

COUNCIL OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

October 25, 2001

Committee
Report No.

01-203

Honorable Chair and Members
of the County Council
County of Maui
Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii

Chair and Members:

Your Budget and Finance Committee, having met on October 16, 2001, makes reference to County Communication No. 01-271, from the Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, relating to the matter of economic recovery actions. In light of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States and the effect on the economic well-being of our State and County, the Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee recognized that economic recovery actions may need to be taken in an expeditious manner.

Your Committee notes that while considering the disposition of County Communication No. 01-271 at its meeting of October 4, 2001, the Council revised the communication to also include referral of the matter of recent health-related concerns facing Maui County.

By correspondence dated October 8, 2001, the Mayor transmitted the following:

1. A proposed bill entitled "A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2002 BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI AS IT PERTAINS TO ESTIMATED REVENUES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS".

The purpose of the proposed bill is to amend Ordinance No. 2963, Bill No. 41 (2001), (Fiscal Year 2002 Budget), to identify \$1,500,000 in Public Service Company Tax revenues and to appropriate the same amount to the Department of Housing and Human Concerns for MEO, Inc. - Hawaii Emergency Lauilima Partnership (HELP).

2. A "CERTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2002", certifying that there is available for appropriation

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revenues of \$1,500,000 from the Public Service Company Tax in excess of the budget estimates for Fiscal Year 2002.

By correspondence dated October 15, 2001, Councilmember Wayne K. Nishiki transmitted a copy of a document entitled "H.E.L.P. Hawaii Emergency Laulima Partnership: A Temporary Emergency Crisis Assistance Program".

At its meeting, your Committee met with the Mayor; the Budget Director; the Director of Housing and Human Concerns; a Deputy Corporation Counsel; and Gladys Baisa, Executive Director of Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. (MEO).

Your Committee received the following documents:

1. A draft pamphlet from Mayor Apana, entitled "HELP: Hawaii Emergency Laulima Partnership", which describes the HELP program;
2. Written testimony dated October 16, 2001, from Gladys C. Baisa, Executive Director, MEO;
3. Written testimony dated October 16, 2001, from Madelyn D'Enbeau, entitled "Why epidemic must be stopped and future waves prevented"; and
4. A document from Ian Hodges, entitled "Hana District: Crisis Response/Economic Revitalization", which requests \$100,000 to fight dengue fever in Hana.

Your Committee received testimony from 15 members of the public. Nine individuals spoke in support of the proposed economic recovery plan entitled HELP; four individuals expressed concerns regarding the dengue fever health issue; one individual spoke regarding both issues; and one individual expressed concern on the mechanism for providing assistance.

A portion of your Committee's meeting focused on the health-related issues regarding dengue fever. Dr. Lorrin Pang, Maui District Health Officer of the State Department of Health, informed your Committee about dengue fever

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and what actions have been and need to be taken to eradicate dengue fever. He stated that it is important to continue to take action and not become complacent because future waves of the disease will be more serious. He emphasized that much has been done on Maui to take control of dengue fever, including establishing information centers and scheduling town meetings to educate residents and tourists; spraying areas in Hana, Nahiku, and Haiku; and a general clean-up of materials that provide mosquito breeding sites. In addition, he stated that the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has representatives on Maui who are helping to inspect areas and train people in the proper methods of cleanup.

The Mayor informed your Committee that the Administration is working closely with the Department of Health to combat dengue fever. Fees at all County landfills have been waived to encourage individuals to take materials to the landfill to eliminate potential breeding sites for mosquitoes. Extra refuse pickups have been made in Hana and Haiku, and literature regarding dengue fever has been distributed throughout the County. In addition, the Mayor informed your Committee that Governor Cayetano and the State Department of Health Director Bruce Anderson will be visiting Hana on Thursday, October 18th. The Mayor assured your Committee that he will forward another appropriation request after he is able to determine whether any State funds might be available, along with a reprioritization of existing funds within the Fiscal Year (FY) 2002 Budget.

Your Committee discussed the proposed bill to fund the HELP program. Your Committee Chair informed your Committee that the other counties have indicated that they are unable to take any specific budgetary actions to address the economic issues faced by residents of their counties because of inadequate funds. He further stated that your Committee's prudent fiscal decision not to appropriate the Public Service Company Tax during the FY 2002 budget session because the funds were uncertain and could not be certified at that time, provides the opportunity for your Committee to respond to this request by the Administration.

The Mayor provided your Committee with an overview of the proposed HELP program. He stated that as a result of the September 11th attack on America, an increase in unemployment claims has made it apparent that a program is necessary to help families cope with the economic downturn. He

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further stated that the Administration had looked at other options, but found that a program designed like HELP would provide the most direct assistance to families in need. The Mayor stressed that HELP is a focused, temporary emergency-crisis-assistance program to help families cope as we move toward an economic rebound.

Ms. Baisa provided your Committee with a description of the proposed HELP program. She stated that the program was named Hawaii Emergency Laulima Partnership because laulima means "helping hands". She further explained that HELP is comprised of a coalition of various local social service agencies and the County of Maui working together in a partnership to assist Maui County residents who have experienced a loss or reduction in income. As presently designed, the program will be implemented for three months, and will provide assistance to families in the areas of food and necessary personal items, housing, utility bills, and medicine. Ms. Baisa stated that partner agencies, with experience in operating crisis assistance programs, will be utilized to take applications and determine eligibility. All benefits will be paid directly to vendors. No cash or checks will be issued to individuals. The goal of the program is to provide assistance within 24 hours of application. She proceeded to explain the details of the program as described in documents provided to your Committee.

Your Committee suggested some revisions to the plan to include additional partner agencies, particularly in the Kihei and Lahaina areas, as well as telephone numbers of the agencies. In addition, your Committee requested that MEO consider how the Maui Food Bank could provide assistance with food distribution. Ms. Baisa indicated that MEO will propose subcontracting a portion of the grant to the Maui Food Bank for food distribution. After further discussion, your Committee decided that the key to making this program work was to have some flexibility to continue to review the best way to provide services in a timely and efficient manner.

Your Committee requested that the Department of the Corporation Counsel revise the proposed bill to add a provision requiring that status reports regarding the HELP program be submitted to the Council on the 15th and the end of each month for the duration of the HELP program. These reports will enable your Committee to review the progress of the program and to take further action, if necessary.

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In addition, your Committee expressed the need to expedite the approval of the revised proposed bill. Therefore, your Committee Chair stated that he would request that the Council Chair schedule a Special Council Meeting to consider passage of the revised proposed bill on first reading. The expedited timetable would enable the bill to be passed on second and final reading prior to the program's implementation scheduled for November 5th.

Your Committee is in receipt of a revised proposed bill entitled "A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2002 BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI AS IT PERTAINS TO ESTIMATED REVENUES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS", approved as to form and legality by the Department of the Corporation Counsel, incorporating your Committee's suggested revisions.

Your Budget and Finance Committee **RECOMMENDS** that Bill No. _____ (2001), attached hereto, entitled "A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2002 BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI AS IT PERTAINS TO ESTIMATED REVENUES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS", **PASS FIRST READING** and **BE ORDERED TO PRINT**.

Adoption of this report is respectfully requested.

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