



## The Senate

STATE CAPITOL  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

June 4, 2020

### MEMORANDUM

TO: Directors of the Department of Health, Department of Defense, Department of Transportation, Department of Agriculture, Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism; Presidents of University of Hawaii and Hawaii Tourism Authority; Executive Director of Agribusiness Development Corporation

FROM: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz  
Senate Special Committee on COVID-19

RE: Economic Recovery following COVID-19

We thank you for your continued cooperation during our ongoing hearings. We appreciate the efforts of your departments in assisting the Senate in the prevention and containment of COVID-19 and are eager to work alongside you in rebuilding Hawaii's economy during this time of recovery.

This period has caused our state to experience historic levels of unemployment and food insecurity, which has triggered predictions from the University of Hawaii of up to 25,000 of our residents leaving our state in hopes of more stable work prospects and security. We are experiencing a lack of active jobs, a shrinking labor force, and the severe impacts of brain drain. A massive dip in the labor force would only exacerbate the state's economic woes, while also fracturing our communities.

This pandemic has caused all of us to pause and reassess the state of our economy. We have, for years, pledged to re-diversify and reverse the brain drain, but it is clear that the state can no longer wait for decisive action toward this goal. The committee respectfully requests that your department and agencies be part of the solution to diversify the economy based on your respective economic sectors and areas of expertise. We ask that you join us in this effort by developing comprehensive plans based on your department's scope of knowledge to address components such as, but not limited to, job creation, utilization of the currently available workforce, revenue enhancement, and educational pipelines for the purpose of workforce development.

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The committee respectfully requests that you submit your plans by **Wednesday, June 10, 2020**, to Dane Wicker via email at [d.wicker@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:d.wicker@capitol.hawaii.gov). Please contact Dane Wicker at 586-6639 if there are any questions.

Sincerely,

/s/ Donovan M. Dela Cruz  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz  
[sendelacruz@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:sendelacruz@capitol.hawaii.gov)

/s/ Donna Mercado Kim  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim  
[senkim@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:senkim@capitol.hawaii.gov)

/s/ Jarrett Keohokalole  
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole  
[senkeohokalole@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:senkeohokalole@capitol.hawaii.gov)

/s/ Sharon Moriwaki  
Senator Sharon Moriwaki  
[senmoriwaki@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:senmoriwaki@capitol.hawaii.gov)

/s/ Michelle N. Kidani  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani  
[senkidani@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:senkidani@capitol.hawaii.gov)

/s/ Kurt Fevella  
Senator Kurt Fevella  
[senfevella@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:senfevella@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Cc: Governor David Y. Ige  
Senate President  
All Senators