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April 1, 2012

Re: Bill 12 (2012) and Bill 30 (2012)

City Council Members:

I am writing in support of Bills 12 (2012) and 30 (2012) which amends provisions of the ROH 1990, Ch. 8 regarding horse boarding and stabling and the dedication of agricultural land, respectively.

I am a horse owner and board my horse at an equestrian facility in Waimanalo. I believe that horse owners (whether owning one or multiple horses) have them in their lives because horses have the ability to transport its owner/rider into a realm where the impossible becomes a distinct possibility, where a good ride or performance cements the communication skills between the horse and rider and even the mundane chore of mucking your horse's stall comes with a degree of accomplishment. The famous adage "[t]he outside of a horse is good for the inside of a man" rings true even in today's world. The skills developed and used in communicating with one's equine partner (whether from the ground or astride) translates to how an individual communicates and manages their life skills, however, having an equine partner does come with a heavy monetary investment. A majority of horse owners are not wealthy and like I, do not have horses on my property. I reside in the City but commute to my horse in the country. I did this in the 1960's and 1970's and again since I returned from the mainland.

In your efforts to rein in the possible egregious use of the "agricultural" designation for some property owners, the passage of Bill 44(2011), CD2 was over broad and failed to mitigate the potential damages for commercial equestrian operators and horse stables. However, the above-referenced Bills currently before you now seeks to remedy the potential effects of Bill 44(2011), CD2. It should be noted that as any horse person knows, multiple businesses benefit from having equestrian facilities and horse owners in the community. We support a litany of different services in the care of our equine partners. To name just a few, from the horse trainer, barn staff members, the local feed stores, local tack shops, veterinarian and farrier services, non-medical health services for our equine partners, local food establishments and transportation services (e.g., gas stations, horse transports, etc.). This is just from a single horse person. Now multiply that with the thousands of other horse owners island-wide and one can see the monetary benefits to the local community and also to both the City and State coffers. As such, we generate and maintain economic activity in our rural areas. Last but not least, equestrian facilities maintain and protect our precious land in that it secures and sustains our green open areas. Let us be cognizant of our purpose to find ways to protect our green areas and not be shortsighted like the State in their support of several Bills before it regarding Agritainment, more specifically, the allowance and expanded residential and touristic uses of agricultural lands.

Any failure by the Council Members to support the current Bills before it will jeopardize and devastate the entire equine community by the closure of multiple equine facilities due to the exponentially rising cost of affordable land. What a potential nightmarish scenario. What do we do with all the horses that people cannot afford to maintain and the "trickle down" effect will of course work its way through the chain to all the businesses and individuals the equine community supported, how do they maintain their personal livelihoods? Then, we come to the land. How will the landowner now be able to afford his

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land? Will it be converted to farmland or will it be sold to a developer who will it get rezoned and developed into residential subdivisions? The loss of such an intrinsic part of our rural community would be lost forever. The resulting equestrian community would then be relegated to the uber-wealthy. This would be an untenable path that I or anyone else in the equestrian community wish to explore.

As such, I implore you to approve Bill 30 (2012) which appeals Bill 44 (2011) or the very least approve Bill 12 (2012) whereby it provides the necessary revisions to amend Bill 44 (2011).

Thank you in advance for your consideration in the foregoing matter.

Respectfully submitted.

/s/ Mae Lock
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