

My name is Vicki Feeney. I have lived in Waimanalo for 23 years. I board my horse at a stable in Waimanalo. And I work at VO Ranch Products, a Waimanalo business, which primarily sells feed and equipment for horses.

If you, our representatives, implement Bill 44 as it is, you will, most probably, eliminate my stable, my feed and tack store, my job, and possibly, my horse.

You have already heard the list of people, businesses and services that will be impacted by this bill. I won't recount them now, but you might ask yourselves what will happen to all of these horses that nobody will be able to afford to board? Or, if they can afford it, where will they find a stable that hasn't been taxed out of business with a 100-fold increase in property tax?

I'm sure it was not your intention to wipe out an entire industry. Horse people come from every district on Oahu and all walks of life. We are doctors, lawyers, hairdressers, waitresses, secretaries, real estate agents, even politicians. We are ropers, jumpers, barrel racers, therapy teachers and trail riders. This diverse group meshes to make the City and County of Honolulu a better place.

The elimination of one industry will impact another. When our tourists take that Circle Island Tour they will no longer have the nostalgia of Old Hawaii by seeing a keiki riding his horse down a rural roadway or a costumed pa'u rider, horse draped in lei, gracing a parade. Next time will they stop on our island, or will they fly straight to a neighbor island, where perhaps the love of the 'aina includes a few paniolos.

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