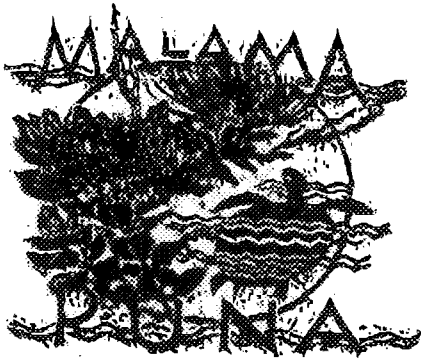




MALAMA O PUNA
P. O. Box 1520
Pahoa, Hawai'i 96778
(808) 965-9254

Preserving Hawai'i's precious natural heritage

October 1, 2002

Chairman Arakaki & Councilmembers
Hawaii County Council
25 Aupuni Street
Hilo, HI 96720

RE: BILL 256

Dear Council members:

Rather than re-word the testimony that I gave the Planning Committee at the first reading of this bill, which you have already all heard and/or read, I would like to address some of the questions which arose on that day, i.e., 9/24/02:

1. The Arborist Advisory Committee had the nomination of the mango grove on its agenda for its June 27th meeting and again on August 20th. Both were printed in a timely manner in the Hawaii Tribune-Herald. Therefore the Ordinance's requirements for public hearing have been met.
2. Sherry Kelso discussed the upcoming nomination with DPW before we even submitted our nomination to the Arborist Committee. Later, Eileen O'Hara-Weir, who at the time was the Planning Dept's liaison with the Committee, checked with DPW to verify County ownership of the road, the size of the County right-of-way, and other related matters. In addition, the two Arborist Committee meetings on 6/27 and 8/20 also constituted notice to DPW. DPW attended neither of those, nor the meeting of the Council's Planning Committee, which was also duly noticed. Obviously DPW has no problem with the nomination.
3. Re: legal issues: Corporation Council Craig Matsumura attends every meeting of the Arborist Committee to make sure that correct process and procedures are followed. He is meticulous and thorough.
4. Government Beach Road is a County road, and the County has liability whether or not the mangos are protected under the ordinance. To ease your collective minds, healthy trees of most species, including mango, do not tend to gratuitously drop branches. Bad pruning *can* weaken a tree. However, the County will not

Comm. No. **725.3**

File No. **HCCIGEN**

Ref. To: **Presented Council**

Ref. Date **OCT 09 2002**

5. Per the ordinance, signage is necessary to help protect the trees by informing the

5. Per the ordinance, signage is necessary to help protect the trees by informing the public of their status. This has already been, and continues to be discussed at the Arborist Committee meetings. It is unfortunate that the budget only allows the Committee \$75 for signage. Perhaps the Council will see fit to increase this so that Mr. Safarik's ideas and Council liability concerns can be addressed.

Thank you all for being supportive of this Bill and what it seeks to achieve. I am, as ever, available to answer any questions.

With aloha aina,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "René Siracusa". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

René Siracusa
President