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March 12, 2026

TO: The Honorable Andrew Takuya Garrett, Chair
House Committee on Higher Education (HED)

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 13, 2026; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2969, SD1, RELATING TO THE MAUI WILDFIRE EXPOSURE STUDY AND MAUI HEALTH REGISTRY**

I support this measure appropriating funds for the University of Hawai'i to expand and sustain services provided by the Maui Wildfire Exposure Study and Maui Health Registry.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, 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 impacts of the Maui wildfires did not end in August 2023. Many residents, particularly children and the medically vulnerable, continue to experience ongoing physical and mental health challenges.
2. Appropriating funds for Maui WES and the Maui Health Registry ensures that trusted community-based care and early detection support continues which may be otherwise inaccessible to many families.
3. Maui WES, the largest post-disaster health effort in Hawai'i's history, also serves as a cost-effective and community-driven model for care that can be expanded to strengthen the resilience of our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

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