

RE: 2% -- not ½ %

FROM: Cory Harden, PO Box 10265, Hilo, Occupied Hawaii 96721, 808-968-8965 mh@interpac.net

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Dear Commissioners,

Please keep the land fund amendment at 2%, not ½ %.

½ % **won't buy much.** ½ % would only put \$1 million a year into the land fund--maybe \$2 million if we get matching funds.

We're not like Maui and Kaua'i. ½ % yields more there, since they collect more in taxes. And they have less open space available to buy. Many of the last big tracts of untouched land in the state lie on Hawai'i Island--magnets for buying, bulldozing, and building.

We will lose the 2% ordinance if the ½ % amendment passes.

Land funds make us eligible for matching funds, usually dollar for dollar.

Land preservation preserves Hawai'i's special relationship with the land. Land, since it is inseparably bound with Hawaiian culture, helps preserve a legacy we cannot afford to lose. Unspoiled open spaces also provide recreation for residents and attract tourists. 65% of

Land preservation cuts infrastructure costs. It can reduce County costs for infrastructure and services, and ease traffic, by preventing building in dangerous or hard-to-serve areas.

Land is infrastructure. Open spaces can protect watersheds that provide water for drinking and swimming. Agricultural land gives us food. Open spaces encourage positive activities for youth and adults.

Land preservation increases tax revenue by increasing property value.

\$43 million is the amount added to the value of property surrounding a 3-mile greenbelt in California.

\$1200 per acre is the increased value of land next to a greenbelt compared to land only 1000 feet away in Oregon.

6% is the increase in value of homes bordering a trail in Washington state.

5% is the increase in value of homes near an arboretum and park in Ohio.

Land preservation attracts business.

#1 is the ranking for recreation/ parks/ open space as priority in choosing a new location by owners of small companies.

A 1998 real estate industry report said "If people want to live in a place, companies, stores, hotels, and apartments will follow".

Voters support land preservation.

63% of votes cast on Hawai'i Island supported the 2% initiative. It also garnered almost 9,000 signatures.

80% of residents surveyed on O'ahu feel that preserving open space is "important" or "very important."

83% of people nationally favored establishing zones to protect green space, farming, and forests outside of existing cities and suburbs. In both good and bad economic times, American voters have strongly supported conservation finance measures that preserve natural lands, create parks, and protect farmland, according to the Trust For Public Land.

Thank you for your work on the Charter. aloha, Cory

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