

**From:** [Libby Leonard](#)  
**To:** [Sur, Peter](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony for Environmental Management Meeting  
**Date:** Monday, September 26, 2022 2:45:54 PM

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Aloha, Peter,

My name is Libby Leonard. I'm a journalist who is based in Kapa'au who extensively covers environmental issues. Most recently the effects of [plastic waste on the environment internationally](#) with solutions-makers not only solving recycling issues, but also providing infrastructure for vulnerable communities. I also covered a story about a [local initiative on cardboard shredding](#) that provides cardboard for farming, and also gets rid of the waste stream. This initiative was amazing, but has since been halted due to the breakdown of the shredders from overuse and the need to raise money to get more (though the founder's goal was to have schools and other organizations on the island to have their own). Anyway, those links are for EcoWatch. I also write for National Geographic, The Guardian, SF Gate and others.

Since I moved here in 2020, I have been floored by the issues with recycling on our island. I have met people who pack their suitcases filled with plastic when traveling to the mainland to offload them to areas that actually have necessary facilities to handle this stuff. I filled an entire shed with my recycling thinking that there would be an opportunity to do something with the recycling, then it was announced what recycling streams would be eliminated.

We can't afford to damage the 'aina anymore. We already have one landfill that is completely shut down, with one left. While there needs to be more reduce, reuse etc, there needs to be proper infrastructure in place. This requires all hands on deck. Putting a grant writer in place to go after this large grant that could actually pull our heads above water is necessary. Applying for this grant is necessary.

The county council needs to fund a facilitator to speak with stakeholders.

Mahalo,

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