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January 23, 2026

Re: Letter of Support for Aloha United Way 2-1-1 Grant In Aid Application

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of Maui United Way, I am writing to express our strongest support for Aloha United Way's leadership and continued investment in Hawai'i's Statewide 2-1-1 Call Center at the full request of the attached application. The events following the August 2023 Maui wildfires made unmistakably clear that 2-1-1 is not simply a referral line, but a critical component of disaster response, recovery, and long-term community resilience for our state.

In the immediate aftermath of the wildfires, 2-1-1 served as a trusted, accessible, and centralized point of connection for thousands of Maui residents navigating displacement, loss of housing, food insecurity, healthcare needs, and emotional distress. At a time when systems were overwhelmed, and information was rapidly changing, the 2-1-1 Call Center provided clarity, stability, and human-centered support. This service became a lifeline for individuals and families who had nowhere else to turn.

Through this experience, Maui United Way and our partners gained a deeper understanding of both the power and the limitations of our existing 2-1-1 infrastructure. While the dedication and responsiveness of the 2-1-1 team were extraordinary, the scale and duration of the disaster revealed a clear need for sustained, statewide investment. Disasters do not respect county boundaries, and neither should the systems designed to support our communities during crisis and recovery. A resilient Maui County depends on a resilient Hawai'i.

As Maui United Way worked alongside Aloha United Way during wildfire response and recovery, it became evident that strengthening the 2-1-1 system statewide is essential not only for future emergencies, but for day-to-day navigation of social services across Hawai'i. This includes improved data collection, consistent resource vetting, multilingual and culturally responsive services, workforce capacity, and technological infrastructure that can scale during periods of surge.

Importantly, Hawai'i's 2-1-1 system is embedded within a proven national framework that aligns local response with national standards, best practices, and interoperability across jurisdictions. Continued investment ensures that Hawai'i remains connected to this broader network, allowing our communities to benefit from shared learning, coordinated disaster response, and nationally recognized data and reporting structures that inform policy, funding, and systems change.

Maui United Way fully supports Aloha United Way's efforts to secure funding and long-term sustainability for the 2-1-1 Call Center, and we are working on a County and philanthropic level to invest into the system as well. Investing in this infrastructure is an investment in equity, preparedness, and the dignity of our residents, particularly those most vulnerable during times of crisis. We view this work as foundational to Hawai'i's social safety net and essential to our collective ability to respond, recover, and rebuild stronger.

Mahalo for the opportunity to express our support. We are grateful for Aloha United Way's leadership and partnership, and we look forward to continued collaboration in strengthening 2-1-1 for Maui and for all of Hawai'i.

Me ka ha'aha'a,



Jeeyun Lee

Chief Executive Officer

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GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER. LIVE UNITED.

Our Mission is to advance and nurture the well-being of our Maui, Molokai, and Lāna'i community through impactful, equitable, and sustainable initiatives.