

## **EDB Committee**

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**From:** Lauren Loor <lauren.loor@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 10, 2020 2:53 PM  
**To:** EDB Committee  
**Cc:** Keani N. Rawlins; Kelly King; Tasha A. Kama  
**Subject:** Testimony for EDB Committee 9/10/20  
**Attachments:** Testimony\_ Maui County\_EDBcommittee\_9.10.20\_Lauren Loor.docx

Aloha,

Please see testimony for the EDB Committee meeting at County Council today at 4:30pm.

Mahalo!

Best,  
Lauren Loor, MPH, INHC



Lauren Loor  
247 West Kauai Street Apt A  
Kahului, HI 96732  
(516) 395-0000

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 Lauren Loor and I am a registered voter who lives in Kahului, Hawaii 96732. I am writing to you as a private citizen and my work as a Food Access Coordinator and Healthy Eating + Active Living Coalition Community Coordinator with a statewide nonprofit agency informs my testimony. In my work and community, I have seen first-hand the devastating effects of this pandemic in Maui County.

For example, working with community partners such as the Maui Food Bank I have seen the dramatic increase in the amount of food the Maui Food bank needs to purchase in order to meet the needs of those in our community who are accessing emergency food because they are currently unemployed. Before the COVID-19 pandemic began the Maui Food Bank's partner agencies uses to distribute food to about 10,000 people per month, now that number for July of this year is over 36,759 as numbers are still being collected from partner agencies. Families who are accessing emergency food are waiting in line for up to 4 hours to receive a box of food. With the 46% increase in shipping cost, even families who are not accessing emergency food will suffer from the increase cost of food that is shipped her to Maui County.

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 the lack cash in families' pockets so they can pay for their families' basic needs, the lack of affordable local foods available in the community, the lack of 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 and 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 in Maui County, 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,  
Lauren Loor