



**RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.**  
Mayor

**JOSIAH K. NISHITA**  
Managing Director

**AMOS LONOKAILUA-HEWETT**  
Emergency Management Administrator

**MAUI EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT AGENCY**  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.mauicounty.gov](http://www.mauicounty.gov)

April 6, 2026

Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr.  
Mayor, County of Maui  
200 South High Street  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

**APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL**

  
Mayor 4-13-26  
Date

For Transmittal to:  
Honorable Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair  
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee  
and Honorable Members of the Maui County Council  
200 South High Street  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Honorable Yuki Lei K. Sugimura:

**SUBJECT: Testimony in Support of Maui Economic Opportunity Human Services  
Transportation Program**

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of continued and increased funding for Maui Economic Opportunity's Human Services Transportation Program on behalf of the Maui Emergency Management Agency.

MEO Transportation plays a critical and reliable role in supporting the safety, mobility, and well-being of our community, particularly for our most vulnerable populations. Their services are essential to ensuring that individuals across Maui County remain connected to sheltering, medical care, and critical resources when it matters most.

During the most recent Kona Low storm events, MEO Transportation provided coordinated transport for over 100 individuals across multiple regions of Maui. These efforts directly supported community safety by ensuring that kupuna, individuals with access and functional needs, and those without reliable transportation were able to relocate, access services, and remain out of harm's way. In addition, tourists stranded at the airport due to weather-related disruptions were connected to transportation and sheltering through MEO services. This support not only ensured their immediate safety and care but also contributed to maintaining visitor trust and supporting the broader economic well-being of Maui County during a time of disruption.

Beyond incident support, MEO Transportation strengthens the County's ability to serve residents on a daily basis. It enables individuals to attend essential appointments, access food and services, and maintain independence, reducing isolation and increasing community resilience overall. The program is a trusted and consistent partner that enhances the effectiveness of County-supported services.

At a time when federal funding remains uncertain, it is critical to invest in programs that demonstrate clear, direct, and measurable impact. MEO Transportation is one such program. However, increasing demand continues to place strain on existing resources. Additional funding to increase staffing and expand fleet capacity is needed to ensure the program can meet both daily service demands and surge needs during emergencies.

Sustained investment will strengthen readiness, improve response capability, and ensure continuity of service for those who depend on it most.

MEO Transportation is an essential component of our community's support system, providing access, safety, and stability when it is needed most.

The Maui Emergency Management Agency respectfully urges your support for continued and increased funding for this vital program.

Mahalo for your leadership and commitment to the people of Maui County.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Me Ka Ha`aha`a,



Amos Lonokailua-Hewett  
Administrator  
Maui Emergency Management Agency

## BFED Committee

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**From:** Estrelita B. Dahilig <Estrelita.B.Dahilig@co.maui.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 13, 2026 11:35 AM  
**To:** BFED Committee; Yukilei Sugimura; Amos K. Lonokailua-Hewett; Maui\_County Council\_mailbox  
**Cc:** Josiah K. Nishita; Erin A. Wade; Cynthia E. Sasada; Didi A. Hamai; Lesley J. Milner; Kelii P. Nahooikaika; James Dineen; Cynthia D. Lallo  
**Subject:** TRANSMITTAL: Testimony in Support of Maui Economic Opportunity Human Services Transportation Program  
**Attachments:** MT#11456.BFED.Chair Sugimura.pdf

Aloha,

Please see attached transmittal dated April 6, 2026, from MEMA Administrator Amos Lonokailua-Hewett regarding the above subject matter.

Thank you and have a great day!

Mahalo,  
Lita



Lita B. Dahilig

Secretary

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