

*Dear Charter Commission members,*

*On Jan. 21, please consider asking these questions re. CA-15, the Land Fund.*

*mahalo, Cory Harden, Hilo*

1-The Finance Department says three-quarters of the budget is fixed costs. That sounds high, but perhaps these questions will clarify:

What is the definition of “fixed costs?”

What items are fixed costs?

Are special funds fixed costs? But aren't they kept separate from the rest of the budget? For example, isn't the Highway Fund only used for highways, and funded entirely by fuel taxes?

Debt payments are included in fixed costs. But can't lower payments be negotiated?

Are payments into the Employee's Retirement Fund and Health Fund considered fixed costs? But don't these payments drop if the number of employees drops?

What percentage of other Counties' budgets are fixed costs?

2-What kinds of emergencies would allow the Mayor to temporarily suspend the Land Fund?

3-Will the Charter amendment replace the ordinance?

4-Will the percentage in the Charter be a floor or a ceiling?

5-If the land fund is at 2%, what percent of the total County budget is this?