

SENT VIA E-MAIL: dbedt.luc.web@hawaii.gov

Honorable Jonathon Scheuer
Chair
Land Use Commission
P.O. Box 2359
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2359

SUBJECT: Opposition to Proposed Important Agricultural Lands Designation

Dear Chair Scheuer and Members of the Commission,

My name is Annette Lee. My husband and I are landowners/farmers in Waimanalo and own 2 acres. I recently received a letter from the Land Use Commission informing me that my property has been designated by the City and County of Honolulu as Important Agricultural Lands (IAL). Further, I was informed that the Land Use Commission may be taking action to accept the City and County of Honolulu's Important Agricultural Lands designation which includes my property in Waimanalo.

Originally, Waimanalo landowners were told that we do not fit the criteria to be designated IAL. We were also told that we could "opt out" of this process if we wished. By arbitrarily designating large areas of small farmers seems like an example of changing the rules after the fact. This seems to be a land grab by the City and State. This is a program primarily for large landowners (10 acres +) which would make sense but does NOT benefit smaller landowners who just wish to farm as long as they can and then retire on THEIR property. The new proposed changes would not allow farmers to lease their property or to live on the property if they cannot physically farm. It does not allow older retirees to lease their property if they are complying with agricultural purposes.

I object to the designation of my property as IAL for the following reasons: the process for the IAL designation was flawed and did not fully inform landowners of the designation's impact; the LUC process did not provide adequate information as to how the acceptance of these maps would impact our property; there was not clear guidance on how I could opt out of the IAL designation; and lastly the process was rushed and has left my family and I confused and perplexed.

Please consider my concerns and reject the City and County of Honolulu's representation that it has followed all procedures with respect to state statute. The IAL designation process needs more vetting and landowners must be better informed about their options, how such designation will impact their lands, and whether or not they have the ability to "opt out" of such designation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Annette Lee
TMK: 41026025000