

October 7, 2009

ALOHA COMMISSION CHAIR Edmund Haisuka and COMMISSION MEMBERS David Fuertes, Daphne Honma, Casey Jarman, Guy Kaulukukui, Jamae Kawauchi, Joseph Kealoha, Alapaki Nahale, Susie Osborne, Todd Shumway & Scott Unger

Thank you for serving on this very important commission to update our Hawaii County Charter. Please consider the following amendments and comments when making your decisions on how to update our county charter:

I SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING CHECKED AMENDMENTS:

No__4-YEAR COUNCIL TERMS: I do NOT support

??__2% FOR THE LAND FUND- other counties have this funding set aside as part of their charter so citizens can count on funds being available to acquire access to beaches and mountains, preserve culturally important land areas and sites, beaches, coastal area, agricultural lands, protect natural resources, significant habitat or eco-systems, water quality and water systems, including buffer zones. This would remove this funding from yearly budget wrangling and have the funds available to attract matching funds. ***This fund must also include a Development Policy that addresses maintenance and public use. Without it, the Fund is set up for abuse. Our family property (the Rice parcel) sits 'abandoned,' unused or developed two years after COH purchase.***

XX__VACANCIES- I support this amendment, because voters should have some say in this process. if an elected official dies, resigns, is recalled or impeached, the 2nd highest vote getter in the last election could serve OR the public should be able to have a "say " who shall serve for the rest of the term by a special election by mail.

XX__APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS- I support this amendment because it gives the council members the right to nominate people for boards and commissions, the Mayor can give comments and the public has a time to weigh in. Council members know who is qualified and involved in their districts better than the Mayor. ***Boards that do not represent all districts should have open nominations.***

XX__AMENDING THE CHARTER- I support using the same process and procedure as Initiative and Referendum to amend the charter as was written by the League of Women Voters and approved by voters in 2008.

XX__FUNDING FOR THE LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR'S OFFICE- I support providing the legislative auditor's office with funding that is independent of the budget process, so they are not beholden to the council and they can do their work independently.

XX__ COUNCIL COMMITTEES- I support having set standing committees for the County council. I support that notices should be sent 6 calendar days before committee and council meetings and that council matters can only be delayed by one meeting and that each council member shall have one vote on each committee.

XX__REDISTRICTING- it is important to have each council district to have approximately the same amount of people and the island to be divided into 9 equal districts. Federal guidelines should be followed, the process clearly defined and a report made to the people in an open and transparent manner.

OUR CHARTER IS THE HIGHEST LAW OF HAWAII COUNTY. I support open and transparent government.

You should also consider means to rein in County Council abuse: ***Currently we have a practicing attorney who knowingly subverted the Sunshine Law- but remains Council Chair?? And a re-reorganization that results from a continuing criminal conspiracy...? Such abuses reduce confidence in government and impede the conduct of public business.***

Mahalo!

Claudia Woodward-Rice

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