

## **EDB Committee**

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**From:** Murray Donaldson <murray@murraylynne.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 11, 2020 1:54 AM  
**To:** EDB Committee  
**Subject:** Discussion of the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, rules, CARES Act and related issues

**Importance:** High

Aloha Council Members,

I would like to address a question to the Economic Development and Budget Committee ("Committee"), and ask what discussion, and/or any decisions on the following.

I acknowledge the magnitude of issues caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic that have had to be addressed by the Council Members ("Members"). I further acknowledge that the current circumstances are unprecedented in our lifetime, and necessitated the Members specify and implement many actions/rules to manage the situation. However, my question relates to the embargo on the use of Short Term Vacation Rentals (STVRs), and the ensuing detrimental impact on the many STVR small business owners.

There have been numerous references to CARES Act monies being made available, e.g. for much needed additional unemployment support, for big business, e.g. Hawaiian Airlines, to keep running, and for medium businesses pay protection to keep people employed. However, STVR owners are generally small businesses, do not have employees, and unfortunately not considered "essential". The upshot is that STVRs small business owners have to continue paying all their running costs, i.e. maintenance fees, reserves fees, and property taxes, but banned from renting their STVRs.

Have the Members given any consideration to providing some monetary relief to STVR small business owners, i.e. some CARES Act funding. If the Members can consider, and quickly implement an equitable level of monetary support to STVR small business owners, the Members would be actively enabling many STVR small businesses owners to survive the months of forced closure, and many more STVRs small businesses will be available to support the recovery of the State of Hawai'i tourist industry.

The Members must carefully consider the level or type of any monetary relief, but based on the support provided to other parties during this pandemic any relief should be in the order of e.g. 6 months of \$300-\$400/month; OR that property tax for 2020 could be 'forgiven'.

I look forward to the record of the Committee's discussion of the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, rules, CARES Act, related issues, and the resulting actions/recommendations of the Committee.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Mahalo, Murray

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