

From: [DBEDT LUC](#)
To: [Quinones, Natasha A](#); [Orodenker, Daniel E](#); [Derrickson, Scott A](#)
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] LUC April 28 - 29 Meeting Testimony
Date: Monday, April 26, 2021 8:22:42 AM
Attachments: [Testimony April 28th 2021.pdf](#)

IAL testimony

From: Samantha Grossi <sgrossio10@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 25, 2021 12:10 PM
To: DBEDT LUC <dbedt.luc.web@hawaii.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] LUC April 28 - 29 Meeting Testimony

April 24, 2021 (see attachment for PDF version)

Land Use Commission Members,

Many of my concerns may apply to other land recommendations for IAL designation however, my testimony speaks specifically to the Waianae area.

It is important to first point out that while this meeting intends to discuss “*whether the proper procedural, legal, statutory and public notice requirements were met in developing the recommendations*” the requirements in question are only proper in the eyes of those who were at the table when they were established. Largely the landowners, the real stakeholders in this conversation directly impacted by the decisions you will make, were not at that table. Deeming what you have determined “proper requirements” irrelevant to most impacted.

To the issue of procedural requirements, the adequacy of data points collected and data collection methods used to inform these recommendations need to be questioned. It appears that soil quality was used as a large indicator of land viability. How were soil samples obtained from individual properties to determine soil viability? Also, why were individual landowners not consulted in the data collection process? Why were interviews not conducted with individual landowners to understand the land in question, its history, how it is currently being used, the benefit it has to the community, and individual landowners, in its current state?

Furthermore, data collection solely on the most viable pieces of land stops short of considering potential economic social damage this designation may have to the Waianae community and families impacted. Why was data not specifically collected on the adverse effects of the IAL designation? This type of limited, one-sided data collection and analysis is misleading, irresponsible, and blind to the real-world consequences of its implications.

There also appears to have been a process to petition for land to be exempt from recommendation. Individual landowner requests for exemption, because they do not wish for their land to be designated in this manner, was evidently not enough to overturn a decision. I understand this issue itself is a discussion for another day

however, the process by which landowners were able to submit a petition was not sufficiently communicated to all landowners impacted. This directly relates to the issue of public notice requirements.

The City and County go to great lengths in its April 21, 2021 report to outline how landowners were notified. However, if you go into the communities impacted and ask the residents if they are aware of and understand this initiative it will be evident that the City and County's efforts were insufficient. The methodology used for community involvement shows a misunderstanding of the community itself. Within the community of landowners are older generations, those whose first language may not be English, and those of low socioeconomic status. It has been repeatedly shown that the use of mail, websites, and newspaper articles are not the most effective means by which to communicate significant change within this community. These methods bring into question issues such as equal access to information including internet access and newspapers which require a paid subscription, and language barriers. A proven method of communication within the Waianae community is canvassing to speak directly to landowners and stakeholders. This was not done and appears to not have been taken into consideration under the public notice requirements.

The quality of the methods that were used should also be critically looked at. Two mailouts are insufficient. The two that went out provided little to no information to landowners about the issue at hand or how to speak with someone to gather more information. Key community meetings were not always easily accessible. For example, the 2017 meeting that presented a draft to the community took place in Kapolei while a substantial amount of the land in question is located in Waianae. This venue choice was not an act of good faith nor did it appear to have the landowners' interest at heart. At other key meetings, this specific issue was often second on the agenda, much like today. For such an important issue special meetings should have been designated. This process was plagued with other issues such as only one landowner participating in the focus group as well as a documented record of community members who attended meetings expressing that the information provided by the City and County was not easy to understand, was not presented in accessible layman terms, and most importantly was incomplete.

The City and County did not act in good faith nor do its due diligence in its unacceptable attempts to inform landowners that their property will be, or has been, recommended for IAL when it was not able to provide full explanations of, but not limited to: Potentially harmful ramifications and consequences for individual landowners, how agricultural land currently used for livestock will be impacted, and if there will be an opportunity to opt-out of the IAL designation.

It is impossible to discuss the matter of meeting public notification requirements without acknowledging that the bare minimum of informing landowners of what has been proposed in an attempt to meet compliance is not enough. It appears that the City and County have taken advantage of landowners by intentionally lacking transparency on key pieces of information landowners need to fully understand these recommendations and how they may impact their land and way of life. What is taking place is insulting to landowners and a disappointment on the part of State and City

and County officials who are to serve all Hawai'i residents, not special interest groups, international business, or those looking to make a profit under the guise of sustainability efforts.

As this process continues I urge you to get to know the landowners your decisions will directly impact. These people are not large corporations. They are longtime, if not lifetime, members of the community. They are small family business owners. They are hard-working people who deserve better than this mistreatment. The majority of people you encounter will have the same goals of keeping agricultural land agricultural, of seeing our land thrive and prosper in diverse ways, keeping local business local, and preventing urbanization of agricultural lands. We have common ground. We have common goals. But this is not the way to achieve them.

Sam Nakamoto
Waianae Community Member