



MAUI DIVISION  
2145 Kaohu Street, Suite 206  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-2257

Telephone: 808.244.5508  
Facsimile: 808.244.3621

[www.hgea.org](http://www.hgea.org)

Council of the County of Maui  
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association  
April 16, 2025

Bill 49 (2025) – A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 2.08.060,  
MAUI COUNTY CODE, ON SALARIES IN THE OFFICE OF COUNCIL SERVICES

My name is Toni Rust, and I serve as the Maui Island Division Chief of the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA). I submit this testimony on behalf of HGEA, which proudly represents approximately 1,000 dedicated Civil Service employees throughout Maui County across five bargaining units.

These individuals are not just job titles—they are the essential workforce that powers our local government every single day. From Account Clerks and Secretaries to Analysts, Engineers, Office Assistants, and Service Representatives, they are the people ensuring public services continue without interruption. They are the backbone of every department, division, and office—performing the critical tasks that keep Maui County functioning.

The 40 positions identified in Bill 49 are no exception in their commitment or value to our community. In fact, many of these individuals perform identical duties to their Civil Service counterparts—some with the exact same job descriptions. Yet, under this bill, these 40 employees would receive substantial salary increases—ranging not just 30%, but in some cases 35%, 45%, and even 55%.

Let's be honest: this bill represents more than routine adjustments—it represents unprecedented raises for a select few, while leaving behind hundreds of equally deserving employees who continue to shoulder increasing workloads amid rising vacancy rates.

In 2024, Maui County reported vacancy rates between 27% and 40%, with over 600 unfilled positions. That number has not improved. Civil Service employees are being stretched thin, asked to do more with less, and now are expected to accept a system that rewards only a few—despite equal work and equal contribution.

We are already hearing from our members—morale is dropping. Resentment is building. Talented, experienced workers are now considering leaving county service altogether. This bill, as currently written, risks deepening the workforce crisis our county already faces.

Let me be clear: **HGEA does not oppose fair compensation or salary increases for anyone.** But we do strongly oppose inequitable raises that ignore parity, transparency, and fairness. And we seriously question the process by which these increases were determined and introduced.

**We urge this Council to defer action on Bill 49.** Take a step back. Consider the broader consequences. And ensure that any compensation adjustments are made with fairness, integrity, and respect for all County employees, especially during this active negotiation year for Civil Service workers.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Toni Rust". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Toni Rust  
Maui Division Chief