

BFED Committee

From: County Clerk
Sent: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 1:39 PM
To: BFED Committee
Subject: Fw: mailto:lalaine@medb.org

From: Joy Gerry <joygerry1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 1:24 PM
To: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>
Subject: mailto:lalaine@medb.org

[You don't often get email from joygerry1@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Aloha

I want to thank you for the STEMWORKS classes that are offered at Lokelani Middle School. My son, who went to Kihei El until 4 th grade and had an IEP, is now in a homeschool hybrid program. He has attended Lokelani's STEM classes after school for the last 2 years. This program is essential to his maturity and education. He is able to be a part of public school, engage with peers, participate in a larger classroom environment until he is mature enough to return to a public school format full time. This county program is so important to the students attending Lokelani, but the fact that it is available to students not attending public school makes it even more advantageous to Maui communities. The professionalism of the teachers is a positive benefit to the program. With all the struggles teens go through today, we need programs like this to continue.

Thank you so much,
Joy Gerry

Sent from my iPhone

BFED Committee

From: Crystal Henkel <crystal.henkel.ms@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 2:21 PM
To: County Clerk; Lalaine Pasion
Subject: Support for Krank Cycle

You don't often get email from crystal.henkel.ms@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

April 8, 2026

Re: Letter of Support – Krank Cycles Keiki Bicycle Program

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the funding proposal championed by Krank Cycles to provide bicycles to keiki in our community. This initiative represents exactly the kind of investment in our children's futures that Maui so greatly needs, and I urge the Council to fund it fully.

Krank Cycles has put forward a thoughtful, comprehensive program. Each child who receives a bicycle will also receive a properly fitted helmet and road safety training. This holistic approach ensures that our keiki are not only given an opportunity to ride, but are equipped with the knowledge and tools to do so safely.

Beyond the physical gift of a bicycle, this program opens doors. When children discover an activity they are good at and enjoy, it builds confidence and a sense of identity. Cycling has a wonderful way of bringing young people together, and programs like this create the kind of supportive friend communities that help keiki thrive — socially and emotionally. Every child deserves the chance to find their passion and belong to a community that lifts them up.

Providing bicycles to children also encourages them to get outside, stay active, and develop healthy habits that can last a lifetime. At a time when youth physical activity is more important than ever, the Krank Cycles program promotes an active, healthy lifestyle in a way that is joyful and accessible. This is the kind of positive, preventive investment in community health that pays dividends for generations.

I stand fully in support of this program and strongly encourage the Maui County Council to provide the funding necessary for Krank Cycles to bring this vision to life. Our keiki are Maui's greatest treasure, and this program is a meaningful step toward ensuring they grow up healthy, connected, and empowered.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Thank you,
Crystal Henkel
(808) 439-7539

BFED Committee

From: Crystal Henkel <crystal.henkel.ms@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 1:48 PM
To: County Clerk; Lalaine Pasion
Cc: Janelle Tamayose
Subject: Strong Support for Continued MEDB STEMworks funding

You don't often get email from crystal.henkel.ms@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

April 8, 2026

Re: Strong Support for Continued MEDB STEMworks Funding

My name is Crystal Henkel, and I am a parent of a student at Pukalani Elementary School on Maui. I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the continued funding of the MEDB STEMworks program.

STEMworks is not simply an extracurricular enrichment activity — it is a transformative educational experience that is shaping how our children see themselves and their futures. Programs like this one are rare, and the impact they leave on young learners is immeasurable.

My daughter, Eliana, is a living example of what STEMworks makes possible. Through this program, she discovered a genuine interest for science, developed a real understanding of coding, and experienced firsthand what it takes to build and control a robot. Watching her come home energized and eager to talk about what she had created and how it worked was something I truly value. That kind of spark — ignited at an early age — is truly priceless.

But beyond the hands-on technical skills, what has moved me most is the message Eliana and her classmates have received: that all careers are possible and accessible to them. For young girls growing up in Maui, hearing that message in an environment where they are actively doing science and engineering — not just reading about it — is powerful and lasting.

I respectfully urge you to continue investing in the STEMworks program. Our keiki deserve every opportunity to discover what they are truly capable of, and this program delivers exactly that. The future of our Maui community depends on young people who are curious, skilled, and confident — and STEMworks is helping build that future, one student at a time.

Thank you for your time and continued commitment to our children.

Sincerely,
Crystal Henkel
Parent, Pukalani Elementary School

BFED Committee

From: County Clerk
Sent: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 4:04 PM
To: BFED Committee
Subject: FW: Support for FY 27 Maui County Agriculture Program Funding - Testimony by CTAHR Dean
Attachments: Maui_BFED-1_Bill_55_04-09-26.pdf

From: CTAHR Dean's Office <ctahrapt@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 3:55 PM
To: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Re: Support for FY 27 Maui County Agriculture Program Funding - Testimony by CTAHR Dean

You don't often get email from ctahrapt@hawaii.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)
Apologies, sending the PDF document here:

Thanks,
Carol

On Apr 8, 2026, at 3:48 PM, CTAHR Dean's Office <ctahrapt@hawaii.edu> wrote:

Aloha,

Please see attached testimony provided by UH Mānoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience Dean, Parwinder Grewal.

If you have any questions, please reach out.

<Maui_BFED-1_Bill_55_04-09-26.docx>

Thanks,

Carol Oshiro
Strategic Initiatives Manager
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human **Resilience**
Office of the Dean
A: 3050 Maile Way, Gilmore 202E, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822
T: (808) 956-8183
W: cms.ctahr.hawaii.edu/ctahrss



Testimony Presented Before the
Council of the County of Maui
Budget, Finance and Economic Development Committee
April 9, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.
By
Parwinder Grewal, Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience

BFED-1: FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI

Chair Sugimura, Vice Chair Batangan and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the proposed appropriation for Maui County Department of Agriculture, Agriculture Program for FY 27 to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience (CTAHR) with funds of \$150,000. CTAHR respectfully offers comments.

CTAHR greatly appreciates the many years of advocacy from the Maui County Farm Bureau and other community stakeholders, and the continued budgetary support from the County of Maui for Cooperation Extension to address the highest and greatest needs in Maui Nui's five CTAHR Centers for Applied Research and Extension Services (CARES) facilities in regards to production, 4-H and youth development, and health and wellness.

The vision of CTAHR is an educated community, healthy population, and sustainable food system and environment that strengthens the well-being and economic development of the people of Hawai'i. CTAHR has made great effort to invest in faculty and staff for Maui County with the recruitment of five Extension agents of which two positions were new Extension agent positions.

The \$150,000 line-item grant provided annually by the Maui County Department of Agriculture to the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience for Maui Nui is critical to support our diverse programs. Our extension agents and their programs are deeply connected to the Maui Nui communities through their impactful projects that continuously respond to the community's needs and deliver practical solutions. Our diverse programs address human, agricultural, animal, and environmental needs and promote their well-being in multiple ways. The line-item grant helps research and/or outreach efforts of our current edible crops, nursery and landscape industry, family and intergenerational, water quality, Hawaiian homesteads, and urban horticulture programs. This grant will also be helpful to the new extension agents we are recruiting to address livestock, food safety, agricultural production and farm economics. All these programs have a significant impact on ensuring the well-being of families, farms, and our natural resources.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

BFED Committee

From: County Clerk
Sent: Thursday, April 9, 2026 9:41 AM
To: BFED Committee
Subject: Fw: budget testimony in support of Feed My Sheep

From: Bill McLaughlin <billmcl2@mindspring.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 9, 2026 9:34 AM
To: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>
Cc: scott@feedmysheepmaui.com <scott@feedmysheepmaui.com>
Subject: budget testimony in support of Feed My Sheep

[You don't often get email from billmcl2@mindspring.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

This letter is being written as testimony in support of Feed My Sheep and the contribution they make to the community.

Not only do they distribute high quality food but they also provide a friendly and caring feeling. The impact that they have

on the community is huge. We are in total support of Feed My Sheep and their concern for a healthy community.

Sincerely,

Bill & Laura McLaughlin

BFED Committee

From: Lorrie Betsill <lorrieinhawaii@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 9, 2026 10:05 AM
To: BFED Committee
Subject: Testimony of Lorrie Betsill - Budget and Finance Committee

You don't often get email from lorrieinhawaii@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Aloha Budget and Finance Committee of Maui County-

Please find my testimony below; I was unable to submit online and why sending this way.

Aloha Chair and Councilmembers,

My name is Lorrie Betsill. I have been a resident of Lahaina for nearly twenty years and have owned and operated businesses here, giving me firsthand experience with budgeting, financial planning, and economic sustainability in our community.

I am here today to express concern regarding the assumptions and priorities within the Mayor's proposed Fiscal Year 2027 budget.

First, I question the population data being used. The budget appears to reflect a population exceeding 160,000 residents. However, in the wake of the Lahaina fires and ongoing cost-of-living challenges, we have experienced a significant outmigration of local families. Many have relocated to the mainland in search of affordable housing and basic necessities. Realistically, our full-time resident population may be much closer to 125,000.

Additionally, Maui County has a substantial number of second-home owners who are not full-time residents. This distinction matters, and I do not see it clearly reflected in the assumptions driving this budget.

I also note the reliance on statewide visitor spending figures—reported at \$20.78 billion compared to \$17.72 billion in 2019. These increases are largely reflective of inflation and rising costs, not necessarily true economic growth. More importantly, there is no clear separation identifying what Maui County itself is generating in revenue. Without accurate, localized data, we risk building a budget on inflated or misleading figures.

Turning to expenditures, the proposed \$2.1 billion budget allocates more than half to the general fund, largely for salaries and personnel. On page 70, I noted 262 employees within environmental management. While environmental stewardship is important, I question whether this level of allocation reflects our most urgent needs at this time.

Maui County is in a period of economic distress. Every day, residents are leaving because they can no longer afford to live here, and many who remain are struggling financially and emotionally. This is not reflective of a healthy or thriving community.

I respectfully suggest that we realign priorities. We should be investing more in:

- **Economic recovery and financial strategy**, including positions focused on rebuilding local businesses and stabilizing our workforce
- **Public safety and infrastructure**, which are foundational to community stability
- **Water systems and resource management**, including revitalizing existing infrastructure such as the desalination plant in West Maui, which remains underutilized

This budget should reflect the reality our residents are living—not just projections on paper.

I respectfully request that the Council take a deeper look at both the data assumptions and staffing priorities before moving forward.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

--

With Warm Regard,

Lorrie Betsill

p: 808-303-0369

e: lorrieinhawaii@gmail.com