

EDB Committee

From: Felicitas B Livaudais <Felicitas.B.Livaudais@kp.org>
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 1:10 PM
To: EDB Committee
Subject: Please use the Federal Covid 19 Relief Funds to support out Maui County Families

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September 10, 2020

Maui County Economic Development and Budget Committee

Testimony submitted via email to: 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 Felicitas B. Livaudais and I am a registered voter who lives in Kihei, 96753 I am writing to you as a private citizen and my work as pediatrician informs my testimony. In my work at Kaiser Maui Lani I have seen first-hand the devastating effects of this pandemic in Maui County.

For example, we have multiple families where both parents or the primary bread winner works in the tourist industry. Families have significant stress in paying their rent and mortgage, have difficulty finding child care if they are working (if they have work) and some even have difficulty paying for school supplies. They are also overwhelmed with virtual learning and want to find a safe way for the kids to return to school. I am also a board member for Friends of the Children's Justice and Paul Tonneasen (our ED) is busier than ever with requests from families in need. Our Maui Ohana generally do not like to complain but people are stressed out, many are underemployed, and they worry about paying their bills. I am worried about our community's mental health overall and this will continue for a long time - until we have a reliable vaccine and cure for Covid 19.

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
- 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
- improve Mental Health access
- Hire as many contact tracers as we need
- rapid testing

- family education, especially targeting pacific islanders and filipinos who are being affected disproportionately
- a more robust and well funded public health

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,

Felicitas B. Livaudais MD
(General Pediatrician)

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