



January 23, 2016

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means Chair Jill Tokuda and Members &
House Committee on Finance Chair Sylvia Luke and Members

Subject: Hawai'i Council of Mayors Initiatives for the 2017 Legislative Session

The Hawaii Council of Mayors extends our appreciation to Committee Chair Jill Tokuda and Sylvia Luke for accommodating the scheduling of our presentations today. We are united in "spirit" and ready to engage in dialogue on the issues and concerns that are facing our State and our counties. However, we all have a uniqueness and each mayor will have the opportunity to share that as they present their legislative requests to you today. We look forward to working together enthusiastically and collaboratively to explore solutions to the issues that face us this upcoming session.

As Mayors, we collectively have agreed on asking for your support on the following three (3) issues that we are all faced with:

- 1.) Homelessness – The burden of the impact to our community and has increased the need for additional public safety protection. We look forward to a fair share of the \$12M that was earmarked from the State for assistance on all the islands. We continue to work with our faith based communities and support the outreach work that various non-profit organizations have provided and urge the State to grant funding to help alleviate this problem through their agencies and other contractors.



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- 2.) Invasive Species –Impacts relating to various types of invasive species have negatively affected communities. Funding to address the unique counties' situation is warranted (i.e. fire ants, coqui frog, parakeets, and others). Each mayor will address their specific need in this area.
- 3.) Lifeguard Tort Liability – The current bill sunsets, thus an extension is needed, but a permanent extension is preferred to provide the counties protection for our lifeguards. We support the Hawai'i State Association of Counties (HSAC) proposed measure this legislative session.

Three other additional concerns facing the State and the Counties this year will be:

- 1.) Collective Bargaining – Eight (8) union contracts are currently involved in collective bargaining which will increase all of our budgets immensely.
- 2.) General Excise Tax (GET) – The Legislature, the Mayors and Councils will be faced with whether or not they would support a GET tax for all counties.
- 3.) State Hospitals – Each county has state hospitals but have difficulty financing their operations. Through the continued support of the legislature much needed health care for those in the rural areas are important and vital to the livelihood of our residents and visitors.

As we come before you today, we'd like to express our heartfelt thanks on behalf of the people of the counties of Hawai'i, Maui and Kaua'i and the City and County of Honolulu for all of your dedication and commitment to making Hawai'i a special place to live. We live in the best place on earth!

Aloha and Mahalo,



Harry Kim, Mayor
County of Hawai'i



Kirk Caldwell, Mayor
City and County of Honolulu



Bernard Carvalho, Jr., Mayor
County of Kaua'i



Alan Arakawa, Mayor
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