

Testimony on Recovery Coordination Directive
HLU Committee Meeting
Committee Chair; Nohe Uu-Hodgins
July 28, 2026

Subject: STRONGEST OPPOSITION to Utilizing Lahaina Recovery/RCD Exemptions for the Ha'ikū Fire Station Project – HLU Committee Meeting

Dear Chair Nohe U'i-Hodgin and Members of the Housing & Land Use Committee,

My name is Victoria Kaluna-Palafox, and I am a resident of Lahaina for generations, writing to register my **strongest opposition** to any legislative maneuver or "lateral transfer" that seeks to apply Lahaina-specific Recovery/RCD exemptions, zoning fast-tracks, or disaster land-use rules to the new Ha'ikū Fire Station project.

Attempting to hijack rules that were written exclusively for the agonizingly slow and painful process of rebuilding Lahaina after the catastrophic 2023 fires is a severe breach of public trust.

The disaster permitting exemptions were passed as a sacred obligation to get fire survivors back to their kuleana lands and homes. They were never intended to be standard legal loopholes for the County to bypass ordinary public reviews, historic preservation checks, or zoning standards for standard public works projects elsewhere on Maui. Using Lahaina's tragedy as a vehicle to fast-track an unrelated East Maui infrastructure project sets a dangerous, unprincipled legal precedent.

I explicitly urge Chair U'i-Hodgin and this Committee to:

- **Vote NO** on any measure allowing RCD/Recovery codes to apply to non-disaster zones.
- **Require the Ha'ikū Fire Station** to finish its approvals through standard, transparent County channels.
- **Protect the integrity of Lahaina's recovery resources** so they remain 100% focused on West Maui.
- **This should apply to Residents**, who are rebuilding their homes.

Disaster relief frameworks must not be weaponized for political convenience. Keep Lahaina legislation strictly for Lahaina.

Mahalo,

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POINT 1: This creates a “dangerous precedent” by using disaster relief rules for a non-disaster project is a highly effective legal argument.

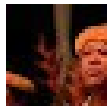
1. **The "Apples and Oranges" Argument:** A public safety building in Ha'ikū has different ecological, cultural, and community impacts than rebuilding an incinerated historical neighborhood in West Maui. Bypassing standard procedure for Ha'ikū ignores the localized concerns of East Maui residents and cultural practitioners.
2. **Dilution of Focus:** Every minute the HLU Committee or the Planning Department spends adapting Lahaina's complex recovery rules for other parts of the island is time stolen away from the hundreds of fire survivors still waiting on building.
3. **Bad Precedent:** If Chair U'i-Hodgin is allowed to pull a "lateral" maneuver here, it opens the floodgates for every developer and politician on Maui to argue that their pet project deserves "disaster-speed" exemptions too, rendering Maui's land-use safeguards meaningless.

HLU Committee

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Mahalo

 Testimony on Recovery Coordination Directive

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