and social support programs.**

Hawai‘i Appleseed advocates for services that allow all Hawai‘i’s residents to thrive, regardless of economic status. Unfortunately, Hawai‘i’s kūpuna already face some of the highest food costs in the nation, stretching fixed incomes across housing, medical bills and groceries. This amendment is an innovative and essential move to alleviate food insecurity for O‘ahu’s older adults, who face unique challenges in accessing food relative to other populations on our island.

Hawai‘i’s largest nutrition support program, SNAP, helps more than 33,000 Hawai‘i seniors[1] afford nutritious foods—supporting overall health and providing flexibility, dignity, and the ability to choose culturally-relevant foods. However, new federal restrictions passed in Congress’ One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) threatens to cut off access to an estimated 16,570 older adults in Hawai‘i unless they can document 20 hours of work per week (based on April 2025 data from Hawai‘i’s SNAP office).

The City and County of Honolulu, like Hawai‘i’s other counties, has an overlooked but critical asset to alleviate this upcoming threat: its federally-designated Area Agency on Aging, known as the Elderly Affairs Division in the Department of Community Services. This office already administers a variety of programs tailored toward older adults, including home-delivered and congregate meals. Currently, these programs are funded through a mix of state and federal funds, which come with a number of restrictions that make it difficult to reach all of the island’s seniors. This amendment would allow the City to expand these programs and tailor them to the specific needs of O‘ahu’s kupuna population.

The issue of senior hunger is complex, but can be alleviated with innovative tools and programs that address it from multiple angles. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Bill 22 (2026), CD2. We are pleased that the Council is paying attention to improving food security. By investing in this initiative, we can create a stronger, healthier, and more equitable Hawai‘i for generations to come.

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[1] U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) State Fact Sheet: Hawaii," accessed March 27, 2026

Testimony for City Council Bill 22, CD 2 for Farm Disaster Recovery Grants

Our North Shore farmers work incredibly hard every day to feed our community. Many are small, family-run farms, and many farmers are elderly. The floods devastated not only their homes, but also their fields, crops, equipment, seeds, and infrastructure — the very things they depend on to survive.

Traditional disaster relief often focuses on damage to homes, but farm losses are just as urgent. Without direct help, many farmers may not be able to recover, replant, or continue providing food for our island.

Please support City Council Bill 22, CD 2 to help support our North Shore farmers in this time of great need.

66-434 Kamehameha Hwy
Haleiwa, HI 96712
(808) 637-4558
info@gonorthshore.org / www.gonorthshore.org

Carol Philips
President
North Shore Surf Girls

Mike Biechler
Vice President
North Shore Law Offices

Will Schoettle
Secretary
Haleiwa Town Center

Darrell Whitaker
Treasure
Camp Mokulēʻia

Lamont Brown
Director
Maya's Tapas and Wine

T.J Cuaresma
Director
Tita Ei Nei Productions

Dave Fuga
Director
KT Protection Systems

Erica Lehmkuhl
Director
Seaside Realty

Marcia Murphy
Director
Pacific One Mortgage

Thomas Naylor
Director
Ke Nui Kitchen

Michael Sweetman
Director
Law Offices of
Einwechter & Hyatt

Robert Walker
Director
Integral Consulting

Bill Ward
Director
Corcoran Properties

Virginia Wallace
Administrator

Marsha Taylor
Community Outreach
Coordinator

June 3, 2026

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF BILL 22 (2026)
RE: CD2 AMENDMENT – $5,000,000 FOR AGRICULTURAL DISASTER RECOVERY

Aloha Chair Walters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Members of the Council,

The North Shore Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the amendments to Bill 22 CD2 that would provide $5 million in Farm Disaster Recovery Grants for farmers impacted by the March 2026 Kona Low flooding.

Our North Shore farmers work incredibly hard every day to feed our community. Many are small, family-run operations, and many farmers are elderly residents who have spent their lives caring for the land and producing food for Oʻahu. The March flooding devastated not only homes, but also fields, crops, equipment, seeds, irrigation systems, roads, and other farm infrastructure — the very things farmers depend on to survive.

Traditional disaster relief often focuses on damage to homes and personal property. While that relief is critical, farm losses are also urgent and must not be overlooked. When a farm is flooded, the damage can affect an entire growing season or longer. Without direct support, many farmers may not be able to recover, replant, replace equipment, or continue providing fresh local food for our island.

Supporting these amendments is about protecting local agriculture, food security, small businesses, and the families who make up the heart of our rural North Shore community.

We respectfully urge the Council to support the amendments to Bill 22 CD2 and ensure that our farmers are not left behind in the recovery process.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify

Carol Philips

Carol Philips
President
North Shore Chamber of Commerce

GRASSROOT INSTITUTE OF HAWAII

1050 Bishop St. #508
Honolulu, HI 96813
808-864-1776
info@grassrootinstitute.org

Removing barriers to Hawaii's prosperity

June 3, 2026, 10 a.m.
Honolulu Hale

To: Honolulu City Council
Tommy Waters, Chair
Andria Tupola, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii
Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: Bill 22 (2026), CD2 — RELATING TO THE EXECUTIVE OPERATING BUDGET AND PROGRAM FOR THE FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2026, TO JUNE 30, 2027

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola and other members of the Council,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **offers comments** on Bill 22 (2026), CD2, which would allocate and appropriate funds for the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

Grassroot appreciates the fiscal prudence that the proposed budget represents overall and encourages the Council to identify additional areas in which city operations can be slimmed down or made more efficient.

The original draft of the bill called for $3.803 billion in non-federal funds, and the current CD2 draft would allocate $3.798 billion in non-federal funds — a roughly $5 million decrease. The enacted fiscal 2025-2026 budget contained $3.766 billion in non-federal dollars, which would make the current draft of the bill a 0.8% increase over the enacted 2025-2026 budget.

With the proposed floor draft seeking to add about $4.7 million to the budget, the net result would be a budget that shrunk by a few hundred thousand dollars.

This fiscal prudence keeps the city's budget growth well below the inflation rate over the past year. Since March 2025, the Consumer Price Index for Urban Hawaii increased by 3.7%, driven partially by surging energy prices.[1]

[1] "Consumer Price Index, Honolulu Area — March 2026," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, April 10, 2026.

Meanwhile, the state Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism estimates real personal income growth was 2.1% in 2025 and is expected to be 1.9% in 2026.[2] However, DBEDT also anticipates the state's economy to remain sluggish in 2026 and 2027, with gross domestic product growth rates of just 1.7% and 1.8%, respectively.[3]

Grassroot also applauds the Council for seeking to pare back duplicative services and government operations as a part of this budget.

Defunding some of the city's more than 2,000 vacant positions is a great start,[4] as is reducing the budget for the Office of Economic Revitalization, which a recent city audit found has not met its Charter-mandated goals.[5]

The current CD2 draft of the bill would remove approximately $1.8 million from OER's budget. Although the proposed floor draft of the bill would restore funding for two positions, the net result would still be a reduction of about $1.6 million.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

[2] "DBEDT Projects 1.7 Percent Growth for 2026," Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, March 12, 2026.
[3] Ibid.
[4] "Lapsed Funds and Vacancy Reports," Memo from Tommy Waters to Kiana Pascal, March 9, 2026.
[5] "Audit of the Office of Economic Revitalization," Honolulu City Auditor, Report No. 26-01, January 2026.

HAWAI'I WORKERS CENTER

Advance and Defend the Rights of Workers in Hawai'i

(808) 743-1031
contact@hawaiiworkerscenter.org
Mail: P.O. Box 29969, Honolulu, HI 96820
hawaiiworkerscenter.org

Executive Board Committee

Rev. Sam Domingo
Board Chair

Mary Ochs
Vice Chair

Dr. Arcelita Imasa
Secretary

Ananda Luttet
Treasurer

Board Members

Yoko Liriano

Innocenta Sound-Kikku

Ray Catania

Joli Tokusato

Justin Puaoi

Misty Pegram

Rich Rath

Nanea Lo

Executive Director

Kami Yamamoto, MPH

June 1, 2026

Honolulu City Council
530 S King St #202
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha Chair Tommy Waters, Vice Chair Andria Tupola, and Members of the Council,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of appropriations for response and recovery efforts related to the Kona low storms, including the proposed funds for flood control studies and improvements, stormwater and watershed monitoring, and the proposed $41-million emergency response and recovery fund.

Farmers and farm workers are among those most severely impacted by the recent Kona low storms and flooding on Oʻahu. Beyond the damage to crops, seeds, equipment, and infrastructure, many agricultural workers face continuous and immediate threats to their livelihood, housing and tenancy, and resilience against future disasters. **Their need for kōkua is therefore urgent and time-sensitive.**

As the City considers how these resources will be deployed, **priority should be given not to large landowners and developers, but to small farmers and agricultural workers** — Hawaiʻi born, migrant, and immigrant workers who are already among the most economically vulnerable and marginalized members of our communities even before disasters occur.

Farmers play an essential role in feeding Oʻahu, sustaining local economies, and strengthening the island's resilience. Yet for many impacted farmers, farm workers and small operators, the City may be the first, and sometimes only, avenue through which aid is accessible. Many of the tenant farmers HWC is organizing have been unable to produce income since the floods, leaving their livelihoods uncertain. **It is therefore critical that emergency response and recovery programs are inclusive, multilingual, culturally accessible, and designed with low barriers to participation and assistance.**

I also urge the Council to thoroughly investigate the causes and contributing factors behind the recent floods and to hold accountable those whose actions or negligence may have worsened a disaster that many community members believe could have been mitigated or prevented. This includes examining the responsibilities of both public agencies and large private landowners, including corporations such as Dole, whose land management and drainage practices many in the community feel have contributed to downstream impacts on farming communities and residents. In the past few months, HWC has been organizing with the farmers/farm owner farmers. We have seen their dedication to farming. Their passion and bond with the land is evident in their efforts to bring their farms to life– even with the meager resources they have.

Mahalo for your consideration and for supporting investments that protect both our communities and the people who help feed us and take care of our land and water resources.



Kami Yamamoto
Executive Director
Hawai'i Workers Center

PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT
FOUNDATION

June 3, 2026

The Honorable Councilmember Tommy Waters, Chair
The Honorable Councilmember Andria Tupola, Vice Chair
The Honorable Councilmember Esther Kiaʻāina, Floor Leader
Honorable Honolulu City Councilmembers
City Council Chamber
530 S King St
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Council Meeting on Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.,
City Council Chamber 22nd Session
Regarding BILL022, "RELATING TO THE EXECUTIVE OPERATING BUDGET AND PROGRAM FOR THE FY JULY 1, 2026 TO JUNE 30, 2027"

Dear Chair Waters and Vice Chair Tupola and Members of the Honolulu City Council,

We ask that you **strongly support Bill 22** to support an additional $1.5 Million to be added for Grants in Aid, for fiscal year July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027.

Partners in Development Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that inspires and equips families and communities for success and service, using timeless Native Hawaiian values and traditions. Since 1997, PIDF has served more than 171,000 people in over 75 communities across the state (www.pidf.org). PIDF has a strong record of managing complex, multi-year federal and state grants with measurable results in early childhood education, family engagement, and youth justice. PIDF continues to step to the frontline to meet the ever-changing needs of our low-income, remote, and rural families and communities, including operating a COVID quarantine hotel to keep families safe and healthy during the pandemic, to supporting families displaced by the Maui wildfires to heal and rebuild, to continuing to support and strengthen our most vulnerable children, youth and families as they navigate increasing living costs, unemployment, and loss of federal resources.

It is vital that this critical work provided by not only Partners in Development Foundation but the many other nonprofit organizations in our state continue to be supported through sufficient resources to impact the children and communities of which we serve. When our families are equipped, healthy, and thriving, our entire community benefits. **We ask that you support the additional $1.5 Million to Honolulu County Grants in Aid, to strengthen the stability and well-being of Oʻahu's families through trusted community-based organizations.**

On behalf of Partners in Development Foundation and our many nonprofit partners serving tirelessly in our state, mahalo nui loa for your consideration of this request.

Me ke aloha,

Shawn M. Kanaʻiaupuni, PhD
President and Chief Executive Officer

PO Box 4, Kunia, Hawaii, 96759 || 808-622-9026 || www.agstewardshiphawaii.org

June 2nd, 2026

Dear Chair Okimoto and Members of the Honolulu City Council Budget Committee:

On behalf of Agriculture Stewardship Hawai‘i, I am writing in strong support of the Office of Economic Revitalization (OER) for Fiscal Year 2027.

Agriculture Stewardship Hawai‘i is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the viability and sustainability of Hawai‘i’s agricultural producers and food system through technical assistance, resource coordination, stewardship-based business education, and policy engagement. We also lead the Statewide Food Systems Coordination Initiative (HSFSC), launched in 2024 with philanthropic and gubernatorial support. HSFSC works to align agricultural stakeholders, address infrastructure barriers, secure federal resources, advance institutional procurement of local food, and support policy priorities that strengthen Hawai‘i’s food system.

We have also worked closely with OER during the Kona Low response to support impacted farmers. These experiences have underscored the importance of staff within OER who understand the economic realities of agriculture and food production in Hawai‘i. Such capacity is essential to effectively serving O‘ahu’s farmers and advancing a resilient local food system.

For these reasons, we strongly support OER’s continued work in this area and respectfully urge the Council to restore and preserve funding that supports farmers, the local food system, and OER’s broader economic development efforts.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Amanda

Dr. Amanda Shaw, PhD, Statewide Food Systems Coordinator
Agriculture Stewardship Hawai‘i
Email: amanda@agstewardshiphawaii.org,
Tel: 808 429 5310

Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

2030 BLUEPRINT
ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN FOR HAWAII

Testimony to the Honolulu City Council
Councilmember Tommy Waters, Chair
Councilmember Andria Tupola, Vice Chair

Wednesday, June 2, 2026, at 10:00AM
City Council Chamber

RE: Bill 22 (2026), CD2, Proposed FD1 – Executive Operating Budget for FY2027

Aloha e Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Councilmembers:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber respectfully offers concerns with Bill 22 (2026) CD2 Proposed FD1, specifically regarding the proposed reduction of staffing in the Office of Economic Revitalization (OER).

The City has identified economic revitalization and diversification as core priorities. The Office of Economic Revitalization (OER) is central to advancing these efforts. Reducing its capacity at this scale would limit the City's ability to effectively carry out these priorities at a critical time when the state contends with high cost of living, disaster recovery, and outmigration.

As Oahu continues to navigate economic uncertainty, strong alignment between government and the business community is essential to recovery. Scaling back key economic functions risks slowing progress and weakening the foundation needed for long-term stability, diversification, and growth. Maintaining dedicated capacity in economic resilience remains vital to both near-term recovery and long-term growth for the City.

For these reasons, the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii respectfully urges reconsideration of the proposed reductions in Bill 22 (2026) CD2 Proposed FD1. A strong and adequately resourced OER is fundamental to supporting the City's business community and economic future.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer comments on Bill 22 (2026) CD2 Proposed FD1.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

KA ʻOIHANA HOʻOMOHALA PĀʻOIHANA, ʻIMI WAIWAI A HOʻOMĀKAʻIKAʻI

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
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Telephone: (808) 586-2355

Statement of
James Kunane Tokioka
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON BUDGET

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2026
10:00AM
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER

In consideration of
BILL022(26), CD2
RELATING TO THE EXECUTIVE OPERATING BUDGET AND PROGRAM FOR THE FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2026 TO JUNE 30, 2027

To Chair Okimoto and Members of the Honolulu City Council Committee on Budget:

My name is James Tokioka, and I serve as the Director of the State of Hawaiʻi Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT). I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of restoring the City Administration's Fiscal Year 2027 budget request for the Office of Economic Revitalization (OER).

OER is a critical partner to DBEDT and plays an essential role in advancing shared statewide and county-level economic development priorities. The office works collaboratively with DBEDT, the County Offices of Economic Development, business leaders, and community-based organizations to strengthen Oʻahu's economic foundation and improve quality of life for residents.

Through its leadership in policy development, program coordination, community engagement, and strategic partnerships, OER provides capacity in areas that directly align with DBEDT's mission and Oʻahu's long-term economic resilience, including:

- Small business development and entrepreneurship
- Innovation, technology, and emerging industry support
- Sustainable tourism and visitor industry management
- Agriculture and local food system development
- Workforce development and aligned employment pathways

These functions contribute to O‘ahu’s economic stability, community well-being, cultural vitality, and the commercial activity that supports City services and revenues.

DBEDT and OER maintain a strong, productive working relationship across multiple initiatives, such as:

- Co-hosting business conferences and convenings, including recent events focused on artificial intelligence and international economic collaboration;
- Coordinating the small business grant program for enterprises affected by the recent Kona Low flooding;
- Supporting Community-Based Economic Development (CBED) initiatives, including loan programs, small business fairs, and informational workshops;
- Expanding general business assistance and technical support for local companies; and
- Collaborating on workforce and housing-stability initiatives that strengthen economic mobility for O‘ahu residents.

OER’s ability to manage funding for community-based partners, extend outreach into neighborhoods, and operate as a reliable, solution-oriented collaborator has been invaluable. As recovery and revitalization efforts continue following the Kona Low event, maintaining OER’s operational capacity is especially important to ensure coordinated, timely, and community-centered support.

For these reasons, DBEDT respectfully requests that the Council restore and preserve OER’s funding at the level requested by the City Administration. Sustaining OER’s work will help maintain an economy grounded in affordability, resilience, and opportunity for all who call O‘ahu home.

Mahalo for your time, service, and continued dedication to the people of O‘ahu.
James Tokioka Director State of Hawai‘i Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism

Hawai'i Community Foundation

hawaiicommunityfoundation.org

827 Fort Street Mall Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
MAIN 808-537-6333 FAX 808-521-6286

TESTIMONY RE: BILL 22 (26) EXECUTIVE OPERATING BUDGET FY 26-27

June 3, 2026

Aloha e Chair Okimoto and Members of the Honolulu City Council Budget Committee,

On behalf of the Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF), I am writing in **strong support of restoring the City administration's budget request for the Office of Economic Revitalization (OER)** for Fiscal Year 2027. OER serves as the City's economic integrator, coordinating across systems to improve access to opportunity for residents and businesses. Rather than delivering services directly, OER focuses on coordination, reducing fragmentation, and translating resources into place-based impact.

Through its initiatives, OER supports key economic pillars that our O'ahu communities rely on, including small business and entrepreneurship, agriculture and local food systems, and workforce development. Collectively, these efforts strengthen O'ahu's economy, cultural vitality, and community well-being. Many of these pillars align with HCF's priorities, specifically within our CHANGE Framework across our Community-Centered Economy, Arts and Culture, and Natural Environment sectors.

Reducing OER's budget would negatively impact our shared priorities in workforce development, small business investment & growth, and housing initiatives. As a philanthropic organization, HCF recognizes OER's role in bridging public and private sectors to help maximize the impact of collective resources. Supporting OER's core work ensures that progress in one area reinforces gains across others, creating a more durable economy for our island home. It takes county, state, federal, private and philanthropic resources to ensure we continue creating a vibrant O'ahu.

We respectfully request that the Council **restore and preserve OER's funding at the requested level making whole OER's budget in Bill 22 CD 2.** OER fills a vital role in aligning systems, reducing fragmentation, and ensuring resources reach the communities that need them most.

Mahalo for your time, consideration, and dedication to O'ahu's communities.

Sincerely,

Terrence R. George

Terry George
Hawai'i Community Foundation
CEO & President
808-566-5579 | TGeorge@hcf-hawaii.org

City Council of the City and County of Honolulu

June 3, 2026

Testimony with Comments on Bill 22(2026)

Aloha Council Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola and Members of the Honolulu City Council,

My name is Eliza Talbot, and I am the current Chair of the Economic Revitalization Commission (ERC) and a resident of Honolulu District III. I urge the Council to restore funding for the Office of Economic Revitalization (OER) in Bill 22(2026). Reducing OER's budget would weaken the City's ability to support local businesses, protect jobs, and strengthen Honolulu's long-term economic resilience.

Based on my experience supporting local business and economic resilience in Hawai'I for many years, I have seen how essential dedicated economic development offices are to community stability and recovery. OER is a critical component of O'ahu's economic resilience infrastructure, and I respectfully urge the Council to reconsider the current version of Bill 22(2026).

OER is O'ahu's primary office for small business support and economic resilience. Reducing its funding would weaken Honolulu's ability to assist local businesses, secure outside funding, coordinate recovery efforts, and protect jobs. This is not simply an administrative reduction—it is a direct reduction in the City's economic response capacity.

If adopted as proposed, this budget would reduce the City's commitment to local businesses, entrepreneurs, and workers at a time when economic resilience remains essential. More importantly, it would weaken the City's practical ability to support the very communities and commercial corridors that depend on that assistance.

There are also 18 hard-working, good people at the OER whose positions would be lost. These are the kind of people you want on your team. These are the "helpers" that run toward a crisis. Some of these people lost their homes in the Kona Low storm and still showed up every day to help others. All of these people work long hours into the night and on weekends to help local farmers and business owners complete tedious paperwork, apply for seed funding and hire team members. They do this work because they believe in the mission of OER that all people can prosper in a resilient, growing economy.

Honolulu's quality of life is closely tied to the strength of its local businesses, workforce, and neighborhood economies. Weakening OER would reduce support for those businesses and the workers who rely on them.

OER IS the critical economic safety net in times of crisis and the full-time small business advocate during times of uncertainty. With crises and uncertainty in no short supply for the foreseeable future, I urge the Council to please support full funding for OER.

I also respectfully ask the Council to work with the Commission and the OER team to complete the strategic planning process so it can reflect district-specific priorities and strengthen accountability for results.

Failure to maintain OER's funding could diminish Honolulu's ability to compete for state and federal funding and to sustain important public-private partnerships. It would also shift economic coordination responsibilities to departments that are already stretched thin. The likely result would be reduced grant capacity, fragmented communication with the business community, slower responsiveness, fewer services for local businesses, and wider gaps in access to City, state, and federal resources.

I urge the Council to support an alternative version of this budget that restores full funding for OER, preserves current staffing capacity and allows us to finalize and implement our strategic plan. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Eliza Talbot

Chair, Economic Revitalization Commission, City and County of Honolulu

KAPOLEI
CHAMBER
of COMMERCE
Working for West Oahu

Honolulu City Council
830 S. King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Committee on Budget
Wednesday June 3, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
City Council Chamber & via videoconference

RE: Bill 22 (2026), CD2 – Executive Operating Budget

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Councilmembers:

My name is Kiran Polk, and I am the Executive Director & CEO of the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce. The Kapolei Chamber represents businesses throughout the Kapolei region, including Waipahu, Kapolei, ʻEwa Beach, Nānākuli, Waiʻanae, and Mākaha. We advocate on behalf of our members and the broader business community to support economic vitality and ensure West Oʻahu continues to thrive.

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce respectfully urges the City Council to restore and maintain full funding for the Office of Economic Revitalization (OER).

From the Chamber's perspective, **OER serves as a critical bridge between government, businesses, community organizations, and funding partners.** OER helps align resources, reduce fragmentation, and connect businesses and residents with opportunities that support economic growth and long-term resilience.

OER has been an essential partner to the business community, particularly in West Oʻahu. Through collaboration with state and federal partners, OER helps businesses access technical assistance, training opportunities, financing resources, and recovery support.

Programs such as the Oʻahu Business Connector provide direct outreach and assistance to businesses that often lack the capacity to navigate government programs on their own.

One of the most impactful initiatives for West Oʻahu has been the Idea2Biz small business incubator program. This innovative cohort-based program provided aspiring entrepreneurs—many from the Waiʻanae Coast—with training, mentorship, business planning assistance, and access to capital.

The Kapolei Chamber worked closely with OER on this initiative and has seen firsthand the results.
Several graduates have since become Chamber members and are actively growing their businesses.

The Chamber has seen firsthand how targeted investment in entrepreneurs can translate into new businesses, new jobs, and stronger local economic activity.

This is exactly the type of place-based economic development that strengthens local communities, supports entrepreneurship, and creates pathways to economic self-sufficiency.

From the COVID-19 pandemic to the recent Kona Low storms, OER has played a key role in connecting businesses, farmers, and residents with recovery resources. Its ability to coordinate assistance and respond quickly at the local level cannot easily be replicated.

In addition, OER supports initiatives that are important to the long-term health of O‘ahu’s economy, including workforce development, small business growth, innovation, agriculture, and economic diversification. These efforts help strengthen local industries, create jobs, and improve economic resilience.

The Makakilo/Kapolei/Honokai Hale Neighborhood Board recently adopted Resolution 2026-5SG supporting full funding for OER and recognizing its importance as the City’s economic integrator. The resolution specifically highlighted OER’s role in small business support, disaster recovery, agriculture, and implementation of economic development strategies that benefit communities across O‘ahu.
We share those concerns.

Reducing OER to a minimal staffing level would significantly diminish the City’s ability to administer recovery programs, support entrepreneurs, coordinate economic initiatives, and pursue opportunities that strengthen O‘ahu’s economy.

At a time when local businesses continue to face rising costs, workforce challenges, and economic uncertainty, O‘ahu needs a strong economic development partner—not a diminished one.

For these reasons, the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce respectfully urges the City Council to restore and maintain full funding for the Office of Economic Revitalization and preserve its capacity to support small businesses, entrepreneurs, workforce development, disaster recovery, and economic diversification across O‘ahu.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Kiran Polk
Executive Director & CEO

P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

June 3, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

TESTIMONY ON BILL 22 (2026), CD2
RELATING TO THE EXECUTIVE OPERATING BUDGET FOR FY July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027

City Council Chamber
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Waters and Members of the Honolulu City Council,

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaiʻi Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized in 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawaiʻi's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports the restoration of the City Administration's budget request for the Office of Economic Revitalization (OER) for Fiscal Year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027.

OER plays an important role in coordinating across sectors to support key components of Hawai'i's economy, including small businesses, workforce development, and agriculture. Efforts that help align programs, resources, and partnerships are critical to ensuring that farmers and agricultural businesses can access opportunities and support services.

HFB appreciates OER's work in supporting local food systems and its role in connecting stakeholders across government, industry, and community organizations. As recent events such as the Kona Low flooding have demonstrated, coordinated responses and accessible support systems are essential to helping businesses, including agricultural producers, recover and continue operations.

Maintaining OER's capacity to serve as a connector and partner will help strengthen O'ahu's economic resilience and support a more coordinated approach to recovery and long-term growth.

For these reasons, HFB respectfully supports the restoration of OER's budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Gregory R. Kim
349 Iliaina Street
Kailua, Hawaii 96734
gregoryrkim@gmail.com | (808) 780-2495 (m)

June 3, 2026

I am testifying to **oppose the defunding** of the Office of Economic Revitalization ("OER"), and to restore its funding, as reflected in Bill 22, CD1. In doing so, in my view, the Council would be throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

I have served as a Commissioner on the Economic Revitalization Commission since January 2023, and have had the privilege of working closely with OER on various planning and initiatives to incentive, develop, and grow good jobs for the people of Honolulu.

As I reflect on the current situation, I ask myself, why would the Council defund the only office within the City and County that is proactively focused on economic development for the people of Honolulu? Why would it do so at this time of economic crisis, when OER's services are most needed? Why would the Council defund OER in an amount that is miniscule in relationship to the City's overall budget, that helps so many small business owners in the City? There are no good answers to these questions.

If it is because OER is not doing enough, that is a given, but not a sufficient recent to eliminate its mission. The solution is for OER to refocus its resources and efforts to find greater impacts. The Audit pointed out the gaps in what OER has done, and what the Resolution contemplated. But that does not mean the OER should be eliminated. Many of the gaps should remain gaps . . . the original mission was off base and overbroad. Others gaps should be addressed.

If it is because the State is already doing economic development, that does not many any sense. Economic development at the Statewide level is a far cry from economic development at the local level. We all know that the level of care for the people of Honolulu by the Mayor's office and the Council is deeper and more informed than at the Statewide level. This is not a criticism of the State . . . it is just the reality of the work of the State versus the City.

If it is to save money, that does not make sense. The $1.7million that would be taken away from OER is a drop in the bucket for the City. For such a small amount, the City would lose 18 employees who are every day actively helping Honolulu business owners on a hand-on basis, to become successful and create good jobs. It would be pennywise and pound foolish to do so.

If it is because of the criticism from the Auditor, that does not make sense. The Auditor was simply comparing OER's operations to the Resolution. But that only begs the question . . . was the Resolution unrealistic and lacking focus? As a Commissioner, I have reviewed the Resolution in detail, and firmly believe that it is overbroad and unrealistic in it's reach. It takes a shotgun approach to economic development. OER has never had the resources to accomplish everything in the Resolution. What is has had to do is focus on a few areas where it can make a difference, with the goal of leveraging that success into a greater mission. That is the way of the entrepreneur, and OER has had to take an entrepreneurial approach. It may be time to revisit the mission of OER, but it is not the time to challenge the need for OER for the people of Honolulu.

The OER, in collaboration with the Commission, has accomplished much, and has much more work to do for the community. OER has only recently shifted from a pandemic relief office to one focusing on economic development. The impacts of its work will be felt in many years to come.

OER is a unique resource for the City and County of Honolulu. Its "can do" attitude and proven track record make it the ideal Office to undertake this critical economic work. I have been most impressed by their ability to get things done, and if they commit do something, they do it. The Commission comprised a talented and motivated group of entrepreneurs, financial experts, and community leaders that, in collaboration with OER, can make big impacts in the community by taking bold, innovative action. That is our mindset.

Studies have shown that most of the new jobs in our country are created by small business owners, and not by large corporations. By providing support to our new and existing small business community, we will ultimately help them create thousands of new, high paying, jobs for our people.

I believe that it would be a setback for the people of the County of Honolulu for the Council to cut OER's budget. OER is already maximizing its resources and personnel to implement its current program and initiatives, and any material reduction in its budget will have a negative impact on Honolulu's future prospects. This is not the time to reduce investments in the future of the people of Honolulu.

Sincerely,



Gregory Kim