

1/19/10

Members of the Charter Commission,

While others will offer arguments about the cultural and environmental importance of purchasing sensitive lands (particularly in a down market), I am writing to you primarily because I do not wish you to take any action to reduce the 2% for Land special fund on procedural grounds. This measure was placed on the ballot in 2006 and the people of this island already decided (with a 63% affirmative vote, which qualifies as a mandate) about this budget allocation. The temporary economic difficulties of our island are not relevant to this issue, as this is an issue of permanent priority. The people decided that purchasing these sensitive lands is such an essential purpose – more important than many other county activities – that it deserved to be removed from the ever-changing political process, which we see now is in full effect. The people decided that they wanted permanent assurance that this use of public funds would *always* occur, not sometimes or only during the boom years. It would be very presumptuous for the Charter Commission to presume that the people of this island no longer feel this way; as such, I urge you to allow the will of the people to stand and not overrule the popular vote. Doing so would be a violation of the legitimate democratic process that has already occurred.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michael Kramer  
Managing Partner, Natural Investments LLC  
Founder, Kuleana Green Business Program of the Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce  
331-0910  
P.O. Box 390595  
Keauhou, HI 96739