

COMMUNITY VOICE

Why House Bill 2501 Should Be Defeated: A Parable

One lawmaker creatively explains his position on legislation that would allow Alexander & Baldwin's continued diversion of Maui stream waters.

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8

A man has finished washing his car, but keeps the water running through the hose and down his driveway. He claims that someone may come around next week to wash another car, so it is imperative to keep the water flowing uninterrupted. Hopefully, many people will come wash their cars and they will need lots of water.

A policeman tells the car owner to stop wasting water and turn off the tap until there is a need for more water to be used. Neighbors start complaining about the wasted water. They note that the water could be put to better use if it were not pouring needlessly down the driveway.

This man pays only for the water he uses to wash cars, not for the water that flushes down the driveway when not washing a car. In other words, there is no financial incentive to turn off the tap, and he takes no responsibility for the damage that his wasteful actions cause other resources.



Josh Henderson via Flickr

HB 2501 would bring new regulation to agricultural use of Maui stream resources.

The man thinks he can mollify the growing anger by turning down the flow a little bit.

This man shouts out that anyone who insists he stop wasting water must be opposed to clean cars. He confuses people with fearful accusations and dire consequences if he is forced to follow inconvenient rules and laws. He wants, no demands, special dispensation to ignore those rules.

This man is wrong.

While emails in opposition to [House Bill 2501](#) have dwarfed the ones in support, one man recently claimed that there is no middle ground in this debate: If you support agriculture, then you must support HB2501. I fervently disagree!

There is plenty of water to both irrigate Central Maui and increase East Maui stream flows, but this future may never come if the Legislature interjects itself in the judicial process and tries to monkey with the Public Trust Doctrine.

I remain confidently opposed to this bad idea called HB 2501.

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About the Author



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Sen. Gil Riviere represents District 23 on Oahu's North and Windward Shores, which includes much of the Koolau watershed, large agricultural lands and coastal resources. His legislative priorities are to improve our roadways, protect and preserve our environment, encourage agriculture and food production, support responsible development and enhance educational and cultural programs.

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