



The Senate

STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

Monday, March 30, 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senate President Ronald D. Kouchi
FROM: Senate Special Committee on COVID-19
RE: Senate Special Committee on COVID-19 Report

Dear Senate President,

Please see the attached report prepared following the March 27, 2020, Senate Special Committee on COVID-19 meeting with the following:

- U.S. Senator Brian Schatz
- Department of Transportation
 - Harbors Division
 - Airports Division
- Department of the Attorney General
- Department of Public Safety
- Dr. Elizabeth E. Char
- Department of Health
- Hawaii Emergency Management Agency

Sincerely,

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole
Senator Michelle N. Kidani

Senator Donna Mercado Kim
Senator Sharon Moriwaki
Senator Kurt Fevella

Attachment

Cc: All Senators

Federal Stimulus Package

Senator Brian Schatz (U.S. Senate), provided the committee the following update on the Federal Stimulus Package in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CARES Act (H.R. 748)

- At least \$1.2 billion for Hawai'i
- Passed the U.S. Senate unanimously Wednesday, was signed into law by President Trump on Friday, March 27, 2020.
- This package is the largest relief/stimulus bill ever passed in the U.S.
- Funding in the bill is divided on a per capita share.
- All the funding in this bill is to be used for COVID-19 response only.
 - No funding will be allowed by states or localities to fill budget holes.
- Programs will use existing platforms to distribute aid.
- Goal is to provide aid as quickly as possible.

Package Components

- The individual components of the package are currently being extracted.
 - Amounts, criteria for access, and details of implementation will be verified and then provided to the committee and public as soon as possible.
- Information (pulled from schatz.senate.gov) includes:
 - Hospitals and health care workers - provides more than \$130 billion to help hospitals, nursing homes, health centers, and health care workers across the country.
 - Billions for personal and protective equipment for health care workers, testing supplies, increased workforce and training, new construction to house patients, an increase of the Strategic National Stockpile, medical research into COVID-19 and Medicare payment increases to all hospitals and providers.
 - Unemployment assistance – provides \$260 billion to help those who have lost their jobs or are experiencing reduced incomes.
 - Available to self-employed individuals, part-time workers, independent contractors, and gig workers, including ride-sharing drivers.
 - Covers those who are sick, quarantined, furloughed, or whose family circumstances keep them from working or reduce their pay as a result of the coronavirus outbreak or government containment efforts.
 - Aid will cover salaries up to about \$65,000 for four months.
 - Direct cash payments – provides a one-time cash payment.
 - Individuals will get \$1,200 (joint filers get \$2,400) plus \$500 per child.
 - Benefits start to phase out for those with incomes exceeding \$150,000 for married couples, \$75,000 for individuals, and \$112,500 for single parents.
 - Payments will not go to single filers earning more than \$99,000; head-of-household filers with one child, earning more than \$146,500; and earning more than \$198,000 for joint filers with no children.

- Small businesses and non-profits – provides \$377 billion for employers, including restaurants, hotels, and non-profits.
 - \$350 billion in partially forgivable loans to small businesses and non-profits to maintain the existing workforce and help pay for other expenses like rent, mortgage, and utilities.
 - \$10 billion for Small Business Administration (SBA) emergency grants of up to \$10,000 to provide immediate relief for small business operating costs.
 - \$17 billion for SBA to cover six months of payments for small businesses with existing SBA loans.
- Large employers – provides \$500 billion for employers including airlines.
 - Protects collective bargaining agreements and prevents employers from firing employees.
 - Extends health care benefits for airline contract workers.
 - Prohibits stock buybacks or dividends for the length of any loan provided by the Treasury plus one year.
 - Restricts increases to pay for top executives.

Future Updates

- An update on the final details of the package is forthcoming.
- Details will be distributed as soon as they can be extracted and verified.

Department of Transportation

Deputy Director Derek Chow (Harbors Division), and Deputy Director Ross Higashi (Airports Division), provided the committee the following update.

Cargo Deliveries

- Cargo operations remain open for business.
- All cargo staff currently being screened.
- The volume of goods on cargo ships has decreased:
 - Harbor's Division does not know if the decline is due to new tariffs or the COVID-19 crisis.
 - Currently no official numbers.

Cruise Ships

- Any ship with a positive or possible positive COVID-19 crew or passenger cannot enter harbors under current protocols.
- Cruise ships must continue to put in requests to refuel and resupply in Hawaii:
 - The Harbors Division continues to monitor supply as these requests come in.
 - Oil supplies and production have not been impacted, but demand has been reduced overall.
 - Sufficient quantity currently exists to continue to refuel cruise ships as necessary

- Eleven cruise ships have canceled calling on Honolulu since the announcement of Hawaii's new restrictions.
- On March 20, two cruise ships, the Maasdam and Norwegian Jewel requested to port and disembark passengers:
 - The Norwegian Jewel was experiencing propulsion complications, and it became necessary to disembark passengers for ship repairs.
 - The Maasdam included an injured passenger that required medical attention and 6 Hawaii residents.
- A passenger transfer plan was provided by the Norwegian Jewel and approved by the Harbors Division:
 - All passengers were screened onboard by U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents.
 - Hawaii residents aboard were shuttled from the harbor directly to their residence, where they began a 14-day self-quarantine period.
 - The remaining passengers were not removed until chartered flights and busses to those flights were arranged.
 - No non-residents were discharged into the general population.
 - The Norwegian Jewel remains docked until repairs are completed.
- For the Maasdam, only the 6 Hawaii residents and injured passenger were allowed to disembark.
 - The ship refueled and resupplied, then continued onto San Diego.

Air Arrivals

- The 14-day quarantine requirement for all arrivals to Hawaii, including residents, began on April 26 and will continue through April 30 unless extended.
- March 26, approximately 1,600 arrivals.
- Prior to the COVID-19, were around 35 thousand arrivals per day.
- All passengers arriving from out of State must provide addresses of where they will be staying.
 - This information is collected through the Department of Agriculture forms.
- The Hawaii Tourism Authority will input all data into a database that is being shared with each county's emergency management agency.
- Only flight crews are being screened for temperatures .
 - This includes commercial, cargo, and private jets.
 - No fevers were reported yesterday.
- Arriving passengers are not being screened for temperatures.
- Arriving passengers are receiving forms with orders to self-quarantine for 14 days.
 - The form provides quarantining instructions and informs arrivals of legal consequences.
 - Citations up to \$5 thousand or one year in prison.

- The Hawaii Tourism Authority is not responsible for passenger transportation.
- Once visitors leave airports, the counties are responsible for transportation and monitoring.
- The Hawaii Tourism Authority notifies the hotel of a passenger's arrival.
- The new restrictions and procedures for entries from outside of Hawaii do not apply to inter-island travel.
- Inter-island travelers are currently exempt from the 14-day quarantine.
- Deputy Director Ross Higashi is continuing to provide input on additional procedures and protocols to Incident Commander Adjutant General Hara.

Enforcement

- There were two arrests made, and numerous citations given out yesterday.

Department of the Attorney General

Ms. Clare E. Connors (Attorney General), provided the committee the following update.

Proclamation Enforcement

- General Hara has given the local police departments enforcement powers of the emergency proclamations.
 - The Attorney General will support this effort.
- Attorney General corresponds daily with the local police departments to identify how enforcement is working, whether there are other issues or violations and whether there is a need for court-ordered quarantines where due process protections are already in place.
- Attorney General is involved in all the conversations that are formalized through HIEMA as well as other the one-on-one conversations regarding enforcement.
- Should you see a group of more than ten people, the best course of action is to notify the local police department.

Proclamation Exemptions

- Manicurists are not exempt.
- Tax preparers and accountants are exempt in general.
 - It is currently unclear if they are exempt for one-to-one meetings.
- Requests for exemptions should be sent to Covidexemption@Hawaii.gov
 - The email is staffed 24 hours a day by 11 to 15 deputy attorney generals.
 - Reports are sent daily to General Hara.

State of Hawaii Website for COVID FAQs

- The Attorney General's office is currently working on a FAQs website.
- The office has deemed this to be essential.
- Answers to emailed questions are being prioritized.

Department of Public Safety

Director Nolan Espinda (Department of Public Safety), provided the committee the following update.

Inmate Releases

- Data has been shared with the Attorney General, the Prosecutors and the Public Defenders regarding the concerns about the potential release of certain inmates.
 - Includes inmates being held for pre-trial and pre-sentencing.
- Since February 24 the Department has released 256 inmates independently of the writs filed by the Public Defender.

Inmate Screening for COVID-19

- A plan for temporal scans is in place however, two facilities do not have the no-touch equipment.
- Currently implementing social distancing protocols.
- Not always possible to keep the inmates 6 feet away from each other.
- No inmate has tested positive for COVID-19.

Sheriffs Protocols

- For sheriffs at the courts, they will follow the judiciary protocols.
- Outside of the courts, sheriffs are being advised on how to handle infractions of the Governor's Proclamations.
- State sheriffs do have enforcement authority to cite and arrest those who violate the proclamations.
- Sheriffs are aware of the protocol for working with the homeless people at the Capitol.
- For those citizens in violation, sheriffs will be advising them of the requirements.

Healthcare Industry

Dr. Elizabeth E. Char (Department Consultant), provided the committee the following update.

COVID-19 Testing

- Those who are exposed to confirmed cases should immediately isolate.
- Should only test if they begin to show symptoms.
- Testing should be expanded on symptomatic individuals.
- Testing asymptomatic people is not effective.
- Asymptomatic individuals will most likely test negative, but could still be a carrier of the virus, and test positive once they begin to show symptoms.
- Studies stating that asymptomatic people can't spread COVID are controversial.
- Symptoms to trigger testing:
 - Coughing
 - Shortness of Breath

- Sore Throat
- Fever

Quarantine

- People waiting for test results, even if they are asymptomatic, should self-quarantine for 14 days.
- Limit contact with other people, including family members.
- Take precautions like regular hand washing.
- Family members do not need to quarantine but should limit contact with the isolated person.
- Mild symptoms should continue to self-quarantine, and only go to the hospital if necessary.
- Being in the hospital can pose higher risks for yourself and other patients if you do not currently require emergency services.
- Patients with positive test results should isolate from all others immediately.
 - Isolate in the same way you would if you have a bad flu.
 - Symptomatic patients are much more likely to spread the virus.

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) Supply

- Hawaii is a little more prepared than other states.
- Hawaii has enough PPE supplies for possibly several weeks depending on the progression of the virus.
- The State is working on getting additional supplies, not waiting to expend all supplies before restocking.

Department of Health

Dr. Bruce Anderson (Director), Dr. Sarah Park (Hawaii State Epidemiologist), and Dr. Edward Desmond (State Laboratories Division Administrator), provided the committee the following update.

Testing Update

- As of today, Hawaii private and State laboratories have performed 5,747 tests.
- All sentinel tests have come back negative, which indicates community spread is limited.
- The number of tests conducted represents 4% of Hawaii's population.
- South Korea has tested approximately 7% of its total population.
- Private labs in Hawaii have now begun processing tests locally.
- Private labs are still waiting for 1,500 tests to be processed.
 - Some will be done locally while some are on the mainland.
 - Previously, tests were exclusively being sent to the mainland for processing.
 - This has delayed results up to 10 days.
- Local testing takes only 1 to 2 days.
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- Department believes that the demand for testing is being met however, intermittent supply issues remain.
- The Department continues to recommend testing for only the following groups:
 - Critically ill patients
 - First responders
 - Healthcare workers
 - Symptomatic individuals who had direct contact with COVID-19 positive individuals
- Department will be reviewing the accuracy of new types of testing kits as FDA approves them; this will include self-administered test kits.

Confirmed Cases

- 6 new cases on March 26.
- 14 new cases on March 27.
 - 9 (Oahu), 2 (Hawaii Island), 2 (Maui), 1 (Kauai)
- All cases were travelers or in contact with travelers returning from out of state trips.
- There is no indication of local clusters (i.e. highly concentrated in a particular neighborhood or community).

Preventative Measures

- Department continues to focus on contact tracing as a preventative measure to determine community spread.
- Methodology in contact tracing:
 - Interview individuals with COVID-19 to identify their contacts in the days before and during symptoms.
 - Classify contacts as high, medium or low risk depending upon the distance and duration of the interaction.
 - Meet with those contacts, and recommend isolation for those at high risk.
 - Monitor high and medium risk contacts for symptoms.
 - If COVID-19 positive, then determine their contacts and repeat the procedure.
- Department is monitoring the progress of other countries in flattening the curve and providing recommendations for best practices.
- At this time that is primarily social distancing.
- Department maintains contact with epidemiologists in other states also to hear and share best practices.

Mitigation Planning

- Honolulu Mayor and Governor Ige will announce a new facility to open on Wednesday for homeless individuals with COVID-19, or awaiting test results.
- The facility will be located in Iwilei and can house 60 individuals.
- State and counties are identifying hotels that can be repurposed for quarantine or isolation on all islands.

- State is determining how to repurpose the Convention Center into a large hospital that could house hundreds of beds if our current hospitals become overrun.

Access to Physicians

- Department is investigating why some private physicians are suddenly closing offices.
 - Department wants to know if it is related to COVID-19 care concerns.
- If anyone lacks access to a medical provider, they are encouraged to contact a federally qualified health center.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) & Other Medical Supplies

- Department has heard that some private physicians are struggling to gain access to needed PPEs.
- Department has authorized hospitals to provide private physicians with PPEs from their stockpiles.
- Healthcare Association of Hawaii knows the capacity, number of ventilators and PPE supplies of all our hospitals.

Integration of Data Information

- Governor's Administration is utilizing data in the decision-making process.
- Department is working with the University of Hawaii on analyzing data and welcomes other community organizations to reach out about data analysis.

Recommendations

- Department will review the Senate Committee's suggestions on:
 - Tracking app for those in quarantine like in South Korea.
 - Mass text messaging like emergency alerts.
- Department discussed the benefits of a future antibody to more accurately determine how widespread COVID-19 is.
- Department warns the public not to purchase tests from third parties.
- There is no guarantee of test accuracy if the tests are not CLIA certified and administered by a health professional.

Hawaii Emergency Management Agency

Adjutant General Kenneth Hara (Hawaii Emergency Management Incident Commander), provided the committee the following update.

Response Planning

- The plan is 75-80% complete.
- The plan has four lines of effort:
 - Prevent and protect
 - Medical response
 - Information and public outreach

- Supply chain management

Travel Restrictions

- 14-day self-quarantine for off-island travelers began March 26.
- Appears to be working so far.
- Airline employees who already possess security badges, and would have been laid off, have been redescribed to process passengers.
 - It would have taken an additional seven days for National Guard troops to obtain the necessary security badges and clearance.
- Process
 - Airline passengers complete form.
 - Flight crew are provided a script that is read to the passengers on the restrictions.
 - Upon arrival, the forms are confirmed, and all relevant info (name, hotel, etc.) are captured for the database.
 - Information from forms is used to create a report for HTA, which is then shared with HIEMA and the counties.
 - Passengers are provided an informational sheet the instructions, symptoms, requirements, and penalties.
 - HTA is doing random calls to the passengers at their hotels to verify the self-quarantine, hotels are asked to report violations.
 - Counties are primarily responsible for enforcement.
 - HIEMA is working on an app to track passengers.
- Next step is screening all passengers with a thermal scanner.
- Taiwan is catching approximately 40% of all COVID 19 positives with scanning.
- Planning and equipment purchases are in the process.

Interisland Travel

- The decision has been made to restrict interisland travel (details are forthcoming).
- Airline restrictions will be similar to recently imposed airline passenger restrictions.
- Small boat harbor restrictions will require additional work.

Electronic Alert System

- HIEMA is working on an app to track those who are travelers and those who test positive – similar to what is used in South Korea.
- HIEMA will look into options to create an electronic alert system similar to the Federal EMS system.

U.S. Military Exemptions

- U.S. Military personnel are subject to the stay at home order.
- Exemptions are only for on-duty hours.
- The military is fully supportive and reinforcing the social distancing messages.

Retail Shopping

- HIEMA will look into the use of a rationing system to reduce crowding at grocery and essential retail stores.
- Potential to use the last digit of driver's license for odd and even shopping days.

-End of Report-