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TO: THE MAUI COUNTY COUNCIL
Fax 270-7165

Dear Honorable Council members,

As a teacher who has been working with disaffected youth and their families for the past nine years at Ka Hale A Ke Ola Homeless Resource Center and Maui Youth and Family Services, I have come to know and understand the educational/work programs for teenagers developed by Brian McCafferty. Naturally, when I learned he was building an Alternative Learning Center in Paia I was thrilled. Mr. McCafferty's approach, one where young folks are taught responsibility and job skills, works with teen-agers. Anything the council might do to support this new project will go a long way toward creating social justice and reducing anti-social activity in our community.

I strongly support the community development block grant allocation for the development of the Paia Community Learning Center. The Felix consent decree requires special education facilities such as the one under consideration here. Recently on the Rivera CNBC news show, it was reported in response to the recent shooting at a school outside San Diego, that one in five American early teens have an undiagnosed mental illness. No matter how true that may be, as a community we must begin to take big, decisive steps to help our young people. This project is such a step. Please help make it happen.

Sincerely,



Gerald Palmer
Teacher