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March 25, 2024

TO: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair, and
Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alice L. Lee".

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 27, 2024; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB2610, HD1, PROPOSED SD2, RELATING TO DISASTER RELIEF**

I **support** this measure to establish the Disaster Relief Match Special Fund and appropriate funds to support the State's continued response to the August 2023 wildfires.

I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. The cost of rebuilding after the August 2023 Maui wildfires is estimated to be in the billions. Collaboration between and funding from Federal, State, and County governments will be necessary to overcome this immense cost. This measure provides valuable funding for the rebuilding and relief efforts.
2. Navigating the federal grant process can be daunting, and failure to do so in a timely manner can result in applicants not receiving grant funds. This measure allows applicants to more easily meet local matching fund requirements, easing part of the burden of accessing the hazard mitigation grant.
3. This measure appropriates funds to support a wide range of programs with urgent needs, including West Maui and Upcountry fire prevention, fire suppression, and erosion control; County of Maui infrastructure, including the final disposition site; and roadway connectivity for disaster evacuation.

Thank you for your consideration.