



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

November 13, 2020

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Senate Special Committee on COVID-19
Thirtieth State Legislature
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Senators Dela Cruz, Keohokalole, Kidani, Kim, Moriwaki, and Fevella:

Thank you for your letter dated November 10, 2020 urging me to develop further protocols and procedures with the State Department of Health to continue our safe reopening to visitors.

I appreciate your concerns about the potential for COVID-19 to spread as we welcome more visitors. The data shows that our pre-travel testing program is in fact working. As of November 10, there have been 18 positives out of 15,142 sentinel tests conducted as part of Hawai'i's post-travel surveillance testing program. This reflects a positivity rate of 0.12 percent, which is significantly lower than what we are finding in our general population. While no testing program is 100 percent effective, our post-travel surveillance testing shows that we are significantly reducing the risk posted by travelers infected with COVID-19.

Furthermore, the Department of Health's Weekly COVID-19 Cluster Report dated November 12, 2020 provides information about where clusters are being found. The clusters are largely the result of community spread due to unsafe gatherings by Hawai'i residents—including home parties and coworkers eating meals together in lunchrooms—not because of infected travelers slipping through the pre-travel testing program.

As the pandemic continues, we need to maintain resources for our health professionals and first responders, residents and employees of congregate living facilities, and schools, as we all want them to open and operate safely. These priorities have been developed in coordination with the health professionals and we will continue to work with and be informed by experts from our Department of Health.

Senate Special Committee on COVID-19
November 13, 2020
Page Two of Two

Thank you very much for your input and understanding that my administration must balance this concern with the dire need to reopen our economy safely so that Hawai'i residents may return to work and provide for their families. I look forward to continuing to work with you as we navigate the reopening of our community and state.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David Y. Ige". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

David Y. Ige
Governor, State of Hawai'i

c: The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, Senate President
Dr. Elizabeth A. Char, Director, Department of Health