

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA

November 21, 2023

To: The Honorable Daniel Holt, Co-Chair,
The Honorable Andrew Takuya Garrett, Co-Chair, and
Members of the House Jobs and Business Working Group

Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2023
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Place: Conference Room 329, State Capitol

From: Jade T. Butay, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

JOBS AND BUSINESS WORKING GROUP DRAFT REPORT OF NOV. 1, 2023

Co-Chairs Holt, Takuya Garrett, and Members of the House Working Group:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the Working Group's draft report. The DLIR has focused on ensuring the delivery of its services to the communities impacted by the Maui wildfires. The department has staffed the Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC) in Kahului and Lahaina as well as previously the Family Assistance Center in Kā'anapali to help facilitate community access to its services.

The Workforce Development Division (WDD) and the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division remain available at the DRCs to provide support for those seeking temporary support in the form of unemployment insurance benefits and assistance (Disaster Unemployment Assistance-DUA) as well as for those seeking job referral and search assistance. In addition, the Hawaii Occupational Safety and Health Division (HIOSH), in partnership with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), deployed staffing and provided Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and safety seminars for private and public sector employers and workers through early October.

To facilitate these efforts the DLIR has conducted outreach with existing community partners and developed new relationships with a wide variety of organizations in the community (civic, religious, ethnic, labor, etc.). The department has made a concerted effort to disseminate information via media appearances including by television and over-the-air and internet radio on Maui. Relatedly, the DLIR's Office of Community Services (OCS) has provided funding for the Maui Immigrant Resources Center to bolster language assistance in various languages (Chuukese, Marshallese, Ilocano, Tagalog, Spanish, and Tongan).

Updates for Draft Report

National Dislocated Worker Grant

The department executed a contract with Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. on October 1, 2023, to effectuate a partnership to make available temporary cleanup and recovery jobs on Maui in response to the wildfires. Three hundred jobs for impacted workers are available through the DLIR Workforce Development Division and Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. (MEO) to assist with debris removal, damage cleanup and the delivery of humanitarian assistance. To date, MEO has received 219 applications and begun placing individuals with employers involved in recovery efforts.

Awarded to Hawai'i through the U.S. DOL's Employment and Training Administration, the grant of up to \$21 million allows the DLIR to provide disaster relief employment and training activities to minimize the employment and economic impact of the disaster. The department received an initial allocation of \$10.5 million after approval of its emergency grant application in August.

Individuals who are eligible for the temporary employment opportunities were living on Maui at the onset of the disaster (Aug. 8, 2023) and include those who meet the following conditions: 1) individuals laid off, permanently or temporarily, because of the wildfires, 2) dislocated workers that were laid off for other reasons, 3) long-term unemployed workers, and 4) self-employed individuals who became unemployed or significantly underemployed as a result of the Maui wildfires.

The temporary jobs may last up to one year with extensions, if approved by the U.S. DOL and include worksites in the public, private non-profit, and private sectors. Target populations include individuals with Limited English Proficiency, immigrants, homeless individuals or those with housing insecurity, migrant populations, and long-term unemployed individuals.

Apprenticeship

The draft report identifies strategies critical to scaling-up training for tradespersons involved in the reconstruction of Maui and notes the recent U.S. DOL \$485,001 award in State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula funds to the department to expand Registered Apprenticeship programs in the state. DLIR believes that its Registered Apprenticeship program will play a vital role in Maui reconstruction as Registered Apprenticeships are unique long-term training programs that combine on-the-job learning with related training instruction, which allow job seekers to learn specialized skills for various trades and occupations. These "earn as you learn" apprenticeships will facilitate the homegrown capacity of Maui by permitting Maui residents, including those impacted by the wildfires, to contribute to reconstruction efforts.

The department notes it celebrated Hawaii Apprenticeship Week during the week of Nov. 13-19 in conjunction with National Apprenticeship Week. Hawaii Apprenticeship Week is a regular part of the DLIR's efforts to boost apprenticeship and made more important by the events in Maui. Governor Josh Green, M.D. kicked off the week by signing the Proclamation to declare Hawaii Apprenticeship Week whereby Hawaii joined national efforts to showcase the value of Registered Apprenticeship and how Registered Apprenticeships are instrumental in building and maintaining Hawaii's

economy, advancing racial and gender equity, a highway to good quality jobs, and strengthening underserved communities. During the week 234 individuals participated to learn more about Hawaii Registered Apprenticeship Programs.

Regular Unemployment Insurance Claims^{1*}

Maui initial claims² for UI benefits from Aug. 12 through Nov. 11 totaled 18,338 claims as compared to 1,967 compared to the same period the previous year, an increase of 832%. Initial claims climbed to a peak of 4,449 for the week ending Aug. 19 and down to 403 for the week ending Nov. 11. To date, weeks claimed³ totaled 92,302 weeks as compared to 9,123 the previous year, an increase of 912%. Weeks claimed climbed to a peak of 8,812 for the week ending Sept. 16 and down to 5,785 for the week ending Nov. 11. In comparison of statewide peaks in claims compared to 2022, initial claims totals increased 408% at their peak during late August and weeks claimed increased a 159% at their peak at the end of September. Currently, statewide initial claims are 7.5% higher and weeks claimed are 94% higher compared to 2022⁴. The increase in claims associated with the Maui wildfires is not comparable in magnitude to the increase in claims due to the COVID-19 crisis.

(Initial claims initiate a determination of eligibility to begin a claimant's benefit year (new claims) or subsequent period of unemployment (additional claims) within the benefit year. Weeks claimed are requests for weekly unemployment payments, whether or not benefits are actually paid.)*

Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund

The balance in the UCTF as of Nov. 10, 2023, grew to \$515,122,551, largely due to receipts from employers' contributions for the third quarter of this calendar year. The DLIR believes that there are sufficient funds in the UCTF and anticipates a lowering of the statutory contribution levels during the next calendar year, which underscores the value of allowing the statutory mechanism to operate as it was intended.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)

The department made available DUA benefits for those that do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits Aug. 24 and extended the application filing deadline to Oct. 26. DUA is a regular part of the federal-state unemployment insurance program in which DUA benefits are federally funded through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Although DUA is a regular part of the federal-state unemployment insurance program, like many other states Hawaii's processes for establishing and paying claims is manual, thus significantly increasing the workload of the UI Division.

The Division fast-tracked addition of federally provided identity verification options to the state's unemployment insurance system that is intended to block fraudsters. Through a partnership with the U.S. DOL and the U.S. Postal Service, this identity verification mechanism offers unemployment insurance claimants the ability to provide the identity proofing required to initiate a claim for unemployment insurance benefits through two new sources – Login.gov and USPS in person proofing. Additionally, claimants may visit their local claims office to furnish proof of identity.

Claimants filing for unemployment insurance benefits on or after August 24, 2023, must

provide proof of ID through one of these methods to initiate a claim for benefits, including Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA). Claimants can select a method of ID proofing through their initial claim confirmation page or through their claimant dashboard. A valid government-issued ID is required.

Login.gov provides claimants the ability to verify their ID digitally through a secure government website. Claimants will also have the option to have the USPS validate identity at a majority of post offices across the state. These new identity verification methods will help improve fraud prevention in the unemployment insurance program while ensuring eligible claimants receive benefits regardless of their location or ability to access technology.

DUA Claims (as of 11/15)

Applications:	3,717
Eligible & Paid:	983
Denials:	2,131: Id Proofing 1,295* Document/Income Info 786** Eligibility 50***
Eligible for UI:	173
Eligible, in process:	108
In review:	95
Pending docs:	90
Miscellaneous:	137: cancelled, active regular UI Appeals, interstate claims, coverage determinations in process for regular UI, etc.

* *Potentially eligible if identity verified*

** *Can be redetermined with good cause*

*** *Subject to redetermination/appeal*

Recommendation 1

As noted in the Working Groups's draft report, the department is currently in the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to replace the legacy application on the mainframe. The new platform will include benefits, tax & appeals; a robust fraud component, additional capacity to service Limited English Proficiency persons, and other information technology improvements to better serve claimants and employers in an up-to-date, user-friendly web interface. This completely modern unemployment insurance information system will serve the State for the long-term and assist in the handling future crisis like the Maui wildfires.

The Working Group's report suggests that the department consider requesting temporary assignments from other state departments to assist in the processing of claims during periods of high claim volumes. The DLIR's experience during the COVID-19 Pandemic has led it to conclude that this approach is problematic. Staff temporarily assigned to fulfill unemployment insurance functions are not capable of developing the expertise necessary to contribute to the efficient processing of claims. In fact, some of the challenges the department encountered during the COVID-19 era arose due to the participation of inexperienced volunteers and temporarily assigned staff from other agencies.

¹ https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/economic/unemployment-2021-ui_state_2022/

² https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/data_reports/unemployment/2021/ui_mau_i_2023.pdf

³ https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/data_reports/unemployment/2021/ui_mau_i_2023.pdf

⁴ https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/data_reports/unemployment/2021/ui_state_2023.pdf

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Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

November 20, 2023

TO: The Honorable Representative Daniel Holt, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Andrew Takuya Garrett, Co-Chair
and Members of the House Jobs and Business Working Group

FROM: Alice L. Lee, Council Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alice L. Lee".

SUBJECT: **HOUSE JOBS AND BUSINESS WORKING GROUP**

On the Maui County Council's behalf, I want to thank you for your excellent work and advocacy in the wake of August's devastating wildfires.

Although addressing the full scope of devastation and loss will take years, we remain committed to working in tandem with our State partners in the recovery. We sincerely appreciate all of the support and aid the State Legislature can offer.

The Council supports the Jobs and Business Working Group's efforts to identify solutions and strategies to assist our Maui residents and businesses. Many businesses need aid, including those damaged or destroyed by the fires, those closed due to proximity to the fires and the resulting lack of water, electricity and other infrastructure, as well as those impacted indirectly due to the extreme decrease in visitors and their spending. Many of those businesses' employees were also severely affected and need assistance.

We look forward to your final report and recommendations for the 2024 Legislative Session, and thank you again for your consideration of Maui and its needs.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me or Legislative Analyst Ellen McKinley at (808) 270-7661.

paf:ebm:23-325c



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

**Testimony to the House Interim Jobs and Business Working Group
Tuesday, November 21, 2023, at 2:00 P.M.
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference**

RE: JOBS AND BUSINESS WORKING GROUP

Aloha Co-Chair Holt, Co-Chair Garrett and Members of the Jobs and Business Working Group:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") appreciates the opportunity to provide comments regarding the report from the House Interim Jobs and Business Working Group.

The Chamber appreciates the hard work and dedication of the Working Group members to understand the impact of the Maui Wildfires on the Workforce and Businesses in the Community. The Chamber respectfully provides additional insights and suggestions for your consideration, based upon our meetings and discussions with Lahaina business owners in the aftermath of the fires.

Comments and Suggestions:

Finding 1: Unemployment Division and System Strengthening

- The DLIR Unemployment Insurance Division became overwhelmed during the pandemic and the state and counties provided support from government employees, from many different agencies, to support the Division. The Honolulu Office of Economic Revitalization and our private professional employment organizations (PEOs) may be well poised to support this effort.
- In 2023, the Legislature passed Act 208 which created an unemployment Insurance Technology Special Fund funded by a new unemployment insurance technology assessment. It would be helpful for DLIR to provide an update regarding the collection and distribution of these funds for the purpose of updating Division technology.
- The Legislature could consider releasing emergency funding to the Division to increase staff and support faster unemployment claims processing.
- The Legislature/Governor could consider bypassing procurement requirements to speed up selecting systems and upgrading technology for the Division.

Finding 2: Workforce Development Initiatives in Construction

- The report is focused on the need to grow the construction workforce but there is also a need to provide diverse job opportunities for those displaced by the collapse of Lahaina's retail/tourism industry. Construction jobs will be critical but will not fit the needs and skill sets of all. It would be helpful to also add training programs for CDL



licenses, healthcare positions, bookkeepers/bankers, digital media creators, cybersecurity roles and other in-demand roles.

- It would be helpful to engage with UH Community Colleges, private sector, trades and unions with already established programs in these fields.
- Establish a grant or scholarship program for retraining/upskilling/certifications in in-demand fields – grant or scholarship requires certain amount of time contributing to rebuild and recovery.
- Suspend or ease requirements necessary for certain positions and/or licenses AND allow persons with applicable certifications or licenses in other states to temporarily transfer to work in Hawaii.
- Provide the first and last month's rent to displaced residents through a grant program or employer incentive program. This could get the workforce into housing faster.
- Engage with local nonprofit organizations to create public service programs that hire from the local workforce to help with rebuild efforts.

Finding 3: Childcare Services Availability

- To expedite availability, establish minimum health and safety requirements for providers and open centers on a probationary basis with regular inspections and reports to ensure compliance. Provide expedited permitting and preference to known providers with a history of compliance.
- Engage in a long-term strategy to streamline the regulations for providers (facilities and personnel) through the DOH. Hawaii has some of the strictest standards for providers in the country.
- Provide grant or scholarship programs for early learning/preschool educators that provide service to the Maui community.
- Engage with Teach for America program, Americorps and other entities to create before and after school care programs with vetted volunteers.
- Incentivize employers to allow employees to bring children to work and/or provide space at a jobsite for children.
- Provide real property tax exemptions or waive building and permitting fees (county level) for new or expanding childcare providers.
- Consider funding and providing mobile childcare services.

Finding 4: Business Assistance Due to Extraordinary Circumstances

- The state legislature could require the counties to implement changes to expedite permitting for businesses impacted by wildfires or natural disasters.
- The county Liquor Commissions should provide a method to transfer a license to an alternative premise or boat, if a license was previously issued and compliant, but the site is no longer operable due to a natural disaster.



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

- Establish a state program that boosts awareness of all federal, state and county grants and resources through a public outreach campaign, marketing, and social media.
- Partner with private sector/large technology-based corporations, with interest in Hawaii, to create business accelerator and technical assistance programs to mentor businesses impacted by fires or victims starting new businesses.
- The State could pass a resolution to ask Congress to provide pandemic loan forgiveness to businesses impacted by fires.

Finding 5: Responsible, Respectful and Compassionate Tourism

- Support efforts by CNHA and HVCB to create educational campaigns for visitors through travel agencies, travel booking sites and, on their plane, or cruise ship by offering volunteer opportunities and tips about culture and sensitivities.
- Develop a State Tourism App with discounts for visitors, advice, volunteer opportunities, cultural activities, and tips for a great trip etc.
- Incentivize socially conscious visitors to return to Hawaii by providing rewards or discounts to visitors that demonstrate respect and compassion.
- Create a visitor ambassador program that gives responsible visitors the opportunity to share their experiences, educate other tourists on best practices and create social media buzz about responsible tourism. We could provide travel discounts or stipends to ambassadors.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and input regarding this important report. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns at smenor-mcnamara@cochawaii.org.

Mahalo,

Sherry Menor-McNamara
President and CEO
Chamber of Commerce Hawaii

Testimony: **Hawaii Pacific Advisory Group**, to Hawaii House Working Group on Wildfire Prevention - November 21 2023 Honolulu Hawaii

JOBS AND BUSINESS WORKING GROUP

Rep. Daniel Holt, Co-Chair

Rep. Andrew Takuya Garrett, Co-Chair

To: Honorable Chairs Holt and Takuya, and Members of Hawaii House Working Group on Jobs and Business

Hawaii Pacific Advisory Group is a voluntary network of people organized under Hawaii Pacific Foundation, a Native Hawaiian Organization, to fill gaps in Maui response. Through our efforts the first overhead aerial surveillance, up close drone surveillance, and cartop 360 ball camera data collection has been done to assist in response decision-making. We have supplied about \$100K worth of PPE. In all cases the work is locally oriented through on-ground leadership in Maui. We invite anyone from the working group to participate directly in our ongoing Maui work, via Zoom check-in 3x/week, and welcome the opportunity to comment on the Jobs and Business Working Group Draft Report dated Nov 1 2023.

The following four comments are intended as compliments to your working group report.

Comment 1

One of our network members is the Stability International Association, a professional society that supports disaster and post-conflict infrastructure restoration and rebuild on the scope of the Maui devastation. Stability International has recent experience housing and training recovery workers using retired ocean vessels moored locally as dormitories and training labs. This avoids adding housing and transportation pressure onto the devastated area. Stability International is willing to help Maui in that same way. The Wet side of Maui could work well in this way and the harbor master at Lahaina has indicated interest. We can connect the Working Group with SIA if interested.

Comment 2

Maui has an established high-end technology business base associated with DOD and space operations. Providing a channel for our Island people into this career path starts with STEM in the scholastic years and coordination thru MEDB with Congressional Delegation. Much has been written about the 'pivot to the Pacific' in Defense spending. In some cases it would be necessary to have our islanders work on the continent for a base level of experience, then bring that new skill back to Hawaii. The Pacific Impact

Zone is designed to provide intern positions for Islanders with technology companies. We should be ready.

Comment 3

Our commentary to other Working Groups has included recommendations for creating a Fire Intelligence Network, a Disaster Logistics system, and Ahu Moku-based Unified Command capabilities as part of an Emergency Management Improvement Plan. These recommendations reflect the new reality of the vulnerabilities we face but acknowledge new methods in risk management technology that can be applied to compliment Island knowledge. These technology-based developments in island Operations will introduce capabilities useful beyond Emergency Operations and will create new career paths.

Comment 4

How do we get there? Hawaii Pacific Advisory Group strongly recommends that the Legislature invest in the Modernization of the State of Hawaii Emergency Management Capability. This will include a systems wide review of the management, communications, logistics, and vulnerabilities and mitigation. HPAG recommends the establishment of Unified Command, designed for the uniqueness of Hawaii and based on the Aha Moku perspective. To expand the human capability which gets stretched beyond capability under duress, adopting of appropriate technology is necessary. This is where educational enrichment via STEM will be effective to prepare our Islanders and leaders. This will create a new branch of business with jobs in the tech and operations sectors as part of economic diversification.

Hawaii Pacific Advisory Group willing to work with the Working Group on legislation.

Contact Information:

Ted Ralston ted.ralston@hpfpsps.org 808.738.6814



Hawaii Solar Energy Association
Serving Hawaii Since 1977

**Testimony Before the Jobs and Business Working Group of the Hawaii State Legislature in
Response to the Lahaina and Maui Wildfires**

Tuesday, November 21, 2023

Dear Co-Chairs Holt and Garrett, and Working Group Members:

As we continue to mourn the shocking and tragic loss of life and property caused by the Maui wildfires, and plan for the challenging and complex task of healing and rebuilding ahead; we are grateful for the leadership of the Legislature and this Working Group.

HSEA members include the majority of locally owned and operated solar and energy storage companies doing business in the state of Hawaii along with leading global cleantech manufacturers and service providers that invest and sell in our market. We employ thousands of residents in diverse green economy jobs that are innovating, designing, and building Hawaii's pathway to a renewable energy future. Since 1977, we've been advocating for policies that help Hawaii achieve critical climate and resilience goals by enabling residents and businesses to invest in and benefit from the transition to clean energy. These investments provide reliable and affordable power that reduces energy cost burden and contributes to Hawaii's energy security as we decarbonize our economy and electric grid.

In response to the failure of West Maui's electric grid in the immediate aftermath of the catastrophic fires of August 8th, the solar industry rapidly mobilized and put its people to work in the response and recovery efforts. Our members, many of them Maui and Lahaina residents, donated their time, boots-on-the-ground, equipment, and financial resources to stand up emergency microgrids powered by solar panels and battery storage. Within days, resilient power systems were set up at ad hoc or planned distribution hubs at Napili Park, Pohaku Park (S-turns) and numerous other locations. These systems provided (and still provide) vital sources of electricity to serve the people of West Maui. They powered starlink/wifi communications networks, refrigeration trucks, and lighting systems to support the response and distribute food, water, and other critical services with clean, quiet, and emissions-free electricity in the people's time of need. To summarize, in cooperation with the community and other partners, we:ⁱ

- Deployed 18 distributed microgrids powered by solar and energy storage;
- Assessed 24 potential sites;



Hawaii Solar Energy Association
Serving Hawaii Since 1977

- Served 1,300+ people per day at partner sites;
- Installed over 100 kW of distributed solar capacity and 380 kWh of storage capacity; and
- Built over \$600,000 of grounded value installed (and counting).

Going forward, on-site solar and battery storage (also called “distributed energy resources” or “DERs”) can play a critical role in rebuilding the West Maui grid and the community of Lahaina. Indeed, it can also play a role in reducing wildfire ignition risk posed by electrical power lines. Rooftop solar and energy storage allows residents and businesses to “ride through” grid outages whatever the cause which enhances reliability and assurance. With increasing risk of weather- and climate-related extreme events such as the hurricane-induced high-winds that knocked out Hawaiian Electric’s transmission and distribution system on August 8th, DERs offer a relatively cost-effective option for building resiliency and reliable power systems. DERs installed in communities can work in conjunction with power shut-off plans and avoid high-cost investments in underground transmission and distribution lines. Resilience hubs with clean and quiet distributed power systems, coordinated microgrids, and community-based assets are other powerful options that can aid Maui and the State going forward.

HSEA and its members look forward to sharing our perspective further and promoting bills that support investments in resilient power systems that can aid in fire prevention, provide resilience in our communities, and constitute a more reliable electric grid in the future. The solar industry also looks forward to working with the community and stakeholders to train workers so they can develop skills for the green workforce of the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

/s/ Rocky Mould

Rocky Mould
Executive Director

ⁱ Information provided by footprintproject.org. HSEA and its members partnered with footprintproject.org and other community organizations to locate and assess microgrid installation sites and procure, design, and install the equipment including but not limited to solar panels, batteries, inverters, and other balance of system components for resilient power systems.

From: [Info User](#)
To: [Jobs and Business Working Group](#)
Subject: JOBS AND BUSINESS WORKING GROUP Daniel Holt, Co-Chair, Andrew Takuya Garrett Co-Chair
Date: Monday, November 6, 2023 4:01:41 PM

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JOBS AND BUSINESS WORKING GROUP Daniel Holt, Co-Chair, Andrew Takuya Garrett
Co-Chair

Hearing Date: November 21st, 2023

Dear Co-Chairs Holt, Garrett, and members of the Jobs and Business Working Group,

I am writing to provide testimony on the importance of language access in evaluating the Maui unemployment rate and the approaches to restart business activity, as well as the impacts on tourism statewide. As you know, language barriers can be a significant obstacle for Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals in accessing critical information and resources, including those related to employment and business development.

Given the diverse population of Maui, the Jobs and Business Working Group must consider the needs of LEP individuals in evaluating the unemployment rate and developing recommendations for legislative action. Without adequate language access, LEP individuals may be unable to access critical information about job opportunities, unemployment benefits, and business development resources, exacerbating existing disparities in employment and economic outcomes.

I urge the Jobs and Business Working Group to establish a working group on language access. This working group should be tasked with identifying the language needs of LEP individuals in Maui, assessing the availability and accessibility of language services, and developing recommendations for improving language access in all aspects of the purpose of the working group, especially employment.

In conclusion, I urge the Jobs and Business Working Group to prioritize language access in its evaluation of the Maui unemployment rate and the development of recommendations for

legislative action. By addressing the needs of LEP individuals, we can ensure that all members of the Maui community have access to the resources and opportunities they need to thrive.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,
The HAPA Team

From: [Nanea Lo](#)
To: [Jobs and Business Working Group](#)
Subject: JOBS AND BUSINESS WORKING GROUP Daniel Holt, Co-Chair, Andrew Takuya Garrett Co-Chair
Date: Monday, November 6, 2023 3:58:47 PM

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JOBS AND BUSINESS WORKING GROUP Daniel Holt, Co-Chair, Andrew Takuya Garrett
Co-Chair

Hearing Date: November 21st, 2023

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Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Nanea Lo (*she/they/'o ia*) | Micro-influencer

Admin & Program Coordinator | [HAPA](#)

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action 5013-c

Board Member | [Hawai'i Worker's Center](#)

Granter | [Hawai'i People's Fund](#)

Kona Representative | [O'ahu Island Burial Council](#)

Commissioner | [O'ahu Historic Preservation Commission](#)

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"Some people say that Hawai'i will be a better place when Hawaiians no longer stand in the way of progress. But even these people must know that at this point, this will no longer be Hawai'i." - Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo'ole Osorio. The Value of Hawai'i