



The Senate

STATECAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 'I 96813

September 3, 2020

The Honorable David Ige
Governor, State of Hawaii
Executive Chambers
415 South Beretania St., 5th Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Governor Ige:

RE: Proposal for an Interisland Quarantine Waiver Program

With the recent surge in COVID-19 cases on Oahu, the trans-Pacific pre-testing program is delayed until at least September 30. Given that reality, neighbor island counties could serve as ideal Pilot Program testing sites for exclusive travel between neighbor island counties (e.g. Maui-to-Kauai, Kauai-to-Big Island). Once the surge in cases subsides on Oahu, interisland travel to Honolulu could also be added to provide a high-volume testing opportunity.

On June 18, 2020, members of the Department of Health (DOH) appeared at an informational briefing before the Senate Special Committee on COVID-19. At that briefing, Dr. Sarah Park explained the elements that could lower incoming traveler infection risk enough to reasonably grant a waiver to the State's mandatory 14-day quarantine. Those elements included:

1. Confirmation of a negative Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (NAAT) from a certified Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendment (CLIA) lab no more than 72 hours in advance of travel;
2. Submission of electronic travel and health questionnaires;
3. A pre-departure symptom screening;
4. A post-arrival health screening;
5. Appropriate social distancing measures taken throughout the travel experience, including masks being worn; and
6. Download of an optional location tracing app.

Incorporating these elements with existing protocols could form the basis of an effective quarantine waiver program. As the Pilot Program would include screening steps that need to be taken at the traveler's initial departure point, either Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) clearance (for procedures undertaken by the airlines or in the airport) or a **reciprocal pre-departure agreement** between destinations would likely be required in order to initiate the Pilot Program.

The existing mandatory quarantine for the state already exists exclusive of formal FAA authorization, even though it disrupts air travel. If two counties were to enter into a reciprocal agreement that allowed for a waiver of that quarantine, it is possible, if not likely, that the FAA would remain silent on that program as well. A quarantine waiver program would work to lessen the restrictions on air travel imposed by the statewide mandatory quarantine. Furthermore, if the program incorporated the necessary process elements highlighted by the DOH above, the risk of such a program to public health should be sufficiently mitigated to allow a limited pilot to commence immediately.

This Pilot Project is a proactive measure that could yield important outcomes for our state while also providing a process for critical interisland travel during the pandemic. As evidenced by the DOT Airport Quarantine process, these systems require time to initialize, pilot, and standardize so they can be scaled to peak capacity. The results yielded by the Pilot Program could provide valuable information that could be applied to an eventual trans-Pacific pre-test or bubble program, which would be a critical element to successfully reopening Hawaii's economy.

Links:

HTA Transpacific Pre-Travel Testing Program Info:

<https://www.hawaiitourismauthority.org/news/alerts/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/>

June 18, 2020 Senate Special Committee on COVID-19 Briefing:

http://olelo.granicus.com/player/clip/77359?view_id=13&redirect=true

June 18 2020 Senate Special Committee on COVID-19 Report:

<https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/committeefiles/special/SCCOVID/2020-06-18%20Report%20of%20the%20Senate%20Special%20Committee%20on%20COVID-19.pdf>

The Committee requests that you provide a response acknowledging your review of our proposal by **4:00 p.m. Tuesday, September 8, 2020**. Please email your response to all Senate Special Committee COVID-19 members. Should you have any questions, please contact Duncan Osorio at 586-6800 or via email at d.osorio@capitol.hawaii.gov.

Sincerely,

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole
Senator Michelle N. Kidani
Senator Donna Mercado Kim
Senator Sharon Moriwaki
Senator Kurt Fevella

Cc: Senate President