This is a rebuttal to the letter by opponents to Bill 113, found here:

<http://voteno113.wordpress.com/2013/11/17/ag-letter-to-the-hawaii-county-community-council-on-bill-113-opposition/>  
  
Below I have quoted excerpts from the letter linked above and responded accordingly.

“**We the undersigned farmers, ranchers and floral & nursery growers collectively produce more than 80% of the food and agricultural products grown in Hawaii.”**

This is hard to believe. What is your source of information for this, and how can this figure consider the uncounted non-commercial farmers and gardeners who grow their own food on this island? It cannot. Besides, this is not about quantity anymore. It is about quality and safety, given that the natural ecology of the planet is currently in collapse.

“We are in the field every day trying to make a living and trying to improve food sustainability in Hawaii, yet we are under attack for using a tool—biotechnology (they call it GMO)…”

So are we organic and non-GMO commercial farmers “in the field every day” and “trying to make a living.” And it will be tough to be in the field and making a living if new GMO crops are allowed on Hawai’I island. TI will also become hard to breathe, as it is on Kauia and parts of Molokai, Oahu, and Maui. We who are organic farmers are not further polluting Hawai’I as does the GMO industry.

You are not trying to improve sustainability if you are fighting against this bill, which would allow RoundUp Ready and stacked trait varieties of GMO, as well as open-air testing of restricted use pesticides and experimental pesticides to enter the island. There is nothing sustainable about the pesticide-dependent varieties of GMO crops this bill is trying to prevent entering.

Yes, we call it GMO because that is what this bill addresses. By calling what the bill prohibits “biotechnology” and not GMO crops is misleading, if not manipulative; you can call it whatever you want, but the fact is that Bill 113 prevents further GMO crops, which are biotechnologically derived, from taking root on Hawai’ian soil, and this is a crucial safeguard to our health, our childrens’ and grandchildrens’ health, the health of the ‘aina, and to the oceans. Look at Kaua’I if you want immediate proof of this. Look at the abundance of science if you want scholarly evidence— [www.gmoevidence.com](http://www.gmoevidence.com).

We have never had a major pesticide-dependent GMO presence on Hawai’I island, we have never needed it, and for all intents and purposes, we never will. Please don’t fabricate fear and false need.

“ Farmers across America use this tool to grow the food that we all eat – and to keep it affordable for working families.”

GMO farmers across America are massively subsidized with taxpayer dollars to grow these crops that have been found to contain elevated levels of pesticides in excess of the minimum allowed. These crops are destroying American farmland, bankrupting and driving hundreds of thousands of farmers in India to suicide, and causing horrible illnesses in Argentina, India, and in the United States, and many other countries.

Go see:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2013/03/201331313434142322.html>

“We support public policies that include all types of agricultural production including natural, organic, conventional and cutting edge technology, so we can continue to provide you with food and other farm products even as we compete with insects, weeds, and invasive species, and deal with drought, plant diseases, and other challenges.”

Organic and non-GMO conventional farming cannot co-exist with GMO farming because of pesticide and pollen drift, causing contamination of the former. The biggest challenge humanity faces is climate change and it has been shown that GMO crops are *less* effective at combating drought conditions than traditionally bred varieties. Read here:

<http://www.gmwatch.org/index.php/news/archive/2012/13627-traditional-breeding-outperforms-gm-hands-down>  
  
*Quote from above: “If we are going to make headway in combating hunger due to overpopulation and climate change, we will need to increase crop yields," says Dr Gurian-Sherman. "Traditional breeding outperforms genetic engineering hands down."61*

and here:

<http://static.ewg.org/reports/2012/gmo-landingpage/pdfs/gmo_crops_developing_world.pdf>  
 *Quote from above: “Climate change has increased the urgency of finding ways for agriculture to withstand extreme weather variations. The USDA has approved only one GE corn seed designed to withstand drought. Limited field-testing of it began in 2012. But the crop is predicted to increase corn productivity by just 1 percent. That’s no better than traditional breeding techniques. Improved farming practices have also increased drought tolerance in U.S. corn by 1 percent a year – without the high costs and decades of development of genetically engineered versions.”*

And here:

And as to the touted (and inaccurate) increased GMO yield disinformation, here are a couple more studies and excerpts:

<http://static.ewg.org/reports/2012/gmo-landingpage/pdfs/gmo_crops_developing_world.pdf>

*Quote from above: “****In 2009 the Union of Concerned Scientists published a report that measured the yield impact of GE crops and concluded: “Commercial GE crops have made no inroads so far into raising the intrinsic or potential yield of any crop. By contrast, traditional breeding has been spectacularly successful in this regard; it can be solely credited with the intrinsic yield increases in the United States and other parts of the world that characterize the agriculture of the twentieth century.”2***

***Other data suggest that some GE crops actually have lower yields than non-GE varieties.3 For example, field trials of soybeans found a 50 percent drop in the yield of GE varieties because of gene disruption.4 And hybrid corn varieties engineered with the Bt bacterium to produce a pest-killing protein were slower to develop and ultimately had a 12 percent lower yield than non-GE varieties.5***

***A U.S Department of Agriculture report on the overall performance of GE crops concluded, “GE crops available for commercial use do not increase the yield potential of a variety. In fact, yield may even decrease... Perhaps the biggest issue raised by these results is how to explain the rapid adoption of GE crops when farm financial impacts appear to be mixed or even negative.”6***

And here:

<http://sustainablepulse.com/2013/11/21/non-gmo-corn-hybrids-smash-gmo-varieties-illinois-trials/#.Uo-eGCiUcfM>

Quoted from above: *“Spectrum Premium Non-GMO hybrids, used in the testing, produced 3 to 10 more bushels per acre when compared to nationally known GMO corn hybrids.  Trial details:*[*bit.ly/1baSkPt*](http://bit.ly/1baSkPt)

*These regional data summaries are evidence that farmers now have the opportunity to lower input costs and effectively increase profitability with the use of Non-GMO corn hybrids.”*

GMO industry is a heavily petroleum dependent industry, which is not part of the solution for climate change and dwindling natural resources, especially fossil fuels. The entire informed world knows that we must end our dependence on petroleum; apparently the Big Oil and Big Ag industries (like GMO industry) have not heard the news, or are just plain ignorant to the welfare of humanity and the ecosystem on which we depend. Or, they are just terribly blinded by mercenary greed.

*“5-Chloro-2-methyl 3(2H)-isothiazolone, for instance, is a chemical component used in*[*Roundup*](http://www.naturalnews.com/Roundup.html)*that has been linked to causing both allergic reactions and genetic damage in laboratory tests. And 3-Iodo-2-propynyl butyl carbamate, a biocide often used in glyphosate formulas, has been shown to cause thyroid*[*damage*](http://www.naturalnews.com/damage.html)*and growth abnormalities in test subjects. Other harmful glyphosate ingredients include* ***petroleum distillates,*** *polyoxyethylene alkylamine, and methyl p-hydroxybenzoate, which are linked to fertility problems, genetic damage, and other harm.*”

<http://shiftfrequency.com/ethan-a-huff-the-facts-on-glyphosate-satans-molecule/>  
  
“Biotechnology can reduce our use of pesticides”

The biotechnology that Bill 113 is trying to keep off Hawai’I island does not reduce pesticide use. If you understand the superbugs and superweeds conundrum, which has spawned the stacked trait variety of new GMO crops, then you know this is not true. A new study just revealed that GMO has actually increased and not decreased pesticide use. After all, Bt-variety crops are themselves listed with the FDA as pesticides because the plant itself produces pesticide from every cell of its body. Here are a couple excerpts regarding a recent study about pesticide use on Bt crops (Bt crops are one of two major GMO methods; the other is RoundUp Ready technology) :

*Genetically engineered crops have led to an increase in overall pesticide use, by 404 million pounds from the time they were introduced in 1996 through 2011, according to the report by Charles Benbrook, a research professor at the Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources at Washington State University.*

*"In order to deal with rapidly spreading resistant weeds, farmers are being forced to expand use of older, higher-risk herbicides. To stop corn and cotton insects from developing resistance to Bt, farmers planting Bt crops are being asked to spray the insecticides that Bt-corn and cotton were designed to displace."*

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/02/us-usa-study-pesticides-idUSBRE89100X20121002>  
  
And another:

[GMO Crops Mean More Herbicide, Not Less - Forbes](GMO%20Crops%20Mean%20More%20Herbicide,%20Not%20Less%20-%20Forbes)

And another study finds:

*“Contrary to often-repeated claims that today’s genetically-engineered crops have, and are reducing pesticide use, the spread of glyphosate-resistant weeds in herbicide-resistant weed management systems has brought about substantial increases in the number and volume of herbicides applied. If new genetically engineered forms of corn and soybeans tolerant of 2,4-D are approved, the volume of 2,4-D sprayed could drive herbicide usage upward by another approximate 50%. The magnitude of increases in herbicide use on herbicide-resistant hectares has dwarfed the reduction in insecticide use on Bt crops over the past 16 years, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.”*

<http://www.enveurope.com/content/24/1/24>  
  
“Biotechnology can reduce our use of pesticides, help us prepare our plants for climate change…”

Not as effectively as traditionally bred plants, so the studies show:

<http://earthopensource.org/index.php/reports/gmo-myths-and-truths>

“and may even reduce the need for costly, artificial fertilizers by enabling plants to convert the environmentally-safe nitrogen in the air to a form they can use.”

Oh yes, and they *may* even grow hundred dollar bills from their rootlets, right? What if I said “organic crops ***may*** tie your shoes in the morning, bake cookies for you while you take a bath, and drive your children to school”? Let’s look at reality. The fact is that organic farming methods *already* reduce costly artificial fertilizers and that GMO crops utlilize exclusively artificial fertilizers.

“This invaluable tool helps us reduce our dependence on imported fossil fuels and lowers our cost of food production so we can keep food affordable for local families.”  
  
No, it does not reduce fossil fuel dependence, but increases it since it is an import-export, fossil fuel-dependent technology, relying heavily on petrochemicals, while local organic farming does not. Where do you come up with these ludicrous statements? You can’t just make stuff up and expect to be credible. It might *seem* to lower food production costs but at what *real* cost? The real cost is our worsening health (diabetes, cancer, autoimmune diseases, obesity in adults and children, among others, have all increased dramatically in the last two decades, and are on the rise now), our poisoned soil, air, and water. Finally, this is non-local technology for non-local profits and non-local families. The GMO corn grown on Kauai and Oahu is shipped around the world. See here:

<http://health.usnews.com/health-news/diet-fitness/diabetes/articles/2010/08/03/number-of-obese-adults-keeps-rising-cdc-says>  
  
“Not having access to biotechnology will severely limit our ability to prepare for the future and to support future generations.”

Utter nonsense. The opposite is true. Biotechnology in the form of GMO crops, which is what Bill 113 addresses, is already spoiling the future for our children. Google it, look around the world, get informed.

“**You know us.  We are your friends, relatives and neighbors.  We are proud and honored to produce food for our communities and for our own families. And like you, we believe in transparency.”**

I actually don’t know you, nor do any of my friends and family. If you believe in transparency, please also take up a belief in reality. The information you present in this article is false and misleading. Please support your assertions with studies and reports, and credible ones at that.

“**We ask you to use facts, not the unfounded fear that is spread across the Internet, to form your opinions about what we do.”**

Facts? I have rebutted all the so-called “facts” of your letter with referenced citations. The internet contains facts and sound studies showing the harm of the biotechnology industry. Where are your facts cited? I invite you to actually look at some of the peer-reviewed studies on biotechnology’s GMOs. If you do, you also might become reasonably afraid. But if you want to remain ignorant of the facts, you can likely continue to publish untruths and not have it weigh on your conscience.

Please don’t characterize anti-GMO passions as “unfounded fear.” They are founded and reasonable. Tell this to our ohana suffering on Kauai with the fugitive pesticide-laden dust and sick children and family members. Tell this to the Argentinian farmers who were made big promises by biotech industry and now see birth defects and cancer increases. Tell this to the peasant farmers in India who trusted the very same misinformation your are spreading in this letter.So, yes, let’s use the facts. Please study them.

“We are committed to caring for the environment because we depend on it.”

Then learn how to farm organically. GMO farming does not care for the environment.

“We want to leave our farms and ranches to our kids and their kids, so we know we must maintain the land and our natural resources.”

Great. But this is not the issue; your wish is self-centered. Without Bill 113 we are vulnerable to losing vast amounts of land and public health to the poison industry of biotechnology’s GMO crops. This intrusion might spare your ranch, but it might not spare your neighbor’s, or mine. So, please, in the spirit of the pride and honor and trust you mention, think about your community, not only what you own and your own wellness (which would not fare well in the face of massive pesticide sprayings and production that GMO agriculture brings), but that of your community and your children’s inheritance, and ours as well.

“So please let us choose how best to grow your food rather than allow folks who have no experience farming for a living to make decisions for us.”

Who exactly has no experience farming? GMO farming is not really “farming,” now is it? It’s knowing how to use chemicals and not caring for the biodiversity of the soil and caring for the environment, diminishing its quality and capacity to support the rich microbial life that sustains our soils and which confer to plants the nutrients they break down through organic processes—all of which GMO farming destroys.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/20/business/misgivings-about-how-a-weed-killer-affects-the-soil.html?_r=0>  
  
I would no trust you or any chemical “farmer” with making decisions for me and my family. Nor would any other reasonable person. Apparently you have not even bothered to Google your assertions in this letter; shame on you. Apparently, the majority of farmers on Hawai’i island oppose GMO farming, judging by the numbers of those who showed up to testify on the last three public hearings for Bill 113. Where were you guys? We outnumbered you in testimony about 9-1. We took off work to be there; we left our farms to be there. Maybe because we did not have to be on the farm that day to spray, allowing the natural measures we employ to sustain our farms for the day.

“We humbly ask you to help support local farmers, ranchers and floral & nursery growers and allow us to use approved and safe technology; follow market demands; not be discriminated against; and be allowed to use our education, training and experience to continue producing our food and other agricultural products.”

We humbly ask you to stand down, do your homework, study the facts, stop publishing lies, and think about your neighbors in earnest, think about our present and future wellness, the use of fossil fuels for poisons in the GMO industry, and to stop propagating misinformation and deception. I have barely omitted one line of your letter which is not outright propaganda to those who actually knows the facts.

“Farmers are under attack from a very vocal minority.”

A very local minority? Then why did we outnumber you so drastically at the hearing for bill 113? Where were all the groups you mention at the end of this letter? We took off work to be there; where were you?

“We need the silent majority and anyone who values local food production to speak up!”  
  
The silent majority who knows nothing about what this Bill is about, much less what the most recent studies and scientific facts are regarding GMO yield, pesticide dependence, fossil fuel dependence, chemical dependence, and the utter degradation to life that the GMO industry brings.

Here is what a recent report says about the GMO industry:

**Statement: No scientific consensus on GMO safety**

*As scientists, physicians, academics, and experts from disciplines relevant to the scientific, legal, social and safety assessment aspects of genetically modified organisms (GMOs),[1] we strongly reject claims by GM seed developers and some scientists, commentators, and journalists that there is a “scientific consensus” on GMO safety[2] [3] [4] and that the debate on this topic is “over”.[5]*

*We feel compelled to issue this statement because the claimed consensus on GMO safety does not exist. The claim that it does exist is misleading and misrepresents the currently available scientific evidence and the broad diversity of opinion among scientists on this issue. Moreover, the claim encourages a climate of complacency that could lead to a lack of regulatory and scientific rigour and appropriate caution, potentially endangering the health of humans, animals, and the environment.*

[*http://www.ensser.org/increasing-public-information/no-scientific-consensus-on-gmo-safety/*](http://www.ensser.org/increasing-public-information/no-scientific-consensus-on-gmo-safety/)

Please get informed and quit making stuff up.