

## **EDB Committee**

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**From:** Venus Rosete-Medeiros <verosete@ksbe.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 10, 2020 1:30 PM  
**To:** EDB Committee  
**Subject:** Testimony for Budget Hearing  
**Attachments:** testimony for Sept2020 Maui budget mtg.docx

See attached testimony for September's budget meeting.

Mahalo,  
Venus

***Venus Kau'iokawēkiu Rosete-Medeiros***

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**Maui, Moloka'i & Lāna'i**

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***Ahuwale ka po'okela I kāu hana iā ha'i.***

**It is through the way you serve others that your greatness will be felt.**

*- Mary Kawena Pukui*

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September 10, 2020

**Maui County Economic Development and Budget Committee**

Testimony submitted via email to: [edb.committee@mauicounty.us](mailto:edb.committee@mauicounty.us)

**Position:** Use Federal Covid-19 Relief Funds to support Maui County families

Dear Committee Chair Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez, Vice-Chair Kelly Takaya King, and Committee Members:

My name is Venus Rosete-Medeiros and I am a registered voter who lives in Wailuku, Maui. I am writing to you as a private citizen and my work as a Regional Director for the County of Maui that informs my testimony. In my work on all three island communities, I have seen first-hand the devastating effects of this pandemic in Maui County.

For example, just recently, a family who lives out in Kahakuloa had one of their four little children test positive for COVID-19. After taking him to the doctor, Mom was told he needed to be quarantined away from the family. Living in only a 1-bedroom home, she could not risk going back home. With nowhere else to go, and not wanting to go back into the village risking exposure to anyone else, she drove around with him in the car. She reached out on Facebook asking if anyone knew how she could get help. Luckily someone immediately created a Go Fund Me account and she was able to raise money through public donation to rent somewhere for them to stay while they quarantined.

I know that Hawai'i must spend about \$320 million in federal funds by December 30, 2020. I want Maui County to request and use some of that money to support families. Some of the most pressing needs I see are:

- A lack of affordable, accessible childcare
- A need for help with elementary-school-age children who are participating in distance learning through DOE and need constant supervision and help while parents need to be at work or working from home
- Stable, affordable housing without facing a big bill of past rent or past mortgage payments due when the emergency protections and housing assistance funds end
- Cash in families' pockets so they can pay for their families' basic needs and other COVID-related expenses.
- Nonprofits serving families are facing cuts in their state contracts and are being asked to serve more families in new ways with fewer resources—this is unsustainable—nonprofits need financial help

In addition to requesting your help in spending the federal money on Maui, please make the following information public on the county website:

- How much federal and state money has been allocated for Maui County because of the pandemic
- How much of that has been spent and what it has been spent on
- What the plans are for any remaining amounts
- Who is informing the County's decisions about these funds, and the best ways for families to get involved in the process.

Please continue to hold public meetings on this topic and make all documents related to these issues accessible to the public.

Thank you for your service to the County and your attention to my testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Venus R. Medeiros". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Venus Kau'iokawēkiu Rosete-Medeiros