

From: [Olani Lilly](#)
To: [Planning WPC Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for Special Permit Application PL-SPP-2024-000075 (Teppy Mountain, LLC)
Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2026 12:50:54 PM
Attachments: [Testimony_Special Permit Application PL-SPP-2024-000075 \(Teppy Mountain, LLC\).pdf](#)

Attached please find my testimony for Special Permit Application PL-SPP-2024-000075 (Teppy Mountain, LLC)

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Joel Olani Lilly (she/her)
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TO: Windward Planning Commission, County of Hawai'i
FROM: Olani Lilly, CEO of CoMission LLC / Hilo Resident
DATE: May 13, 2026
SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION to Special Permit Application PL-SPP-2024-000075 (Teppy Mountain, LLC)

Aloha Chair and Members of the Commission,

My name is Olani Lilly. I am a Hilo resident and the CEO of CoMission LLC. I am writing to express my strong opposition to the Special Permit application by Teppy Mountain, LLC (PL-SPP-2024-000075) to allow a 500-person festival with overnight camping and commercial vehicle storage on agricultural land in Pāpa'ikou.

This proposal is a clear example of the extractive, uncreative "solutions" that continue to threaten our island's rural character and agricultural future.

1. Our Neighborhoods are Not Festival Grounds

As a neighbor in Hilo, I know that the residents of Pāpa'ikou have built a community rooted in agriculture, quietude, and mutual respect. They do not want a "Coachella" or a "Burning Man" in their backyard, and we should not be allowing it in ours. These types of massive, high-impact events are fundamentally incompatible with the lifestyle and the infrastructure of a rural agricultural corridor. Bringing 500 attendees and amplified sound into this space infringes on the rights of the families who have lived there for generations.

2. Rejecting the "Tech Oligarch" Land-Grab Model

We are seeing an alarming trend of tech oligarchs coming into Hawai'i, buying up vast tracts of land, and then attempting to impose their own visions onto our communities without regard for local values or zoning laws. This applicant has already demonstrated a blatant disregard for our County laws by holding unpermitted events in 2023 and 2024, resulting in over \$34,000 in fines and multiple cease-and-desist orders. We must stop supporting a system where those with deep pockets believe they can ignore our rules and later "buy" legitimacy through a Special Permit.

3. A Lack of Economic Imagination

This proposal is an incredibly uncreative response to our island's economic challenges. It remains tethered to a dying tourism model that treats Hawai'i as a playground rather than a home. This event is not built *for* the people of Hawai'i island; it is a magnet designed to attract non-residents, leading to the further extraction of our precious resources by people who do not live here. We should be investing in economic models that empower local farmers and Indigenous practitioners, not those that turn our 'āina into a temporary stage for outside entertainment.

4. Industrial Use and Environmental Harm

Beyond the festival, the request to "legitimize" the storage of commercial gravel trucks on agricultural land is an insult to the intent of the State Land Use Agricultural District. Furthermore:

- Fire Risk: Introducing "burning art" and 500 campers next to the Hilo Forest Reserve is an unacceptable risk in our changing climate.

- Infrastructure: Indian Tree Road is a narrow residential road that cannot safely support the influx of festival traffic alongside heavy commercial vehicles. This is a safety crisis waiting to happen for our families.

The Commission's role is to protect the long-term health of our land and people, not to legitimize illegal activity after the fact. We must think more creatively about our future and stop allowing our land to be repurposed for the whims of wealthy outsiders at the expense of our residents. I respectfully urge the Commission to deny this application in its entirety.

Mahalo,

Olani Lilly
CEO, CoMission LLC
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