

From: [Akoni Kanaele](#)
To: [Planning WPC Testimony](#)
Subject: Opposition to PL-SPP-2024-000075
Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2026 11:53:05 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in strong opposition to the special permit application by Teppy Mountain LLC (PL-SPP-2024-000075) to host an annual multi-day festival on agricultural land in Papaikou.

Agricultural land in Hawai‘i is a limited and precious resource. These lands are not simply vacant open spaces for commercial entertainment ventures — they are tied to our food systems, rural communities, generational farming families, and our relationship to ‘āina itself. For many of us in Hawai‘i, the land is family. It feeds us, teaches us, and carries the history and responsibility of those who came before us. Approving this permit would set a dangerous precedent for the continued conversion and misuse of agricultural land across Hawai‘i Island.

There is also a growing concern throughout Hawai‘i of outside interests coming here and treating these islands as though they are simply another part of America to use however they choose. Hawai‘i is different. Our islands have limited land, fragile ecosystems, rural agricultural communities, and a unique cultural and historical relationship to place that must be respected and protected. Large-scale commercial festival activity on agricultural land cannot become normalized here simply because it may be acceptable elsewhere on the continent.

The applicant has already held this event several times without a permit, accumulated over \$34,000 in fines, and is currently appealing those fines while simultaneously seeking this permit. This pattern of disregard for county rules does not inspire confidence that permit conditions will be respected going forward.

I also urge the commission to scrutinize the application’s designation of only 14.7 acres for festival use on a 1,400-acre property. This appears specifically designed to remain just under the 15-acre threshold for a higher level of review and does not reflect the true scale and impact of this proposal.

Our rural communities, our farming families, and our agricultural lands deserve meaningful protection. Once agricultural land begins being treated as entertainment venue space, it becomes increasingly difficult to preserve the integrity and purpose of these lands for future generations.

I respectfully urge the commission to deny this application.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Akoni Kanaele
Hilo, HI