

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROVIDING PUBLIC TESTIMONY AT AN LUC HEARING

The Commission offers an opportunity for individuals to provide public testimony for each item scheduled on the meeting agenda and personally address members of the Commission. The Commission will take testimony on each agenda item during a period determined by the Commission Chair. Please read the sections below that will walk you through the steps in providing public testimony and provides tips for being effective.

What To Expect If You Intend To Testify In Person

1. Arrive Early

The meeting start time is posted on the agenda and the Commission usually addresses the agenda items in the order they are posted. The Commission may occasionally take agenda items out of order but every attempt is made to receive public testimony for each agenda item at its designated time. Also, if the LUC staff or the Commission Chair is made aware prior to the start of the meeting that you need to speak on a specific agenda item out of turn due to extenuating circumstances, your request will be considered and the proper accommodations will be made if it is approved. *Requests made after the start of the meeting may not be considered.

2. Sign In

There will be a table with a “sign-in” folder near the entrance to the meeting room. Please print your name and address on the sheet for the agenda item that you wish to testify on. If you have written testimony, please be prepared to file an original and 15 copies with the LUC Chief Clerk or Planner, prior to the start of meeting. Your testimony will be circulated to the Commissioners as soon as possible in a manner to avoid disrupting the proceedings. When it is your time to speak, you will be called forward by the Executive Officer, the Commission Chair, or LUC staff.

3. Being called to Testify

When you are called to the table, you will be sworn in and asked to identify yourself. Start your testimony with...”For the record, my name is _____, speaking on(my own behalf; or behalf of an organization – if any)...and my address is _____.

Speak clearly and slowly into the microphone so that the court reporter can take down your testimony. You should remain in the witness box after your testimony is concluded in case

any of the parties or members of the Commission have questions for you. The Chair will then excuse you.

TIPS FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY

For some, public speaking, especially in front of a large group of decision-makers, can be an intimidating experience. The suggestions below are provided to help you prepare and communicate effectively.

Ask the Commission for something specific

Please state your request in one clear, declarative sentence; and the points you make in your testimony should support this request. For example, if you want the Commission to grant the Petition, state so directly, and then provide the reasons why they should do so.

State your facts

The Commissioners are volunteers from the community and are not necessarily experts. Respect that they sacrifice their personal time to participate in their Commissioner roles and have sat through many meetings, and have heard many testimonies with different (sometimes contradictory) ideas. Facts to support your testimony and position are important and should be stated clearly. You should make yourself familiar with the decision-making criteria used by the Commission in Section 205-17, Hawai`i Revised Statutes (HRS) and Section 15-15-X, Hawai`i Administrative Rules (HAR).

Be able to say your piece in a timely manner

Substance, not length, determines the value of testimony. While the Commission usually suggests testimony be kept to 3 minutes or less when confronted with a long list of testifiers; if you aim for less time you may have time to answer a question or two from the Parties to the proceedings or the Commission. If you seem to not have a clear statement and are taking more than your allotted time, you may be asked to conclude before you are finished with your comments. To be compelling, hone your message, practice, and keep it short and to the point.

Avoid repetition

If others testifying before you have raised points you intended to speak on, it would be appreciated if you simply endorse what they've said. It is not necessary to repeat prior testimony in detail. Along those lines, if you come as part of a group, it would be appreciated if you would designate a spokesperson. It is helpful for the Commission if one member of the group takes the lead in introducing the issue and other members of the group. Members of the group may generally be given the same amount of time as an individual speaker, but may be asked to limit their time in order to accommodate all who are interested in speaking to the Commission.

Mahalo for your interest in participating in the Land Use Commission's proceedings!