

# Resolution

No. 23-105

## SUPPORTING MAUI COUNTY'S HEALTHCARE WORKERS AND URGING MAUI HEALTH SYSTEM TO RESOLVE THE LABOR DISPUTE WITH THEM

WHEREAS, on February 22, 2023, nearly 500 nurses' aides, respiratory therapists, emergency-room technicians, maintenance workers, transporters, housekeepers, cooks, dieticians, and other workers at Maui Memorial Medical Center, Kula Hospital, Kula Clinic, and Lana'i Community Hospital walked out and began organized picketing at all three locations; and

WHEREAS, 97.6 percent of these workers, represented by United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO, voted to authorize the strike on February 10, 2023, after nine months of contract negotiations and subsequent mediation failed; and

WHEREAS, the workers on strike are fighting for fair and reasonable wages and working conditions; and

WHEREAS, the workers on strike are essential and heroic frontline workers who have been the backbone to Maui County's healthcare system, working tirelessly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic without receiving hazard pay; and

WHEREAS, Maui Memorial Medical Center, Kula Hospital, Kula Clinic, and Lana'i Community Hospital are operated by Maui Health System, a Kaiser Foundations Hospital LLC; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 20-76, "SUPPORTING MAUI COUNTY'S HEALTHCARE WORKERS, FIRST RESPONDERS, AND OTHER ESSENTIAL WORKERS AT THE FRONT LINES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC," urged employers to add hazard pay and ensure adequate workplace protection for healthcare workers and expressed deep appreciation to essential healthcare workers on behalf of a grateful citizenry; and

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WHEREAS, according to a 2021 Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation poll, roughly three in ten healthcare workers have considered leaving their profession, and about six in ten healthcare workers say “stress from the pandemic has harmed their mental health”; and

WHEREAS, in a March 7, 2022, blog post, Maui Health Systems stated that they were “juggling an outflux of employees and recruitment strategies to fill vacancies” and identified the strain of the COVID-19 pandemic and the high cost of living in Hawai‘i as reasons for vacancies; and

WHEREAS, “Access to Care Hawai‘i,” a July 2022 report published by Community First Hawai‘i, found a “desperate need for home-grown talent” in healthcare occupations and recommended increased salaries across the healthcare spectrum as a strategy for workforce development; and

WHEREAS, inflation and the cost of living continue to rise in Maui County, as shown by a 2022 Aloha United Way study that found more than half of Maui County households live below the average income needed to afford the household survival budget; and

WHEREAS, the Maui County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, published by Maui Economic Development Board last year, stated: “Wages [are] not matching the cost of living or the importance of the healthcare role”; and

WHEREAS, fair wages and attractive working conditions for healthcare workers at Maui Memorial Medical Center, Kula Hospital, Kula Clinic, and Lana‘i Community Hospital would address the weakness in the County’s healthcare and wellness sector identified by Maui Economic Development Board; and

WHEREAS, in a January 17, 2023, blog post, Maui Health System reported that Maui Memorial Medical Center, the County’s only acute care hospital, is experiencing a high number of patients; and

WHEREAS, the United Public Workers union has notified Maui Health System through a federal mediator that they are available to meet and continue negotiations at any time; and

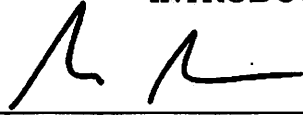
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WHEREAS, a swift and fair resolution to this labor dispute is in the best interest of the healthcare workers on strike and the health, wellness, and safety of residents of the County of Maui; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it supports Maui County's healthcare workers and urges Maui Health System to resolve the labor dispute with them; and
2. That it expresses appreciation and gratitude to Maui County's essential and heroic healthcare workers; and
3. That it supports fair wages and working conditions for Maui County's healthcare workers ; and
4. That it urges Maui Health System to resume good-faith negotiations and provide a fair contract with members of the United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO; and
5. That certified copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Honorable Josh Green, MD, Governor, State of Hawai'i; Kenneth S. Fink, MD, MGA, MPH, Acting Director of Health, State of Hawai'i; Kerry Watson, Interim CEO, Maui Health System; the Board of Directors, Maui Health System; Greg A. Adams, Chair, President, and CEO, Kaiser Hospitals Foundation; Kalani Werner, State Director, United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO; and the Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor, County of Maui.

INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'G' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

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GABE JOHNSON