

Good Morning Board Members,

My name is Norman Sadoyama a farmer for over 45 years in Waiahole Valley.

I recently found out that the government in Japan value their farmers so much, that they are given 2nd in priority in receiving funding from their government. We are not valued in Waiahole Valley under HHFDC.

I have been paying lease rent for unusable land for 25 years. Of the 47 acres that I lease, only 10 acres are farmable. Because we are in re-negotiation for our leases, I felt this is the best time to bring this issue to your attention. And I am confident that you will make a fair decision.

I brought my situation up with Chris Woodard and said, 'Why should I pay \$200 per acre for unfarmable land?' His response was, "We have to be fair to everyone". Who is everyone? I'm a farmer too. I asked him how this was fair for my situation, and he said, "from the roadside it looks flat. Then he said we will go to arbitration. How unreasonable is this comment as he is willing to spend taxpayers' money for a problem that is obvious and can be settled reasonably and fair. *my money*

This has been the pattern with our negotiations with the HHFDC leadership. Take it or leave it, causing pressure, anxiety, and stress to all especially our Kupuna. The meaning of negotiation is discussion aimed at reaching an agreement, not threats. Our negotiations have been far from this, in fact it's been "this is HHFDC's offer, no discussion".

The WWCA "Steering Committee" and our Lawyer, Dennis King represents most of our residents and farmers. The "Steering Committee" has been undermined by Chris Woodard and Lee Miller by going out to talk to residents whom we represent.

Another issue is the raising of the annual percentage lease rent to 1%, which is another way to squeeze the life out of a farmer. On one hand, the Government speaks of promoting local agriculture and on the other hand they say, give me part of your gross income. This should be done away with; it is not fair.

Please try to understand the small-time farmer. Take into consideration the location, weather, amount of sunshine and rain, and the terrain (amount of farmable flat land) Farming is up and down; we have good years and bad years. When a farmer has a bad year, he is optimistic and looks forward to having a better year and if he has another bad year, guess what, he still looks forward to another good year. Farmers put their sweat and blood into the land they farm. Farmers are struggling even more now because of the pandemic and struggling economy. Even through our struggles we contribute tons of produce to Hawaii.

Mahalo and Aloha

Aloha Kakahiaka

Aloha Awakea

My name is Lauralee L. Uyemura, My parents are Laurence & Helene Uyemura, they live in Waiahole Valley for over 50 years, they take care of and pay for all the cost of repairs and upkeep of all they have built on this property that they are so blessed to live on. They are living comfortably and simply with just what they need.

we all know that the cost of living here in Hawaii is already so high. STOP and help us to preserve our lands and don't be the reason for homelessness, BUT be the reason for HOPE, HOPE for our Kupunas our Keiki's our moopunas. None of us want to move away from where ~~we~~<sup>we</sup> are born and raised but you are Pricing us out of our Paradise.

SO we humbly come here to ask of you HHFDC not to be the problem of homelessness. But be of Affordability, that you will help us to preserve our lands that you will reconsider Waiahole Waikane Community Association's offer which is very reasonable for each of us that live in Waiahole and Waikane which is our Paradise yes this is a unique situation we would like to keep it unique

Ua Mau Ke Ea O Ka Aina I Ka Pono

<sup>THE</sup>  
The life of this Land is perpetuated in righteousness

Proverbs 21:21

He who follows righteousness and mercy  
finds life, righteousness and honor

May God bless us all

♡ Aloha, Mahalo Nui. ♡

## **Laverne Tarumoto**

My name is Laverne Tokunaga Tarumoto a third generation resident of Waiāhole Vally. I am a retired DOE Career and Technical Education Resource Teacher from the Windward District. Raised on a farm learning how to use tools laid the foundation for me to become the first Female certified Industrial Arts Teacher in Hawaii.

In the early 1940's my Tokunaga grandparents moved into Waiāhole Valley from Maui. They had already raised 9 children, my father the oldest child. My parents also moved to Waiāhole where my 5 siblings and I were raised. My grandfather, uncles and father supplemented their small income by farming in Waikāne and Waiāhole. We all worked on the farms afterschool and weekends.

I always knew I'd come back and live out my life in Waiāhole to care for my parents. When Hurricane Iwa destroyed our house in early 1980's my parents couldn't get a loan living on a month to month lease. With their meager savings and lots of help from family and friends we built a small Hicks type home. Every home improvement since then has been paid by savings and hard work. Farming, working 2-3 jobs, selling homemade goods at craft fairs was a necessity. When my parents needed extra care we didn't send them to a nursing home. We all contributed time and love to keep them at home. After years of hard work, being a good citizen, being a good neighbor and community member, trying to be self sustaining on my small lot, I thought I could relax and finally enjoy a simple comfortable life.

While trying to remain calm and pragmatic throughout this lease rent process I feel:

- 1) HHFDC has under valued and unfairly treated me as a person, who makes Waiāhole a wonderful place? ALL of US in the valley, don't separate or label on us differently;
- 2) I feel penalized for my lifetime sacrifices to live a good life by HHFDC treating me differently in lease increases, what happened to FAIR treatment? I am a Widow, Senior citizen with medical issues who has prepared to live independently for as long as I can, why do I feel that preparation is a punishment?, and
- 3) I feel it's a privilege to live in Waiāhole and every chance I get I share my home and lifestyle with people who do not live in the greatest place on Earth! All I ask is for fair treatment.

## **Testimony for HHFDC Board Meeting, June 8, 2023**

**Zaadia Manalo**

Members of the Board, WWCA, and everyone in attendance:

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak.

My name is Zaadia Manalo. I currently reside at 48-163 Waiahole Valley Road.

Why? Because we are Ohana and no one is left behind. Many of us in our valley have been faced with one hardship or another. Some are dealing with tragedies and lost ones. Many of us came home just to have a roof over our head. Thank God for my mom who engraved it in our hearts reminding us constantly to "Love one Another". She never turned anyone away.

We are not asking for handouts but what is fair and just across the board. Today I am here but tomorrow I may not. Many of us who move home are transients. We too want to be on our own one day and live life to the fullest. But how can we make it when we pay land taxes but don't own the land. We pay for a million dollar liability insurance that is streamlined just for WWCA because it covers only HHFDC and not too many companies have this insurance. Where landlords normally pay for home repairs, HHFDC doesn't, we have to.

The saying when it rains it pours, it sure does. It storms right into our life. Just to fix rotten steps, it cost me over \$200 and I'm lucky because I have a carpenter in my family. The same day the ceiling falls in the shower, over \$3000 just for materials. Monies that have to be paid up front or credit that now pushes us more into debt. But again I'm lucky to have a carpenter and plumber in the family or else I would be paying thousands upon thousands for labor. With the high cost of building materials today, many of us cannot do home repairs and live with buckets in our houses to catch the rain, or patches of wood here and there to keep the cats and chickens out.

We do what our parents did, budget and stretch our meals. We do not live fancy lives but am so grateful for a place lay our head down at night. We live with love and gratitude to hold our families together and if you see us with fancy things, its because we were blessed by God. He provided when there is a need and he strengthens us.

I pray that God puts love and gratitude in HHFDC hearts so that they too can be fair and just in making their decision for increasing our rents. I pray that HHFDC open their eyes and ears to hear our cries for fairness. I pray that he blesses everyone in this room with love and gratitude. I'll leave you with a saying.

UA MAU KE EA O KA AINA IKA PONO. The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness. Is it really so? I wonder

6/8/23 Aloha, my name is Annette, daughter of Wineslaw + Betty Putalana of  
WAIKANE VALLEY

My Family was asked to offer our testimony of why low income housing  
is necessary for Waikahole + Waikane valley tenants

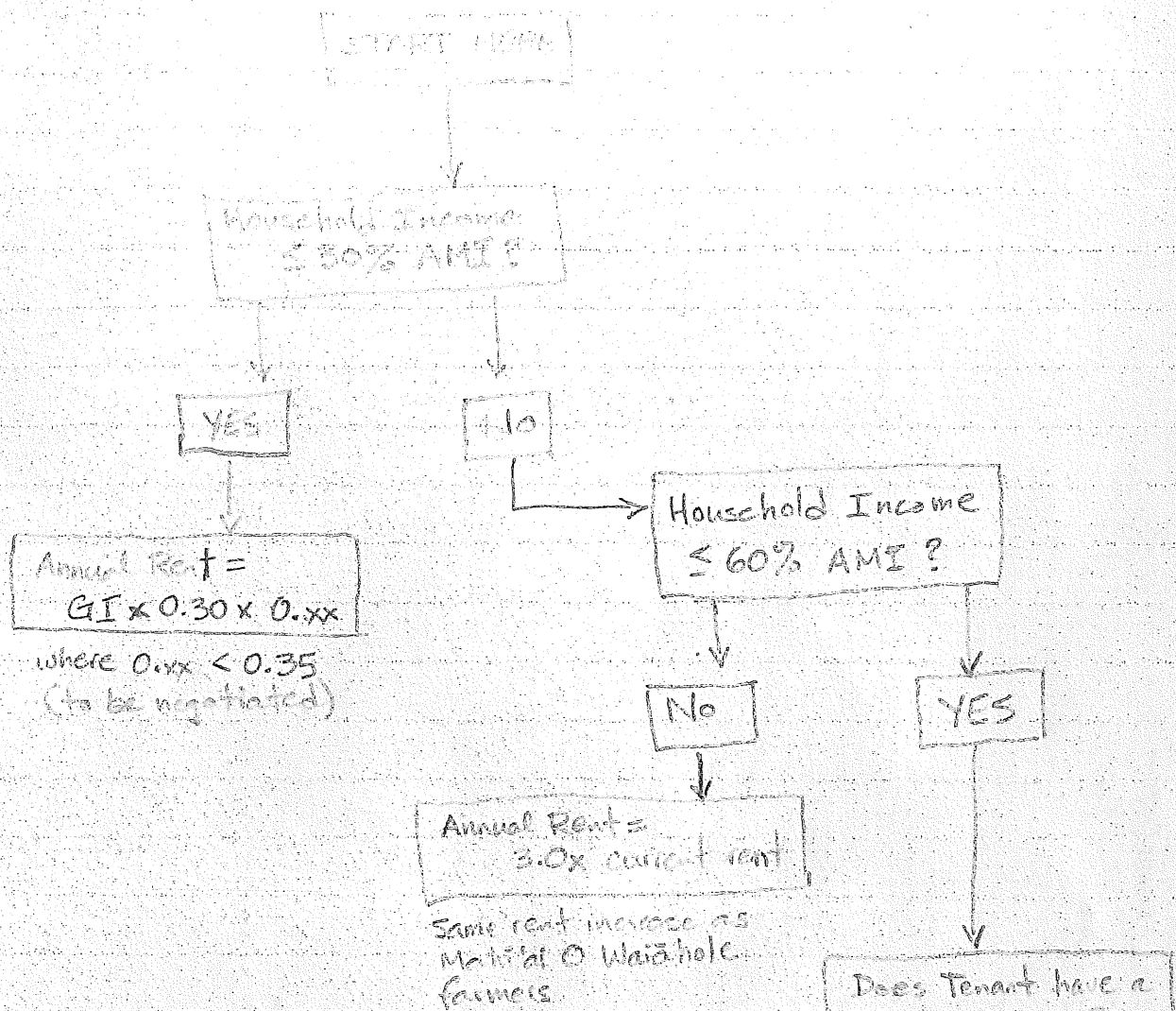
The Rent Negotiations is only a small part of the tremendous  
burdens we already have, and will be faced with, because of the  
limitations + By-Laws of the current Lease - We are not the  
owners of the land, but under the Residential Lease, we are held  
solely responsible for ALL Maintenance + repair costs, the  
property taxes, Liability Insurance and rising utility costs.  
We also pay for the Damage to our house by flooding that happen almost  
every year partially caused by the un-manned river next to our lot  
no-one has ownership of that river to monitor except for my family and  
surrounding community - I MENTION THIS because the lease cannot be  
used for an equity loan or any type of Borrowing - FURTHER emphasizing  
that all Improvement or Repair to land + home are paid out-of-pocket  
by my family. My 98 year old mother remembers how my father built  
our home more than 70 years ago. He laid the pipes to bring running  
water to the house on his own, then worked the land to make it livable  
We learned hands-on Survival Skills + cultural practices to Farm  
the land. We lived there as farmers then as Residential Tenants  
for many years. Now we have Kupuna to care for, our house to repair  
Land to maintain, Families to raise + Jobs to keep. In Perspective,  
the State is biting the ~~HARD~~ working hands that feed it by adding  
more expenses to our humble island Life styles. The Expenses of the  
Lease requirements include the estimated cost of \$25K to purchase +  
install Septic Tanks - which our family is expected to finance  
as well as the costs of installing Safety accommodations for our  
Kupuna - All this among the rising costs of living  
in Hawai'i nei -

The operating Losses of the State have quadrupled from a quarter of  
a million to 1.1 million per year, However - the State should not be  
Balancing their Books on the backs of Waikahole / Waikane tenants  
We look forward to completing the rent negotiations for appropriate  
Low-income Housing rents and Look Forward to continuing our  
diligence in taking care of our precious valleys w/ confidence  
that the affects of the increasing cost of living + Higher Rents  
will not cause us to end up Homeless

Our Country Lifestyles Demand our Energy, Time + Money  
to preserve the Life + Beauty of this land for generations  
to come.

"Ua mau Keia o Ka Aina i Ka Pono"

Mahalo for listening



Notes:

(1) GI = Annual Gross Income  
(Line 9, Form 1040)  
of Household

(2)  $0.xx$  and  $0.yy$  are  
each less than  $0.35$ ,  
but not necessarily  
equal to each other.

Annual Rent =  
 $GI \times 0.30 \times 0.35$   
Subsidized Rent Program



## Testimony for June 8, 2023 HHFDC Board Meeting

Toni Cano

Aloha Kakahiaka Kakou!

Mahalo for the opportunity to share....My name is Toni Cano, I am a resident of Waiahole Valley.

**We have been told that the Board of Directors wants residential tenants to pay substantially higher rents than the farmers pay.... When asked why, the response was that farmers give more to the community, particularly during times of natural disasters because of their individual experience with tools & equipment.**

My Ohana has been mowing the grass along both sides of Waiāhole Valley North Branch Rd for over a decade, week in and week out, Storm or No Storm.... We do it for FREE using our own equipment that we've purchased and maintained at our own expense.

We have within our valley professional arborists who have cleared the road of fallen trees after windstorms for free! **So, Please, Don't tell me that my ohana who is in a residential lot doesn't give back to our Community!**

My family isn't the only one...Our residents include an array of useful laborers with skills like home repair, maintenance work, and many who are ready to jump in to help... again, for *many years!*

**Is it right that the residents pay a higher rent because they chose professions other than farming?**

We also have teachers, school administrators, caregivers—**all women**—who have dedicated their lives to educating our keiki, helping the sick and the mentally challenged. **Is it right that these women pay nearly twice the rent as farmers because they chose not to till the soil and farm?**

Our Kūpuna lives on two-thirds of the residential leases. They couldn't farm even if they wanted to.....

Is it PONO that they pay more because they grew old?

Don't be surprised if they aren't the first to cook and serve meals and to offer a roof to those who lost theirs.

**Discrimination**, whether based on sex, age, or occupation, has no place here in Hawaii-nei. Let's put a stop to this!.

**\*\*\*\*The WWCA has authorized me to state that it would support and accept offers by the HHFDC for those residents who do not qualify for the Subsidized Rent Program that Chris will refer too...**

**We want to pay a rent equal to exactly 3 times their current rent just like the Waiāhole farmers agreed upon with Chris recently.**

Let's stop dividing Waiāhole into privileged farmers and disadvantaged residents.

Praying for a favorable agreement.

Mahalo for your time and Aloha!

Thank you HHFDC Board for having me here today. My name is Margot Mendoza, born and raised on Lana'i and my home is now Kaneohe. This is my mom.

Today, Staff says they've concluded 33% of lease negotiations. Today, Staff says "rent levels effectively have been set for all lessees... allowing HHFDC to achieve its policy goal of treating all lessees equitably". We disagree.

Staff states 33% is a good representation of ALL of Waiahole Valley lessees. 33% is a good representation of 100%?! This is absurd! Staff is implying 33% represents the majority. 33%- that's not even half! Since when is majority below half? Only 33% have concluded lease negotiations, that leaves 67%. 67% is more than half- that is the majority. Let's hear them! Listen to them, the 67%, the majority. Negotiate with the majority!

Regarding unaffordability of higher rents, Staff states today: "Detailed recommendations regarding program terms and conditions are still being considered". Yet Staff also states today that "As discussed in executive session with the Board of Directors (the Board) EARLY IN THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS, a subsidized rent program for low-income residential lot lessees should be established".

EARLY ON Staff addresses that this Subsidy Rent Program was needed, yet, after nearly 12 months, Staff has no assistance program set in place. How can lessees sign and agree to something that doesn't even exist? This is absurd!

I ask you, the Board, look at the 67%, THE majority, the WWCA who has negotiated well, honorably, and in good faith. Accept their most recent counteroffer. Mahalo for your time.

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