People seem to either love the Ho`opili development, or hate it. And I can understand that. I'm 28, and will soon be looking for my first affordable home. On the other hand, I'm 28, and my generation and I will have to live with the consequences of poor planning for decades to come.

Last Friday the decision to rezone 1,500 acres of prime agricultural land to "urban" came before the state Land Use Commission. The commission looks at "the development of Hawai`i's limited and valuable land... and the conversion of prime agricultural land to residential use ... "

The Land Use Commission rightfully rejected the request from Ho`opili's developers. It is important to realize that today, Hawai`i imports nearly 90 percent of our food. This takes billions from our economy each year, and as the cost of oil and shipping continue to rise, so too will prices at the grocery store. So it's a problem that Ho`opili's 11,750 new homes would be built over 14 percent of O`ahu's best agricultural land, which is a major contributor to our local food supply and critical to a workable agriculture industry.
HO’OPILI DEVELOPMENT (PAGE 2):

Back in 1997 when homes in `Ewa were originally developed, it may have been good policy. However, since then available farmland in Hawai`i has declined by more than 22 percent, and the cost of shipping food to the islands has skyrocketed.

The goal is to create new jobs, reduce food prices and sustain Hawai`i for the long-term. We have realized there is limited space on O`ahu to build new homes — and new ideas for "smart growth" have changed and will redevelop old industrial areas such as Kaka`ako, instead of building over endangered farmlands.

We have to think ahead. What makes Ho`opili important is that it is a case of competing uses. The choice pits fertile agricultural land, home to several outstanding local farms, against another 11,750 homes. The decision about Ho`opili will determine if the state is serious about properly managing growth and planning ahead for the long term. It will force our leaders to follow through with commitments to smart growth, renewing local agriculture and diversifying our economy — or to proceed with short-term thinking and business as usual.

Ultimately, the plan for another 11,750 homes on agricultural land is the same urban sprawl that has paved over O`ahu for the past 50 years. Hawai`i's population keeps growing, and the question is not whether we need new homes. We have to have new homes. The question is where we choose to build them.

Chris Lee is state representative for House District 51 (Lanikai, Waimanalo).
HONOLULU – The Legacy Land Conservation Program will convey some $3.27 million from the State Land Conservation Fund for land acquisition projects to protect Hawai‘i’s unique and valuable resources, a news release states.

Seven state, county, and nonprofit applicants will receive grant funds for the permanent protection of lands having cultural, archeological, and natural resource values.

“Participating as a funder in these conservation partnerships is an efficient way to protect important natural, cultural, and agricultural resources,” Laura Thielen, Board of Land and Natural Resources chair, said in the release. “By providing these grants as incentive, the State is utilizing mostly private and federal funds to protect these resources.”

Every state dollar spent will be matched with approximately $3 in federal, county and private funds, for a total of $9.48 million in matching funds that will be used to acquire approximately 752 acres of threatened or unique natural, cultural, recreational, and agricultural resources. The funds will be used to protect lands and will provide benefits to Hawai‘i residents in the form of scenic open space, watershed protection, agricultural production, and preserved natural and cultural resources.

The Legacy Land Conservation Commission, a nine-member commission composed of cultural, agricultural and natural resource experts and representatives from each county, advised the Board of Land and Natural Resources on this year’s project selections. Gov. Linda Lingle released funding for the Commission’s recommended projects in early June.

“Each of the recommended projects protects an important resource,” Commission Chair Dale Bonar said. “Clean drinking water, our natural and cultural heritage, our agricultural lands —
these are the resources that Hawai‘i needs to maintain a connection to its past and build a sustainable future.”

The following are summaries of the approved projects:

★ County of Hawai‘i and the Trust for Public Land, $945,000 for the acquisition of 10.61 acres on the island of Hawai‘i, coastline lot within Pao‘o ‘ahupua‘a, North Kohala District, to protect over 27 cultural sites from development and maintain the natural landscape and scenic views of the Kohala coastline.

★ Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry & Wildlife, $500,000 for the acquisition of a conservation easement over 614 acres on the island of Moloka‘i, East Moloka‘i, Kainalu; mauka of Kamehameha V Highway, to protect critical watershed and prevent erosion damage to near-shore coral reef ecosystems and historic Hawaiian fishponds.

★ Kaua‘i Public Land Trust and the County of Kaua‘i, $800,000 for the acquisition of 0.74 acre on the island of Kaua‘i, on Hanalei Bay directly next to the Hanalei Pier, to be held by the County of Kaua‘i, to enhance and protect the heavily used Black Pot Beach Park area for Hawai‘i’s residents and visitors.

★ Kona Historical Society, $255,592 for the acquisition of 2.11 acres on the island of Hawai‘i, South Kona, makai of Mamaloahoa Highway, to provide a scenic buffer for the historic H.N. Greenwell Store and additional space for preservation of the farming and ranching heritage of Kona.

★ The Trust for Public Land and O‘ahu Land Trust, $500,000 for the acquisition of a conservation easement over 107.73 acres on the island of O‘ahu, ahupua‘a of Ka‘alaea, in the Ko‘olaupoko District, to be held by the O‘ahu Land Trust, to protect agricultural production and maintain a portion of the rural character of windward O‘ahu.

★ Malu ‘Aina Center for Non-Violent Education and Action and the Hawai‘i Island Land Trust (HILT), $231,788 for the acquisition of 11.14 acres on the island of Hawai‘i, Puna District;
ten miles south of Hilo, makai side of Highway 11, with a conservation easement to be held by HILT, to maintain agricultural production on lands with kipuka deep soil and abundant rainfall.

★ HILT, $35,000 for the acquisition of conservation easements over 6 acres on the island of Hawai‘i, Puna District; in Hawaiian Orchid Island Estates adjacent to Kahauale‘a Natural Area Reserve, to preserve an intact native ‘ohi‘a forest canopy that allows native birds, insects and plants to travel and propagate.

LLCP projects are subject to a consultation process with the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the approval of the Governor. Grant funding for projects that protect lands having value as a resource to the State is awarded through the Legacy Land Conservation Program on an annual basis, subject to the availability of funds. For more information, visit hawaii.gov/dlnr/dofaw/llcp or call (808) 586-0921.
Some water diverted to plantations put back in native streams

After years of essentially being drained dry and left for dead, two legendary streams on the Hawaiian island of Maui came back to life this week, thanks to the work of Earthjustice.

The streams were diverted over a hundred years ago to irrigate sugar cane and pineapple plantations. Over time sugar and pineapple have faded in the islands, succumbing to cheaper foreign competition. This freed up the water to restore the streams.

But the old plantation companies have other ideas. They want to develop the farmlands and bank and sell the diverted stream water. To them the water is the key to cashing in with McMansions, condos, resorts, and shopping centers, all fueled by "free" stream water.

On the other side, Native Hawaiian and local communities have waited to restore the streams and the interconnected wetland taro patches that produce a staple food as old as Hawaiian civilization. Earthjustice attorneys took the case to the state water commission and won a ruling that some of the stream water must be restored. The ruling didn’t begin to go far enough and has been appealed to the courts. But it marked the beginning of the end of the plantations’ water monopoly. The commission ordered the restoration of some flows to Waihe’e River and Waiehu Stream, two of the four major waters in Central Maui.

When the fateful day came, the plantation diverters allowed some of the water to once again take its natural course. Every year brief downpours of heavy rains would temporarily make the streams flow again which helped retain the original streambed. Now, in the middle of summer, fresh clean water from West Maui’s
mountains once again flowed to the sea breathing life into the plants and animals along the way. For the first time in more than a century, and after six years of legal battles, the community saw the streams come back to life.

The restored water recalled a similar water battle fought by Earthjustice 15 years prior on the island of O'ahu. In that case, native streams were eventually restored by court order after plantations stopped using it on cane and pineapples. And on O'ahu, as on Maui, the powers that be fought stream restoration tooth and nail. They tried as hard as they could to bank the water for, surprise! - development on former farmlands.

On Maui, the plantation companies are not going quietly. They have so far refused to provide all the water they were ordered to restore. One company is even resorting to scorched earth tactics, allowing some residents with priority water rights who had been receiving water though the plantation ditch system to be cut off, and refusing to cooperate to find a solution. The truth is the plantation companies easily have more than enough water to both restore the streams and supply these residents. Earthjustice will stay at it until these problems are addressed. In the courts and in the community, we will not rest until justice, and the waters of Maui rivers and streams, flow once again for present and future generations.

Visit Earthjustice's Restore Stream Flow webpage to view a photo slideshow of the restoration of Waihe`e River and Waiehu Stream, and to learn more about this issue.

Restore Stream Flow: http://earthjustice.org/our_work/campaigns/restore-stream-flow

FACT SHEET:
“Purple Spot” Plan threatens O‘ahu’s remaining Ag Lands
http://kahea.org/blog/farms-not-dumps-for-waianaecoast?searchterm=Purple+Spo

Farms, not dumps = True sustainability for the Leeward Coast

What is the “purple spot?”
- In 2009, Wai‘anae Coast residents updated their “Community Sustainability Plan,” which states that all future urban development “shall not be allowed to intrude into the Agricultural area” and instead should be focused along the highway.
- Despite this strong language, the plan today contains two possible maps, one that preserves current agricultural lands, and one with a random industrial zone (a big purple spot) in the middle of green Lualualei valley.
- Why a purple spot? The purple spot paves the way for developers to put an industrial park on agricultural land deep in Lualualei Valley, next to farms and homes, and not along the highway.
where the plan itself says it should go.

- This purple spot will allow the developers to use this fertile agricultural land for any kind of industrial use—including another landfill—and limit the ability of residents to contest whatever developers decide to do inside the purple spot.

Today, we have a chance to continue to preserve agricultural lands in Wai‘anae, and get that purple spot removed!

“Purple Spot” Fact Sheet – pg. 2

Take Action! The Wai‘anae Sustainability Plan must be approved by the Council for the City and County of Honolulu before it becomes law. We are asking Council members to reject the “purple spot” and protect agricultural lands throughout the Wai‘anae Coast.

Sign the petition and spread the word! Tell Honolulu Council members that you support protecting rural lifestyles and agricultural lands in Hawai‘i. No purple spot!

What’s going on: Today, despite overwhelming community support for protecting local farmlands, developers are pushing Honolulu Council members to approve a “purple spot,” a new industrial zone in the middle of green Lualualei Valley. This industrial zone would urbanize precious agricultural lands, paving the way for industrial parks, landfills, and other industrial land uses.

Wrong for Wai‘anae: Over the years, industrialization, militarization and wrong-headed waste management has unjustly turned the Wai‘anae Coast into O‘ahu’s dumping ground. Wai‘anae is a place rich in tradition, with countless sacred and cultural sites, and one of the largest communities of Native Hawaiians in the islands (and the world). Wai‘anae is also home to the largest producer of organic greens in Hawai‘i, and a place where the movement to reclaim traditional farming practices began—and continues today. Together with rural and Hawaiian communities around the islands, we can say NO to new potential toxic sites, and NO to further loss of agricultural lands.
Is paving over Agricultural lands “sustainability?”

**Become a spot remover!** Say NO to more loss of precious rural agricultural lands! And NO to government that serves wealthy developers over the interests of local families and communities!

Learn more + take action at:  [www.KAHEA.org](http://www.KAHEA.org)