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HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

DEPT. COMM. NO. 544

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FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
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October 28, 2025

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senate President Kouchi and Speaker Nakamura:

Subject: Preliminary Estimates of State Growth Rate and General Fund
Expenditure Ceiling for FYs 26-27

The Hawaii State Constitution, Article VII, Section 9, requires the State Legislature to establish a general fund expenditure ceiling that limits the rate of growth of general fund appropriations to the estimated rate of growth of the State's economy.

Chapter 37, Part V, General Fund Expenditure Ceiling, HRS, which implements this constitutional requirement, defines State growth as the average annual percentage change in total State personal income (TPI) for the three calendar years immediately preceding the fiscal year for which appropriations are to be made. TPI is defined as the State personal income series published by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). For the current and next succeeding calendar years, for which the BEA does not publish income, it shall mean the TPI as estimated by the Council on Revenues (Council).

The Director of Finance uses the BEA's personal income series and the Council's estimates to determine the State growth rate and general fund expenditure ceiling. Upon making this determination, the Director of Finance is required to inform the Governor, Chief Justice, and Legislature of the Preliminary Estimates of the State's growth rate and expenditure ceiling as of August 15, 2025.

Based on the data submitted by the Council in a letter dated August 1, 2025, it has been determined that the Preliminary Estimates of the State growth rate and the general fund expenditure ceiling are as follows:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>State Growth</u>	<u>Aggregate Expenditure Ceiling</u>
26	4.32%	\$11,731,628,979
27	5.30%	12,353,932,052

Executive and Judicial Branches' Appropriation Ceilings

The Executive and Judicial Branches' appropriation ceilings as of August 15, 2025, were calculated by multiplying Executive and Judicial appropriations for the previous fiscal year by the applicable State growth rate. The Executive and Judicial Branches' appropriation ceilings, appropriations, and margins are as follows:

Executive Branch Appropriation Ceiling for FYs 26-27

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation Ceiling</u>	<u>Appropriations</u>	<u>Margin</u>
26	\$11,734,725,362	\$11,196,746,794	\$537,978,568
27	11,790,677,096	11,328,183,159	462,493,937

Judicial Branch Appropriation Ceiling for FYs 26-27

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation Ceiling</u>	<u>Appropriations</u>	<u>Margin</u>
26	\$245,487,050	\$209,059,987	\$36,427,063
27	220,149,553	211,244,568	8,904,985

Comparison of Executive Branch and Judicial Branch Appropriation Growth Rates

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>State Growth</u>	<u>Growth in General Fund Appropriations</u>	
		<u>Executive Branch</u>	<u>Judicial Branch</u>
26	4.32%	-0.47%	-11.16%
27	5.30%	1.17%	1.04%

A public notice of the Preliminary State growth rate and expenditure ceiling for FYs 26-27 will be published in the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, Hawai'i Tribune-Herald, West Hawai'i Today, The Maui News, and The Garden Island.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luis P. Salaveria', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

LUIS P. SALAVERIA
Director of Finance