

May 8, 2013

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The Honorable Ann H. Kobayashi, Chair
The Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
& Distinguished Members of the Committee on Budget
City Council
Honolulu Hale
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Kobayashi, Vice Chair Chang and Members of the Budget Committee:

RE: BILL 11 (2013) CD1 – SUPPORT FOR THE WEED AND SEED PROGRAM

I am appealing for your support of Bill 11 (2013) CD1 that includes monies to sustain the Weed and Seed program in Kalihi-Chinatown-Ala Moana-Sheridan, Waipahu, and Ewa/Ewa Beach.

Weed and Seed is a collaborative effort involving law enforcement, residents, non-profit organizations, community groups and private businesses that have helped to reduce violent and drug-related crimes in our community.

As a first year member of the Kalihi-Chinatown Weed & Seed's Steering Committee, I see first-hand how effective Weed & Seed has been in our community for nearly five years.

Working in Chinatown and a member of Friends of Chinatown, I see first hand the need for Weed and Seed as part of an active Citizen Patrol unit under the Honolulu Police Department District 1. We actively walk Chinatown twice a week, conduct monthly safer road sign waving campaigns and pedestrian safety events on Kekaulike Mall.

Living in Kapalama Heights, I am part of an active Citizen Patrol and Neighborhood Security Watch under Honolulu Police Department District 5, my neighbors were trained and now work closely with assigned Weed and Seed's Community Policing police officers to address area concerns including illegal drug activities, speeding, burglary and petty thefts.

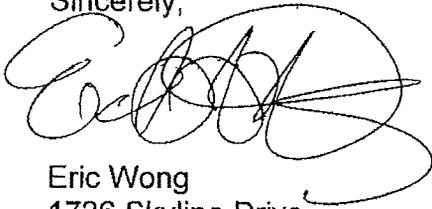
I strongly believe this working relationship as their 'eyes and ears' for and with the police creates a safer community from Kalihi to Chinatown. Our communities need Weed & Seed more than ever especially with these tougher economic times and higher drug abuse epidemic.

Currently, Bill 11 (2013) CD1 has designated \$150,000 for Weed & Seed. On behalf of my community where I work and live, I humbly ask that our City Council increase that amount to \$200,000. Increased Weed & Seed programs will save the City & County of Honolulu thousands of dollars annually through crime prevention.

Weed & Seed has been instrumental in getting businesses, residents, service providers and community groups to "volunteer" our time, including my personal 2-4 hours a week, as in Citizen Patrols and other events that strengthen community involvement in crime prevention. Additionally funding will allow us to continue our efforts with the assistance of the Honolulu Police Department Community Policing officers who are building a strong network of committed citizens that will work toward preventing crime and growing strong, healthy communities.

I urge you to support the passage of Bill 11 (2013) CD1 with our recommended request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Eric Wong', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the printed name and address.

Eric Wong
1726 Skyline Drive
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
808 371-0016