

# **HEALTHY FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

**Council of the County of Maui**

## **MINUTES**

**September 10, 2020**

**Council Chamber, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor**

**CONVENE:** 9:02 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Councilmember Riki Hokama, Chair (out 10:11 a.m., in 10:25 a.m.)  
Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Vice-Chair  
Councilmember Tasha Kama (in 9:33 a.m.)  
Councilmember Kelly Takaya King  
Councilmember Michael J. Molina  
Councilmember Tamara Paltin  
Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez

**NON-VOTING MEMBERS:**

Councilmember Alice L. Lee (out 11:00 a.m.)

**STAFF:** Richard Mitchell, Legislative Attorney  
Shelly Espeleta, Legislative Analyst  
Lesley Milner, Legislative Analyst  
Rayna Yap, Committee Secretary  
Jean Pokipala, OCS Assistant Clerk

Evan Dust, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Tasha Kama  
Trinette Furtado, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Keani Rawlins-Fernandez  
Kate Griffiths, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Kelly Takaya King  
Jordan Helle, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Riki Hokama  
Davideane K. Sickels, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Tasha Kama

**ADMIN.:** Stephanie Chen, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation Counsel  
Linda Munsell, Deputy Director, Department of Housing and Human Concerns

**OTHERS:** Faith Chase  
Ronald D. Kouchi, Senate President  
Mahina Martin, Director of Government and Community Relations, Hawaiian Electric Company  
Debbie Cabebe, Chief Executive Officer, Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.  
Nicholas Winfrey, President and CPO, Maui United Way  
Zandra Amaral-Crouse

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**PRESS:** *Akaku: Maui Community Television, Inc.*

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CHAIR HOKAMA: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Aloha, everyone. Welcome to the Maui County Council's Committee on Healthy Families and Communities. This is our regular meeting of September 10, 2020. This morning, we have from our Committee, our Vice-Chair Ms. Sugimura.

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: Good morning, Chair. I look forward to hearing Senate President. Thank you for bringing him.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you. From our Committee this morning, we have Ms. Kama. I know Ms. Kama is going to join us shortly. Next we have our Committee Member Ms. King.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Aloha kakahiaka, Chair. I do have to leave by noon. Are you expecting this to go till 2:00? I noticed it was...

CHAIR HOKAMA: No, no, no, no. Yeah, some of our resource people we invited weren't able to participate, so I think, yeah, we can wrap up by noon time, Ms. King.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. All right, thank you. Just letting you know ahead of time and welcome --

CHAIR HOKAMA: Yeah, thank you for that...

COUNCILMEMBER KING: --Senate President Ronald Kouchi. Hi Ron.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Next we have Mr. Mike Molina.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Good morning, Chairman and colleagues; and of course, welcome, Senate President Kouchi. I'm broadcasting to you from Makawao.

CHAIR HOKAMA: All right. Thank you, Mr. Molina. From our West Side, we have our colleague, Ms. Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Aloha kakahiaka, Chair. Aloha e Senator Kouchi. Live and direct from the Old Lahaina Center.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Aloha. And from our sister island, we have our colleague, Ms. Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha kakahiaka mai Molokai nui a hina, Chair, a e Senate President Kouchi, aloha.

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CHAIR HOKAMA: Aloha e. And of course, joining us, and we are pleased to have, our Chair, Ms. Alice Lee.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Mr. Chair, I'm going to say, buenos dias, good morning, because our meetings are going to run into the night. So we're going to end up from buenos dias to buenas noches. And welcome, welcome, Ron. Good to see you again.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay, Members, this morning we have just one item under our agenda, HFC-66, under the heading of the Evictions During COVID-19 Pandemic. We are in receipt of a County Communication 20-419, from our Chair, Ms. Lee, that transmitted the matter of the State's suspension of laws relating to evictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (or HUD) regulations to stop lease payments upon the expiration of a lease. This morning, before testimony, we will be introducing Senate President Ron Kouchi. So Members, without objections, I am going to ask that Mr. Kouchi be designated as a resource personnel in accordance with our Rule 18-A of the Council, and that we can take his remarks before testimony. Any objections, Members?

**COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS.**

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you very much, so ordered. And at this time, I would like to introduce to all of you, and to our community of our County, a person that is well known. He's a former great Chairman of the Kauai County Council, one of our key Senior Directors at the National Association of Counties, and now is the President of our State Legislature. I'd like to introduce a great friend of Maui County, homegrown, keiki o ka aina, Mr. Ron Kouchi. Senate President, welcome to our Committee.

MR. KOUCHI: Well, thank you, Councilmember Hokama. And as you said, during my tenure on the Kauai County Council, I've had the pleasure of serving with you, with Councilmembers Molina and Council Chair Lee, and so you're no strangers. And I think it was almost four years ago, I had the opportunity to address the inaugural meeting of the Maui County Council in the Chambers when we could all still gather in large groups and, you know, seeing the overflowing Chamber, and leis, and all of the hugs that used to happen in Hawaii and the aloha spirit. So it's a brand-new world. You know, I read about Maui County being a leader in having the virtual meetings with BlueJeans, so I loaded the app on my iPad and I've never used it till this morning. Most of the meetings I've had are Webex, Zoom and GoTo Meetings, and Teams and some of those. So I really would like to first acknowledge the Maui County Council for having the foresight and having moved forward to do this. And we're excited, you know, on October 5th and 6th, the Senate will go back into session for the sole purpose of confirming Judges, and it's my belief or understanding that we have now upgraded our technology capabilities, and we're going to have our first virtual meeting where we'll be able to take in live testimony and have a much more robust public participation. So the Hawai'i State Senate is almost gonna be catching up to Maui County.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Ah, great news. Great news, Senate President. Thank you for sharing

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that with this Committee this morning.

MR. KOUCHI: But with that, on the evictions issue, you know, the emergency orders are good for a 60-day period. At the end of that 60 days, you need to evaluate the current situation and what's happening and determine if it's warranted to extend the orders. The money that we've put in to have rental assistance is till the end of the year, so it would not surprise me that this moratorium on evictions is going to last at least until December 31st. In the press conference the Governor had the other day, we have \$50 million committed to rental assistance for those who are at 100 percent of medium income or less. I know the Hawai'i...Kauai County numbers for a family of four, it was 97,000, and for a single person it was about \$67,000, and you'd be able to get \$1,500 a month in rental assistance, and that would be from August 1st going forward till the end of the year. And because we're taking applications into September, then you would be able to get a lump sum check, and most importantly, the payment goes directly to the landlord. So we have, you know, been dealing for several years now with the homelessness problem, and realizing that people who have been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and unable to pay rent, it would only exacerbate a difficult situation with the amount of homelessness we're experiencing. And we have not been able to build enough shelter space yet to accommodate everyone, and so part of the strategy on the eviction moratorium was to make sure that people have safe shelter and, you know, are able to provide for their families. Now, the great thing about our plan though is that the payments go directly to the landlords, and not enough has been discussed about landlords. And in Hawai'i, a lot of the retirement strategy has been to invest in second homes. And so for a lot of our former plantation workers who lived on inexpensive plantation homes, they were able to save, invest in, you know, rental property, and that's all part of their retirement strategy. And they will have mortgages that are due. And so while we were worried about tenants, we need to be sure that banks aren't foreclosing on our landlords, and our landlords are able to get that rental income. You know, I think too often, we just view the owners of rental properties as large corporations, but that's really not what we do here in Hawai'i. But 50 million, again, is dedicated for the Rental Assistance Program till the end of the year, and then they will shortly be announcing the ability to apply for another \$50 million of rental assistance, and that would be going back to March and, you know, trying to make up for the back rent. People may owe from March all the way to July 31st. And then the most important thing is it's a moratorium, and I think some people mistakenly thought that they were forgiven the rent. The rent will eventually become due, and so we also have mediation services that are available through the program. You may want to have renegotiation with your landlord about what would be a more appropriate market rent, what's affordable in today's economy. And so those kind of assistance tools are available to be funded through the \$50 million program as well. But that's, that's it in a nutshell. If you had any questions, you know, I'll do my best to answer them, and if not, we'll talk to Denise Matsubara and have her get back. Oh, and I guess the most important thing, Catholic Charities and the Aloha United Way are assisting us in helping deploy the money. I know the Aloha United Way number is 211 to find out what kind of assistance you may have available to you. I don't have in front of me the Catholic Charities, you know, the website or phone number, but, you know, Maui has their Chapter. We have four

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people in our office here on Kauai who are about to go crazy in dealing with the calls but, you know, we've got a really good staff here and, you know, I'm confident that our residents are going to be well served.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you for your comments this morning, Senate President Kouchi. We appreciate that. I'm going to ask the Committee Members and Ms. Lee if you folks have any questions or need to clarify on what Mr. Kouchi shared with us. I'll start with, Ms. Sugimura, our Vice-Chair. You have anything you'd like to...

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, just quickly. Thank you. Thank you, Chair for having Senate President here. And this is such valuable information for this big problem that's brewing in our community because of COVID. I just want to also plant the thought 'cause you have the power. I worry about what's gonna happen January 1 because these monies are good through December 30th, and you're already looking back to cover the March through, I guess, July rent also. But I just want to plant the thought that there's this...I don't think pandemic is gonna leave us soon enough, and we have a bunch of people on Maui who are still collecting unemployment. And as you know, our main visitor industry is hurting. So thank you for this, and I look forward to hearing what others say, but I just wanted to plant that thought as you look forward. And you . . . *(inaudible)* . . .

MR. KOUCHI: Well, the other thing that Senators Keith Agaran, English and Baker are quick to remind their colleagues in the Senate of is with the strong visitor industry that Maui had built up, that Maui has the highest unemployment rate now in the State of all the four individual Counties. So I can tell you, your Senate delegation makes sure that it's top of mind. And we are incredibly concerned because our main source of revenue is from the business activity generated by the visitor industry. So where do we get the resources to try and do this as far as provide support when we're already talking about a \$200 million deficit minimally for us to deal with. And, you know, we have authorized the Governor to access the Federal loan funds that are available to Counties and States. We authorized up to 2.1 billion in budget and finances, financial analysis, they feel that it would be reasonable for us to borrow \$750 million, that's what we could reasonably pay. There is a three-year window to pay the money back, and in the most recent economic reports, they are saying that we are probably looking at a four-year recovery cycle as opposed to what they initially thought was a two-year cycle. But we've made those tools available to the Governor. And then unfortunately, in reading, you know, some of the national newsletters I receive before I came on this morning, you know, the so-called skinny stimulus bill didn't receive the 60 votes it needed to move in the U.S. Senate, and so it seems like the gridlock in Washington D.C. will result in no new aid that was gonna come in. And as you know from being involved at the National Association of Counties, Riki's a former president of NACo for us at the National Conference of State Legislators, you know, we were all told that this next round is when the State and County Governments were going to get assistance when they passed the last bill. Don't worry, you're next in line. And so for the Counties and the State, we're in a very difficult position because of the Congress not addressing our loss of revenue.

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CHAIR HOKAMA: Yes, we hear you very loud and clear, Senate President.

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you, Ms. Sugimura. I'll move on to our next Member. I'll go to Ms. King at this time, if you have a question for the Senate President.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Thank you, Chair. Aloha, Senator Kouchi, nice...thank you for coming to speak with us at this critical time. You know, my first question is, I don't know if we're gonna do second rounds, but are...is the money that's available for rental assistance from the State, is that prorated per County? Or is it just an open pot? First come first served.

MR. KOUCHI: . . . *(inaudible)*. . . come in because it is income qualified. And so, you know, at that point, if you meet the criteria then, you know, you'll be processed in and taken. So we're not prorating any of it.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. So it...basically, once it's gone, it's gone, and it's just up to people to get their . . . *(inaudible)*. . .

MR. KOUCHI: Well, what the Governor did in vetoing some of the appropriations, line item vetoing in the CARES Act, is built up a surplus, and we did leave the Governor with a surplus of funds. And so depending on how quickly this goes, there would be potential for some available funds to plus up the amount available.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Oh, okay, great. And then if I can just follow up with one question, Chair?

CHAIR HOKAMA: Yeah. Real quick please.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. So Senator, have...are you folks following the various spending, the CARES act spending by the Counties to make sure that every that all of our Counties are on track to actually spend it all by the end of the year? 'Cause I'm a little worried about Maui's funding and, you know, how slowly we're getting our money.

MR. KOUCHI: Well, the Senate Committee, the COVID-19 Committee has been asking for that information, so they've been receiving monthly reports and briefings. And, you know, in the case of the House, you know, they have in the House COVID Committee, you know, they're also tracking that. I think Representative Nakamura from Kauai, Representative Belatti the majority leader, and Chair Luke are leading that efforts on the House side. So we are, we are tracking it but, you know, as we've seen, some of the needs have changed. And the other thing that, you know, works out in contracting with some of the non-profits and other organizations, the Counties are able to more quickly deploy the money and get it out there. So hopefully, you know, you'll see that money being spent. But your concern is valid, we have seen that when Mayor Caldwell deployed \$25 million for rent rental assistance, only a little over 2

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million has been deployed because that paperwork was so cumbersome and onerous that it was difficult to get the money out. And hopefully we've all learned, as we try to get this Rental Assistance Program out, in trying to make sure there isn't fraud because there's fraud being committed in every state by bad actors who are taking such badly needed money away from those who need it. But while we want to make sure we clamp down on any fraudulent request, we need to have something that works quickly 'cause people need the help yesterday.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Right. Right, and we don't want to lose it, we don't want to lose any of that --

MR. KOUCHI: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: -- funding by not spending it. Okay. Thank you so much. Thank you, Chair. I appreciate my opportunity.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you, Ms. King. I'd like to now call on my colleague, Mr. Molina if...for his opportunity.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Chairman. And again good morning, Senate President Kouchi, nice to see you. And thanks for giving us the update on the rental assistance from the State. Do you know, again, which Department will be administering this, and processing the applications, and do you know if whichever Department it is, are they adequately staffed and funded to have the tools to process these applications in a timely manner to get it out to those in need? And I bring this up because of the concerns that was expressed by the public with the Unemployment checks, yeah, and the time it's taken to get those checks processed out to people. Any, any additional information you can provide for us on that?

MR. KOUCHI: Yes. The lead agency for the State has been the Hawai`i Housing Finance and Development Corporation, HHFDC, with Denise Iseri-Matsubara in charge. She has been doing a fantastic job. And as you know, they were set up for the purpose of dealing with income, directed Rental Assistance Programs, and creating housing opportunities. But more importantly, to make sure that we have adequate personnel and that we can deploy it quickly, they have entered into working agreements with Aloha United Way and the Catholic Charities. So they...Catholic Charities and Aloha United Way will be processing the applications, bringing it back to HHFDC, and then the checks will be issued. And so using the expertise in the private sector, and in particular, in our non-profit community, we are expecting that collaboration to be successful in deploying it quickly, unlike the Unemployment Insurance.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. Well, thank you very much for that update, Senator. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you. Again, Members, yeah, watching the time and its impact on the Senate President, we'll do another round if time permits. I would like to ask Ms. Paltin for her opportunity with the Senate President.

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you so much, Chair. Thank you, Senator Kouchi. I just was wondering if you had any information about the amount of foreclosures to date on homeownership and, you know, any efforts to prevent...especially our residents, but I mean, I guess in general, foreclosures?

MR. KOUCHI: We've had a moratorium on foreclosures, so I hope it's zero. And in some of the news articles that have been reported, you know, when people have either tried to evict or foreclose, Legal Aid is one of the organizations that has been providing help. And when they've been informed of what's going on, we've prevented the evictions or, you know, prevented the foreclosures. And so those are all in place. But again, I cannot stress enough the most important thing is those are all moratoriums, which means you have a timeout on paying, but you will have a bill come due at the end of whenever the emergency order ends. And so you need to take advantage of these kind of programs so you don't have such a large bill that you have to pay, and you're unable to stay where you are. And then the only other thing I would say because I have two younger sons, you know, 28 and 30 years old that are renters today, but looking to purchase homes, one of the few ways that you can tell a tenant that they would have to move is if you have a direct family member who would be going into your property. You know, it does understand and allow for direct family members to occupy a house someone is currently renting. And we've heard a lot of stories about family members who are now deciding to move back home because they're working remotely or they've lost their jobs. And so I know for some of the families, then that's been an impact of having so many additional members returning to their households.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And just to follow up, when the mortgage is due, it's not like the one where you add it on to the back end, it's gonna be all due one time, the whole?

MR. KOUCHI: Yep.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

MR. KOUCHI: But that's why...but that's why I say, we have some of that mediation skills available or, you know, if you're in the income qualified group and, you know, see Legal Aid. I would guess that there's going to have to be some kind of plans put into place to try to figure out how to make that up. You know, the reality that somebody will have the whole lump sum on the mortgage on the back end is not realistic, given the amount of unemployed we have today. So just know that there are potential tools available to you, and make sure you explore all of your options.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you. I definitely will explore all options.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Yeah. Thank you, Ms. Paltin. I'd like to now ask Ms. Rawlins-Fernandez for her opportunity.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Aloha again, Senate President Kouchi.

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MR. KOUCHI: Aloha.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: So I thought it was really important that you brought up the concern of fraud. My concern has been about double dipping because the State has the HHFDC or Catholic Charities, Aloha United Way program for rental assistance. And our County also has the H.E.L.P. program, which provides rental assistance, and both programs give payment directly to the landlords. And I've asked our Directors about preventing any kind of double dipping 'cause my understanding is the State program will fund up to 50 percent with rental assistance. And so when I asked about, you know, safeguards to prevent any kind of double dipping from State and County, they said that there are safeguards in place, but they didn't really explain what they are. I was wondering if perhaps you knew what, what it was, the safeguards in place to prevent any kind of dipping of both funds.

MR. KOUCHI: So I'm gonna take a quick look here. I'm assuming that my office is on this call making sure that I don't mess, mess up too badly. So I would tell you that no, I don't know specifically what the safeguards are, but I will have my office get in touch with Denise at HHFDC and, you know, follow up, and then we'll submit in writing to Chair Hokama, you know, what we find out to assure that. And, you know, as you said, each County has some different programs, so Oahu has one, I don't think that Kauai was doing rental assistance in, you know, the projects they were doing, but we'll get you an answer.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Thank you so much, Senate President.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you, Ms. Rawlins-Fernandez. I can tell you that, yes, even Congress is concerned about pandemic fraud. It's gonna be a nightmare regarding audit requirements down the road. At this time, I'd like to ask Ms. Lee if she has any questions with...for Senate President. Ms. Lee?

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Muted.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you, Chairman. Good morning again, Senate President Kouchi. One of my concerns was sort of mentioned earlier, and that is the allocation of the 50 million, the first 50 million, and then the second 50 million. Mainly because the outer islands are at a big disadvantage, having smaller populations. And in Maui's case, not only do we have like one-tenth practically the population of Oahu, but we do have the highest unemployment rate due to our visitor industry, you know, problems. 'Cause...is there any way that the Legislature could sort of guarantee a certain amount for some of the smaller Counties?

MR. KOUCHI: Well, at this point...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Especially if...

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MR. KOUCHI: But it's out of the Legislature's hands. The project is now administered by the Governor. One of the things I think that we have an advantage over...a good friend of mine manages between 3 and 400 rental properties, most of them here on Kauai. He brought pastry to the four employees at Catholic Charities yesterday, you know, acknowledged how hard they're going to be working, but he's already been encouraging the tenants that he's managing about what the program is. I think for the neighbor islands being a little smaller and more community minded, I think we're gonna be a lot more effective in getting the word out to the people who qualify in our Counties, and hopefully take better advantage than Oahu, which is so large, I don't know that they reach everybody. You know, my intention is to get on the local radio station here on Kauai and, you know, remind everybody that it's available to get out there and, you know, we'll see what we can do. The only...like I said, the only other thing that we would work with is if the monies start to get deployed quickly, then to look at some of the money we set aside for the Governor's discretion, that this is where we should spend it. I believe we left him with about \$30 million, and in the line item vetoes he's added, so that there was quite a bit of money, you know, well over a hundred, an additional 150 million in that surplus account, if you will. And we did recognize, when we appropriated the funds, that other kind of needs or emergencies would come up, and they would need some flexibility. And maybe some of the money we had for PPE, as an example, we've had others step in to provide PPE and use some of their budgeted monies for that. So if we are in a good place with PPE, then we would also look at redeploying that, that money. And then, you know, we'll see how it's going in the next several weeks, but again, the Senate will be meeting on October 5th and 6th, and so if that's what starts to happen, that the neighbor island maybe seem not to be getting their fair share, then I'll have a chance to meet with your Maui delegation and the four members from the Big Island to make sure that the neighbor islands get their fair share. In the Senate, I would just tell you that besides myself as President, we have--Senator English is the majority leader; Senator Keith Agaran's on the leadership team, he's the Vice-Chair of Ways and Means; Senator Inouye is on the leadership team from the Big Island; Senator Kanuha is the caucus leader; you know, myself as President, so half or more than half of the Senate leadership is comprised of neighbor island Senators. And then for several of you who had the chance to serve with Senator Dela Cruz when he was on the City Council, he made it a point to come out to, you know, the neighbor island HSAC meetings. Not all of the Oahu Councilmembers are active participants in HSAC, Senator Dela Cruz certainly was, and so he has been very good to the neighbor islands. And I think part of the message back to the neighbor islands, we had a formula that took the population of numbers of how Oahu got the money to then give the neighbor islands their money. And so I believe 40 percent of all the CARES money that came to the State of Hawai'i was deployed to the Counties.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you. Thank you very much.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you, Chair Lee. So Senate Pres...

MR. KOUCHI: Oh, wait, and I forgot to say, your...your Committee Chair is a good pain in

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the behind too, at contacting me immediately when he thinks that Maui is not getting their fair share.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: We appreciate that.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you. I know I abuse our close to 45-year relationship, Senate Pres. So thank you very much. My, my...I just...I'm gonna wrap up, I know your time is precious, so we want to first say thank you so much for making time for this Committee and the Maui County Council. One thing I wanted to ask you because it's part of the evictions and concerns of our Committee Members, our Council, as it impacts our community is again, the issue of power or electricity, Senate President. We are aware that Kauai is independent as a co-op, island co-op. You have any thoughts about how the State might assist our communities, our island people, as it regards to power? Because right now, with distance...social distancing, long distance education requirements, even for Telemed purposes, power and connectivity is critical to communications and everything else. So you see anything happening as in regards to power and evictions?

MR. KOUCHI: Again, the Hawaiian Electric Companies have extended the, you know, moratorium on no shutdown of power, KIUC has done the same thing. I anticipate that going till the end of the year, you know. But on a broader note that you've kind of opened the door, every Wednesday we're on a broadband hui call. We started with 15 people on the first call, I think we've have 30 now, 30 consecutive weeks, we have over 60 people. There are several people from Maui who participate, including from Mayor Victorino's Administration. And clearly, connectivity is a huge issue. I see going forward, you know, we need to work with our Federal delegation to bring Wi-Fi access to...universally to our residents. I don't see, you know, us losing or being able to get enough classroom size to have 100 percent in-classroom learning for a while, if we need to keep the six-foot distancing in place. As you mentioned, in telemedicine, they often told us why we couldn't do it and, you know, the health officials in Hawai'i think they've made four or five years progress in telemedicine. And so, you know, for those who are in areas where they don't get the Wi-Fi and the connectivity, you know, now this is an access to health care issue, besides an educational issue. And if we're able to get devices to every student, not only are we working to help educate our students, but for parents who didn't have that connectivity and the device, now things like the telemedicine are all available to them. And, you know, as we go forward in this new post-COVID-19 economy then, you know, eliminating that digital divide, bringing connectivity to every resident who wants to get connected is gonna be critically important for future success.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Yeah. Thank you. Yeah, appreciate those words, Ron, I would agree with you. I'm aware of your time demand, Senate President, so I wanna first thank you for making the time with us this morning. But any closing thoughts you would like to share with us or our County?

MR. KOUCHI: No, again, I'm happy to, you know, work with you if you need, you know, to set this up again. Now that I know BlueJeans works on my iPad and, you know, at

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this point, you know, we continue to be ready to work and partner with you. I know Senator Keohokalole, who is on the COVID-19 Committee, is gonna be reaching out to all of the County Councils. They have that interisland travel proposal so, you know, they continue to look at ways where we could take steps to reopen our economy, but doing it in a way that mitigates any kind of health impact to our residents. And as I was talking with him on the phone yesterday afternoon, he said well, so much focus has been on the Trans-Pacific, let's make sure that we are working hard to address the concerns and the well-being of our residents. And, you know, we're such a family-driven ohana State, to the ability not to see family members that are on the other islands. And especially if we're doing a good job of managing our COVID numbers, shouldn't be an impediment to our residents. And then each of our islands could use the support of, you know, having those visits come in and some of the spending that would occur. And so we will continue to look at ways to try to start getting some economic activity so we have funds to address this. And then the only thing I'd say in closing, I did an ad at Star Advertiser, Facebook Live, and kind of wore more of a turtleneck, and Kaylee Tsutsui immediately criticized me for not wearing a collared shirt. I hope she's online doing her homework, but maybe somebody will let Kaylee know when I appeared in front of the Maui Council, I made sure I picked out a collared shirt for this morning.

CHAIR HOKAMA: And thank you for wearing University green, Senate Pres.

MR. KOUCHI: Yeah. A University of Hawai`i shirt. But thank you very much, you know, it's been very enjoyable seeing you this morning.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you, Senate President. And from our Committee to you, we wish you well, and to your family, yeah, our aloha. So thank you very much again for the time you've shared with us this morning.

MR. KOUCHI: Thank you. Bye-bye.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Bye-bye. Thank you. Okay, Members, we are now going to take public testimony and then hit our resource personnel. So for those that would like to share testimony with the Committee on our one item for today, please make yourself known. The Staff will indicate to us when your turn is. Please state your name. For the record, you have three minutes to share your thoughts with us today. And let's see. With that, Lesley, do we have anyone for testimony at this time?

MS. MILNER: Yes, Chair. Faith Chase.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Now for those of you out there, if your mics are on, if you could turn it off until we call you, to help us with audio quality and any feedback issues, we would appreciate that, so thank you. Okay. First person please.

**...BEGIN PUBLIC TESTIMONY...**

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MS. CHASE: Good morning, Chair. Good morning, Committee. I just wanted to make a quick comment, saying that I've been listening to all the COVID, CARES funding issues, and I do see and I hear from fellow Committee Members and my Councilmembers that reaching the rental sector hasn't really happened. And so I'm not sure what could be done in that area. United Way, MEO, Family Life Center, whoever are helping to distribute those funds, that not to forget about that component of something creative to reach out to that sector. 'Cause a lot of people are having problems, but when you don't...there's not a way to get their voice...it's not...there's no mechanism to hear what their struggles are. And also, in addition, some people have faced evictions, and so I know Legal Aid Society is there to support them, but they do...they might need another, some sort of uplifting assistance as well. Because those that didn't understand the eviction process, you know, landlords or so be it, they're going to have legal situations down the road too, that are unfortunate, but might need assistance. That's all. Thank you.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Well, thank you for your comments this morning. And this is part of the purpose of the meeting today is to receive comments such as yours that we can look at ways of reaching out to those in the rental sector. So thank you very much. Lesley, person please?

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Chair? Chair? Can I ask?

CHAIR HOKAMA: Ms. King?

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Yes. Can I ask a question of Ms. Faith...Ms. Chase?

CHAIR HOKAMA: Yes. Yes, ask your clarifying question.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Is she still on? Are you still on?

MS. CHASE: Yeah, I'm here. Hi.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. Thanks for being here, and for your comment. And I'm just...while I know you're really connected with a lot of social media, and so when we started this session, I asked my Staff to post the State program. And so maybe if you can help us out and just get this on the network, help us get this spread out, the information. That's be a --

MS. CHASE: Yeah. I -

COUNCILMEMBER KING: --good step.

MS. CHASE: --I agree. I think now that everybody, even people who maybe never frequented the internet, are doing that as well. And so I wouldn't put...I would also entertain, like Senator President Kouchi mentioned, I think radio is as...shouldn't be forgotten as well. Thank you.

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COUNCILMEMBER KING: Yeah. Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Faith.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you. Ms. Sugimura?

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you, Chair. Ms. Chase, in your testimony, you said that there are people during this time that got evicted. And I would ask if you could let me know who because I think right now, to evict somebody because of not...non-payment of their rent is illegal because of the eviction moratorium that's...or the moratorium. So if you don't mind, and if you would like to help that person, could you please reach out to me after the meeting? Or if I could help them, please let me know. Thank you.

MS. CHASE: I'd be happy to. In fact, I didn't realize that President Kouchi was from Kauai, or maybe that had slipped my mind, and Kauai is having some issues as well. And while that's not my County, maybe I will...I'll address it to both of you.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you very much.

CHAIR HOKAMA: . . . *(inaudible)*. . . Les, next testifier please.

MS. MILNER: Chair, we have no one else signed up to testify.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Members, with no objection, I'd like to close public testimony for today's meeting, as well as accept any written testimony that has been presented for today's meeting.

**COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS.**

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you. Thank you, Members, so ordered.

**. . .END OF PUBLIC TESTIMONY. . .**

**ITEM HFC-66: EVICTIONS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC (CC 20-419)**

CHAIR HOKAMA: We will now move forward this morning. We do have, participating with us is Ms. Mahina Martin. She's a Director of Government Relations for Maui Electric. We have also joining us Ms. Debbie Cabebe of Maui Economic Opportunity as its Chief Executive Officer. And Mr. Nicholas Winfrey, he is a, as I was told, that our new President and Chief Professional Officer of Maui United Way. The Chair also made a outreach to Catholic Charities and a few others. So again, Members, this is a...will be part of a continuing effort of this Committee to bring resources and information to our community as it...they get impacted in various areas of the pandemic. So without objection, Members, with...under Rule 18-A of the Council, I would like to have those three individuals I mentioned as resource personnel, without any objections from the Committee, please.

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**COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS.**

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you. At this time, I'm going to ask each of them to give an opening comment, and then we'll open it up and allow you, the Members, to present your questions and concerns. So at this time, Ms. Martin, are you ready to share some comments to the Committee? I know I saw you earlier.

MS. MARTIN: Chair?

CHAIR HOKAMA: Hi. Good morning, Ms. Martin.

MS. MARTIN: Hi. We're all navigating the new world of online meetings. Good morning, Chair Hokama.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Even the Senate...the Senate President did give kudos to the Council's effort. Ms. Rawlins-Fernandez's efforts regarding BlueJeans. So yeah, we're all learning and moving forward. We're happy to have you join us, thank you.

MS. MARTIN: Thank you.

CHAIR HOKAMA: And please share your comments with us.

MS. MARTIN: Sure. And thank you again. Good morning everyone. I appreciate the opportunity, Chair Hokama and Members. Today, or this morning, I'm gonna share a little bit about how Hawaiian Electric is addressing our customers' needs during these COVID conditions, and this very odd and strange times for many of us. Our company recognizes that it's more than day-to-day needs, such as turning on lights in homes and businesses, but that we do provide a very critical and essential service of power for households to feed their families, conduct work at home, support online learning, and also support those in medical needs and critical care being conducted at both home and in facilities. And we do recognize that our service is critical to all businesses, small as well as large. Given the situation and the gravity of what people are facing today, Hawaiian Electric has voluntarily suspended disconnections since March 17th, as you may be aware, and we have also voluntarily extended it four times since then, and we actively monitor the situation. It's quite an intense effort within our company internally. We've taken quite a lot of steps, or a pretty big effort to try to reach out to our customers to help them explore what's available, to help them with their financial needs and economic situations. For us here in our County, we have about 70,000 customers on Maui, 3,000...little over 3,000 on Moloka'i, and just shy of 2,000 on Lāna'i. So some of the things that Hawaiian Electric has done to intensify our efforts and really be there to support our community and our customers has been on our website at [hawaiianelectric.com](http://hawaiianelectric.com). If your constituents, the general public, and our customers take a look at it, they'll see a specific page dedicated to pandemic efforts. And on this, it's pretty healthy, it will guide them through many resources, what's going on, how to set up payment arrangements, even COVID-19 general information for just health and wellness. We provide information for payment

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arrangements in seven languages. If you're interested in what those are, it's Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Ilocano, Vietnamese, Marshallese and Chuuk, as well. We have designated teams internally within our company that address the needs of low to moderate income and special communities, or communities with special needs that have a high level of poverty in their area, as well as keeping an eye on the...those in the working class that are falling off of that class and moving more into the lower income arena today. And we know that those are the ones really struggling in those arenas. We are offering payment plans, hopefully you've heard all of our advertising, our efforts. We've been really pushing it, but we've been intensifying the effort. We provide, through those payment plans, a very easy way to set up a 4, 6, or 12-month installment plan. We just want people to call us and set up something. Because realistically, if someone is struggling with a monthly bill right now, and they hold off and wait till the very, very, very end, it's going to be that much more difficult. So we have been really encouraging people, just call us and set it up. As you heard from Senate President Kouchi, you know, fraud is out there, and we're no strangers to it. We hear a lot from our customers, they're getting calls pretending to be Hawaiian Electric saying, hey, you can get a rebate; or you have a bill, we're gonna disconnect tomorrow if you don't wire us some money today. So whenever there's an uptick in it, we used to just send it out, you know, fraud advisories. Today we're keeping a larger eye on it, and are more intense on it. And finally, you know, we spend effort in connecting our customers through LIHEAP. And you'll hear from Debbie Cabebe, of course, but MEO's H.E.L.P. programs with the CARES funding, and we do our very best to even leverage our charitable foundation giving. We've supported many, many organizations and...including the Food Bank, Maui United Way, to up their services to the communities in need during pandemic times. Our commercial account services staff have initiated calls to just several hundred of our business, small and large, check-in, how are you doing, can we do an energy assessment for your business to help you save money if you're operating, can we put you on a payment plan, a future installment plan, what can we do to help you? So those have been pretty good. You may have gotten a bill insert if you're like me, still getting your bill on paper. If you open it, it'll be in our customer newsletter, we put it in...online advertising, traditional as well as social media, of course. And we've gone even one level deeper, we've gone to many of our stakeholders, including a lot of our elected officials, asking everyone to let their own world of friends, family, colleagues and constituents to know, don't wait. You know, there are funding opportunities available, and we know you need your electricity to function in your everyday life. But thank you, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you, Ms. Martin, for sharing those very helpful comments with us this morning. I'm gonna now ask and invite Mr. Nicholas Winfrey of Maui United Way if he would please join us at this time and share any comments that he may have. Good morning, Mr. Winfrey. Thanks again for joining us in our discussion. And if you'll share your --

MR. WINFREY: No, it's my pleasure, Chair, and appreciate...oh, sorry.

CHAIR HOKAMA: -- . . . (*inaudible*) . . .

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MR. WINFREY: Thank you so much, Chair and Committee, we appreciate the invite and being included in the conversation. I guess I am still new, it's been a little over a year and a half, which feels probably like a decade to all of us since this last six to eight months. But, you know, we appreciate being able to share kind of the resources that we're providing, and it was good to be on the call earlier to get a sense of the new program and where, potentially, some of the speedbumps might occur as well. I do have a small slide deck, if I'm able to present, or...if that's suitable for this meeting; otherwise, I can kind of just speak as well.

CHAIR HOKAMA: No, no. If you've got something you prepared and you can share with us, yeah, we'd be happy to see it, Mr. Winfrey.

MR. WINFREY: Perfect. It's nothing too extensive, but we have...and I apologize, hopefully it's pulling up here shortly.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Got it.

MR. WINFREY: Not quite sure if all of you can see it.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Yes, we can see the screen. Thank you.

MR. WINFREY: Perfect. Well, just a quick synapsis, you know, Maui United Way, we've been around for a while, obviously, great foundation within the community. We support 39 programs outside of the current crisis, but we have began providing ancillary support via a safety net fund that we launched back in March. So basically, we're funding safety net, COVID programs, 38 of them around the community, to the tune of about \$200,000-plus, that's all private funding. We've also supplied PPE to the community in general, and really kind of are held accountable as far as administratively goes to ensure that kind of every dollar is going to where it needs to go. Moving forward, we launched the CRUA Fund Partnership, which is COVID Rental Utility Assistance, this was actually back in April. So we were already working with Catholic Charities running a rental assistance for up to three months for up to \$1,000 a month. This was in addition to the H.E.L.P. and Laulima funds, but we did, you know, coordinate and learn kind of from that, and referred agencies to each other. We still have those funds available, but with this new program, we do have some concerns about overlap. We haven't been asked for any of our data on who the individuals that have applied for the funding is, so that fraud alert kind of pops up from that initial conversation, that there really hasn't been any communication. All of...everyone that was kind of needing assistance, MECO was forwarding them to us 'cause it's utilities as well, payments go directly to the landlords. But the primary focus of data to us is via 211. So basically, individuals can dial 211, we've got a PSA that's been out there running, we've been promoting it everywhere we go for that resource. Issues that we're seeing, once again, is even with our initial program, the influx of calls has been overwhelming. And this is, you know, a \$120,000 program, not...what my estimate is that they're breaking it down population-wise, it's probably gonna be about, I think, 6 million for Maui, based on what my perceptions are in chatting with Aloha United Way. Calls aren't getting returned, we're getting calls...I've...on this meeting alone, I've probably

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have about ten calls to my cell phone, looking for this program that we're not actually even running, it's the State-based one. So we're seeing some confusion between Catholic Charities, Aloha United Way and Maui United Way, and we feel that, you know, just getting that information out as cleanly and clearly as possible is gonna be a bit of a challenge. People are gonna end up being forwarded along to multiple locations, and then potentially not getting the support that they need. The other issue that we see is the concern about receiving both funds, and being able to track that down, and us being held accountable if necessary. So there's really a lot of holes right now that we're seeing. The need is great, but the holes within the system itself basically are keeping me up at night right now, to be honest. Moving forward, we do have data that we collect on a regular basis so we can kind of gauge where the needs in the community are, and where it's flowing. And this is open source, and we share it with everyone. Housing and shelter obviously has skyrocketed, healthcare had been high, but if you're looking at the housing and shelter breakdown, it's actually 88 percent of those calls are focusing within that space. So we initially saw food security, we saw a lot of these other things kind of take hold, but now, in the last couple of months, it has been rental and utility assistance. Basically April 9th...or through September 9th of this year, we've had, you know, 31,000 calls. I think that percentage increase is incorrect, that's from a prior one. But 31,000 over, you know, 5,700 calls just tells you kind of the impacts that we're seeing. If you're looking at specifically just housing in the trends, we did start going down once everybody started thinking everything was opening back up, but we are seeing those numbers increase for need and support, and this is prior to really the UI insurance running out. Moving forward, we're still looking to secure as much funding as we can, we'll still work with anyone. We answer the phones live to direct individuals where they go. Even if it's not our program...I chatted to a guy about 20 minutes today about his frustrations and fear about what's going on. But we'll continue to work with basically the broader non-profit community and try to secure private funding in this space, but know that rental and utility assistance is really...we're kind of on a cliff at this point, but happy to help out in any way and like, you know, work closely with MEO and Catholic Charities and everyone within that space. I could talk a lot more, we have lots more programs and safety net fundings, but I welcome the conversations at this point, or questions.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. And Mr. Winfrey, yeah, thank you for doing that PowerPoint and sharing those slides with us. Before I entertain questions from the Committee for you and your organization, I'm gonna allow Ms. Cabebe to give some comments at this time, and then we'll open it up, Mr. Winfrey. So thank you. Ms. Cabebe, it's your opportunity. We would be happy to hear your thoughts on this subject this morning.

MS. CABEBE: Thanks. Good morning, Chair, and thank you for the opportunity. I didn't prepare a PowerPoint, I wasn't quite sure what, what's on the agenda. So I did want to share a little bit about, you know, the H.E.L.P. Program --

CHAIR HOKAMA: Yes.

MS. CABEBE: --and where that's been going. You know, as of...as of the most updated numbers that I had reported, we...we've processed 6,485 applications between

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H.E.L.P. I and H.E.L.P. II, distributing about \$3.1 million in assistance. The biggest ask that we get is still for food, and it's--even though there are community food distributions, it's for, you know, the poultry, for the meats, those...you know, those kinds of things, for milk. I think because there are other rental programs available, rental assistance, then people have...we've been trying to steer them toward leveraging their money. We've also been very fortunate to receive money from Hawai'i Community Foundation, two different pots of money, and we helped about probably 800 individuals to supplement what they received under H.E.L.P. funding. We also had funding from the Montage Bay at Kapalua, and they created a fund...their owners actually put money together and created funding to support their team members that were laid off. So a lot of them were able to leverage H.E.L.P. money, but they were also able to get money from the pono, they called a Pono Project. The Hawai'i...Hawaiian Electric also had some money that they, they allocated for us, so we helped supplement people's rental...or not rental, but utility assistance. We also have money that we received from Hale Mahaolu to help their clients, so they had come up with a rental fund. So their residents that needed assistance, they would pay half of their rents, and we helped about 105, I guess, individuals during...with that funding. In terms of evictions, we're not seeing a lot of people coming to us saying they're going to be evicted. And when they do, we have been directing them to Legal Aid, and there's a link that explains very clearly about the process of eviction. And so a lot of times when we intervene and we talk with the landlords, and many of them, they just weren't aware that it was a problem. And so once they're aware, then their tone kind of changes, and they do appreciate the assistance. I think our fear is at the end of this, people are still going to have debt. And what's gonna happen then? Because, you know, H.E.L.P. is a small amount of money. And although they're very grateful for it, it doesn't pay, you know, the full bill. So when you have...if you're a two-household family and you have \$500, and you've got electric to pay, you've got a cell phone bill, you've got rent to pay, and you need food, how do you decide what, you know, what you're gonna use that money for. And so I think that's what a lot of our staff have been trying to help people sort through, like what is...what are their priorities. During the...Mahina was talking about LIHEAP, we had, we processed about 1,065 applications in the month of June, but that...those are credits, energy credits, that are assigned to the applicants that go back to the State. And then we also had about another 30 emergency assistance disconnect notices. And I hope that's enough information for you at this point, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: I'm sure you have a lot more to share, Ms. Cabebe. So thank you. No, thank you for those opening comments. I appreciate the three of you participating this morning. So now I'm going to ask Ms. Sugimura if she has...first I'd like to...and I apologize, Ms. Kama joined us earlier. She had a previous commitment, and she's joined us at least half-hour ago, I do believe. So my apologies, Ms. Kama, for not recognizing you sooner, but thank you for joining the Committee this morning.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Ms. Sugimura? Yeah. Welcome, welcome sister. Ms. Sugimura, any questions for any of the three people from Ms. Martin, Maui Electric; Ms. Cabebe,

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MEO; or Mr. Winfrey of Maui United Way?

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you for the speakers, the presentations were very informative. I wonder if, Mr. Winfrey could give us his PowerPoint so that we could have it as information, that's one request, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Yeah. We'll follow...

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: And...okay, thank you. I...for Mahina, you gave us your number of customers. And I was just wondering, do you...with all the financial assistance that are out there, with MEO and now with the State, are you seeing a problem with people not paying your electric bills?

MS. MARTIN: Yes, it's still continuing. A lot of it depends on how we get the word out. And what we do notice is, and I am a particular person who has seen it, is that we're experiencing folks who, maybe for the first time, have never found themselves or their household in this situation. So not only are they uncomfortable, they're unfamiliar, but they also think it's temporary. So they, you know, are of the thought, oh, it's just a couple of months, we can cover it, take it from our savings, or hold off on it or something, only to learn that, you know, while we're in it several months now, and now it's a bigger issue. So a little puzzling, you know, in trying to address those, but it still continues. It's...I think what we're hoping to do is prevent it from escalating further, address that, you know, the new low to moderate income groups that are entering our communities right now and their realities, and then continue to make it available for folks who still need economic support, with or without pandemic conditions. Our concern continues to be that if Federal CARES money and all the funding support starts to get, you know, go away in a few months at the termination of programs or agreements or just money dries up, electric use will continue, and of course, utilities include water as well, so I'm sure there are some other issues with that.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you. And if HECO gave a donation to MEO...I mean MEO, does...do you have some kind of program that you can help people in need, or was that just a random or just a side issue that HECO did?

MS. MARTIN: Yeah. So we have a charitable foundation that gives out substantial amounts of money to non-profits.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Okay. So separate.

MS. MARTIN: Between us...yeah. So our charitable giving arm will...this year we made a very decisive move to move away from traditional requests that are generally, you know, viewed and approved, and focus more on COVID recovery and response needs. And so we either actively looked for them or it came our way but, you know, and it could be everything from food security. We paid for the shipment for Moloka'i to get food in the early days of the pandemic. We continue to work with all the other non-profit providers. So, yeah, it would be from the charitable arm.

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COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Okay. I was just wondering how the two would come together and...so Chair, I have...I'll wait for other questions, but I just wanted the Committee to know that I am working, I'm talking to Judge Joe Cardoza who is, has been asked by Chief Justice to take on this eviction moratorium issue. I am gonna have a town hall meeting with him, and I was gonna ask Mahina to join me, MEO, and he gave me a list of other people. And the only reason why, Chair, he's not at your meeting now is because Fidelity is having a town hall meeting, which he's participating in, otherwise he would be here talking to you now. But we are, we are actually going to get a town hall meeting together, and bring speakers like you have today, and take it out to the community, like what Senator Kouchi is talking about, so that we can help those people in need. And I did talk to *Akakū* already, and I'm developing this, and I might ask Fidelity to also help us put the town hall meeting together 'cause they've been doing it. So thank you. Thank you, Chair. I look forward to hearing more about this.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Sugimura. I'm gonna next call on Member Kama for her opportunity with our resource people. And Ms. Sugimura, as the Vice-Chair, take over I'm going to need to do a personal requirement at this time. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you, Chair. So I just had one question for now. And I'm not sure if the question can be answered, but I just want to say thank you, actually, for the...for all the people who are here today, for Mahina and Mister...and Nicholas for coming today, and for the Aloha United Way, I'm really appreciative of that. But it's very hopeful because, you know, when...from what I sit and I look at what's out there, sometimes it can be really bleak, but I'm glad that there's hope and it's here for us. So thanks to, you know, MEO and the County and Aloha United Way, United Way, Catholic Charities, and all of those that come together to try to help our community. So my question is, do we have a sense of really how much, how much money are we talking about, are we going to need, if we make an assumption that we're going to be in this pandemic for at least the next ten months. Do we have...I mean, have we been in this long enough to get some kind of an estimate about what we're gonna be needing for the future? If anyone can answer that, that's my question. Thank you.

MR. WINFREY: I'd actually take that one, Chairperson *[sic]* Kama, and appreciate the question. It is Maui United Way, Aloha United Way is Oahu, so we are different, I'll clarify that. That's...your question is actually incredibly pertinent right now. What we're looking at doing is actually trying to collect and collate all of that data as best as we can, and basing it off of the programs that we support and kind of the needs from the non-profit community to try to start forecasting and preparing for the next 6 and 12 months. You know, we're looking at surveying our non-profits, as well as the community, as well as trying to pull as much data from UI and COVID response and all of those types of things. We're actually meeting with a broad spectrum working group in the next couple of weeks from data sciences to pollsters because we see this as such a need as we prepare long term. The analogy that I'm using is basically we're throwing buckets of water on a raging fire, and we have to start building these firebreaks to start planning ahead. Otherwise, you know, that ROI for the investments

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that we're making is just a Band-Aid on a bullet hole. And I will stop using pivot, and it is what it is, those are two terms that we're just done using, it's just being overplayed. But we will try to do that, and we'll keep, absolutely, the Council and the Committee in the loop on that, that information.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you.

MS. CABEIBE: Member Kama, may I say something regarding that?

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Sure. Yes, by all means.

MS. CABEIBE: I think the challenge...I'm sorry. Thank you. I think the challenge is regardless of what the numbers are, you know, in alignment with what Nick, Nick was saying, you know, we can throw...we're throwing money at this, we're throwing a blanket on it at the moment, or water on the fire. When we come out on the other side, and I think Councilmembers...or Representative *[sic]* Kouchi spoke about that, that there's gonna be this pot of money that people are still gonna owe, and where is that gonna come from. Because all this, all this funding is gonna end, and in the end we're gonna have all this debt, and the moratoriums are gonna end, and that's where the problems are gonna start. So I think we have to look, you know, farther to the future and figure out the...after this, then what, and how are we gonna address that. So the immediate assistance right now is tremendously helpful, but I think we have to think long term. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you. That's the plan, the plan is to think about what do we need today, and what do we need to plan for today for tomorrow. 'Cause I think that's the direction that the Council wants to go in. So thank you for that, Debbie, I appreciate that.

MS. MARTIN: Yes. If I could also offer a comment to that question about forward facing and moving forward. You know, we're only...gosh, about several weeks away from the end of the year, literally...what is it, about 12, 15 weeks away. So the reality of Federal money or programs...oh, bless you, Chair Lee, if you just sneezed. If the reality is that it's gonna be several weeks out, it's coming around the corner. By the time we have really, really escalated our coordinated response, we're in it, and we're gonna be in a real stuck place. So from a utility perspective, and knowing that electricity is such critical and essential needs for homes and businesses and schools, to make the transition from that to that, we cannot keep a moratorium forever, and I think everybody understands that part. We do not want our communities or our customers to be suffering any more than necessary. So whatever way we can work together to ramp up the messaging and get that available is going to be helpful for everyone.

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any more questions, Ms. Kama?

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: No, that's enough, that's all. Thank you, Chair.

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So I just wanted to kind of add to that, just so that there is

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a connection with what other things are going on with this, is that the courts, in their understanding that the eviction moratorium may one day end or that the landlords are gonna come after the renters, as part of their process...and that's why I think it would be good to one day have Judge Cardoza here. Because part of their process is a landlord will file an eviction notice, and then the next thing that happens is that the landlord tenant has to go through the...go through the...what is it, what do they call it...the negotiations that's happening with Bevanne Bowers with Maui Mediation Services --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . . (*inaudible*). . .

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: --so that's gonna be part of the process, and then come back to the court. So there is...and then they have to go through--the renters have to go through some kind of financial planning education also. So that's what the judge was telling me. And I know that we are actually talking about lots of money that will be needed in the future, which is probably the bigger problem that everybody's feeling. But we're covered through December, and then what happens after that? So anyway, next I think I saw Ms. Lee's hand go up. Ms. Lee?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Yeah. Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to encourage everybody--I have to leave the call at 11:00 for another meeting, but I was hoping to encourage everybody to focus on solutions, rather than keep repeating the problems. We all know the problems. Yes, you know, right now we're very, very fortunate, the people are very, very fortunate that we have the additional Federal, State and County funds to provide these gap services for now. But the long-term solutions have to do more with teaching people how to fish, and that means job creation, money creation...generation, whether it's through taxes, whether it's through helping people train for other jobs, other kinds of jobs, other kinds of, you know, educational opportunities, et cetera. So I'm hoping that everybody starts thinking along those lines, and not just say, well, you know, let's...let's help somebody stay in their house for one month. I mean, you know, that's great, that's great, but let's try and figure out how to help somebody stay in their house forever, and not just one month. So let's try and throw our thinking in our...and cast our vision further than next week, and next month, and next year, and try to really pool our...'cause I know we have, we have the mental intelligence to figure this out, but we gotta focus on that, and not continually repeating the problem. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Ms. King?

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Thank you, Chair. Yeah, I think we're supposed to be focused on the eviction notices, so that we're trying to stay on peck (*sic*). I got cut off yesterday in a meeting because I didn't stay completely on track of what the item was. So I'm trying to...I'm trying to focus everything on the actual posted item. And one of the things that I think could be a solution--because I'm hearing all of our presenters today worried about fraud. And I'm wondering if there's a way to get, if not for our State, for our County to get a coordinated list, a master list of where the funding is going for all of the different programs for rental assistance. And then my...and so I guess that

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would be a question for maybe Ms. Cabebe and Ms. Martin. And then...oh, well, and also Maui United Way because you guys are having that same concern. And then also, I wanted to find out why, if we're having these on-going suspensions of disconnection notices, why we...I just heard from, Ms. Cabebe that she's seen 30 disconnect notices come through. So is...are the...are we sending out notices, or have...or intermittently, or how is that working with the Hawaiian Electric Company?

MS. MARTIN: Well, I was wondering that the same way, looking for clarification on what are the disconnection notices. Are they telecom, are they cell phones, are they cable, or water? 'Cause it certainly should not have been from Hawaiian Electric.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay.

MS. MARTIN: We are absolute in our, in our decision and our practice. It's a formal filing with the Commission, it's not a loose decision we've made. So yeah, I heard that too, and it kind of caught my attention.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Yeah, okay. So that, maybe that wasn't the utility. But what is the, what is the possibility of if we could get a master list so that we don't have to worry so much about the double dipping, and then we can get the money out faster maybe, instead of having to do these investigations. And is that, is that a possible...I've been on, I've been on webinars through the National Association of Counties that are...have been presentations by other municipalities, and other municipalities out there are creating dashboards so that anybody in the public can go on the dashboard, see who's getting the money, what businesses, even a list of individuals and, and know, you know, and if you...I guess the point is to know where their money is going, where that CARES Act funding is going. But we don't seem to have any kind of...we have a real lack of information. And I see the media stepping up to try to, you know, push the envelope on getting more information to the public, but it just seems to me there should be some kind of a master list of...at least for the rental and utility assistance. Has that been talked about at all?

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. So I wonder if that's something that...that's a really good idea, Kelly. I wonder if something that we can ask our...

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Looks like Debbie Cabebe has a response.

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes. Okay.

MS. CABEBE: Yes. I know the State is working on an integrated intake system. We had some community CDBG funding for housing assistance as well. And so that's...they're looking at a universal application that will go into a database. I think the challenge is going to be is how do we get this existing data into that database and to share it. So I do know that under the State, they are looking at that, they have reached out to myself and to Family Life Center, they're doing some of that on Oahu as we speak, but it's not fully functional at the moment. You know, one of the challenges is there's a lot of different organizations involved, and they have different ways they have to report,

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and so how do we integrate that, I think, is something that we're...definitely acknowledges the challenge. And I think Nicholas might have something to say. Thank you.

MR. WINFREY: Thank you, Debbie, yeah. The data security issue is something that's gonna be discussed, and that we have concerns of as well and privacy concerns. You know, as clients, and in the social sector, we would be cognizant of posting anyone's names publicly or anything like that. The system that we're utilizing is basically via Google Sheets, and it's been built out by AUW and us and Catholic Charities, so that we've been running what I'm assuming is a mirror program since April that the State is launching right now. So the data that we have, I think we're fine sharing internally, but the issue that I see is, once again, the privacy statements and ensuring that, that we're protecting those individuals, while ensuring that the fraud would mitigate that as much as possible.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Is it possible to have a...to create some kind of a list that only the funders hold, you know, as a...I mean, you know who your clients are, right. So if you knew who your clients were, who MEO's clients were, who...and all these different funding sources that, you know, maybe something like that so that you guys could internally...it sounds like...great that you're very focused on making sure that you're accountable, but just everybody individually making sure that they're accountable for what they give out does not make the crossovers happen. So that's...I guess that's the biggest concern about the fraud issue.

MR. WINFREY: I think...and just to chime in one last time. Obviously everything is Oahu centric, and I'm learning that as I live here in Maui. If they can take charge, basically Catholic Charities at that level, to have a singular source rather than everyone trying to bounce data around, once again, I think that's what we would look for at Maui United Way, to share with a singular entity and have a kind of a flow chart of how that data is collected and used, and let them build out that process. I would hope with, you know, such a large program, they would have that in place, and we'll certainly be having a conversation, in fact tomorrow afternoon, with Catholic Charities, and we'll raise that question.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. Well, thank you for those answers. I think that's, that's time well spent, you know, creating that kind of a crossover master list. Chair, are you going to do another round of questions?

CHAIR HOKAMA: It depends on how long this round takes.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Can I ask one really quick question of...I'd like to call them the company formerly known as MECO. I just basically wanted to find out if the disconnection, your . . . *(inaudible)* . . . of disconnection, extends to businesses as well?

CHAIR HOKAMA: Yeah. Hold on, Ms. King. Yeah, I'm gonna give Mr. Molina his opportunity at this time.

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COUNCILMEMBER KING: Oh.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Mr. Molina?

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Chair. I just have a question I was gonna ask Ms. Martins something about electric matters as well. And first of all, thank you for providing that information for us and what you're trying to do for people who are in need of relief. But now, my question is more about the health of your company itself because since the pandemic, you...I guess utility companies all over the country are having lower revenue, and I'm asking what kind of impacts will that have on your company. I presume you might have had some hours reduced, people laid off, and could we foresee in the near future, to make up for this lost revenue, a potential request to the PUC for rate hikes? Because we saw that with Young Brothers recently, and I guess...I guess their rationale was maybe to, just to stay afloat, not to make any joke out about that, but in terms of the health of HECO itself. Could this reduction in revenue for HECO, looking long term, could we see a potential request from HECO to ask for a rate hike from the PUC?

MS. MARTIN: You know, I think it's a little early right now for us to speculate, and I wouldn't want to speculate on that. I will say that our regulators have been with us every step of the way, including, of course, they have to approve any extensions we have, and the viability of our company, which is what I think you're . . . *(audio interference)* . . . at. But the viability of a company is dependent on how well we navigate through this. So we have a very extensive financial team staying on top of the situation. We are mindful that for every time, every period that we've extended it, it has impact to us. We do care deeply about our customers and are not doing it lightly, you know, it's very necessary for us to examine all of it. With regards to impact, you know, just before the pandemic started, we experienced an audit by the Utilities Commission, and the audit forced us to take a closer look at how we operate on our five islands. And out of that, you know, on a real positive way, it gave us a chance to take a look at how well the operation is run, how streamlined it is, and any necessary steps. So from that, I think the timing of it just kind of worked out. We were already in motion to address, you know, how can we, how can we look at our costs and our operating responsibilities. So then the pandemic hits, but we're in it, we're still viable, we're matter of fact very well in the way we're managing through it. It's not all...it's a serious situation for many, but we're not there yet. So I think we're just happy and very lucky that our company can navigate through it, pay attention, which is why we're very worried for our customers come January and beyond, and how we can make sure that they're secure in it so that all of us are well. You know, we have the highest hit, I think, in the State than in the nation.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. Great. Thank you for your responses. Thank you, Chairman.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you, Mr. Molina. Ms. Paltin?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair for my opportunity. I had couple quick

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questions. The first one was for MECO, Mahina, I just was wondering, you know, one of...someone in my family recently applied for the MEO to pay their electric bill, and it was because I told them about it. And so I just was wondering like, you know, if folks are behind on it, instead of sending like a disconnection notice, would it be possible to send information like, you know, here are the...some of the programs that assist, consider if you meet the qualifications, and maybe also list the qualifications so that, you know, MEO isn't getting inundated with people that don't qualify. But maybe...'cause you know all the folks of the 7,000 or the 3,000 or 2,000 that are behind. Like maybe assist, or if you're already doing it, I'm not sure of some of the resources that they can apply to.

MS. MARTIN: Yes. Absolutely. Thank you. First of all, they should not have gotten a disconnection notice. So if it happened after March 17th, offline I'd like to know about it. That should absolutely, unquestionably should not have happened.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Sorry, that was my bad. They didn't get a disconnection notice.

MS. MARTIN: Oh, okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: But like instead of a disconnection --

MS. MARTIN: A reminder.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: --notice, like if something...like if they aren't paying their bill to --

MS. MARTIN: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: --let them know there's these resources available.

MS. MARTIN: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: You know what I mean?

MS. MARTIN: Yes. Okay. Got it. So we...part of our efforts these last several months is to reach out to those that are behind, or falling behind, to ensure that they don't keep falling behind, knowing that accumulation of month to month bills will be harder down the road. So they should have gotten those resources. I can certainly forward those, but our customer service department has taken steps to make sure that we communicate where to go. On our website, they have direct links to apply to MEO, LIHEAP, and anything else that we know, and we're gonna add Maui United Way resources once those become . . . *(inaudible)*. . .for utilities. So we want to prevent it, so I think what they experienced was just prevention communication to direct them to financial help.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, maybe it wasn't . . . *(inaudible)*. . .it was you guys. 'Cause I've been like pushing them, you know. And then I guess the other thing, like I'm the

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one that files my husband's unemployment, and like every time we watch that the amount is going down and the time period, I think you have like 26 weeks of unemployment. So whatever we're dealing with now is when people are still getting unemployment. So then when that balance runs out, then it's gonna be like, to me, catastrophically more worse, you know. Because right now, at least there's...like it might not be your full paycheck coming in, or two sides not getting the full paycheck or the tips or whatever it is, but at least something is coming in. And then when the unemployment runs out, then it's gonna be like, to me, like times 100 times worse. So if we're struggling right now, it's, it's...is there plan for when the unemployments run out?

CHAIR HOKAMA: You addressing that to a specific person, Ms. Paltin?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah. . . . (*inaudible*) . . . I don't know, maybe Mr. Winfrey?

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. We'll...

MR. WINFREY: I'll try to give a shot at that one.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Go ahead, Nick.

MR. WINFREY: We're really on the cusp right now. And we've been seeing this kind of ongoing, especially in the data as far as increase in needs. I think that's kind of what, you know, everyone is looking at right now is, is how do you prepare for the future. We are seeing a higher burden on...within the non-profit sector, and I have a fear that even our non-profit partners are going to be disappearing. And with an added need for resources, and lack of, that's a huge concern. So I think right now, everyone has no clue. I think because CARES Act funding is falling out, I think because there's so much questions within, you know, the current political situation and current race, along with vaccination timelines and all of these things. I think Maui Nui, in general, is just better prepared than most because of the non-profit sector and the direct connections that we have with each other, but it's something that we are incredibly fearful of. Tomorrow, the next week, going into next year and, you know, as the Senate Chair said, the next four years and kind of the economic fallouts within the State probably within the next 12 months as well.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Cabebe, I'd love to hear what you have to say.

MS. CABEBE: I'm sorry, it's not directly to that question, but I did want to say, I wanted to clarify, and I apologize for misleading information. So the emergency crisis intervention that I talked about earlier is a State...is part of the State LIHEAP program, and we normally help people with energy disconnection notices. In this case, we use the past due payment notices, so there were not disconnection notices sent, but it was past due. So I apologize for that misinformation. Luckily my staff was watching, and came to my rescue. So thank you.

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CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thanks for that correction, Ms. Cabebe, it's appreciated. Ms. Rawlins-Fernandez, your opportunity?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Prior to me asking my question, I think Member Paltin wanted to see if Ms. Cabebe had anything to add to her question, or was that the addition to Member Paltin's question?

CHAIR HOKAMA: Ms. Cabebe . . . (*inaudible*) . . .

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Oh, okay. No comment.

CHAIR HOKAMA: . . . (*inaudible*). . . why don't you proceed --

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Sorry.

CHAIR HOKAMA: -- . . . (*inaudible*). . . Fernandez

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Okay. I first wanted to thank Ms. Martin, Ms. Cabebe and Mr. Winfrey for all the work, you know, in helping our community. It's one of the things that make Maui County and Hawai'i so special that when, you know, we're facing, you know, devastation and crisis like this, we come together and really collectively try to lift each other up and make sure that we'll all be okay. In your opening comments, Mr. Winfrey, you talked about being on the phone with a gentleman this morning for about 20-minutes who was struggling with anxieties. I'm sure like financial anxiety just, you know, future uncertainties and, you know, we're all in that boat. I was wondering about two things. One, about what more could the County do to support this, do you think that there's a need for more people to, you know, help with addressing some of the anxieties that, you know, people are calling with. Is it, you know, becoming too much so that we can, you know, I don't know. If you can speak to that a bit, I guess.

MR. WINFREY: I would love, love, love to take that one, and appreciate...I mean, you can hear the emotion in everyone's voice. I mean, this is obviously affecting everyone emotionally, or is getting difficult. We've had to split up our phone calls even within our own team and having lines forwarded because it's beginning to get too much. I think one thing that we are looking at specifically with 21...211 that's really firewalled on Oahu is looking at potentially bringing and training and scaling up . . . *[clears throat]* . . . excuse me...that program to represent specifically Maui County. You know, we have had conversations with Linda Puppolo, with contact tracing looking within that space, to potentially train staff within a call center within Maui to help direct those phone calls to the resources as they become available. It's...once again, it's just keeping communication lines open and having people that are trained. Our staff isn't social workers, we're not trained to do that, and then scaling up when necessary. If you're looking at Catholic Charities, I do have a concern with the wait time. I mean, you saw how well MEO took care of H.E.L.P. and the amount of time it took to kind of streamline that process. I have a fear that, that there's gonna be huge backlog and bottleneck, at least these first two months. So there is support within that space to

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scale, I think it's definitely, you know, the ROI is going to be incredibly high.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, for your response, Mr. Winfrey. And then my . . . (*inaudible*) . . . question is to Ms. Cabebe. This morning Senate President Kouchi talked about how City and County of Honolulu had allocated \$25 million for rental assistance, and only about \$2 million to date has been accessed because the paperwork has been too cumbersome. Do you...have you found that to be similar, you know, similarly experienced here, or do you think that we've done a better job as far as streamlining the paperwork so that we're not experiencing bottlenecks or, you know, too many barriers making the paperwork too cumbersome, as Senate President described Oahu's program?

MS. CABEBE: Thank you for the question. I think, actually, we've done a really good job. The initial process was cumbersome, and then working with Housing and Human Concerns and with the Administration, things were streamlined, so it's a lot easier. And then, of course, as people have been navigating the system, they're more familiar with what's needed, so it's been a more a less painful process. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, for your response, Ms. Cabebe. So the initial application is, I'm guessing is likely more paperwork, and is there like a renewal program or process that would be less paperwork? Is that how the program works?

MS. CABEBE: Well, I think even the initial program, we require more documentation when we first implemented it. And then as we were working through the process, we realized that some of those documents maybe weren't necessary to achieve the results that we were looking for. So we were able to just eliminate that requirement, rather it was your first time or your second time. And of course, if you've already applied, there's a lot of data on file, so they just need to give updated financial statements, and then a copy of whatever bill they want to pay. So the second, third, you know, applications are much quicker.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo for your response. Mahalo, Chair, for my opportunity.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Rawlins-Fernandez. My general question for our panel this morning, and I'd like to ask each of you if you could give us a short response. I think the Senate President shared a very important comment this morning with us, and that is the State's, I guess, embracing that recovery may take four years for Hawai`i. And so I would like to ask each of you in your area that you serve now, whether it's MEO, Maui United Way, Maui Electric, do you...have you folks already started to make plans for this so-called four-year recovery period? Because we're not talking of weeks anymore, we're not talking of months anymore, we are now talking in years. And so, you know, life is gonna be like this for a lot longer than we all would like it to be, and so I'm just curious to see if as an agency or an organization, has your board or your leadership management team have made already discussion plans for this four-year recovery? I'll start with Ms. Martin, then I'll ask Mr. Winfrey, and then ask Ms. Cabebe to wind it up for the group. Ms. Martin?

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MS. MARTIN: Sure. Thank you, Chair. Very good question. You know, the four years that Senate President has spoken about, I think realistically, if you look back on the last several months and looking forward, it's a moving target because early on, we thought ah, I think we'll be okay by...hey, let's welcome back all of our economic foundation or businesses by the end of the year, and every month, and now it feels like every week. You know, we just had the Council on Revenue release their projections, which I think is driving some of that perspective about a longer range. So when you look, when you look at where we've come from in just several months, kind of understand, is that going to be our reality for the next year, two, three, four years. You know, I will say that our company has been monitoring from day one the strength of our company. When we realigned as Hawaiian Electric and continued to operate of the five islands is that we can actually leverage all of that together. So in terms of like, you know, Councilmember Molina had asked earlier about our viability, that is our strength, is that we're a large enough company covering five islands, we can have that very long-term look. Our challenge, of course, is that as our customers suffer in both the commercial side and residential, we also must continue to operate and do business and provide power, but move towards bigger goals. Our renewable energy goals, you know, is that really, you know, how does that fit into our attention in the near future and long term? Because those are capital projects, those are capital improvement projects that require long-term planning, large funding. Is that part of the picture of diversifying our economy. Are their jobs in there, should we be shoring up that, that arena. All those conversations were occurring, but now are ramped up even more as we run parallel with where with the State and Counties are going. Because if you look at the discussions going on, even among the Council and the Administration here locally, you know, how do we take that long view, apply all we can in the way that we're doing business, so that we too are diversified and not reliant. How do we meet the State mandate of renewable energy, still be sensitive to community concerns, and plan accordingly 'cause our projects cannot come up in a short window. They're just too big and too important. So we're very concentrated on doing that. So a four-year plan, that number, is not something we're committed to at this point 'cause it's always evolving, but we are certainly looking at, really, what are the multiple layers that we must look at as a responsible company, as a provider of essential services and critical needs, sensitive to the communities, you know, climate and what's going on, their realities, but also leveraging the strength of one company, you know, servicing five islands. So that's been a kind of mix, it's very unusual in the utility world, you know, we're an island with all these many grids, but very much plugged into what's happening and monitoring closely. I hope that helps to give you some perspective.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Yeah. For me it does because this Council gave...not this Council, but the Council gave your company approval of Maui . . . Waena almost 20 years ago for alternative development and research. I mean, yeah, people like me, here I am, 20 years later, still waiting for those projects. Mr. Winfrey, any comments at this time you'd like to share? We happy to give you your opportunity.

MR. WINFREY: Thank you. As you guys have learned, I like to talk, so I appreciate the space. We have to look long term at this point, we do have solid cash flow statements

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and reserves set aside. But if you're looking at our income stream being workplace giving is the generalized model for United Ways, you know, we're forecasting at least a 50 percent drop this year, and potentially higher, and we don't quite know how long term that is. What our big focus is right now is instead of just moving resources around on island, is how do we bring resources to island, and diversify our income stream instead of doing workplace giving, whether it's partnerships with Century Insurance or things like that. The other approach that we're taking is looking at potential consolidation and mergers and acquisitions within the non-profit space. You know, so much of the tri-agencies is how can we better utilize shared resources instead of kind of all of us having separate payroll systems, things like that. So we are kind of evaluating that as we move forward. The other approach that we're taking is basically shifting to a data-driven model within United Way, so we're working with the broader United Way Worldwide as kind of a case study to see what social impacts are across, you know, our sector and our island. And basically, looking at modifying doing right by the community, and holding, you know, institutions accountable to basically start providing needs within their own workplaces instead of Maui United Way and the social sector doing that. So we're working with a pretty solid working group in that space, and have actual financial investments from United Way Worldwide to start looking at that here within Maui Nui.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you for that, Mr. Winfrey, I appreciate your comments. Ms. Cabebe, anything you would, you can add to the discussion from your perspective? Debbie, you're muted. Thank you.

MS. CABEBE: Thank you, Chair. We actually have a board meeting scheduled at the end of this month, and one of the items on the agenda are talking about long-term plans. And what we're gonna do, actually gonna recommend creating an ad hoc committee to help, you know, kind of through the process. We have been meeting internally with my executive team and, you know, looking back at, you know, the last big drop in the economy and then all of the . . . (inaudible) . . . money that came in, it's this is very similar. Lots of Federal resources thrown at the problem, and then when that was done, everything was pretty tight for...for us in particular, for about five years. So we do have, you know, some history and know what to expect, and we do have some internal plans, and really looking at core services and making sure that, you know, programs that we're serving are relevant. We just completed our three-year community needs assessment and our community action plan. And so, you know, the timing was actually very good. So I think we do have some plans in place and I, you know, I know it's gonna be a tough road ahead. Thank you.

CHAIR HOKAMA: No. We're happy to hear though that your group is not sitting still and doing nothing, Debbie. I'm happy that they're at least discussing those concerns, which hopefully, you know, some of those outcomes can be shared with us at the appropriate time. My last quick follow up, and this is more for you and maybe Mr. Winfrey. For Counties and our constituencies, our residents, besides the utility concern about not having power at their location, one thing we do know by statistics, and it is already an epidemic crisis for us nationally, we are aware that the opioid crisis now has exploded even greater because of the anxiety and depression and other

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stresses on individuals. So it may, you know, they may take it and say I'm not gonna pay my power bill because I really need my drug to help me get through this time, or whatever it be. But we notice that opioids have exploded even greater nationally among those that are having economic challenges and other issues. Have you seen any jump in those areas of our community that you're serving that maybe we need to be aware of so that if need be, we can redirect certain resources to address this opioid impact on our community population?

MS. CABEIBE: I'll start. I think this is kind of along the lines of what Ms. Martin talked about. You know, we're seeing clients that we have never seen before, or maybe we saw them after 9/11, but they're typically not clients that would come to MEO. And I think some of those clients are the ones that are having the challenges. But because they're from, you know, professionals, a lot of times it's a little, it's masked a little bit better than maybe some of the clients that we typically deal with. But I do know on a national level, the community action...national community action programs, that is an area of focus. Thank you.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you. Mr. Winfrey, any comment in your world of non-profits regarding this challenge?

MR. WINFREY: We have seen Aloha House and other agencies apply for funding specifically for those areas. So you are seeing non-profits that really focus in that area support. I think what we're seeing right now is really a lack of information because everyone is still locked down, you know, whether it's DV...domestic violence increase, your social anxiety. I think...I can only make an assumption as far as the numbers without specifically talking to our non-profit partners, but it's certainly something that we will continue to survey. And I can, you know, I never assume anything, but you can guarantee it's getting worse.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you, Mr. Winfrey. Okay, Members, we got about an hour left, we gonna...anybody needs a personal break stretch, personal break? If not, we're gonna start the next round. We're all okay? Okay. Thank you. We're gonna start...Ms. Sugimura, anything you would like to ask our panelists? You're muted.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you. Yeah, I got it. So really appreciate this discussion, and I look forward to learning more about what happens from January of next year forward. So I really appreciate the four-year, you know, look at this problem because it's not gonna go away. I believe that what somebody must have said about processing of the applications, I checked with Thelma Kealoha with Catholic Charities, and she only has herself there, really, to look at this, and I think they'll need probably more staffing, it sounds like. And that the...she said the applications, once this was announced, which was on Monday when Governor Ige announced this, Catholic Charities has an online application process. And there are--just because I looked into this, Members, if anybody applies, you have to have your last two tax returns, you have to have your last couple paystubs, and there's a whole bunch of requirements, as well as your lease agreement to pay the rental portion. Debbie Cabebe and MEO, you probably, from what you said, have figured out you don't need all those documents. I

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would love to hear from you what you've learned and I will, I will tell you that it's a process, so it's not easy because we're asking people, you know, to...we're asking for money. And so I wonder what MEO has learned on this whole process that...to streamline it? What have you excluded?

CHAIR HOKAMA: Ms. Cabebe?

MS. CABEBE: Well, I think initially, we were asking for like the last so many paystubs prior to being laid off, and then we were asking for a paystub after they received their layoff notice. That was one of the things. We still continue to ask for their income tax return, and for some people that was problematic. I don't--they couldn't find it or they said they hadn't filed. So we said, we need your most current, we didn't say it had to be like maybe this year. Some people maybe are working with an attorney because they have some tax issues, so they were working through that. So we were able to just say a most current. And the reason we use the tax return is to establish family size. Because that's the way to say how many, you know, how many dependents they have, and then that's...they would qualify for assistance based on that number. So it's not necessarily how many people live in a house, but how many different taxpayers do you have in that household. So those were the, I think the biggest changes that made it a lot easier. We still have some challenges sometimes when we want a bill, so maybe they apply, you know, and then you're not able to help them right away because there's, you know, there's a process of people in front of them or whatever. So by the time you get to them, you have to get a more current bill, so that's been a little bit of a challenge. But I think the paystubs were really one of the biggest challenges. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Thank you very much, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you. Ms. Kama?

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you, Chair. You know, so I was just curious to think that, you know, once, you know, once you start paying your rent late, and once you start falling behind on your utilities, you're usually falling behind on other kinds of bills. And a lot of that goes into what you call your credit history, then it impacts your FICO score. So I wanted to know how, how is what these families are going through right now gonna impact their financial ability in four years? And will they have anything to be able to do in four years?

CHAIR HOKAMA: You have someone you would like to have respond to you specifically, Ms. Kama?

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: I'm not sure if anyone could, I'm just throwing that out there, but --

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: --I'm not sure.

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CHAIR HOKAMA: Who would like to...

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: I'm just concerned about that.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Who would like to take a swing at the ball? Mr. Winfrey?

MR. WINFREY: I'll get one out there just 'cause I can...ours is actually private funding in the rental assistance program that we're running. And it is through Catholic Charities, and it is through United Way, so it is that system that's basically operating right now. But because they have given their W-9s, there is a documentation that that payment has been made. However because it is, is private funding rather than Federal or State, I can only see it as, you know, a normal payment for their rent and wouldn't necessarily affect it from our perspective.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Ms. Martin or Ms. Cabebe, if you have anything you would like to add to the response.

MS. CABEBE: I think for the rental, if the landlord is not reporting that to the credit agency, it's not gonna have an impact. Now, I'm not sure, and maybe, Ms. Martin can speak to that about utility companies, if those things are reported to credit bureaus.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Ms. Martin, any comments?

MS. MARTIN: Not generally, not utility bills. I think in terms of the question of the aftermath, you know, how will our people recover if we want them to reach a point of stabilization and be able to themselves move forward, I think it is gonna be a big issue. Again, I talk about the middle class, working class that are going to suffer or maybe have bills that their credit history, so that they could buy a home and settle in and all of that, you know, good life that they had hoped for, only to find a backward slide and unable. Or those who have worked their way out of poverty into a higher income to get by, and then could qualify more, have lost ground as well. But I do think we're going to see the ripple effects from the utility and it...there's no real direct impact to us, you know, credit scores don't affect your ability...we're required by law to provide electricity in a reasonable fashion, so we would do with or without that kind of impact to them.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you. Ms. Kama?

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you. Ms. King?

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Ms. King, second round?

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COUNCILMEMBER KING: Thank you, Chair. So to follow up on my previous question, which I don't think got answered, was is the utility...Mahina, is the utility suspension on disconnects, is that for business as well or just residents? Business and non-profits?

MS. MARTIN: For all. Any --

COUNCILMEMBER KING: For all?

MS. MARTIN: --and all of our customers.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. And then I had another question for all of you. And I know we're asking our three panelists, which I really appreciate you being here, we're asking you to have crystal balls. And I know you don't have that, none of us know what's gonna happen next week, right, we're taking four years from now and, you know, I've been in an industry, as you know, Mahina, that pivots every month, and so I'm kind of used to having to switch gears. But I'm wondering, when we're giving out all this aid, is there any way to tie that into, to the behavior? Because I see the State moving...I'm seeing a lot of ads on TV and even, you know, on social media trying to encourage people to wear masks, social distance, and take this really seriously, which I think we have to do if we're gonna get out of it quicker. And yet, I'm also seeing on social media, people saying, oh, you know, this...that's a myth and, you know, people even get sick from wearing the mask, which I don't know anybody whose ever gotten sick from wearing a mask. But, you know, there's anti...there's a part of the population that seems to not even believe that we're really in as dire straits as we are. So, you know, we're giving out aid, and it just...I just wonder where, you know, is there a way to tie that in with people who are trying to do the right thing and get us out of this faster by, you know, this...everything's about social behavior, I think, right now. But I don't know if you guys can answer any...that I know that's kind of a . . . (inaudible) . . . question, but it just occurs to me that there's a lot of aid going to people who probably don't even believe that COVID is real.

MS. CABEIBE: Oh, I can answer a little bit. I mean, I know for us as an organization, you know, we've closed our offices to, you know, walk-in traffic. We do everything by appointment. But when people come, I think we've practiced the behavior, and we tell people, you know, you have to have a mask. We had a gentleman yesterday that was quite upset, and said we were denying him service, and we had to serve him. And he flashed some card he had, and said that he had a medical exemption. And we said, well, we're not denying you service, sir, but we're telling you that this is the process. So you can drop it in the drop box, and we can contact you. Also, for the clients that we have on our buses, you know, we do require that they wear masks, we do ask screening questions before they make a reservation, we're doing temperature checks for all of our employees. So I think we're trying to set a good example, and that's sort of MEO's what we do anyway. I mean, in our employment and training programs or anything, we're trying to teach our clients and help give them that hand up and model the behavior. So that's, that's our...been our approach. Thank you.

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COUNCILMEMBER KING: Anybody else?

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: I really appreciate that, Chair, because, you know, it's been...it's just been a, you know, it's been a big question to me, is how we're gonna get out of this when there are people out there, and it only takes a few to deny the situation we're in and to not mask up, and to not just, you know, the groups that are...have been gathering anyway. Like how do we, how do we use some of this CARES Act money to police that, or get that message out there more strongly and, you know, there's a lot of people who would volunteer to help with that, but we have to do...

CHAIR HOKAMA: Right, right. . . . (*Inaudible*). . . . Yeah, I hear you, Ms. King. I mean, look at California, right, the Governor is saying, you know, whatever you believe, trust your eyes, you know, with their fires and everything else that they're dealing with. Just trust your eyes. I mean, you can see what's happening.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Right.

CHAIR HOKAMA: That's the reality. And so you can hear the frustration nationally, you know, in the past, like with the 9/11 and whatnot, people still felt they had choices they could relocate or go to, to either feel more safe or more secure. Right now, where do you go? Anyplace you go, you're gonna still deal with a pandemic. You cannot escape it globally, so where do you go if you cannot stay here, right? For us, home is home. So I mean, people like me don't even think about going anywhere else, but I appreciate...

COUNCILMEMBER KING: I'm more afraid of --

CHAIR HOKAMA: I appreciate.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: --the people from here.

CHAIR HOKAMA: No, I hear you. And again, I think part of the frustration is that people don't see an end of the rainbow, or end of the tunnel where the light is that you...I know it's gonna end within a time that they can try and plan for, and everybody is like, there's no deadline. So we got how long do I live like this, how long could I make my number one priority just number one because I gave up two, three, four and five priorities. You know, so I can understand depression, anxiety, frustration, anger, fear. I mean, people like Mr. Winfrey, Ms. Cabebe, and their employees are dealing with a lot of emotional senses right now, including the employee's own emotions. So we need to be aware that not only those that are impacted, but those that provide service also need our support and assistance. So I appreciate that...those concerns from each of you on this matter. Any...anything else, Ms. King, at this time?

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Well, one of the other questions I had is because I'm hearing, you know, that number of 31,000 phone calls, Mr. Winfrey, is staggering. And are you

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able to harness any additional volunteer help or possibly, you know, try to get CARES money to bring more people on to help you answer the phones? Because I think the, you know, when you're trying to reach these...the agencies for help, and you can't get through or there's nobody to answer your phone call, that's a huge pressure, that's a very mental anguish when you talk about people getting angry, that adds to the frustration and anger when you can't even get through. And if we had more people answering the phones, and that's what I was hoping that some of this CARES Act would be used for, is that there's tens of thousands of people out of work. Can we put these people to work, train them or whatever, and have them help folks like you so we can get the money out the door quicker. What are your thoughts on that, in building up that capacity?

MR. WINFREY: Kelly, we're absolutely keen to try that. I think kind of going along with everyone's conversation here is there's so much firewalled conversations and decisions being made that a lot of people are out of the loop in these conversations, especially when it comes to CARES Act funding, and especially when it comes to ancillary funding to these things. As far as scaling up, United Way, Aloha United Way and 211 has done that on Oahu. And they are looking at expanding that system, utilizing sales force, and updating that, it's moved up timelines quite a bit, and potentially even including 311. So the work is being done there. I think what I would look at here on Maui is bringing on specific staff, if we have the resources to do that, to focus solely on Maui 'cause what we have right now is basically someone calling in 211 based on what their geo tag is, their zip code, they're going to be talking to someone on Aloha in Oahu that may or may not know all of the programs that are available for Maui County. They're probably gonna be trained primarily on the rental assistance and a few other key ones, but we've tested that system, we're working with a working group here on Maui, whether it's language barriers, whether it's programmatic errors, whether it's outdated programs, we see those issues right now. And I think if we do have funding available and capacity, and we're happy to research that, but obviously, if it comes easy, it comes easy to hire and train and get someone representing them here within the community.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Well, thank you for that. Yeah, I would be in favor of...I mean, there's...we have tens of thousands of people out of work here. We have the greatest need, the highest unemployment, and so we should be tapping that money and bringing these people in to help wherever we can.

MS. MARTIN: Chair, if I could also offer a perspective?

COUNCILMEMBER KING: . . . *(inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR HOKAMA: Sure.

MS. MARTIN: Thanks for the question.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Sure.

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MS. MARTIN: You know, we're talking about the mental wellness and compliance of behavior, I mean...so from a business perspective, these...of course, are non-profits, are dealing with front line. It is really critical that all businesses, and we make it a point to ensure that our people understand that our customers are very fragile at this point, it's just the environment. So, you know, talking about bill payments, I mean, you know, we can send out the reminders in the mail, but if they don't open their envelope, you know, because maybe they're putting off paying their bill, they don't want to look at the stack of mail. We can't get to them, right, so it's really difficult, but we try to remind ourselves to be sensitive of the fragility of our community, and...but importantly is our employees because we're a large employer. We have...but thousands of us work through the different islands, and what's unknown to many is that there are well over a thousand of us working at home. So we're also dealing with employees, you know, working at home in different environments, meeting the demands of home, work life in a whole new setting. So it's important that employers also consider what is the well-being of our employees, and that their behavior is also safe. We...all of you know from our storm response and emergency work that we initiate always an incident management team that takes hold of the situation, guides the company through, and very deliberately takes steps to address everything. So we've done the same thing with the pandemic. So we actually have an incident management team that focuses on it near daily, addresses employee needs, their behaviors, the compliance, health safety, entering our base yards, their own travel, and what's going on in their own homes as well. So I think it's important that all businesses take that responsibility because we're a large part of the community in partnership with the non-profits trying to respond.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you for your comment, Ms. Martin.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay, we're gonna...thank you, Ms. King, for those concerns. Mr. Molina, please, we happy to hear from you.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Yeah, thank you very much, Chairman. When I heard Ms. Cabebe's opening comments, one thing that stuck out in my mind was that when you mentioned that there's still a demand for food, especially meat and poultry. And as we all know, in the United States is a very wasteful country when it comes to food and, you know, we've had all of these food distributions and what have you. But I've heard some horror stories of people that who really don't need the food they're getting it as much as others. I mean, is there a way to monitor that? I mean, I've heard stories of people who get the food, they either hoard it or they turn around and sell it at a real discounted price to others who really need that, you know, need the food. So any way to check on that? And also, one more thing. I went out to Paia recently and talked to some of the homeless residents out there. And it's interesting, their major need was more electricity and bathroom 'cause I guess there's been a lot of Catholic, or not Catholic, but religious groups coming out and dropping off food and so forth. So what one resident told me is interesting, since the pandemic started, food for them hasn't been the problem. But any thoughts from you, or Ms. Cabebe, or Mr. Winfrey on this

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whole issue of food?

MS. CABEBE: I think --

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. . . . *(inaudible)*. . .

MS. CABEBE: --in terms of the clients...oh, I'm sorry. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: . . . *(inaudible)*. . . Cabebe go, and then Mr. Winfrey will follow you.

MS. CABEBE: Okay. Thank you. I think in terms of the clients that we've been helping, when we look at...you know, we see their finances. So I mean, they're, you know, if you're minus \$1.90 in your account, or you have multiple overdraft fees, I mean, the... definitely, the food is a need. We also get receipts back from the stores, from the grocers because it's a voucher that goes to like Times Supermarket, or Foodland, or...and they return the receipts to us so we can see what people are purchasing to see if it's, you know, not, I guess, essential. You know, we can't catch everything, and for the most part people have been very respectful and prudent in what they're purchasing. In terms of the food distribution, I mean, I'm not sure. I know a lot of times the lines are quite long, so if you're not there early, maybe you don't get, or perhaps what the type of food that they need is not maybe provided in that, in that box, you know, so that's the best answer I can give you. Thank you.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you. Mr. Winfrey, any comments?

MR. WINFREY: Just to mirror what Debbie was talking about is, we work with the food distributors, including Maui Food Bank, including Feed My Sheep, and small ancillary food distribution centers. They know their clients fairly well, at least pre-COVID. I think it's just a matter of time, and getting to know the individuals, and seeing the needs to where, you know, some of those frauds might kind of show themselves. But unfortunately, in this environment and in this situation, you're always gonna have individuals that try to manipulate the system. And there are checks and balances to correct that, but it'll never disappear. I think food security as a whole is a massive issue here, that's side note, my passion as well. But you are seeing a lot of entities kind of get that squared away in build out systems. I just...my hope would be that people really actually work together instead of working these small pockets to where we're duplicating efforts and not utilizing the minimum, the little resources that we actually have available. And that's what we work on as kind of that 30,000-foot view, is try to connect the non-profits together to collaborate rather than, you know, kind of duplicate services.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Great. Thank you for your responses. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: . Thank you, Mr. Molina. Ms. Paltin?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair, for this opportunity, and thank you, Mr. Winfrey, for your clarification earlier about the number 211 going to Oahu. I just

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wanted to further clarify, like if we're getting the information out of what 211 specifically provides. Is it fair to say that specialists will help you with finding food, shelter, financial assistance, childcare, parenting support, elderly care, disability services, job training, and more?

MR. WINFREY: 100 percent. If you think of any non-profit program within the entire State, or specifically, folks within Maui Nui, they're gonna be included in that. We've done our best to communicate to all of the non-profits to get registered there. It can also include, as Chair Hokama was talking about, drug abuse, domestic violence...really any, any issue that can be touched upon by the non-profit sector can be included in that.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Like specifically drug abuse, domestic violence support, and rental assistance maybe add on to those, add on to that?

MR. WINFREY: 100 percent.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And then maybe just a follow up to Member King's question for Ms. Martin...Mrs. Martin. Was that non-disconnection notice, was it applied to small businesses as well?

CHAIR HOKAMA: Ms. Martin?

MS. MARTIN: Yes, 100 percent all of...without question, all of our customers, regardless of size, residence, business, or island. Except for Kauai.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you. 'Cause they're independent utility?

MS. MARTIN: Correct. So they have their own policies in motion, which I...my understanding is they also have a moratorium in place. But, you know, they oversee their own.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. Thank you. Thank you for my opportunity, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you. Ms. Rawlins-Fernandez?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Questions are for Ms. Cabebe. I was wondering, for the trend in applications that you're receiving financial assistance for, from our County residents, do you see more assistance being requested for rental, utilities, food, other things?

MS. CABEBE: As I said earlier, food tends to be the first, and then it might be other bills, electric, water, could be cell phone bills, we've had some car payments, we had one gentlemen that needed tires, he was gonna get called back to work, but he couldn't get his safety inspection because his tires were bald. You know, so it's kind of all over the place. But I would say food, and then rent, and then all the other, all the other things. We see some very large families as well. I mean, you know, some of the household

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sizes are really, really quite large, and you just can't even imagine how, under normal circumstances, they can pay their bills.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Ms. Cabebe --

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo.

CHAIR HOKAMA: -- just in the...appreciate your response to Ms. Rawlins-Fernandez. Can you give us a sense of what is very large? Like 14 people in a house, or?

MS. CABEBE: We've seen quite a few of nine and ten...ten dependents in a household.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Dependents? Not adults then.

MS. CABEBE: No. I mean, it's people that they claim on their tax return, so.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Okay. So maybe about a dozen per in the house, including --

MS. CABEBE: Yeah. Could be even more than that if we...you know, we don't know what other taxpayers are in the household, but because we're just using the tax return, that's, that's where we're getting that from.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Right. Okay. Ms. Rawlins-Fernandez, sorry, I just wanted to get a sense of number.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah. Good question. Mahalo, Chair. Okay. And then I...to follow up to that, are you seeing applications come in from Moloka`i and Lāna`i too, and how does that look? 'Cause I'm...I'm...I haven't been hearing too many of our community members here talking about accessing the H.E.L.P. funds, and that's concerning for me. I want to make sure that, you know, everyone has access to these funds for this help. I mean, Member Hokama and I have been, you know, promoting it, but I was just wondering what the result is like, if it's beyond Maui island?

MS. CABEBE: Thank you for the question. Actually, the Housing and Human Concerns and Budget Chair Yoshimura...or not Budget Chair, but Budget Director Yoshimura had reached out and asked that, that exact question. So Moloka`i, 78 applications in total from the first round of H.E.L.P., and as of I think it was August 31st, there were 11 for this for the H.E.L.P. II. Some of the challenges are people don't want to give the documents. And so...and then also, it has to be COVID related. So if they were behind in bills before, before this pandemic hit, they're not the group that we're reaching out to, so then they wouldn't qualify for H.E.L.P. assistance. And then for Lāna`i, I think we had ten on the first H.E.L.P. I, and we've had just one so far, but we anticipate an increase, of course, because now Pulama has laid off. And we do have ILWU, Joe Aquino is our Board Member, and so Joe has, you know, made sure that his business agents have H.E.L.P. applications, and are passing them out, and helping either them apply online or helping them complete a paper application. And for Ms.

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Rawlins-Fernandez, on Moloka`i, so we do have staff over there that will accept, you know, applications, and make sure they have all the documents, and then they send it here because our Fiscal Department would have to process it. But we do encourage people to go online because that's the fastest, most efficient way. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. Cabebe. And so for the, you know, food is the most sought after, applied for funding, and I understand that the program that we're using is a voucher program, and I guess the County is working with Foodland, Times and other stores like that. Have you...who selects which stores or entities to partner with? Does, you know, Moloka`i and Lāna`i stores have that voucher program? And which stores? And is it possible to partner with the Maui Food Hub, Sustainable Moloka`i's Mobile Market, Sun Fresh, to ensure that there's, you know, those community based companies that are, you know, supporting our local farmers also have access to this voucher program?

MS. CABEBE: That's a great question. So when we were first approached by the Administration to administer the H.E.L.P. program because of our experience administering help after 9/11, we had a really quick turnaround time. So we went to the vendors that we had relationships with and approached them. So it was MEO's responsibility to reach out. So we reached out to Star Mart...not Star Market, Times Supermarket and to Foodland because we had, you know, a relationship with them, they are willing to take vouchers. Because basically, they're floating the money until they send us a reconciled bill so we can pay them. So not every merchant has that ability. Safeway did not respond, that was a request. Of course we didn't go to Costco 'cause we didn't think that was gonna be possible. We do have the Friendly Isle Market on Moloka`i, and then on Lāna`i, we have...and I can't think of the name of it. But we...so we have...and then even in Hāna, we have Hasegawa General Store. But in terms of adding other vendors, we certainly could do that, I think it would be a matter of them being willing to take the voucher, and then they would have to have the capacity to do a reconciliation and send the data to us. So that's where it becomes a problem. Thank you, Gay, Pine Isle Market. So I hope that answers your question.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. Cabebe. So just a follow up to that. Have the mobile markets or other farmer's markets been reached out to the same way that like Times and Foodland and Safeway were?

MS. CABEBE: We didn't initially do that. And again, like I said, it's because they would have to front the...basically the payment until they could do the reconciliation. So they would have to have the capacity to reconcile what we owe them, send us a detailed bill so that we could pay them. So that's one of the challenges. We do run a Statewide farmers, not a Statewide, but a State funded Senior Farmers Nutrition Market Program, and we deal with a lot of the local farmers, and they do a voucher system. And then our COO, whose family is Nakamura Farms, she actually goes out and collects the vouchers, and then we issue payment. But some of them have, like couple of thousand dollars in vouchers, and they don't even like turn them in, we have to go get them from them to make sure that we can pay them. So administratively, I think for some smaller vendors, it might be more difficult.

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COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. Cabebe. Would it be possible if this was like a formal letter that was sent to, or email that was sent to Foodland, Times, et cetera, could that also be sent to the food hubs and farmer's markets?

MS. CABEBE: I would be happy to do that if, if somebody has a, you know, a list of people you'd like us to contact. I mean, be more than happy to do that.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I'll send them to you. Mahalo, Ms. Cabebe. Mahalo, Chair.

MS. CABEBE: Thank you.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you very much. And thank you, Ms. Cabebe. Okay, we're gonna start wrapping up, Members, but again, obviously, we need to continue the discussions on this item. And so what I'm gonna ask the panel, for my last opportunity, is two things, your thoughts again. Because of my own anticipated length of this pandemic, I see two things that we need to help our community. Of course, one will be the financial aftermath effects and how we going to mitigate those issues. So we're all aware that doesn't disappear, it just gets deferred in time to a later date to be paid. And second, we understand the biggest sector that has impacted this State, this County, and the Country is travel leisure sector, the biggest impact at one . . . (*inaudible*) . . . and those that potentially need to be considering retraining or re-educated for a new type of employment since travel leisure, in my understanding of what's going on, may never recover to what it was. You already noticed that for cruise industry, a lot of them have disposed of assets, up to 70 percent of vessels. You noticed the issue with the airlines. And so my general question to our panelist is, at this time is, what do you feel is your entity's participation in financial aftermath participation, or in education and retraining of the workforce? So I'll ask Mr. Winfrey first, we'll give you your crack first, Nick. And again, whatever you could share within a reasonable time please, your thoughts.

MR. WINFREY: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Because . . . (*inaudible*) . . .

MR. WINFREY: It's a very difficult question.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay, before you go on. Those two factors impacts the ability to you to retain your living quarters, whether it's the rental or your house or your apartment. The reason I throw that up is it will impact your dwelling. And so if you could respond in that context please.

MR. WINFREY: Absolutely. Thank you, Chair. So I just want to try to repeat the question 'cause it's pretty massive in trying to look at basically how we as a community can diversify our income, and how the non-profit sector can facilitate. Is that kind of the direction you're looking at?

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CHAIR HOKAMA: Can they participate, right.

MR. WINFREY: Absolutely. I think for us specifically, it's having our finger on the pulse of what the needs are in the community, and knowing kind of where the trends are going, both immediate and the long term. I think as we look at Maui United Way specifically, it's how can we get the best return on investment by bringing resources on island once again, rather than shifting them around from non-profit to non-profit. I think for us, it's gonna be a uphill battle no matter what, but we're gonna utilize basically the resources that we have here, both in-house and also kind of at the national level within the broader United Way network. As we see what other communities are doing within that space, I think we're very unique in a fact that I've seen how many people have applied for unemployment in this County, and how dire the situation that it's in. But I think within our space in the non-profit sector, we're incredibly lucky that we can--and I said I wouldn't use a pivot but, you know, we can pivot and react and adapt fairly quickly. And we'll continue to kind of communicate with the non-profit sector about how we all work together to support with fewer and fewer resources.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you very much, Nick, appreciate those, those words. Ms. Martin, any comments from your sector and your perspective?

MS. MARTIN: Yeah. Absolutely. You know, looking forward to rebuild our island's wellness and trying to figure out, you know, how do we add resiliency so that in the long term, not just recovery, but we can manage that. I think that the business sector, for us it's always all hands on deck when it comes to economic realities. You know, the resorts are large customers of ours, we see training opportunities, we've been working with UHMC in developing, and we've had it in motion already, for mechanics program for electric vehicles. On that part, we're donating vehicles to that program too. So we've had those in motion, I think we have to accelerate those kinds of opportunities. We have a large tie-in to our Chambers of Commerce, we want to see what they can do. I think a coalition and concerted effort together from the private sector combined with our non-profit, our community building groups, as well as government and policy making is going to result in a healthier community. Today, and in the near future, we need to combine our capabilities and our communication skills so that we can...we have some assurance to the public that there is hope, you know, not just for the emotional well-being, but just overall to...we have a role in stabilizing that. But they need to hear how we can help with training. So from our end, from Hawaiian Electric, definitely putting in the resources into training, into supporting STEM programs and non-profits.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you for those comments, Ms. Martin. Ms. Cabebe, any thoughts you'd like to share with us? I mean, I know you deal with a wide spectrum of clientele, ages, different educational levels, different cultural practices, and what not. So any comments you could share with us at this time?

MS. CABEIBE: Well, we are very active with our workforce investment board and at the

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American Job Centers, so we do look at workforce development. I've been involved with some focus groups that were initiated through the college talking about that very issue. And we continue to look for programs that support our employment training and education because we do realize that that's the, you know, the way that we're gonna get through all of this. So we have a, we have a Federal...excuse me, a State employment service program right now that we have 68 enrolled clients. And this is for low income, but a lot of these clients are eligible because they were displaced by because of COVID. And so we have 55 enrolled right now in certified nurse's training or phlebotomy school. So there's...they were service industry individuals that are gonna be moving into these healthcare fields. So...and we do know that the healthcare field is expanding, and the need is very real and great, so that will continue. We're also using some CARES money to do some employment and training credentialing for our returning citizens for...from MCCC, and this is through our community service block grant under CARES Act funding. And it's actually two-year program so we had some pretty comprehensive services. And then of course, even with our own staff, we have a lot of, we grow a lot of our own in terms of educators, we put them through classes at UHMC, we have part of the teaching lab and help them obtain their teaching credential all the way up to a bachelor's degree. And we had three, actually, internal employees that had worked their way up from a CDA to Associates to a Bachelor's in the last two years. So those are some of the things that we'll continue to do in looking at those growth areas. So thank you.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you for those comments, Ms. Cabebe. Okay. So Members, I'm gonna ask you if you have any requests for the Chair to solicit on the Committee's behalf, any information, I'm happy to do so. I will also ask the panel if there's any requests you'd like to ask of us or this Committee, we're happy to receive it, and we're happy to share whatever information we can back with you as well. I will let you know that I am looking at some type of proposed legislation, and one is more about what I'm thinking is just our little part in assisting with the issue I get a lot about contact tracing and lack of State direction. So I'm possibly looking, with Corporation Counsel's advice, again maybe using the Charter's temporary emergency section to see if maybe a 90-day type of County legislation in the Code can address that. And so I'm gonna be drafting some, which would just be you need to sign in--put your name, your phone contact, the date and time you are using the establishment, and that's it. Very simple, I don't think it's intrusive, you don't need to file your address or anything else, but in case you need to be contacted, we have a list. I think that's very simple, again the Charter just allows that to be in effect for 90 days before expiration as one way to consider it. And I am planning to bring, for the next time on this subject, people from the educational sector regarding retraining and job preparation; the financial sector regarding what happens in the aftermath of the collection of debt; and also, possibly a representative from the insurance company because I am now aware of many people who pay and then cancel policies to try...in the belief they're saving money until they need that insurance policy to take care of their emergency needs. So that is some of my ideas of what we were gonna plan to continue the discussion on, Members. I'm open to any of your requests as well. So at this time, I'm gonna ask the panel first, Ms. Martin, is there anything you would like to ask of the Committee? That we could maybe --

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MS. MARTIN: Only...

CHAIR HOKAMA: --possibly assist you.

MS. MARTIN: Chair, only as you progress, should you see a trend or pattern or an uptick that maybe would have escaped our radar. We certainly could take advantage of that. So staying in the loop. And I really appreciate this discussion and the attention on it. It obviously is very, very critical at this time. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you. Ms. Cabebe, anything from your sector, or your organization?

MS. CABEIBE: Well, I'd also like to say thank you for this opportunity, and thank you for all you do to support the residents of Maui County and non-profits, making sure that we have the resources to assist the clients. So thank you again for everything, and appreciate the opportunity to have this discussion. Have a good day.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you. Mr. Winfrey, any requests or last comment?

MR. WINFREY: To reiterate Debbie, thank you all, again, for the conversations. It's heartwarming to know that we're not in a bubble, that everybody is working on these things and continues to work on them and know the uphill battle ahead. I would just ask that, you know, Maui United Way continue to be in the loop and utilized as a resource by this Committee that we have, you know, some outside abilities that we are certainly willing and able to help out with.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you very much. We appreciate your willingness to continue to work with us. Ms. Sugimura, any requests of the Chair?

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. I look forward to hearing more about what your emergency plans are. There's definitely a need for contact tracing, so.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Well, I'm just gonna prepare --

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . . (*inaudible*). . . talk about that.

CHAIR HOKAMA: --for general Committee information and, you know, I'll post it for public information and, you know, it'll be a venue of the discussion, you know, it allows the venue of discussion. And again, it'll go where it goes, and whether we adopt it or not, I think it's important that at least for our County, our residents know that we believe contact tracing is an important part of dealing with the pandemic. So thank you.

VICE-CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Ms. Ka...Miss...excuse me. Ms. Kama any request of the Chair?

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COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Yes. You know, you're gonna invite some financial people to attend, can one of them be an economist?

CHAIR HOKAMA: Sure. We're happy to --

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Okay.

CHAIR HOKAMA: -- yeah, ask from the banks or independent economists --

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Yes.

CHAIR HOKAMA: --be happy to consider that. Thank you for that request. Ms. King, any requests?

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Thank you, Chair, appreciate the question. And I have one request as a follow up to the conversation, and a couple of ideas going forward. But if there's...I don't know if we, if we can send a letter to the State or it would be better to the County, but I would like to inquire, just following up on our conversation, on any attempts to quantify the programs that are out there, especially, you know, what we were talking about today, which is eviction, which is rental assistance. So --

CHAIR HOKAMA: Right.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: --any attempts to quantify the programs across the board and help everybody coordinate better. And then going forward, the two, the two things that I was interested in going forward, I think are pertinent to this Committee are--one is how much is being spent and/or requested for childcare because that's become a huge issue now that the schools have, you know, keep getting, put off the opening. So childcare is a big issue. And then informational, going forward, we get a lot of, we get daily reports on how many people have tested positive, but it's never put in the context of how many people are tested. So, you know, if only a hundred people are tested and six people are positive, that's a big number. But if a thousand people are tested and only six people are positive, that's a smaller number. But hard to put it in context when we don't know the greater number of how many people have been tested. So if we...if there's some way we could ask for that, and I've been asking for better information because I go on these meetings with Civil Beat and some other organizations, and everybody's talking about how little information we're getting. And it sounds really good when we only have single digit numbers, but it depends on how many people are being tested.

CHAIR HOKAMA: I hear you. I hear you, Ms. King. Yeah, one out of two people is 50 percent, right.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Yes, exactly, exactly, that makes one a really bad number, but one out of a thousand is a good number. So, you know, if we could make a request through this Committee for, you know, better information, I think everybody's pushing on that right now, trying to get better information, it would make our numbers more

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relevant.

CHAIR HOKAMA: The Chair will take that request seriously, and will...with Staff will draft the appropriate communications to forward and request that information, Ms. King.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. Thank you so much. I really appreciate that.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Thank you. Mr. Molina, any request sir?

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: No, Chairman, not at this time, but thank you for asking. Thank you.

CHAIR HOKAMA: Okay. Thank you. Ms. Paltin?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. And I just want to say I fully, fully wholeheartedly support contact tracing. And, you know, I'm introducing a resolution about it tomorrow, and I've been working with this group. So yeah, I just really appreciate that sentiment. And also, in terms of response, you know, just the overall plan, you know, I mean, it's really good to pick it apart one at a time but, you know, if you look at the places that have gotten a handle on it, it's testing, tracing, and treatment, where treatment is quarantine or isolation or healthcare. And when we're talking about quarantine or isolation, it's enforced or managed in some way. So, you know, like Alaska or New Zealand, if you go to their website, they have the plan right up there for people to see, and it's something that we don't have. Like you need...if you having crisis management, you need a plan, you know, people's lives, their livelihoods, their liabilities, everything is at stake, and I just am not seeing that from the State, you know. And they're going off spending 37 million on thermography and, you know, facial recognition, and it doesn't have any basis in science, you know, and they're bypassing things that are free. And...so yeah, just a overall, what is the plan? Like when we went into lockdown and we were doing so well, I think we all wrongly assumed that there was a plan, and somebody was working on a plan for reopening. And in the absence of that plan, we came into what, what it is today. And --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: --you know, there wasn't really good guidelines and directives, you know, we're like, oh, we're doing great, we're doing great. And so people are like, we're doing great, let's have a barbecue, we're doing great, my son's birthday party, or whatever, you know, let's go to the beach, we're doing great. And nobody was saying, still be cautious, still don't gather, you know. So in hindsight, always 20/20, but I mean, I don't think it's fair for the State to be telling us about our responsibilities as public, and not living up and fulfilling to their responsibilities as leadership of the pae `aina, so yeah. Thanks. Support tracing . . . (inaudible) . . .

CHAIR HOKAMA: I hear your frustration, Ms. Paltin, and many of us share your sentiment. I just...so you folks are aware, I believe our great Staff, as always . . . (inaudible) . . . says that we have an item HFC 70, 7-0 on our master calendar, and that has to do

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with contact tracing. So yeah, we'll...and then we look forward to your resolution, Ms. Paltin. Thank you for that. Ms. Rawlins-Fernandez, any requests to the Chair please.

**COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ:** Mahalo, Chair. I want to quickly thank you for putting together this panel. Mahalo again, Ms. Cabebe, Ms. Martin, and Mr. Winfrey for attending and fielding all of our questions as best as, you know, anyone can because no one has a crystal ball, and we're all trying our best. And I echo everything that Member Paltin said. Plan, plan, plan, plan, plan, fail, plan, plan, fail. And so contact tracing, I support that, you know, having that discussion. I think tonight at 4:30, pursuant to Chair Lee's request to have town hall style meeting, EDB will have its meeting at 4:30, and we will have Department of Health, so we can ask the question about getting better information on their website and available to the public. We will have a representative from the Unemployment Office, from the airport, and from Maui Memorial. So, you know, we can ask some of those questions. And then a follow up to the, you know, my next EDB meeting, we will have a discussion on economic development and moving forward, you know, getting past this in the years like you said, Chair. So I support this collaboration with HFC, I think it's such a huge, you know, issue that all of our Committees would be able to take this up, and it would still not be enough. So mahalo for your work on this issue, Chair.

**CHAIR HOKAMA:** Mahalo for those kind words, Ms. Rawlins-Fernandez. So yes, the Staff has taken all of your requests and comments down. The Chair will be following up on those items prior to the next meeting that we'll post to continue the discussion. And again, your Chair will bring in additional resources of other sectors that are...can assist or are being impacted by this pandemic and have you, your opportunity to discuss with those people from those sectors. Like I said, I'm looking at education, financial and insurance sectors. If you have any other sector you want us to focus on, I'm happy to take that and see if we can incorporate it at one of our meetings for our future plans. Let's see, Staff, is there anything we need to inform the Committee on? Okay. Again, Economic Development and Budget will meet this afternoon at 4:30. Members, if there is no other requests of the Chair, again, our...my...our final mahalos and thanks to Mr. Winfrey, Ms. Cabebe, Ms. Martin for joining us and sharing with us your perspective and responses. We thank the Senate President, Mr. Ron Kouchi of Kauai, the leader of our State Senate, and his comments to our community and this Committee this morning, we thank him for his participation. And with no further business, please have a good mid-day, Members. And to our community and our residents, we say be safe and stay well, wear your face masks please. Right on, Ms. Paltin.

**COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS.**

**ACTION: DEFER PENDING FURTHER DISCUSSION.**

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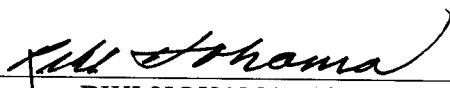
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CHAIR HOKAMA: Aloha everyone, this meeting is adjourned. . . .(gavel). . .

**ADJOURN:** 11:51 a.m.

APPROVED:



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RIKI HOKAMA, Chair  
Healthy Families and Communities  
Committee

hfc:min:200910:cs

Transcribed by: Cheryl von Kugler

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**CERTIFICATION**

I, Cheryl von Kugler, hereby certify that pages 1 through 51 of the foregoing represents, to the best of my ability, a true and correct transcript of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not in any way concerned with the cause.

DATED the 1st day of October 2020, in Wailuku, Hawaii



Cheryl von Kugler