

Dear Mr. Aczon,

2015 NOV -9 A 9:16

I am a student at Red Hill Elementary School. Our robotics team of fifth and sixth grade students participates annually in FIRST Lego League events. The theme of this year's challenge is "Trash Trek".

Our robotics class wants to help Hawaii to solve a trash problem. We chose the issue of Oahu public trash landfills. Newspaper stories say there is still no site identified to replace the Waimanalo Gulch landfill. We have learned that to engineer solutions to problems, the most difficult part may be to first envision a solution; our vision is to entirely recycle the landfills at Kapa'a Quarry and Waimanalo Gulch.

State government information indicates that at least 77 landfills were created on Oahu since 1926. For most of that time, neither the technology nor public interest existed for burning trash for electrical power or recycling materials. Sometimes, some refuse was burned at the dump, but our parents and grandparents say they saw demolished wood houses, furniture, and crates, cardboard, telephone books and newspapers just plowed into the landfills and covered with dirt. Our research discovered that toxins such as waste oil and oil-based products, PCBs, refrigerants, lead batteries, were all buried and are still there --- just waiting to someday contaminate our drinking water, or the atmosphere. People have been fined for just letting rainwater run off of the top of the landfills.

We suggest uncovering the two biggest landfills and processing trash at H-Power. No one has said where Honolulu will get electrical power for the rail system. How about from landfills? Burnable materials do not have to be trucked across the island. H-Power cannot handle more trash, so just build smaller H-Power plants at the landfills. If any disaster causes a loss of electrical power across the island, a small plant in Kapa'a will also help windward residents to get power back sooner, and ease the load for other areas.

Recycling buried plastic, glass, toxins and metal products should be possible, utilizing current technology. As the two sites are reclaimed out of the hillsides, there will be more than enough room created to safely hold the smaller volume of ash from H-Power. We will not have to ruin more valleys. Creating a new landfill will just allow things to get worse for the future.

We hope that as a matter that significantly affects our local community, you might ask if our engineers are able to rise to the challenge. We are writing similar letters to other government officials listed on the attached sheet. We hope that every one will conscientiously evaluate this suggestion, when everything else seems to be too difficult.

We want to learn to use Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math to benefit our community. We should not accept the great risks to public health by harmful materials placed underground, years ago.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



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