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BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
Council of the County of Maui
M I N U T E S
April 9, 2009
Council Chamber, 8th floor

APPROVED:

Committee Chair

1 CONVENE: 9:06 a.m.

2 PRESENT: Councilmember Joseph Pontanilla, Chair
3 Councilmember Danny A. Mateo, Vice-Chair
 (in 9:45 a.m.)
4 Councilmember Gladys C. Baisa, Member
 Councilmember Jo Anne Johnson, Member (in
 9:53 a.m.)
5 Councilmember Bill Kauakea Medeiros,
 Member
6 Councilmember Michael J. Molina, Member
 Councilmember Wayne K. Nishiki, Member
7

8 EXCUSED: Councilmember Sol. P. Kaho'ohalahala,
 Member
9 Councilmember Michael P. Victorino,
 Member

10 STAFF: Gayle Revels, Legislative Analyst
11 Lance Taguchi, Legislative Analyst
 Yvette Bouthillier, Committee Secretary

12 Leinaala Kihm, Executive Assistant to
 Councilmember Medeiros

13 ADMIN.: Frederick Pablo, Budget Director, Office
14 of the Mayor
 Lori Tsuhako, Director, Department of
15 Housing and Human Concerns
 Jo-Ann Ridao, Deputy Director, Department
16 of Housing and Human Concerns
 Deborah Arendale, County Executive on
17 Aging, Office on Aging, Department
 of Housing and Human Concerns
18 Robin Tanaka, Administrator, Kaunoa
 Senior Services Division, Department
19 of Housing and Human Concerns
 Wayde Oshiro, Housing Administrator,
20 Department of Housing and Human
 Concerns
21 Traci Fujita Villarosa, First Deputy
 Corporation Counsel, Department of
22 the Corporation Counsel

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1 CHAIR PONTANILLA: ...(gavel)... Good morning,
2 everyone. The Budget and Finance Committee meeting
3 for April 9, 2009 is now in session.

4 At this time, the Chair would like to
5 introduce the Committee Members that are present
6 this morning. We do have Member Molina.

7 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Good morning, Chair.

8 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Member Baisa, Member Medeiros and
9 Member Nishiki. Good morning.

10 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Good morning.

11 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Excused at this time are Member
12 Johnson, Member Kaho'ohalahala, Member Mateo and
13 Member Victorino.

14 Supporting the Committee this morning, we do
15 have Mr. Lance Taguchi as well as Gayle Revels and
16 Yvette Bouthillier from Council Services and from
17 the Administration this morning, and continuing on,
18 the proposed budget for Department of Housing and
19 Human Services (sic), we do have Lori Tshako, the
20 Director; and Jo-Ann Ridao, the Deputy Director
21 along with Mr. Fred Pablo our Budget Director; and
22 from Corporation Counsel, we do have our First
23 Deputy, Traci Fujita Villarosa.

24 Members, we do have several people from the
25 public signed up for public testimony this morning,

1 but before we accept public testimony, if everyone
2 could turn off their cell phone to the silent mode,
3 or turn it off, the Chair would appreciate that.
4 Thank you.

5 For those of you this morning that providing
6 public testimony, you have three minutes to provide
7 public testimony. If you can provide us your name
8 and organization that you represent, the Committee
9 would appreciate that. And once you get through
10 providing your public testimony, if you could stay
11 a while at the podium, the Members may have
12 questions for you.

13 So with that, the first person signed up for
14 public testimony is Lyn McNeff.

15

16 ...BEGIN PUBLIC TESTIMONY...

17

18 MS. MCNEFF: Good morning. My name is Lyn McNeff. I'm
19 the Chief Programs Officer for MEO. I'm really
20 speaking for Debbie Amaral, our Early Childhood
21 Service Director, who is unable to speak.

22 MS. AMARAL: Good morning.

23 MS. MCNEFF: Good morning, Budget Chair and Council
24 Members. MEO Head Start is a Federally-funded
25 program that offers part day program for children

1 and families. We serve 298 in the County of Maui.
2 That's Molokai, Lanai and Maui.

3 Through the good support of the County of
4 Maui, we have been able to support full day, full
5 year services for 80 families due to the financial
6 support. That means that there are 80 families and
7 80 children. Eighty children go to school for a
8 full day so that those families can work, go to
9 school or be in training.

10 As you have heard through our public
11 testimonies, what a difference this makes to
12 families to be able to do that. If they are not
13 able to do that or work during the summer, families
14 don't -- people don't usually work nine months a
15 year unless they are in a school system. Then
16 their children need to have care. If they are
17 unable to do that, have childcare, they are unable
18 to work. That means they are unable to have a
19 house over their head. They are unable to provide
20 food for their families, and they are unable to
21 provide the essentials.

22 By having them in our Head Start program, they
23 are in a full day comprehensive quality program.
24 MEO did propose to reduce their funding this year
25 because we were asked to reduce our funding, and we

1 did reduce it, but we got a bigger reduction than
2 we asked for. We proposed one classroom for after
3 school and one classroom for summer. We got a
4 bigger reduction, and that means that we add
5 another classroom because in Head Start, you either
6 -- you go by children of 20s. You can't just take
7 additional. It's all or part of a classroom. But
8 as we saw with our families that have testified,
9 they need that care. They need to be able to
10 support their families, and without that childcare,
11 they will -- and it's quality childcare, they would
12 be unable -- unable to do that. So we are asking
13 you to restore our funding so that we can support
14 the 80 families and children that need our
15 childcare. Thank you.

16 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Members, any questions
17 for the testifier? Member Baisa?

18 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Yes. Thank you, Chair.

19 Ms. McNeff, thank you for being here, and I'm
20 sorry about your throat, Ms. Amaral. It must be
21 pretty bad. To keep a Portuguese lady quiet, its
22 got to be bad. We know each other well, or I
23 wouldn't be joking with her about this.

24 Ms. McNeff, can you give us a specific amount
25 of money that needs to be restored? Do you know?

1 If not, could you tell us later?

2 MS. MCNEFF: Yes. We can certainly get that to you if
3 we have to.

4 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Just submit the amount so that we
5 know.

6 MS. MCNEFF: We will be happy to do that.

7 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: We certainly have heard many, many
8 testimonies from the Head Start program and
9 parents, actually, wherever we've been. So we get
10 the message. Thank you. You do know we've got
11 money problems, but we'll try our best.

12 MS. MCNEFF: We know that.

13 MS. BAISA: Thank you.

14 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Members -- Member
15 Medeiros?

16 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Mahalo, Mr. Chairman. Thank
17 you to both of you, both the speaker and
18 non-speaker for being here.

19 I wanted to ask, the children that qualify for
20 this program, is there an income criteria?

21 MS. MCNEFF: Yes. At least 90 percent of our families
22 need to meet the 100 percent of the Federal Poverty
23 Guideline. As you know, that is very low. So for
24 these -- so taking anything away from these
25 families would put them in even greater poverty and

1 unable to fulfill their basic needs.

2 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Okay. Is there a relationship
3 or partnership with MEO's Head Start Early
4 Childhood along with the County's Agency on Early
5 Childhood?

6 MS. MCNEFF: Absolutely. We are partners with many
7 agencies. We are the -- we are the people that
8 need the service. We are in the Homeless Resource
9 Center. We are in the Kahekili Terrace. We are in
10 the DOE. We serve children with special needs. We
11 are wherever the need is for the low income
12 families.

13 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Okay. So there is a -- a
14 partnership with the -- even the private early
15 childhood schools?

16 MS. MCNEFF: Yes. On Lanai, we are in the partnership
17 with the private preschool where we assist them.
18 We pay tuition for certain number of children to
19 attend, and we support them with teacher develop --
20 career development and various things. Oh, it's a
21 very wonderful partnership.

22 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Okay. Thank you for being here
23 this morning for that information.

24 Mahalo, Mr. Chair.

25 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Before I call on

1 Mr. Nishiki, just one question from the Chair. How
2 many of your families are single family -- single
3 parent?

4 MS. MCNEFF: You know, people think of single family as
5 the women. We have a lot of men that are single
6 families too. I would say at least a third.

7 CHAIR PONTANILLA: One third.

8 MS. MCNEFF: Uh-huh.

9 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Member Nishiki?

10 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: You mentioned a criteria of 90
11 percent.

12 MS. MCNEFF: 90 percent of our families need to meet the
13 Federal Income Guideline.

14 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: And what is that income amount?

15 MS. MCNEFF: For a family of one, it goes up with the
16 number in the family, and I haven't memorized it,
17 but for a family of one, it's 11,000. It goes up
18 incrementally. So I think for a family of four,
19 it's 25,000 annually.

20 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: You have currently 80 families
21 participating?

22 MS. MCNEFF: In the After School Program. We have 298
23 in the Federal Head Start Program. Yes.

24 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: And is there a wait list?

25 MS. MCNEFF: Absolutely. It's almost double.

1 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: It's almost double.

2 MS. MCNEFF: It's almost double and it gets larger as we
3 speak.

4 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: So there is a need for
5 childcare, but more than that, there is a -- most
6 of these people can't afford to pay childcare?

7 MS. MCNEFF: Absolutely. And we feed them the meals.
8 We help them brush their teeth. We don't just do
9 the childcare. We do the comprehensive programs,
10 and we work with the families also. So the
11 families are very involved in their child's
12 education because we believe they are their child's
13 first teacher. So we give them the good nutrition.
14 We make sure they have their immunizations and
15 their health care, their dental care. We make sure
16 that we give them a head start to life so that they
17 will be ready for kindergarten.

18 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: And finally, do these people
19 have to be employed?

20 MS. MCNEFF: The ones in the After School Program do
21 need to be employed, correct, or in school or in
22 training.

23 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Thank you.

24 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Member Baisa?

25 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Just one quick question; I've been

1 out of touch for a while.

2 How many of the centers are accredited right

3 now?

4 MS. MCNEFF: We are working on two. You know, it

5 expires.

6 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Yes. You keep having to renew

7 them.

8 MS. MCNEFF: Correct.

9 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Well, congratulations. We know

10 that's a tough process.

11 MS. MCNEFF: One more thing. We have -- we are a

12 partnership with MCC, and we are their lab, you

13 might say. So that's where they train their early

14 childhood teachers.

15 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Chairman.

16 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Member --

17 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Yeah. One more question.

18 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Mr. Nishiki?

19 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Thank you.

20 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Mr. Nishiki, Member Molina and then .

21 . .

22 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Oh, I'm sorry.

23 CHAIR PONTANILLA: You follow Member Molina. Member

24 Molina?

25 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Chair. Just one

1 question for you, Ms. McNeff.

2 What is the average age of your clients, the
3 parents that you work with?

4 MS. MCNEFF: They are younger parents, most of them, but
5 the funny thing is that we are now getting
6 grandparents raising grandchildren. So that raises
7 the average age up. So it use to be around 23, 24,
8 but I'm sure it's much higher now with the
9 grandparents averaged in.

10 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Wow. That's an interesting
11 phenomena now with --

12 MS. MCNEFF: 17 to 54.

13 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: That's the age range 17 to 54.
14 Wow. Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

15 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Member Nishiki?

16 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Yeah. Are there circumstances
17 where if they can't get their kids in this program,
18 then these people cannot work?

19 MS. MCNEFF: Yes. There are.

20 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: And if they cannot work, then
21 they go on Social Services?

22 MS. MCNEFF: Correct. Public Assistance. Yes.

23 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Okay. Thank you.

24 MS. MCNEFF: You're welcome.

25 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you, Mr. Nishiki. Members, any

1 more questions for the testifier, the one that can
2 talk, and the other one can whisper.
3 MS. MCNEFF: She's the backup though.
4 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Mr. Chairman?
5 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Mr. Nishiki?
6 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: What about your facilities,
7 buildings? Do you -- can you take more people with
8 what you have as far as building?
9 MS. MCNEFF: That's part of the problem with early
10 childhood is these facilities have to meet a
11 certain Department of Housing Human Services (sic),
12 guideline. So no. We are maxed out in the
13 facilities we are in.
14 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Thank you.
15 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Thank you again for being
16 here this morning.
17 MS. MCNEFF: Thank you.
18 CHAIR PONTANILLA: The next testifier is Cynthia
19 Morihara.
20 MS. MORIHARA: Good morning.
21 COUNCIL MEMBERS: Good morning.
22 MS. MORIHARA: I'm Cynthia Morihara, a mental health
23 consumer and Chairman of the Board of the Mental
24 Health Association of Maui County. Thank you for
25 helping the Mental Health Association survive for

1 the past two years. Without your assistance, we
2 could not have stayed in business serving Maui
3 County. We are asking for you to continue funding
4 the Mental Health Association as we are in dire
5 need of financial assistance, especially for this
6 year. Although we have only one paid staff person
7 while everyone else are volunteers, we have a busy
8 office, and many activities associated with
9 promoting mental health in the community. With the
10 State cutbacks in mental health this year, our
11 services, advocacy and support are needed more than
12 ever. Please don't cut us as we actually need all
13 the money we received last year and a little more.
14 Mahalo.

15 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Members, any questions
16 for the testifier? I'm seeing none. Thank you,
17 Cynthia, for being here this morning.

18 Next testifier is Colleen O'Shea Wallace.

19 MS. WALLACE: Good morning. I've never been here except
20 in the audience. I'm a little nervous, and I just
21 want to say good morning. I know you were here
22 late last night, to the Budget Committee Members.
23 Mahalo for keeping us serving Maui County the past
24 two years. We have actually been here since 1972,
25 and fortunately, your grant was able to match with

1 United Way which was our main funder that kept us
2 going with our little fundraising we could do for
3 years and years, and so, and you decided we were
4 bread and butter service, which I think we are, and
5 so it kept us going. Thank you.

6 So who we are, we are a Maui-based
7 self-supporting consumer-oriented volunteer
8 organization working since 1972 to secure quality
9 mental health services for our families, our
10 neighbors, and ourselves, volunteers working
11 through public education and community action to
12 end mess and misconceptions about mental illness
13 and to improve mental health services for adults
14 and children.

15 I work with at least 150 a year on every
16 project that we do, and advocates for consumers and
17 the agencies who serve them, and it's not just me
18 because the volunteers become advocates over time,
19 and it strengthens them and our community.

20 We are busier than ever this year, and the
21 office is busier because I'm getting a lot of
22 calls. See, we don't take -- we never took State
23 funding. In fact, this was the first Government
24 funding and only Government funding we ever had
25 because of advocates because we are always trying

1 to keep Mental Health Services funded so that
2 people get services and don't become homeless or
3 something because they're not having regular
4 treatment.

5 So I've been having to stop everything we were
6 doing. We do a lot of programs, and I'll hand this
7 out to you again. You got one last year, and you
8 can see we have one more support group for people
9 who lost their jobs that we just started.
10 Partnering with United Way. We partner with
11 everybody, but we are busier than ever because I'll
12 get calls from State people. I'm losing six of my
13 staff, according to the House Budget. So then I
14 stop everything and start calling and faxing
15 Legislators, and of course, I had done a testimony
16 earlier for a briefing on mental health, but I need
17 to remind them, and I spent the last day and a half
18 just talking to people because the Senate Budget is
19 a little different now, but it's going to go to
20 Conference Committee, and we want to keep mental
21 health.

22 So that's our advocacy, and also our police
23 training started as a part of advocacy because the
24 police have to deal with our people who aren't well
25 in the community. And then we added children, so

1 actually they told me, the training people, that we
2 are the only nonprofit that has from 7:45 to 4:30
3 in the morning, the whole training, and it's cool
4 down there. So we do children's in the morning,
5 adult in the afternoon. We have autism. We have a
6 public speaker's view. If you ever need a speaker
7 on a mental health topic, please tell me. We
8 didn't ask for less money due to not being able to
9 cut me in half. We have a really tiny office in
10 the Cameron Center.

11 MS. REVELS: Three minutes.

12 MS. WALLACE: Okay. That it?

13 CHAIR PONTANILLA: You can conclude.

14 MS. WALLACE: It allows us to have the meeting rooms for
15 our support groups and things like that, and -- and
16 I'll just pass this out because a lot of you know
17 about our various programs, and this will remind
18 you.

19 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay.

20 MS. WALLACE: Is that all right, or can I just hand it?

21 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Colleen, if you can leave it with
22 staff. Thank you.

23 Members, any questions for the testifier?

24 Seeing none, Colleen, because I'm -- can you
25 tell us about fundraising that the organization do

1 during the year?

2 MS. WALLACE: Oh, well, yes. Because we had two or
3 three regular fundraisers every year in addition to
4 the United Way grant, but I guess they just small.
5 We don't make big bucks. It's probably because of
6 who's on our board, who's willing to be on our
7 board and work hard.

8 So we always have a dinner, and it's on May
9 7th. I hope you can all come, and now -- and now
10 we invited the Mayor a few years ago, and then now
11 that we have a new Mayor, she -- you know, and they
12 bring their people, and we -- it's fun. Judd
13 Cunningham and Tony Krieg played music. They are
14 really good, and we have a great auction. Okay.
15 And then we -- hopefully, we are going to have
16 another golf tournament this year, and those are --
17 actually made less money than the dinner, but we
18 have golfers, and they like to do it every year,
19 and then we had chicken hekka for three years, and
20 Herman Nascimento actually helped to save the
21 organization because we ran out of money in March
22 two years in a row. And so he helped us make
23 enough money so we could get to our dinner in May,
24 and then when we got the County funding in October,
25 you know, because United Way also doesn't even give

1 us their money usually until September, and so
2 that's what helped us keep going and somebody said
3 they might do a fundraiser for us, but I don't know
4 if it would actually make any money, but I'm not
5 going to say no. So we might have four this year.
6 But we are selling fewer tickets to the dinner. So
7 you're all invited. Bring friends if you want to
8 come, please.

9 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you for advertising. Thank
10 you. Members, anymore questions for the testifier?
11 Seeing none, thank you, Colleen, for being here
12 this morning.

13 MS. WALLACE: Thank you.

14 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Bye. Next testifier is
15 Ken Anthony?

16 MR. ANTHONY: Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen. I am
17 the Branch Manager for Wesco Distribution, Inc.,
18 Westinghouse, for all those remember. We've been
19 on Maui for over 60 years. I'm here to speak to
20 you on behalf of Maui Economic Development Board.

21 Wesco is involved in large scale renewable
22 energy development projects. We are actually doing
23 a pilot for the corporation to try and bring
24 together technologies that will help the Country
25 get off of foreign oil. MEDB has helped us

1 immensely in recruiting the types of industries and
2 engineering consulting types of individuals to help
3 us put together these technologies.

4 These companies are willing to look at
5 locating to the Island of Maui. They would be
6 bringing high paying jobs in significant number to
7 help impact Maui's economic base. Job creation is
8 a fundamental building block for overcoming many of
9 the budget challenges that I know we all face
10 today.

11 These are real tough economic times for
12 everybody, from State, County to the local business
13 community to local families. Hard decisions have
14 to be made. I urge the Council's continuing
15 support for Maui Economic Development Board. Thank
16 you.

17 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Members, any questions
18 for the testifier? Seeing none, thank you very
19 much for being here.

20 MR. ANTHONY: Thank you.

21 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Next testifier is Tom
22 Blackburn-Rodriguez.

23 MR. BLACKBURN-RODRIGUEZ: Good morning, Mr. Chairman.
24 Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.
25 Aloha. My name is Tom Blackburn-Rodriguez. I'm

1 testifying this morning as an individual.

2 First of all, I would like to thank the
3 members of the Budget and Finance Committee and its
4 Chair, Joe Pontanilla, for all your hard work.
5 This is a tough year, and we appreciate all of your
6 efforts on behalf of Maui County. It's a tough
7 year, and we want to thank you very much.

8 Recently the University of Hawaii Economic
9 Research Organization issued a report that said in
10 2009, Hawaii may see its largest job loss in more
11 than 50 years. At the same time predicted that the
12 recession will last until 2011, a year longer than
13 previously forecast.

14 News reports today in the Maui News indicate
15 that the Federal Reserve also feels the same way.
16 Unemployment in Hawaii is reported to be at 5.4
17 percent and rising.

18 Based on this stark economic reality of
19 increasing unemployment and decreasing income, I
20 respectfully request that the Committee transfer
21 \$1 million from the Affordable Housing Fund
22 established by Charter Amendment Number Two in 2006
23 and provide the funds to programs that will use the
24 money to provide direct rental assistance and
25 relief to families struggling to avoid having to

1 live on the beach or in their cars.

2 I congratulate Mayor Tavares for designating
3 rental assistance as a critical program and funding
4 it at the same level as last year. However,
5 current events have overwhelmed even that correct
6 action. And today more needs to be done as quickly
7 as possible. The language of the Charter Amendment
8 which I was a Vice Chair in that campaign does not
9 prohibit the use of funds for rental assistance.
10 The key clause in the amendment is that quote the
11 revenues in this fund shall be utilized for the
12 provision and expansion of affordable housing and
13 suitable living environments for persons of very
14 low to moderate income. Currently, the fund has a
15 balance of 6.2 million. After adding in this
16 year's allocation from the property tax revenues,
17 it will have a balance of 10.9 million. While
18 there may be projects that will come forward to use
19 these funds, and I would like to support those
20 projects, even if they do, there will still be
21 nearly \$10 million left in the fund, even after
22 meeting this critical housing emergency need.

23 I would like to thank you for your
24 consideration of the request. Mahalo.

25 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you.

1 Member Baisa?

2 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Thank you very much, Chair. And
3 thank you, Mr. Blackburn-Rodriguez, for being here
4 today.

5 I've been contemplating the same kind of
6 thing, and we did hear you when you spoke in Kihei,
7 I believe it was.

8 MR. BLACKBURN-RODRIGUEZ: Thank you very much.

9 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Yeah. We heard you loud and
10 clear, and I was happy to hear what you said
11 because this has been on my mind. You know, one of
12 the quick ways to help people in trouble is with
13 rental assistance, and I am aware that the MEO
14 program has been doing very good work, and they
15 tell me that they have 100 percent success rate,
16 and the reason is, of course, that they, not only
17 provide the check, but provide the program and the
18 counseling and the case management to take the
19 people from needing the support to no longer
20 needing the support, and we heard this over and
21 over in testimony. I think there is some confusion
22 about -- we've heard that Federal monies are coming
23 down. Have you heard that?

24 MR. BLACKBURN-RODRIGUEZ: The -- Councilmember Baisa,
25 thank you for the question.

1 My understanding from looking at the American
2 Recovery and Reinvestment Act which I've -- I have
3 studied extensively for many clients, indicates
4 that Section 8 is going to be a program that the
5 Obama Administration is going to favor more than
6 the previous administration.

7 Currently, I know of one source of funds that
8 are in the stimulus package, and that is to allow
9 for property owners who have Section 8 renters to
10 be able to upgrade and make certain their
11 properties are in compliance with zoning and those
12 kinds of things.

13 I would also anticipate an increased
14 allocation for Section 8 Housing in the new -- in
15 the budget that's being considered now in Congress.
16 But as you correctly point out, Section 8 is for a
17 program that has to deal with a separate section or
18 group of people who may need rental assistance, and
19 once you get into Section Eight Program, if you
20 continue to qualify on an income basis, that
21 program is maintained as well as the property is
22 also maintained. The programs that I'm speaking of
23 are the programs like MEO Family Life Center, Ka
24 Hale A Ke Ola, Women Helping Women, in which the
25 idea is to bring these families to a position where

1 they are stable, and they are able to maintain
2 their own finances, and that requires financial
3 training. It requires budgeting, and it requires
4 working with some of the other issues that are
5 there as well as the main issue which is declining
6 income.

7 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: You mentioned in your testimony
8 that the -- you were congratulating the Mayor for
9 keeping the amount of funding the same level as
10 last year.

11 Do you know what that is?

12 MR. BLACKBURN-RODRIGUEZ: The level of funding, my
13 understanding, was \$425,000 in the previous year
14 and is also included in this year's budget as well.
15 And again, as I mentioned, that figure, I think the
16 Mayor should be congratulated for that, but it is
17 my belief that events have overwhelmed even that
18 correct action.

19 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Well, it's my feeling that we have
20 the Department of Human Concerns here this morning,
21 and later on, when we are through with testimony,
22 we will be talking with them, and I'll ask them
23 more about the program. So thank you very much.

24 MR. BLACKBURN-RODRIGUEZ: Thank you very much for your
25 time.

1 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Member Molina?

2 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And good
3 morning, Mr. Blackburn-Rodriguez.

4 MR. BLACKBURN-RODRIGUEZ: Good morning.

5 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: First of all, thank you very much
6 for your efforts back in 2006 to help campaign and
7 promote the Charter Amendment which the Council
8 initiated and to put on the ballot, and the
9 electorate passed it by an overwhelming margin, but
10 your efforts as well as others helped to really get
11 the word out and the message about the importance
12 of creating this Affordable Housing Fund.

13 MR. BLACKBURN-RODRIGUEZ: Thank you for your leadership
14 on that, Councilmember.

15 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you. I think this is a
16 very interesting option that you've presented to
17 us. You know, it's funny how times have changed
18 since 2006, and now I think with people maybe -- we
19 have less people now who are looking at
20 homeownership because of the downturn in the
21 economy, and now we have a lot more people now who
22 are in dire need of rental assistance.

23 You know, you did mention in your testimony
24 that it is silent in the Charter Amendment as far
25 as the usage of the money. So you know, we'll

1 certainly consult with our legal counsel to see
2 what we can do, and I believe it gives us that
3 flexibility, Mr. Chairman, and I just wanted to
4 say, you know, thank you so much for bringing this
5 idea to our attention, and at this point, how many
6 -- do you have any numbers as far as how many
7 people we are looking at that are in jeopardy so to
8 speak?

9 MR. BLACKBURN-RODRIGUEZ: I -- I could not give you an
10 exact figure, Councilmember Molina, but I can tell
11 you that when I called around because I wanted to
12 be a little more prepared for this testimony than
13 in Kihei and provide you with information you can
14 use, it's my understanding that the MEO program of
15 rental assistance will actually run out of funds in
16 October of this year, although that program was
17 funded to run theoretically until December. So
18 that is just one instance in which I -- in which I
19 understand is -- is occurring in the community.

20 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Uh-huh. Great. You know, with
21 the County providing MEO the funds to administer
22 the program, and you know, maybe this could be a
23 shot in the arm to extend the amount of assistant
24 -- assistance that's given out to our citizens.

25 MR. BLACKBURN-RODRIGUEZ: And I -- I did want to say

1 that I respectfully make the suggestion about where
2 the funds could be utilized. I know there is also
3 the First Time Homebuyer's Fund and other
4 allocations, but I wanted to make a suggestion for
5 potential solution where we already have the funds
6 already in the kitty, as it were.

7 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Good point. Thank you,
8 Mr. Blackburn-Rodriguez. Thank you, Chair.

9 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Members, anymore
10 questions for the testifier? Seeing none, thank
11 you very much for coming up with creative ideas all
12 the time. We -- we need those ideas.

13 MR. BLACKBURN-RODRIGUEZ: I get in trouble a lot at home
14 about that, and a Happy Passover to everyone as
15 well.

16 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you, Tom.

17 Next testifier is Alika Atay.

18 MR. ATAY: Good morning, Budget Chair Pontanilla, House
19 Members (sic). Good morning. My name is Alika
20 Atay. I'm with Maui Economic Opportunity. I'm the
21 Director of Youth Services. Youth Services for
22 Maui Economic Opportunity has been offering
23 programs for youths and adolescents for almost ten
24 years through the process of Youth Bank and Ameri
25 Corps. We -- we have a very unique approach in

1 addressing the needs of our young people. We are
2 primarily focused on taking the assessments from
3 the recent findings of focus Maui Nui. One is to
4 take care of our natural resources and our
5 environment, and number two, to provide meaningful
6 opportunities for our young people and young
7 adults.

8 Adolescence, we know, is a very pivotal
9 period. It's a pivotal period between childhood
10 and adulthood. It is a time when the youth need to
11 acquire the attitudes, the competencies, the
12 values, and the social skills that will carry them
13 forward to becoming successful adults or reaching a
14 successful adulthood.

15 Adolescence is also a time when they need to
16 avoid choices and avoid behaviors that would limit
17 their future potential. At least 25 percent of all
18 adolescence or one out of four are at serious risk
19 at not achieving productive adulthood, and they
20 face such risk as substance abuse, adolescence
21 pregnancy, school failure, and involvement with the
22 Juvenile Justice System.

23 We at MEO Youth Services believe that we are a
24 community member that is watching out for these
25 youths and young people. We are willing to take

1 the responsibility for their safety and well-being
2 and their development, and we are hoping to help
3 steer them in the right direction towards becoming
4 successful, contributing citizens and adults of
5 Maui.

6 A lot of our programming is focused on
7 outdoors, experiential, life skills and career
8 skills development. We currently -- last year, we
9 served 197 youths in our programming, and one of
10 our targeted objectives were -- is always to -- to
11 move towards graduation and/or grade advancement.
12 Last year we had 197 out of 197 completing
13 graduation or grade advancement, and along the way,
14 we are always looking for ways to develop and give
15 them skills. The majority of the youths we have
16 fall in the range of 13, 14 year old's. So if you
17 can imagine the characteristic traits and
18 behavioral traits of our 13 and 14 year old, and we
19 ask them, what do you expect and envision the
20 traits of a successful adult male? What are the
21 traits of a successful adult female? This is where
22 we are at. And so we -- we believe MEU (sic) Youth
23 Services is -- is we try to fill in a gap and try
24 to develop the necessary skills that each
25 individual child needs for them to move them

1 forward --

2 MR. TAGUCHI: Three minutes.

3 MR. ATAY: -- to obtain that successful adult level.

4 Today I'm here to ask -- to reconsider and
5 consider the funding level of our Youth Services
6 Department. Currently, we have been receiving
7 250,000. We have been targeted to take a \$50,000
8 cut. That's a 20 percent cut in our programming.
9 This will greatly affect our services. We are
10 encouraging you to continue to invest in our young
11 people and their development. We will be possibly
12 losing -- we also involved in this Coalition for
13 Anti-Drugs in our community. To date, I don't know
14 that Maui County or Maui Island does not really
15 have a drug free Maui, and we are on track with our
16 active involvement with the partnership for
17 underaged drinking as well as our involvement with
18 the tobacco prevention. With this funding would
19 allow us to springboard towards receiving Federal
20 funds in the areas of CADCD which is --

21 MR. TAGUCHI: Four minutes --

22 MR. ATAY: -- the Community of Anti Drug Coalition
23 Development.

24 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Mr. Atay.

25 Members, any questions for the testifier?

1 Member Baisa?

2 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Just a brief comment. I want to
3 thank you for the photo album that was given to us
4 last night at the public hearing here. It was a
5 complete yearbook of what you all have been doing,
6 and one picture is worth a thousand words, and
7 there were many pictures. So thank you very much.
8 You certainly showed me the environmental, cultural
9 and the ohana aspect of the program. Thank you.

10 MR. ATAY: Thank you.

11 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Members, anymore
12 questions for the testifier? Seeing none, thank
13 you, Mr. Atay.

14 Melanie Padget?

15 MS. PADGET: Good morning. I'm very short. I'm
16 speaking in reference to Grant 2626 which is to
17 Maui Family Support Services for Early Childhood
18 Programs and the Maui County Childcare subsidy.

19 Thank you for this opportunity to speak in
20 favor of funding the Maui County Childcare subsidy
21 as recommended in the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2010
22 Budget.

23 One of my duties as project specialist with
24 the Beginnings Maui County, and Maui Family Support
25 is our fiscal agent, is to manage the Maui County

1 Childcare subsidy which provides financial
2 assistance for childcare and pre-school to families
3 who fall into certain gap groups that are not
4 eligible for help from other programs such as
5 Childcare Connection or Open Doors or Head Start,
6 despite having legitimate need.

7 At the start of the third quarter of Fiscal
8 Year '09, that's right now, 40 families in Maui
9 County, and this is including Lanai, Molokai and
10 Hana, have received benefits from the subsidy for
11 one or more months during this year.

12 This is up from 14 families in 2007, and 24
13 families in 2008. The big increase in families
14 benefiting from the program is due to our intensive
15 outreach to the community to spread awareness about
16 the program, and also very definitely, to the
17 \$20,000 increase in funding that the County Council
18 approved last year for the program. All of that
19 money has gone directly to families, by the way.

20 We've worked diligently to maximize the
21 resources through careful case management so that
22 families are guided to other programs as changing
23 situations make them eligible for those programs.
24 This benefits the families, and it also frees up
25 funds to help others. So we are constantly in

1 flux, moving people toward more appropriate
2 programs as their situations change.

3 I'd like to tell you a little bit about the
4 participants, since most of the parents of the
5 children in the program are unable to attend these
6 hearings themselves, because they are either
7 working or taking care of young ones, and a lot of
8 them are just, you know not comfortable in a
9 situation like this. So we ask them to send --
10 send "thank you" notes or testimony in writing to
11 you, and hopefully some of them have done so.

12 Okay. The Gap group families receiving assistance
13 from this program are struggling with a variety of
14 challenges, but what all the parents have in common
15 is a desire to be self sufficient and to make sure
16 their children are receiving high quality care
17 while they are working actively looking for work or
18 in school. Most of the parents are fully employed
19 and are making just a few dollars more than the
20 allowable income to be eligible for Childcare
21 Connection which is the -- the State program for
22 childcare assistance.

23 With the high cost of living on Maui, they
24 can't afford to pay anywhere from \$500 to \$1,300
25 per month for high quality childcare on their own.

1 Some of the recipients are single parents
2 struggling to pay high rents on one income. We
3 have quite a few single dads that are raising their
4 children on their own, and this program is a great
5 benefit to them. Some of the recipients -- excuse
6 me. Others are couples working three or more jobs
7 between them to make ends meet. Some . . .

8 MS. REVELS: Three minutes.

9 MS. PADGET: Some are grandparents overwhelmed by the
10 unexpected challenge of raising their grandchildren
11 on Social Security income alone. Two parents are
12 full-time students. Three families receive short
13 term emergency help when they were terminated from
14 Childcare Connection benefits while on maternity
15 leave.

16 Without help from the Maui County subsidy,
17 they would have had to take their children out of
18 preschool and most likely lost their places at the
19 schools when they were ready to go back to work.

20 Ten families who lost their Childcare
21 Connection benefits, when the parents were laid off
22 suddenly, received assistance so they could keep
23 their children in preschool. This provided the
24 children the security of a familiar routine
25 environment during a stressful time and allowed the

1 parents the flexibility to look for new work
2 opportunities and go to job interviews.

3 In some cases, losing childcare would have
4 made them ineligible to receive unemployment
5 benefits. We have a long mailing list of families
6 requesting applications for next year, and
7 anticipate the need to be even greater than this
8 year as more families are experiencing temporary
9 layoff's and shortened work hours that will make
10 the high cost of childcare even less affordable.

11 Please remember that this program is doing a
12 lot with relatively little money. Each participant
13 receives between \$200 and \$250.

14 MS. REVELS: Four minutes.

15 MS. PADGET: Per month -- sorry. Shall I stop?

16 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Can you conclude?

17 MS. PADGET: Okay. Toward their childcare cost. They
18 pay the rest themselves. This money helps
19 struggling families keep their heads above water,
20 helps them stay in their jobs and off more
21 expensive forms of assistance, and keeps their
22 children in high quality education and care
23 environments that will help them be ready for
24 success in kindergarten and beyond.

25 The families in the program are very grateful

1 that the County Council Administration have
2 responded to their need by funding this program in
3 the past, and I ask you to include money for this
4 very worthwhile program in this year's -- next
5 year's budget. Thank you.

6 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Members, any questions
7 for the testifier? Member Medeiros?

8 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Mahalo, Mr. Chairman.
9 Ms. Padget, thank you for being here --

10 MS. PADGET: Uh-huh.

11 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: -- and for your testimony.

12 I -- I like part of your testimony that
13 families are guided to other programs as changing
14 situations make them eligible for other programs.

15 In doing that, does your agency assist private
16 early childhood programs such as preschools to
17 become accredited so they will be eligible for
18 other financial assistance?

19 MS. PADGET: Yes. That's part of what we do at -- where
20 it says other early childhood programs that we --
21 we work with. We are very connected to the early
22 childhood community, preschools and agencies, and
23 the early childhood resource coordinator is
24 actively working to help preschools who are not
25 already accredited become accredited, and if they

1 are accredited, then they can benefit and be part
2 of the Pauahi Keiki Scholar Program with the
3 Kamehameha Schools. So that opens up another
4 avenue for help to families to go to those schools.

5 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Yes. I'm glad to here that,
6 that the program and your agency does look to do
7 that so there is more availability to families and
8 children to meet some of the requirements to get
9 into this program. So thank you for the work that
10 you do, your agency, and thank you for being here
11 this morning.

12 MS. PADGET: You're welcome.

13 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Mahalo, Mr. Chairman.

14 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Members, anymore
15 questions for the testifier?

16 Seeing none, thank you, Ms. Padget.

17 MS. PADGET: Thank you.

18 CHAIR PONTANILLA: The last person to sign up for public
19 testimony is Sandy Baz.

20 MR. BAZ: Good morning, Mr. Chair and Committee Members.
21 My name is Sandy Baz from Maui Economic
22 Opportunity, and I'm here just this morning very
23 quickly to answer questions brought up earlier this
24 morning about the funding level for MEO's Head
25 Start After School and Summer Programs.

1 If you look at the Budget narrative, page
2 1024, I don't know what it is in the Budget Detail,
3 but its got listed under there for Grants for Early
4 Childhood, Maui Economic Opportunity Head Start
5 After School Program, if you fund last year's
6 appropriation of \$219,975 for that would be
7 appropriate.

8 For the MEO Head Start Summer Programs would
9 be \$123,900, and for MEO's Molokai Summer Program,
10 \$27,300. This would allow us to serve the number
11 of children that we are serving now in that program
12 and not have to reduce services for those families
13 in -- in need of the full day and summer Head
14 Starts.

15 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Members, any questions
16 for the testifier? Seeing none, thank you, Sandy.

17 MR. BAZ: Thank you.

18 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Members, Mr. Baz was the last one to
19 sign up for public testimony this morning.

20 Is there anyone in the gallery that would like
21 to provide public testimony that hadn't -- that
22 haven't signed up yet? Seeing none coming forward,
23 if there is no objection, the Chair would like to
24 close public testimony.

25 COUNCIL MEMBERS: No objection.

1 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you.

2

3

...END OF PUBLIC TESTIMONY...

4

ITEM NO. 1: PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010
FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI (CC 09-59)

5

6

7 CHAIR PONTANILLA: At this time the Chair would like to

8

recognize the presence of our Council Chair,

9

Mr. Mateo.

10

VICE-CHAIR MATEO: Good morning.

11

CHAIR PONTANILLA: Good morning.

12

Okay. Members, yesterday we left off with

13

Human Concerns Program. We got through with the A

14

account which is salaries and wages, and I know

15

that on the Housing Program, we had some questions

16

by some -- some of the Members here this morning on

17

the First Time Homebuyer's Program. The Chair is

18

going to take that item last because of the short

19

time that we have this morning before we debark for

20

Lanai.

21

Members, so coming back to the Human Concerns

22

Program, if you note, there is a one million --

23

approximately \$1.1 million of reduction which

24

represents 9 percent of the operations.

25

If I, you know, turn to you Members for

1 questions on the -- on the operations for the
2 particular program, the Chair has one question for
3 the Department in regards to Meals Program and the
4 reduction of \$82,499, and what effects would have
5 in regards to Elderly Lunch Program.

6 MS. TSUHAKO: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair. Can you identify
7 the --

8 CHAIR PONTANILLA: I'm sorry, 820.

9 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Excuse me, Mr. Chair. Sorry.

10 Before we recognize the Department, can you give us
11 a reference point where we start?

12 CHAIR PONTANILLA: 8-20. Sorry, Members. Page 8-20.

13 I'm looking at the handout that was given to us by
14 the Budget Director in regards to the number of --
15 of reductions in the different areas, and if you
16 note on page four, the last one, Meals Program,
17 they show a reduction of \$82,000.

18 MS. TSUHAKO: Sorry, Mr. Chair. One minute, please.

19 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay.

20 MS. TSUHAKO: Okay. We -- we found it, Mr. Chair.

21 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. What page is it on?

22 MS. TSUHAKO: Well, I understand what you're talking
23 about now. I wasn't sure, your reference to the
24 handout, but we found it. Thank you. The
25 reduction in the Meals Program in our budget does

1 reflect approximately a 10 percent reduction, and
2 it will have some impact on our ability to grow
3 that program.

4 Mr. Tanaka is here today, and if you have any
5 specific questions about the number of meals that
6 might be impacted by that reduction, I'm sure that
7 he'd be happy to join us and to explain that to us.

8 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Yeah. Thank you. And the reason why
9 I ask that question is I understand there is five
10 meals that is provided on a weekly basis and
11 because of the monies that going to be receiving
12 from the Stimulus Package, we have some concerns
13 with Hana as well as Lanai -- not Lanai, but
14 Lahaina in how do we provide services to those
15 programs, you know, in Lahaina as well as Hana.
16 Will this affect the ability to provide that five
17 meals for the rest of Maui County?

18 MS. TSUHAKO: It will, Sir. It -- um, you know, between
19 the vendor who is Kaunoa and the -- the agency that
20 accept some of those funds, the Office on Aging,
21 they're really trying very hard to work together to
22 find solutions that don't involve hiring more staff
23 necessarily for Kaunoa, to do more deliveries,
24 utilizing more volunteer services more thoughtfully
25 and more strategically, and also there is a

1 discussion about potentially buying a vehicle that
2 can keep the meals warm. That's one of the issues
3 that we have to be concerned about. The other
4 factor in there is that the price that each of the
5 vendors charges the County for meals went up
6 significantly recently, and I believe it happened
7 very recently, and so the increased price of meals
8 has to be factored into the overall cost of the
9 program itself.

10 CHAIR PONTANILLA: So as they increase the price, you
11 reduce your budget. So we get less meals going out
12 to the elderly from five to -- I don't know, maybe
13 a lower number like three?

14 MS. TSUHAKO: I don't know that it would reduce it in
15 that -- in that fashion that quickly, but it does
16 have an impact on our ability to do the service.
17 Yes. It does.

18 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. Thank you.

19 Members, questions? Member Molina?

20 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: No. No questions.

21 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Member Baisa?

22 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: I -- I listened to your question
23 Chair, and I heard the answer, and it appears to me
24 then that there will be a resulting impact on the
25 meals or the amount of meals or how often the meals

1 are served; is that correct?

2 MS. TSUHAKO: Yes. Hold up one second, Ms. Baisa,
3 please. I believe the numbers that Mr. Tanaka
4 provided me would suggest that there would be a
5 reduction of approximately \$16,900 Meals on Wheels
6 delivery in the next fiscal year.

7 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: And do we know how that works in
8 terms of people, five meals a week, 52 weeks in a
9 year?

10 MS. TSUHAKO: During the fiscal year, it's anticipated
11 that the number of people served through Meals on
12 Wheels will be reduced from 430 a day to 370 a day.

13 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: And you have a waiting list for
14 this program?

15 MS. TSUHAKO: I believe we do have a waiting list. Yes.

16 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: This is something for us to think
17 about because, you know, we really want to make
18 sure that our seniors at least have that meal. So
19 I'm glad this has come up, because we'll make a
20 note, and we'll -- we'll think about this. Thank
21 you.

22 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Director, the stimulus
23 money that we received, can it be utilized to meet
24 this deficit?

25

1 MS. TSUHAKO: The stimulus money that we received, we
2 discussed actually with this body last Friday is
3 about \$50,000. I'm sure that it would -- it will
4 help us to boost the services that we have now, but
5 it certainly will not replace all of the reductions
6 that the Department is having to make.

7 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. Thank you. That's something
8 that we'll take a look.

9 Member Johnson?

10 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yes. And what is the total
11 amount in -- in order to continue at the current
12 level of service? What would the total dollar
13 amount be? If you include the stimulus money, how
14 short are we if we just, in essence, replace those
15 16,900 meals?

16 CHAIR PONTANILLA: \$32,000.

17 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: 32,000?

18 MS. TSUHAKO: At least.

19 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. And if there is this
20 waiting list for the services, what -- another --
21 because how many -- how many people is that
22 actually serving?

23 MS. TSUHAKO: Well, I would -- I would also suggest,
24 Member Johnson, though that we look at with the
25 increased prices of the meals that we are having to

1 factor into the cost that the -- the shortfall
2 would actually be closer to \$100,000.

3 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

4 MS. TSUHAKO: Because if you have to factor in higher
5 meal cost as well as addressing a backlog --

6 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Right.

7 MS. TSUHAKO: -- what that would entail is really asking
8 the staff, which we already have asked the staff,
9 to work together and look at what kind of
10 collaborations can be made within the community to
11 increase the volunteer corp.

12 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Right.

13 MS. TSUHAKO: Because we are not -- we are not in a
14 position to hire more staff to do the service. So
15 we have to figure out more creative and strategic
16 ways to use volunteers and to spread out the use of
17 whatever equipment we have because we are not
18 making, you know, additional requests for
19 necessarily vehicles and things like that. So we
20 have to make better use of what we have. We
21 realize that.

22 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: And -- and I really appreciate
23 that because I think now one -- one of our former
24 residents in Lahaina, Pastor Laki Kaahumanu, he has
25 returned from the mainland, and now he is back in

1 Lahaina, and he had always in his group had always
2 been very active in doing the reaching out to
3 people that were not able to help themselves.

4 So I think that whatever we can do to help,
5 you know, foster those services.

6 I -- I think, Mr. Chair, this is one area, as
7 Member Baisa said, that the vulnerable and the
8 frail, they cannot be allowed to slip through the
9 cracks, and I really appreciate it. And if you
10 have a better number that you can provide to us,
11 that would give us some, you know, how many people,
12 what the scope is. I'd really appreciate that.

13 Thank you.

14 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you.

15 MS. TSUHAKO: Thank you.

16 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Member Medeiros.

17 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Mahalo, Mr. Chairman.

18 Since our last meeting, has there been any
19 update on information regarding why Hana gets one
20 meal per week?

21 MS. TSUHAKO: Yes. We forwarded that. I believe it
22 will be transmitted via the Mayor's office as other
23 transmittals are done in response.

24 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Okay. But you couldn't share
25 that information with us this morning?

1 MS. TSUHAKO: I can share with you what I remember about
2 that transmittal, Mr. Medeiros.

3 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: All right.

4 MS. TSUHAKO: It's the vendor -- the primary vendor
5 that's in Hana is the Department of Education, and
6 I believe Uncle Billy's and Tutu -- Tutu Snacks or
7 something are the alternates that are used during
8 the school intersession, and that those two
9 alternates would be considered as potential
10 additional vendors for Hana.

11 There is about 19 elders who receive home
12 delivered meals once per week. Eight I think of
13 those elders -- also participate in the Congregate
14 Meals Program. They go twice a week. So they
15 actually receive three meals a week from
16 programming through our Department.

17 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Uh-huh.

18 MS. TSUHAKO: We are looking at having to work with more
19 volunteer corps because there is only one half-time
20 staff out there. So that half-time staff is
21 actually delivering meals on Wednesday and working
22 on Congregate Programs on the Tuesday and Thursday
23 day of the week. So it -- the increase in meal
24 deliveries cannot happen unless we have more staff
25 or unless we have dedicated volunteers who can go

1 out and deliver those meals, and that's not even
2 counting the cost of the meals itself.

3 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Okay. So how will the
4 reduction in the Meals Program budget impact what
5 is already in Hana and the potential for increasing
6 the number of meals?

7 MS. TSUHAKO: I cannot tell you with specificity right
8 now that, you know, that a reduction in the -- in
9 the Congregate Meals or in Meals on Wheels is going
10 to affect Hana by so many meals per week because I
11 don't have that information, but I'm guessing, as
12 an Administrator, I would guess that it would have
13 an impact on Hana as well as having an impact on --
14 on folks in all of our areas of Maui that are
15 served through this program.

16 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Okay. You said the reduction
17 in budget would equate to the reduction of 16,000
18 meals; is that correct?

19 CHAIR PONTANILLA: 16,900.

20 MS. TSUHAKO: Uh . . . 16,900.

21 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Okay. So that would equate to
22 what dollar amount? I realize . . .

23 MS. TSUHAKO: Well, I mean, I think it -- it's directly
24 related to the reduction of the . . .

25 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: \$82,000?

1 MS. TSUHAKO: Yeah. Or the \$98,000 because of the meal
2 cost increases. And if I -- if I could, Member
3 Medeiros, may I ask, Mr. Chair, if our Senior
4 Services Administrator --

5 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Oh, yeah, by all means. Mr. Tanaka.

6 MS. TSUHAKO: -- Robin Tanaka can join us? He can
7 provide you with more specific information.

8 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. We've got the expert coming.

9 MS. TSUHAKO: Thank you, Robin.

10 MR. TANAKA: Good morning, Councilmen. Thank you for
11 that question. Yes, we were asked to do a 10
12 percent cut in our B account, and we knew that
13 there would be some major cutbacks in our services.
14 And what we are looking at is, one, a cutback of
15 about 82,000 in our B account, and also an increase
16 in meal cost. Three of our major vendors will be
17 increasing the cost of the meals effective July
18 2009. And with the results or the combination of
19 the reduction in meal costs -- I mean, in the
20 budget for the meals, and the increase in meal
21 costs, we are looking at a total of about 28,000
22 meal reduction. This would be about 17,000 for the
23 Meals on Wheels program and about 11,000 for the
24 Congregate Program.

25 This will result in about 60 to 70 less meals

1 per day for the Meals on Wheels Program. I mean,
2 clients would have to reduce from about 430 to
3 about 360, 370 meals per day, and for our five day
4 sites, we'll be cutting the service to four days.
5 For our two day sites, we have a total of 20 sites,
6 we'll be cutting back about one day every two or
7 three -- every three months in service.

8 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: So your Congregate Meal
9 Service, what's the facility in Hana that is used
10 for that?

11 MR. TANAKA: Right now for Congregate, we have a two-day
12 meal program every Tuesday and Thursday. There are
13 about 25 people that receive those meals. So since
14 it's a two-day site, we'll be cutting back one day
15 service every three months.

16 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Yeah. My question is, what
17 site is that?

18 MR. TANAKA: The Community Center.

19 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: The Community Center?

20 MR. TANAKA: Yes.

21 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Okay. Is that associated with
22 Hale Hulu Mamo?

23 MR. TANAKA: They serve, I think, on Monday, Wednesday
24 and Friday. We serve on Tuesday and Thursdays.
25 Yes.

1 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: So we may potentially expect in
2 Hana, from going from a one meal per day to a no
3 meal per day?

4 MR. TANAKA: For the Meals on Wheels Program, we have
5 only one day service.

6 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Correct.

7 MR. TANAKA: As the Director mentioned, we have one
8 person out there. That person does Meals on Wheels
9 one day, two days Congregate site, Tuesday and
10 Thursday. One day, she goes out to Kanae to run
11 that site out there, and I think the other days to
12 provide assisted transportation.

13 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: I see. I realize that the
14 meals may cost different -- at different areas with
15 the different vendors, and I'm not sure what the
16 health requirements are as far as what you prepare
17 and with whom.

18 Has there been any consideration because that
19 we may see this impact on our seniors to purchase
20 prepared frozen meals in bulk to reduce your costs
21 substantially, and that those meals could be heated
22 up at the different sites throughout the County?

23 MR. TANAKA: I don't think the frozen meal -- the cost
24 of the meal would be reduced, but as far as the
25 number of meals that we can deliver during a day

1 would be increased. Yes.

2 With regards to this cut, just for your
3 information, 92 percent of our meals program
4 account is set aside for purchase of meals and for
5 the consumable supplies that we need to pack and
6 deliver those meals. So it's really -- so we say
7 there will be a \$80,000 cut. It's all in meal
8 cost.

9 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Yeah. That's my question. Is
10 -- I have a challenging time thinking that a vendor
11 would charge a certain price and that in bulk
12 frozen material -- frozen meals like through Costco
13 would cost the same? To me, the cost should be
14 substantially lower.

15 MR. TANAKA: Well, so you're referring about purchasing
16 meals from Costco.

17 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Well, from any vendor that you
18 can purchase frozen meals prepared in bulk and then
19 have the sites just heat it up. Have you -- have
20 your agency thought about that because . . .

21 MR. TANAKA: Yes. We looked at that. In fact, we did a
22 survey to find out how many of our Meals on Wheels
23 home delivery clients had microwaves. About 85
24 percent indicated they did have microwaves, but
25 many didn't want to use the microwaves. Many of

1 our Meals on Wheels clients are people that live
2 alone, or they live with families that go to work.
3 So they are home by themselves, and many didn't --
4 I would say maybe -- I'm trying to recall what the
5 survey results were. I would say maybe about 30
6 percent indicated they wouldn't mind receiving
7 frozen meals, and they could handle it.

8 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Yeah. My -- my thinking on
9 this is that we do have a County approved kitchen
10 at the Hana Community Center which is the old
11 cafeteria kitchen, and to purchase microwaves and
12 have staff do it there would seem a good
13 alternative than to cut the number of meals that
14 you're considering.

15 What are your thoughts on that?

16 MR. TANAKA: You're talking about for the Congregate
17 Program or for the Meals on Wheels Program?

18 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Well, whatever program we need
19 to deliver or have meals given -- provided to our
20 seniors that qualify for them.

21 MR. TANAKA: One of the things we need to -- one of the
22 requirements of the program is that the meal has to
23 be at a certain temperature when we deliver it. I
24 think it's 140 degrees Fahrenheit. The other thing
25 is that it has to meet a nutrition standard, and

1 normally a nutrition or dietitian would make that
2 determination, and our current vendors are major
3 vendors, are Molokai General Hospital, the DOE and
4 Hale Mahaolu, and these people have dietitians
5 aboard that review the menus and determine that it
6 meets the requirements.

7 So that's one thing we would have to -- one
8 obstacle we would have to comply with.

9 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Okay. And I understand your
10 responses, but I -- I would encourage you and your
11 agency to look at alternatives besides just looking
12 at a reduction in the budget and seeing that it
13 will cut meals, just asking the agency to be more
14 innovative in thinking of other options possibly
15 available so we don't cut the meals to our seniors,
16 our kupuna, especially in rural areas where there
17 is less services available to them. So that's what
18 I'm asking the Department.

19 Okay. Thank you, Mr. Tanaka.

20 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Mr. Tanaka --

21 MR. TANAKA: Yes.

22 CHAIR PONTANILLA: -- you mentioned Hale Hulu Mamo.

23 They provide two meals a week?

24 MR. TANAKA: Three meals a week for the Congregate
25 Program.

1 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Three meals a week on the Congregate
2 Program. So in -- in -- they provide three meals a
3 week. So basically, the people in Hana, the
4 seniors are receiving five meals per week?

5 MR. TANAKA: Um -- yes. It's available for five days a
6 week, but we have different requirements as to who
7 can qualify for the meals.

8 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. Okay. Thank you.
9 Member Nishiki?

10 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Robin, good morning.
11 My question is, you are not accepting anymore
12 people, whether they be Congregate or Meals on
13 Wheels?

14 MR. TANAKA: No. The Congregate Program, people -- we
15 still accepting people, that they just will have to
16 cut the number of days -- service days for those
17 meals. For the Meals on Wheels Program? Yes. We
18 are not accepting people at this point. Yeah. We
19 have a waiting list of about 100 clients.

20 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: That's it.

21 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Member Mateo.

22 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: Chairman, my questions are not
23 relative to the meals program.

24 Can I go elsewhere?

25 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. No questions for Mr. Tanaka?

1 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: No.

2 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. I've got one question for
3 Mr. Tanaka.

4 In order for us to restore this Meals Program,
5 to care of our seniors, for the elderly, the amount
6 that was removed, 82,499 would provide full service
7 to all areas?

8 MR. TANAKA: In doing a calculation for the Meals on
9 Wheels Program, off the 800 something dollars that
10 -- I'm sorry, 80 something thousand dollars cut,
11 55,000 was set aside for the Meals on Wheels
12 Program. So we would have to restore that. Plus
13 the increase in our meal cost was calculated at
14 43,000. So that would be a total of 98,000 to
15 maintain current service levels for the Meals on
16 Wheels Program.

17 For the Congregate Program, about 35,000 of
18 that 80,000 was cut from the Congregate Program,
19 and our meal cost increase would be about 23,000.
20 So adding those up would be 35 plus 23 --

21 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. Thank you.

22 MR. TANAKA: -- to maintain services for our Congregate
23 Program.

24 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Is there an income qualification for
25 -- to receive these meals?

1 MR. TANAKA: No. None.

2 CHAIR PONTANILLA: None.

3 MR. TANAKA: Yes. But however, the participants do make
4 a donation to the meals, and they contribute
5 whatever they can.

6 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. Thank you.
7 Member Molina?

8 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Chair.
9 One question for Mr. Tanaka.
10 You know, if this proposal is left to stand as
11 is, how is a determination made to -- I guess it
12 was mentioned earlier about 60 clients would be
13 impacted. How is it -- how will you make that
14 determination, I guess, to break the bad news, so
15 to speak?

16 MR. TANAKA: Yeah. I guess with any shortage of funds,
17 the first thing we would need to do is to
18 prioritize service to people with the greatest
19 need. And we probably would have to sit with our
20 colleagues in The Office of Aging who determine the
21 eligibility for people that receive these meals and
22 kind of discuss and try to provide service to
23 people that we determine with the greatest need.

24 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Uh-huh. So clients that had been
25 receiving this service for X number of years, will

1 you then make a determination for someone who may
2 just sort of I guess apply for something like this
3 or who just been on the program less time than
4 those who had been on it a longer time, will you
5 then give preference to -- I guess, you'll just --
6 as you stated, you'll go more by need?

7 MR. TANAKA: Yeah. The best way to do it would be
8 through attrition because people leave the program.
9 We wouldn't replace, you know, another person,
10 another client. So we try that method first rather
11 than just cutting somebody off.

12 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. Thank you.

13 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: That's -- that's a really tough
14 dilemma you're going to be in, and I know times are
15 tough, you know, Mr. Chairman. And for me
16 personally, I think to cut back on food for people,
17 that's real tough for me to take. I mean, I can
18 understand cutting back on services that are not as
19 essential as the basics like food, but in this
20 case, we've got seniors, a lot of hungry people out
21 there. So, you know, just my thoughts,
22 Mr. Chairman.

23 Thank you, Mr. Tanaka. Thank you, Chair.

24 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Yeah. Go ahead.

25 MS. TSUHAKO: Members, I also like you to know that

1 recently there was a team visiting our Office on
2 Aging from the Executive Office on Aging, and they
3 helped our staff do an audit of how State monies
4 and Federal monies that are funded -- funneled
5 through the State are being spent here, and one of
6 the things -- one of the results of that audit, and
7 some of the recommendations that were made are that
8 the Office on Aging take a good look again at the
9 eligibility of clients for these services because
10 there are very strict eligibility requirements, and
11 I think that what I understood is that some folks
12 have been receiving some services for which on
13 paper they are not eligible for, and so I think
14 part of addressing the shortfall also is looking at
15 cleaning up the backlog of reassessments on -- on
16 the elders and making sure that the folks that are
17 getting the service are actually eligible and that
18 those who are on the wait list are, indeed,
19 eligible by the standards that are -- that are
20 determined by the Federal Government that funds
21 some of these programs also.

22 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Mr. Chair, if I could follow up
23 on the Director's comments?

24 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Sure.

25 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: So -- so are you saying that over

1 the years then, we may have been providing services
2 for people who may not have been eligible for this?

3 MS. TSUHAKO: Well, in a way. Yes. I think what I want
4 to say is that when the determinations on the
5 assessment are made, sometimes the -- the
6 assessments have been very generous in terms of
7 provision of services, and so the office -- the
8 Executive Office on Aging has suggested that we
9 tighten up on those assessments to make them more
10 accurate and more within the guidelines that are
11 being set up for us in terms of how we spend money,
12 and -- and I have no disagreement with that,
13 because I think when we do -- when you do an
14 assessment, and you see somebody is eligible for a
15 service because of the need, then we should be able
16 to substantiate that.

17 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. Well, thank you, Madam
18 Director. I wish you success in that endeavor
19 because if that is the case, Mr. Chairman, by all
20 means, we need to tighten up because if there are
21 people out there who really are not -- I don't want
22 to use the term "deserving," but if that's the
23 case, then they shouldn't be receiving that
24 assistance if they already have the means to get
25 food for themselves, and you know, insure that we

1 provide the service for those who are really in
2 need, and of that over 100 people that are waiting,
3 there might be people out there who are much more
4 eligible for those services than some of those who
5 are currently receiving the services now. Thank
6 you, Mr. Chair.

7 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. And it's my understanding
8 that the Department will follow up on those things
9 to make -- to make sure that the ones that really
10 need the meals get the meals.

11 Before I call on Member Nishiki, Member
12 Johnson.

13 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yes. And I wouldn't beat
14 yourself up because sometimes your qualifications
15 that you're looking at are the income criteria
16 generally. Is that not true? Do they look at what
17 the income qualifications are for the individuals?

18 MS. TSUHAKO: Member Johnson, no. They are not looking
19 at income criteria.

20 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

21 MS. TSUHAKO: They are -- actually, the outreach workers
22 are doing assessments on activities of daily
23 living, being able to drive or having the support
24 services to -- some families have the means to have
25 food brought in for family members. Some people

1 can drive to the Congregate --
2 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah.
3 MS. TSUHAKO: -- to get food. So -- so we are looking
4 at those -- those assessments and updating them --
5 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Uh-huh.
6 MS. TSUHAKO: -- to see if folks continue to need the
7 service.
8 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah. Because I'm really glad
9 then because I -- even myself, I think that
10 sometimes, just like the child meals that are
11 provided in the Department of Education, in order
12 to receive certain benefits, you have to qualify
13 based on what your income would be, your capability
14 to pay. So what you're saying is that it's the
15 actual need of the individual irrespective of their
16 ability to pay.
17 MS. TSUHAKO: Yes.
18 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Now, if you had people within
19 the program that actually contributed more to the
20 program because they do have a greater financial
21 capability, what efforts do you or, I guess, the --
22 you know, the people that directly interact, what
23 efforts do you make to let those people know that
24 if they do have financial wherewithal, where they
25 can contribute additional monies so that others who

1 are also deserving of the program, but maybe
2 because there is not enough money, where they can
3 make contributions. Do you do that?

4 MR. TANAKA: Yes. We do. We send fliers out. We
5 indicate to them how important their contribution
6 will be to the program. However, according to
7 Federal guidelines, you know, we can't pressure the
8 family.

9 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Oh, I realize.

10 MR. TANAKA: Yeah. It's just all voluntary
11 contribution, and all the monies that we receive go
12 back into the program to pay for meals.

13 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah. And -- and I just want to
14 let people know that if they have, you know, and
15 this is a good time to do it because if people are
16 watching, if they have the ability because of their
17 income or, you know, pension, whatever they get,
18 and they have that ability to pay, it will also
19 help us tremendously to be able to continue to
20 provide that service to others because where you're
21 drawing the line strictly due to budgetary
22 constraints, it's really hard. So I, you know, I
23 know people are hurting financially, but just that
24 little bit of extra assistance, it really helps,
25 because I know, even with MEO, when -- when they

1 come, I always ask them for their envelope, you
2 know, for their contributions or whatever, and they
3 are always grateful for whatever assistance can be
4 given.

5 So I -- I just think the more we can do though
6 to educate the public, that if they can contribute
7 a little, we can continue those programs as well.
8 Thank you.

9 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Thank you. Members, if
10 you have more questions regarding the -- the Meals
11 Program for -- well, the Elderly Lunch Program,
12 please submit the -- those questions to the Chair.

13 Continuing on the Operations, Member Mateo?

14 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: Chairman, thank you very much, and I
15 just wanted to ask the Department if they can
16 provide additional information, and this would be
17 on the -- the Immigrant Services, and we can start
18 -- we can start with 815 for rentals, and if you
19 can -- you can tell us the -- the need for those
20 additional funds?

21 MS. TSUHAKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The -- the
22 rental fees for immigrant under the Immigrant
23 Services' Index Code, is for an office space that's
24 being rented for our two staff members on Molokai.
25 Their rent is \$825 per month. So that figure is

1 reflected in our request.

2 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: Okay. And the long term projection
3 then, Madam Director, would be to continue to rent
4 for those two individuals?

5 MS. TSUHAKO: For the long term, I mean, I hope that we
6 have a spot that we can have all of our County
7 folks together.

8 One of the reasons that the two Immigrant
9 Services staff members were moved out of their old
10 placement which is in the County facility was
11 because the trailer that housed our Senior Services
12 Program was not inhabitable anymore in the
13 condition that it was, and because the Kaunoha staff
14 saw other -- another location from which to work,
15 the Department made its decision to try and
16 co-locate other Housing and Human Concerns staff in
17 the same location.

18 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: And having said that, that same
19 direction from prior leadership also talked about
20 the Department coming up with funds to do a campus
21 study to see how the employees from your division
22 would be housed.

23 Can you tell me where that would be reflected
24 in this budget?

25 MS. TSUHAKO: The campus study for Molokai is not

1 reflected in my budget, Sir.

2 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: Thank you. And the only reason I'm
3 asking, Madam Director, is because this \$49,000
4 that is being projected is really a wasting of
5 County funds. These two individuals had an office
6 on Molokai. They had space that they were not
7 really being, you know, having to pay for.

8 When they were moved, you had to pay for
9 electricity and for the -- the relocation. As a
10 matter of fact, even prior to this office moving,
11 they were paying for rent that was virtually
12 unoccupied for several months.

13 For the other individuals, for the Senior
14 Program, the trailer was definitely in dire need of
15 help. It was leaking, et cetera, and instead of
16 looking at a replacement trailer while a campus
17 study was actually done, the choice of that
18 director was to move everybody under one location.

19 I just see a blatant misuse of monies that
20 could have definitely been moved towards the -- you
21 know, the meals probably or, you know,
22 consideration.

23 I'm just troubled that we expended monies that
24 we didn't have to.

25 Moving onto the Acculturation Program, can you

1 tell me the purpose and the function of that
2 program -- that -- that initially was targeted at
3 \$25,000 prior and in this fiscal year nothing?

4 MS. TSUHAKO: Mr. Mateo, the Acculturation Program was
5 intended originally at its -- at its inception to
6 be a program that worked with immigrant youth to do
7 pro-social activities, to do social support as well
8 as academic support in order so that they wouldn't
9 be involved in negative activities such as gang
10 membership and delinquency.

11 Since that time, really, the -- the definition
12 of Acculturation has moved beyond the youth
13 population. Our Immigrant Services office deals
14 with a large population of Pacific Islanders who
15 have become new members of our community, and so
16 we've -- we've actually been looking at expansion
17 of Acculturation to mean more than just with youth,
18 but with entire families because we are having to
19 deal with the consequences of having new immigrants
20 here from other cultures other than the
21 Philippines.

22 The \$25,000 that you see under contractual
23 services, sub-object quote 6112, was actually added
24 to the existing County grant subsidy of \$50,000,
25 and then reduced a little bit by -- by \$6,000, I

1 think. So we combined, rather than having a
2 contractual service which we had for Molokai
3 services, we just put it into a single source so
4 that all of the Acculturation services could be
5 provided through the County grant subsidy.

6 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: Okay. Thank you.

7 And then, Madam Director, if you can tell me,
8 the County's Immigration Office, do we service
9 Filipino's only?

10 MS. TSUHAKO: No.

11 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: Can you tell me who we service?

12 MS. TSUHAKO: The Immigrant Services Office services
13 immigrants from every -- every ethnic group you can
14 imagine.

15 I think there is a misconception, and there
16 has been for a long time that the only immigrants
17 being served there are Filipino immigrants, and
18 that's certainly not true.

19 We can certainly provide a breakdown of all
20 the immigrants and all their ethnicities that are
21 served through our office. They do -- my staff
22 does a very remarkable job for the number of people
23 that they have working for them in helping people
24 with immigration issues. They have an excellent
25 relationship with the immigration office in

1 Honolulu. I'm very proud of the work they do.

2 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: And also, Madam Director, then at the
3 same time, you still have a vacancy for an
4 Immigrant Service Specialist II, and I'm trying to
5 ask these things because the question I'm going to
6 ask you is one that's real simple.

7 We have an immigration office that you're
8 proud of. We have an immigration office that
9 services more than Filipino -- the Filipino
10 community. You have an immigration office that
11 you're in collaboration with -- with the Honolulu
12 and the Federal Office of Immigration. Have you
13 considered the addition of the services in the
14 existing office to take care of the Latino
15 community?

16 MS. TSUHAKO: The Latino community is served.

17 We do service --

18 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: Not by your office, Madam. They are
19 served by a separate grant amount that we provide
20 to the Enlace's Program.

21 MS. TSUHAKO: They are also served -- they're -- we do
22 also serve Hispanic residents of Maui County, Sir,
23 through our office.

24 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: So the Department prefers the
25 separate grant item to serve this one group versus

1 your -- under your Department?

2 MS. TSUHAKO: The -- the grant that the Department
3 provides to the Enlace Hispano Program, I can speak
4 perhaps on Monday -- at Monday's hearing about the
5 specifics, but if we look at the proposal that the
6 agency has provided as well as the services they
7 provide, they provide a service that's more in
8 depth, for example. I think one of the proposed
9 service -- what they do right now is that they help
10 people with driver's licenses. They help people
11 with getting their GED's, things like that. And
12 those services are more in depth than what our
13 office is capable of doing. So it's -- it's --
14 it's not a fair comparison to make at this point.

15 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: So what I'm saying then, if they are
16 providing services to our immigrants in that
17 nature, then I think then your Department's
18 operation is not providing consistent services to
19 the other immigrants as well.

20 So I think it's time the Department take a
21 look at consolidating all Immigrant Services and
22 provide similar services, or there is disparity in
23 the services that you provide. And that's all I'm
24 trying to say.

25 MS. TSUHAKO: Thank you. I'll take that under

1 advisement.

2 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Mr. Nishiki?

4 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: No.

5 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Mr. Medeiros?

6 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Mahalo, Mr. Chairman.

7 I just wanted to follow up. So Director,
8 since you do indicate that you folks serve other
9 immigrant groups, and I know, like you say, there
10 have been a misconception that the Immigration
11 Services under your management just serves
12 Filipinos which I'm sure is not true, as you say,
13 but you do have fluent speaking Filipino staff
14 members, how do you handle other immigrant groups
15 that speak their native language and you don't have
16 people that speak it?

17 MS. TSUHAKO: Thank you. That's an excellent question.

18 We do have bi-lingual staff in our Immigrant
19 Services Office. The way that any other service
20 provider would work with an immigrant who is not
21 fluent in English is to utilize the resources that
22 exist in the community. So our Immigrant Services
23 staff knows people who have expertise in other
24 languages. They might, once they are introduced to
25 the client, they may call on those other people to

1 come in and assist them or more often than not, the
2 client themselves will bring a family member who
3 can at least do translation between what the
4 Immigrant Services staff is saying and what the
5 client needs to know.

6 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: I see. Okay. That's good to
7 know. Because I think one of the larger immigrant
8 groups that we have now is the Micronesians, and I
9 think you know . . . Tell me this though, when we
10 get immigrants say from the Philippines they come
11 with a different citizenship and they work on their
12 American citizenship. Micronesians come from a
13 territory that the United States has an agreement
14 with. Are they still considered non-US citizens or
15 are they considered US citizens?

16 MS. TSUHAKO: I don't believe they are considered US
17 citizens. I might be wrong but I don't believe
18 they're considered US citizens because of the
19 COMPAQ, I think it's called the COMPAQ Freedom
20 Association --

21 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Uh-huh.

22 MS. TSUHAKO: -- those residents have privileges to work
23 without a formal work permit and things of that
24 nature.

25 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: So if they want to become US

1 citizens, they have to go through the same program
2 that Filipinos coming from the Philippines have to
3 go through.

4 MS. TSUHAKO: I don't know the answer to that, sir.

5 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Okay. And Mr. Chairman, so as
6 far as the B Account, we're looking at just 8-15?
7 I mean, everything says Human Concerns Program at
8 the top.

9 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Yeah, the total operations for the
10 Human Concerns Program. I don't know how many
11 questions that you have, but . . .

12 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Well, it's the entire B account
13 then, all the pages?

14 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Yeah.

15 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Whoa!

16 CHAIR PONTANILLA: And then if you have more questions

17 --

18 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Holy smoke.

19 CHAIR PONTANILLA: -- you know, you can provide it in
20 writing to -- to the Chair, and you can get
21 information from the Department.

22 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: So it's just one program, and
23 all of this is under their program?

24 CHAIR PONTANILLA: On operations. Yeah.

25 COUNCILMEMBER MEDEIROS: Well, it's too much to review.

1 Okay. Thank you.

2 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Member Johnson.

3 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: And -- and if you don't feel
4 comfortable answering, I totally understand, but
5 because as our Member Medeiros just alluded to,
6 your Department of -- I see this as you're making
7 across the board cuts in areas that are, I guess,
8 substantial. And some of the services that you
9 provide are, in my opinion, really core because
10 they serve the frail and elderly. They serve the
11 most vulnerable people in the community.

12 If you had to add money into a specific area
13 where you believe that it was very hard for you to
14 make that across the board cut, do you feel
15 comfortable saying what area or areas that is
16 besides the meals that we've already spoken about?

17 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Department?

18 MS. TSUHAKO: Member Johnson, I thank you for your
19 consideration of that.

20 You're -- you're actually very accurate. It
21 was very grueling to come up with this budget, and
22 I think, you know, part of what the Department
23 tried to do in -- in creating and drafting this
24 budget is to look at overall need, and to
25 prioritize, not just in the way we made

1 recommendations on funding of grants which was by
2 identifying service priorities. Food, shelter and
3 safety issues were our priorities, but we tried to
4 look at the Department and make reductions with --
5 with that same three-prong focus in mind. And this
6 -- the document that you're seeing is the result of
7 that.

8 I'm -- I'm not really comfortable saying,
9 well, give money to this, or give money to that. I
10 mean, I think if you can formulate a question and
11 submit that, I will -- I will think more about
12 that, but I really stand here as an advocate for
13 the Department as well as for the work that's being
14 done by all the partners that we have in our
15 community.

16 You know, we -- we are responsible for -- for
17 many, many things, and we are very realistic about
18 what we have to do and what we can do and what we
19 want to do.

20 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah. And -- and the only
21 reason I ask is because you -- you knew which cuts
22 were probably the hardest to make, if any. And
23 when I look at the cut, for example, to the
24 programs or the frail and elderly, you know, the
25 youth programs, you know, I know you've cut those

1 too. But I think that because the needs in the
2 community are so great, and particularly with frail
3 and elderly people, they -- they can't really go
4 too many places to get these services. So what
5 I'll do, Mr. Chair, is I will -- I will try to
6 formulate a question, you know, and then submit it
7 to staff because there are, you know, this program
8 is huge, and when it comes to just the core
9 services, I'm really concerned about people not
10 falling through the cracks because as these times
11 increase in difficulty, I think those sections of
12 the population that are the most vulnerable -- I --
13 I just think that they are going to need a little
14 bit more help than the average citizen.

15 So I thank you, Madam Director. I know it's
16 not easy, but if you think of anything too in the
17 meantime, I just appreciate either you telling me
18 personally or, you know, just take a second look.
19 Because if we have to allocate money to these
20 things, I want to make sure that we are putting it
21 where it's going to be most important and really
22 make a difference to you. Thank you.

23 MS. TSUHAKO: Thank you, Member Johnson.

24 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you, Member Johnson. And
25 you're right with economic times, people losing

1 their jobs, you know, the Department becomes more
2 of a safety net for all of those that are affected
3 in our community.

4 So, you know, Director Tsuhako has a tough
5 job, and based on the reductions that she has made,
6 you know, it's going to be up to us to make sure
7 that, you know, those frail elderly, the young
8 ones, and I like her priority, food, shelter and
9 the safety net for our community.

10 Member Baisa?

11 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Yes. Thank you very much. And I
12 certainly agree with Director Tsuhako's idea that
13 we need to take care of core services at this time
14 because making sure that people are taken care of,
15 their basic needs are met, in my opinion, is our
16 priority. But I'm confused. Did I not understand
17 that we were going to do grants on Monday?

18 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Yes. We are.

19 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Because it's all mixed up in here,
20 and there are grants before page 820 where we went.

21 Are we going to have a chance to come back and
22 discuss those?

23 CHAIR PONTANILLA: At the rate we are going, we are
24 going to bring back Department of Housing and Human
25 Services (sic) because I doubt if we are going to

1 complete today, and if need be, it's going to be
2 Monday of next week, Tuesday, probably because this
3 is one of the Departments that I think is --
4 because of the condition, you know, our economy
5 condition, that this Department plays a big role in
6 trying to meet the needs of our community.

7 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: The reason I'm asking that is I
8 didn't know if it was appropriate to ask about any
9 of these grants that we skipped in order to get to
10 820, or are we saving that for the grant
11 discussion?

12 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Well, I was saving it for the grant
13 discussion on Monday, but, you know, my -- my
14 agenda is to go into the Human Concerns Program
15 based upon A, B, C accounts, and then follow up
16 with the grants later on.

17 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: So even though there's grants
18 mixed up in the B account as we are looking at it
19 right now -- it's the way it's presented that's
20 confusing, the way it's in our Budget Details. You
21 know, you've got grants mixed up, and then you get
22 to more other costs, and it's kind of hard to
23 follow, but anyway, we really should take a look at
24 a lot of these, Chair, because there is a lot of
25 information in here, and a lot of money.

1 CHAIR PONTANILLA: There are. Yeah. I understand that.

2 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: If I could just go back to the
3 Immigrant Services Division for one moment?

4 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Sure.

5 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: There is a performance measure
6 that I don't understand, and I would like to hear
7 about it. It sounds interesting.

8 In the Immigrant Services Office, on page 1014
9 on the very bottom, they state, savings to
10 immigrants who were provided with services by our
11 office in '08, not applicable, '09, half a mill,
12 and Fiscal Year '10, half a mill. What is this?
13 Can somebody explain?

14 MS. TSUHAKE: Mrs. -- thank you for your question,
15 Mrs. Baisa.

16 The -- that performance measure was not
17 included in Fiscal Year '08 because it didn't
18 exist. It was added recently.

19 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Uh-huh.

20 MS. TSUHAKE: And what I asked the Immigrant Services
21 Division to do is to keep track of the services
22 that they provided to their clients that would
23 preclude them, the clients from having to go to
24 Oahu, pay for airfare, pay for their transportation
25 over there to get work done on Oahu. And recently

1 -- I'll give you an example. Recently, Immigrant
2 Services worked together with the Maui Filipino
3 Club to host, and you know, to make all the
4 arrangements for the Consul General from the
5 Philippines to come to Maui. He's -- that staff
6 has come twice, once last fall and once on March
7 the 28th. And our Immigrant Services staff has
8 helped to do the processing of some of the
9 paperwork so that the passports and changes in
10 status can be done here on Maui rather than having
11 each of those 3,000 or so folks having to pay
12 airfare, travel to Oahu, go to the Consulate in
13 Nuuanu and have it done there. And so it's kind of
14 a cumulative tracking of how much money we are
15 actually saving people by having the service here
16 rather than having to -- having them fly to Oahu
17 individually.

18 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: I'm happy that this was brought
19 out because, you know, there is a humongous cost
20 benefit if you look at the cost of the office and
21 the cost of what it's saving because this is out of
22 pocket money that would come from people who can
23 least afford it.

24 So to me, it's a very important statistic, and
25 I'm glad that you're tracking it. It surprises me

1 that we never thought of doing something like this
2 when I was at MEO. This is a very good cost
3 benefit statistic. So thank you very much for that
4 information.

5 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you.

6 Member Molina?

7 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Chair.

8 Just to follow up on Chairman Mateo's inquiry
9 into the Immigration Services to the Department,
10 and I believe I heard you were going to provide us
11 a breakdown on numbers of -- by ethnic groups, the
12 amounts being serviced.

13 MS. TSUHAKO: Yes.

14 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Am I correct in saying that, I
15 guess, the top three ethnic groups being serviced
16 would be, in terms of numbers, would be -- would it
17 be Filipino's, Hispanics, Pacific Islanders, just
18 for starters?

19 MS. TSUHAKO: Those ethnic groups would be among the top
20 three, Councilmember Molina, but I -- I don't have
21 that. They printed it out for me, but I don't have
22 it with me right now.

23 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay.

24 MS. TSUHAKO: So I don't want to say yes and have to
25 come back later.

1 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Sure. So -- so you wouldn't know
2 of late which -- which ethnic group is, I guess,
3 receiving the amount -- most amount of services at
4 this time based on the rate of people coming in to
5 become residence?

6 MS. TSUHAKO: I -- I would guess that it might be the
7 Filipino immigrants just because they've been here
8 longer than some of those other ethnic groups, and
9 they -- there for the most part because they have
10 many family members who are already here, they are
11 very well versed in the services that the Immigrant
12 Services Office does provide, and so they take good
13 advantage of it.

14 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. And because we have one
15 agency that provide -- is getting a grant that
16 provides additional services for one particular
17 ethnic group, historically, are you aware of any
18 other agencies or organizations that have come to
19 the Department for the same type of additional
20 services for other ethnic groups?

21 MS. TSUHAKO: I am not, Sir.

22 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. All right. Thank you.

23 Thank you, Chair.

24 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you.

25 Members, again, for clarification, the Chair

1 is intending to take up the grants on Monday
2 because there is a lot of grants up, that is in the
3 Department of Housing and Human Concerns.

4 Members, anymore questions on the B account?
5 Seeing none, the C account equipment? The
6 Department is -- or the program is asking for
7 \$27,000 worth of equipment. Department, if you can
8 identify those equipment?

9 MS. TSUHAKO: Thank you, Sir.

10 I'm sorry. I'm having problems with my binder
11 today.

12 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Mr. Pablo gave us a handout. It's so
13 easy to follow.

14 MS. TSUHAKO: Yeah. I'm sorry. Thank you. Thank you,
15 Fred.

16 The equipment requested by the Department
17 includes leases for copiers as well as metal
18 storage -- I'll go down item by item.

19 A copier in the amount of \$3,170 for lease
20 from Grants Management. A copier lease for \$4,219
21 for Office on Aging, Senior Leisure, other
22 equipment which is a metal storage container for --
23 in the amount of \$5,000, and a motor vehicle in the
24 amount of 20,000 -- \$27,000 excuse me -- to -- to
25 -- as a replacement vehicle.

1 CHAIR PONTANILLA: How old is the -- the -- the ones
2 that -- the one that's going to be replaced?

3 MS. TSUHAKO: I believe the one that's going to be
4 replaced is more than ten years old.

5 It's actually a 1997 vehicle with about
6 136,000 miles, a replacement for that vehicle.

7 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you.

8 Members, any questions regarding -- regarding
9 equipment? Member Johnson?

10 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Is this the area that I remember
11 we had a donation of a vehicle? I think we had
12 some discussion about it. It was a Jeep or
13 something?

14 MS. TSUHAKO: Yes. It was for assisted transportation.
15 You're correct.

16 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. So then that vehicle
17 though, because it had -- it was just like a -- it
18 wasn't a steady use vehicle, it was just, if
19 something broke down, it would be used as in an
20 emergency situation?

21 MS. TSUHAKO: Right. That Jeep Cherokee that was
22 donated last year was -- is to be used only as a --
23 as a standby. It's not part of the regular fleet.

24 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. I -- I just -- I remember
25 that vehicle that was used for that. So anyway,

1 and the assisted transportation motor vehicle, do
2 you have any idea what kind of vehicle it's going
3 to be? Because for \$27,000, is it a, you know, van
4 or . . .

5 MS. TSUHAKO: If I recall correctly, Member Johnson, I
6 believe that it was a hybrid vehicle that was being
7 requested.

8 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah. Because I just -- I had
9 an opportunity to look yesterday at the new Honda
10 which is probably like the Prius which would be the
11 insight, and it was less, I guess, than \$20,000,
12 and it's hybrid, and it gets about 50 miles to the
13 gallon. So my suggestion would be take a look at
14 it.

15 MS. TSUHAKO: Yeah. We -- we need for the purposes of
16 the senior transportation, we need a four door
17 vehicle.

18 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: This is four door.

19 MS. TSUHAKO: Yeah. Okay.

20 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: It's four door, and it's
21 everything --

22 MS. TSUHAKO: Thank you.

23 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: -- that you could ever
24 imagine. So I just suggest because it's
25 substantially less expensive for a comparable

1 Prius. And if you look at those vehicles now that
2 are out, \$7,000 -- it's \$7,000, and you multiply
3 that out times the number of vehicles, I think it's
4 really worth looking at.

5 MS. TSUHAKO: Thank you.

6 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Members, see if you have
7 any questions in regards to Human Concerns Program,
8 please forward to the Chair, and we'll get answers
9 from the Department.

10 Members, let's go back to First Time
11 Homebuyer's Fund.

12 Member Molina, I think you had a question
13 along with Member Mateo.

14 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I -- I
15 know Mr. Mateo brought the subject up first. If --
16 you know, I'm happy to yield the floor to
17 Mr. Mateo, or if he is ready to start off, then I
18 can follow up, and the rest of our colleagues.

19 CHAIR PONTANILLA: I tell you what, Members, we'll take
20 a five-minute recess, and then the Chair intends to
21 complete this First Time Homebuyer's because we all
22 know -- well, we all going to Lanai, and the flight
23 leaves at 1:30. So the Chair is going to go until
24 11:30 this morning.

25 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay.

1 CHAIR PONTANILLA: So this meeting is in recess until
2 10:55.

3 RECESS: 10:52 a.m.

4 RECONVENE: 11:03 a.m.

5 CHAIR PONTANILLA: . . . (Gavel) . . . Budget and
6 Finance Committee is now reconvened.

7 Members, when we left off, we were going to
8 take up the First Time Homebuyer's Program.

9 At this time, Member Mateo.

10 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: Chairman, thank you very much.

11 And in the interest of time, we'll just cut to
12 the chase, and we could just ask the Department if
13 they can provide us with the information on the
14 purpose and the intent of their proposed First Time
15 Homebuyer's Grant Program. In particular, the --
16 how the funds will be utilized with this particular
17 grant program, and whether it differs from the
18 other revenue funds that the Department is using
19 like the Residential Workforce Housing Fund and how
20 that differs from the intent of the use of these
21 funds.

22 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you.

23 Ms. Tsuhako?

24 MS. TSUHAKO: Thank you, Council Chair Mateo.

25 I'm going to defer to Deputy Director Jo-Ann

1 Ridao to answer your question as well as provide
2 members with other details of our proposal.

3 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: Thank you.

4 MS. RIDAO: Thank you, Chair Mateo.

5 Primarily, yes. The First Time Homebuyer's
6 Program as the Administration is proposing it this
7 year will be very different.

8 We are recommending that this become a grant
9 program, and that it be -- it be proposed out, or
10 we call it RFP'd out so that a private entity out
11 in the community can run the program for the
12 County.

13 Primarily, we are recommending a grant program
14 versus a loan program, and I'm not sure if you want
15 me to go through the entire program -- the program
16 guidelines that we have sent down to Council, and I
17 believe it is in your binders. It was sent down on
18 March 30th, so if we want to go to that item, and
19 maybe we can discuss it, but I can go through it
20 for you if you would like.

21 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: No. If you could -- Deputy Director,
22 if you can just tell us how you see this program
23 working with this 1.6 million that's being
24 requested.

25 MS. RIDAO: Okay. Primarily what would happen is the

1 1.6 million would be granted out. We foresee that
2 home prices are coming down. So it's making the
3 market available to -- especially those middle
4 income or moderate income families that have secure
5 jobs. Those people will become eligible probably
6 to purchase a home in the community. We are
7 expecting that this \$15,000 will only be a part of
8 their down payment. So it will require that they
9 have probably a little bit of savings to help them
10 with the down payment.

11 I think the other issue that probably would be
12 of interest to you is that we propose to secure or
13 to -- yeah, secure the County's interest in this by
14 proposing a lien on the property for a period of 15
15 years. So that's how primarily the program would
16 operate.

17 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: Okay. Madam Director, my interest in
18 asking is the initial -- for me, I have to take a
19 look at the initial purpose and the intent of the
20 creation of the fund itself.

21 MS. RIDAO: Uh-huh.

22 VICE-CHAIR MATEO: The initial purpose and intent to
23 some degree varies from your proposal. Your
24 proposal looks at providing the availability of
25 these funds to those who make 120 and below.

1 The original intent of the fund was to those
2 who make up to 140 and below, and that was, in
3 fact, to assist those in the so-called gap group
4 who was that group that was not being serviced, you
5 know, to a large part because of sheer economics at
6 the time.

7 I see my difficulty in supporting your concept
8 is because it does not differ from the Department's
9 use of the Residential Workforce Housing Funds to
10 begin with, and I see -- I see us looking at, not
11 really servicing that group that we had originally
12 intended to, and I see this primarily as, once
13 again, providing the more in depth services to the
14 nonprofit organizations. And I think we have had
15 this dialogue many times, especially when you came
16 before us using the residential work house --
17 Workforce Housing funds.

18 So you in -- in fact, has looked at expanding
19 the pot of money, and I'm just worried about the
20 target group that you are focusing in on, and I
21 have difficulties with that particular target
22 groups as shared in prior discussions. And,
23 Mr. Chairman, my interest is, I don't see a
24 differentiation between expanding now these
25 particular funds primarily as a grant because a

1 grant will exhaust a fund. And the purpose and
2 intent in the creation of the fund was so that we
3 can help the groups ranging all the way up to the
4 140 percent median income level which was the
5 inclusion of Chairman Pontanilla because that was
6 recognized as the target group or the gap group
7 that was left out.

8 So, Mr. Chairman, to keep it real short, I do
9 not support this particular program in terms of a
10 grant. I think the Department has ample funds as
11 they have continuously looked at the Residential
12 Workforce Housing Funds. And with that, I gladly
13 yield to Mr. Molina.

14 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you.

15 Mr. Molina?

16 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you very much,

17 Mr. Chairman. And then to follow up Chairman
18 Mateo's line of questioning, I should have, you
19 know, remind the Members that it's been almost
20 three years since the Council enacted the enabling
21 legislation, and for reasons that I won't -- don't
22 need to get into, it's been delayed, and it's
23 unfortunate, but you know, we have to move on. So
24 the Mayor basically is asking the Council with this
25 proposal to basically repeal our Legislation that

1 we put on this so which requires some further
2 discussion, and -- and in fairness to the Mayor, I
3 want to thank her for at least looking at -- for
4 taking a different angle to get this program moving
5 and disbursing the funds to those who are in need.

6 For the Department, if you could briefly tell
7 us, you know, the requirements being that you're
8 looking at it from a -- a grant -- standpoint of
9 the grant, will the applicant be -- so, in other
10 words, the applicant is not going to be required to
11 pay back the grant as if it were a loan program
12 like it currently is; am I correct?

13 MS. RIDAO: The applicant would be required to repay the
14 grant if they did not live in the home for 15
15 years. So no repayment of the grant, as it states
16 here, to the County will be required if the -- I
17 mean, it would be required if the borrower sells
18 the property, borrows, or refinances on the first
19 mortgage and/or if they no longer uses -- use the
20 property as their principal residence.

21 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. And currently, do you --
22 has there been an increase in the number of
23 applicants or a decrease because of the change in
24 the economy? I would maybe venture to guess we
25 have maybe a little less interest now, or people

1 that are eligible for this actually?

2 MS. RIDAO: Actually, I think, you know, in some
3 respect, I would like to address what Chair Mateo
4 said.

5 Primarily, I think, again the program would be
6 helping those individuals that -- and we can -- you
7 know, I have no problem increasing it to 140
8 percent if -- if that's what the discussion, you
9 know, turns out to be.

10 I think this program will probably help those
11 people that have secure jobs, jobs that, for
12 instance, people that are not going to be laid off,
13 and -- but need assistance with down payment.

14 What happens with young families often times
15 is they can afford the rent which is maybe \$1,800 a
16 month which would pay a mortgage, however, they
17 can't save because of their rent that they are
18 paying is so high that they can't save, and this
19 would help those individuals.

20 I think the Residential Workforce Housing
21 actually -- program would come -- this program
22 would complement that program. If developers came
23 in, for instance, and were developing affordable
24 units, those people are also going to have to have
25 down payments.

1 So I think this down payment assistance will
2 actually complement that.

3 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. You mentioned a lien on
4 the property for 15 years to, I guess, prevent
5 speculation. Was there any consideration for a
6 second trust deed as additional protections for the
7 County to prevent any potential abuse of the
8 program? Because -- you know, you have people out
9 there that may initially have good intentions, and
10 then maybe look for loopholes to exploit the
11 program.

12 MS. RIDAO: Councilmember Molina, my understanding is
13 that the State of Hawaii does not utilize that
14 mechanism, a second trust deed.

15 I can look into that further, but in my
16 discussions with financial institutions, they
17 indicated to me that our mechanism is a lien or a
18 second mortgage.

19 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Uh-huh. Okay.

20 And finally, Mr. Chairman -- Ms. Ridao -- so
21 if we decide to go with -- I mean, can you do this
22 as a grant? Can you actually get all 1.6 out in
23 one fiscal year? I guess you're looking at 15,000
24 per applicant.

25 MS. RIDAO: That's about 100 applicants. I would say

1 that's a little ambitious.

2 I would be comfortable with 75. Yeah.

3 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. Because for me, I know the
4 initial appropriations were \$400,000 per year, and
5 now its been built up to 1.6. So if we can't get
6 out the 1.6, then you know, Mr. Chairman, we can
7 consider other options for monies that are not
8 being -- that are not able to be disbursed during
9 this fiscal year, possibly putting some of that
10 money away in an emergency fund or use it for some
11 other use in a community, possibly rental
12 assistance if it does -- if it does qualify because
13 I guess we have to look at the parameters, if there
14 are restrictions on the use of the money and for
15 the intent and purpose.

16 So, but anyway, just kind of throwing out some
17 different ideas, but I want to thank the Department
18 for coming out and put -- putting an option there
19 for us to consider because, you know, we've been
20 waiting a long time for these funds to get
21 disbursed. Then I -- I would guess the
22 Department's intent is to help expedite getting the
23 monies out, and I guess, with the current
24 Legislation that's in, it kind of prevents you from
25 getting the monies out in a more expeditious

1 manners; am I correct?

2 MS. RIDAO: That is correct, Councilmember Molina.

3 And -- and I think that, you know, we need --
4 we need to look at what is happening in our
5 community also. You know, Na Hale O Maui is going
6 to receive \$3 million in funds from the Federal
7 Government in the Stimulus Bill to purchase units
8 in our community, and this will -- I think the
9 First Time Homebuyer's Program will also assist --
10 help that program to become successful. They are
11 going to be able to purchase the units. They are
12 going to be refurbishing and reselling those units,
13 but the purchasers, the borrowers are going to need
14 assistance in their mortgage.

15 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. Well, thank you,
16 Ms. Ridao, and I appreciate the option you're
17 giving us, and because this is a tough one because
18 I think we have to weigh the consideration from the
19 Administration versus just instead maybe just
20 possibly amending the existing Ordinance. So we
21 have to look at those two options as well,
22 Mr. Chairman. And I'll yield the floor to my other
23 colleagues for additional questions.

24 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Just a comment.

25 You're right. We need to look at the

1 Legislation, and -- and Mr. Blackburn-Rodriguez
2 provided us with some -- a recommendation that can
3 help with our community more readily, in fact.

4 MS. TSUHAKO: Mr. Chair, excuse me.

5 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Yeah.

6 MS. TSUHAKO: Councilmember Molina, the other -- the
7 other consideration that the Department looked at
8 is that, you know, you're right. This First Time
9 Homebuyer's was stalled for a while, and we do
10 agree with you that we need to get these funds out
11 to people so that they can move on and use it in
12 the way this body intended for those funds to be
13 used.

14 We also had originally, when we -- when we put
15 together our budget, had a position requested to
16 actually manage this fund as though it would be --
17 become a County program, and I think, you know,
18 after much discussion and with the Mayor and the
19 Budget Director's guidance, we -- we thought that
20 it would be -- the money would be provided to our
21 residents more expeditiously. We would save money
22 in terms of staffing, and simply use existing staff
23 to monitor the granting of the funds rather than
24 administering the fund ourselves, and so that was
25 another consideration that we had to balance the

1 need with -- with the efficiency.

2 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Ms. Tsuhako, one final question from
3 the Chair. What's the difference between the
4 program that you folks are proposing and the Home
5 Program? Is there any difference?

6 MS. TSUHAKO: There -- I think there is a very big
7 difference.

8 The Home Program are Federal funds that come
9 down. I don't believe that there -- they can be
10 used for down payment assistance. I think that
11 there is a different program called the American
12 Dream Down Payment Initiative, the ADDPI Program
13 that can be used for that purpose, and that was
14 recently granted out to Habitat For Humanity to --
15 no. To Lokahi Pacific, excuse me, to help with the
16 provision of those funds.

17 CHAIR PONTANILLA: And is there a payback provision?

18 MS. TSUHAKO: For the ADDPI funds? I'm not sure. It's
19 a deferred loan, Sir.

20 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. Thank you. Members, I know
21 the time is getting short.

22 One last item. I know we all going to Lanai,
23 you know. A question may come up in regards to
24 what's happening to the Lanai Senior Center.

25 Mr. Nishiki?

1 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Yeah. You know, the concern I
2 have is those that initially get that -- this money
3 will be lucky. But it seems like this Council's
4 concern was, and I don't know because I wasn't in
5 the Council, was this was a revolving fund so that
6 other people through repayment of the loan can also
7 participate. So I don't like -- if it is not a
8 revolving fund, and there is no repay -- repayment,
9 then to me, it's not in concert with what the
10 Council really wanted, which was to have a
11 revolving fund and allow future homeowners also to
12 participate in this. To me, it's like if you come
13 first, and you qualify, then the fund is gone.
14 Then what do we have to do, again create more money
15 for this First Time Home Buyer's? And I don't
16 know, Mr. Molina, if that was how the concept was
17 crafted.

18 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you.

19 MS. RIDAO: Chair, if I can address?

20 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. Go ahead.

21 MS. RIDAO: Thank you for that question,
22 Councilmember Nishiki, because I think it would --
23 it's great education.

24 In -- in trying to support what the Council
25 had intended, I spoke with at least three financial

1 institutions. The problem with the loan program is
2 that, even if the wording says, the loan does not
3 have to be paid back until 15 years later, it has
4 to be calculated in the qualifications for this
5 loan that the applicant is making -- that the
6 borrower is making. Therefore, more than likely,
7 because of the -- because of the income person
8 that, you know, the income requirements that we're
9 placing on who we're helping, say up to the 140
10 percent person, that will -- that will kick them
11 out. It will kick them out of qualifying. So
12 that's the problem. And -- and I asked them, is
13 there any way that we can -- because I said, even
14 if the wording said that this loan does not have to
15 be paid back if they remain in the house for 15
16 years, they said, as long as the program mentioned
17 the word "loan", they have to calculate it in the
18 qualifications. So, in other words, when they
19 qualifying someone, they're -- they're including
20 another loan which is for \$15,000, and what will
21 happen is their -- what do you call it -- when they
22 are trying to balance this thing out, it just won't
23 work out.

24 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay.

25 MS. TSUHAKO: The qualification.

1 CHAIR PONTANILLA: That's the last question I'm going to
2 address. It seems like, you know, we coming up
3 with more questions regarding this First Time
4 Homebuyer's Fund, and again, Members, we still have
5 to review with the Department the grants program as
6 well as grants revenue that they receive in Housing
7 and Human Program Department (sic).

8 So members, next Monday we're going to
9 continue on reviewing with the Housing and Human
10 Services, not only the grant revenues, but all of
11 the grants that come out of that Department, and
12 we'll continue discussion on the First Time
13 Homebuyer's Fund because I think it's very
14 important that, once we make this decision during
15 this budget go around, that we know where that
16 money is going to go to.

17 The last item that I have here before we leave
18 is the Lanai Senior Center which I know going to
19 get questions about the Senior Center tonight. So
20 I just want all of you to be prepared for some
21 response, should seniors ask the question.

22 So, Ms. Tsuhako, briefly, if you could review
23 your CIP on page 29-3.

24 MS. TSUHAKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25 The Lanai Senior Center is a project of our

1 Kaunoa Senior Services Division. The County is
2 proposing to build a new Lanai Senior Center, and
3 we've had -- we've had some history recently.

4 The County is a lessee of that property.
5 Castle & Cooke holds the lease, and our staff has
6 been trying to work with Castle & Cooke to obtain
7 building permits as well as demolition permits.
8 There was some stall because the building was
9 designated a historical site, but we have since
10 been able to mitigate that issue because much of
11 the building was actually reconstructed around 1983
12 with very little of the original historic nature
13 maintained.

14 Right now -- excuse me. We are -- the
15 Administration is in the process of drafting a
16 letter to respond to some concerns that were raised
17 by Castle & Cooke about the building of this
18 project.

19 Right now the Department is proposing a two
20 story building that is going to house potentially
21 our Senior Services staff, as well as on the bottom
22 floor, staff from the Department of Motor Vehicles
23 and our Immigrant Services staff, and that's been
24 an issue of contention.

25 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you.

1 Members, questions about the Senior Center
2 that's being proposed?
3 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: I have one question.
4 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Quick.
5 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Why are they objecting, Castle &
6 Cooke? What is the reason?
7 MS. TSUHAKO: They have -- they sent a letter to the --
8 I can't remember what the acronym is. No. It was
9 Cultural Reserve Commission, I think.
10 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Cultural Resources.
11 MS. TSUHAKO: Cultural Resources.
12 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Yes.
13 MS. TSUHAKO: And they had some objections about the way
14 the County was -- had processed the request for
15 demolition as well as the request for building
16 permits, and the designation of the building as a
17 historic site. So right now, our Department is
18 taking a response to them because there are
19 responses that we need to make to them. And
20 hopefully -- we are trying also to work with them
21 in identifying those issues that have already been
22 resolved, and so to move on. Essentially, we need
23 their permission. We need their cooperation as a
24 landowner.
25 COUNCILMEMBER NISHIKI: Okay.

1 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Member Baisa?

2 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: No.

3 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Okay. Members, any more questions?

4 Members, staff gave you a handout in regards to
5 where we are going to have dinner tonight.
6 Everybody got it. No. Okay. It's going to be
7 very close by to the meeting at the school
8 cafeteria. We are going to be meeting at the pool
9 located in Lanai City. Members, I -- I know the
10 Chair had sent you guys an E mail regarding a
11 spreadsheet -- Excel spreadsheet. This is in
12 regards to your proposal of the Mayor's proposed
13 Fiscal Year 2010 budget. Okay. Members, I know
14 this year is a very tough year and to come out with
15 our own proposals. So at this time, the Chair
16 would like to make some comments in regards to how
17 we going to be working this thing.

18 We are not going to discuss -- what I'm going
19 to say to you folks this morning, you know, as the
20 future of the TAT is uncertain, I'm requesting that
21 all of the Members submit a budget proposal based
22 on a cut of \$18 million from the Mayor's proposed
23 budget without raising real property tax. In the
24 event that the County loses the TAT funds, I would
25 like to have proposed cuts available for

1 consideration. I'm also instructing the staff to
2 provide information of what kinds of property tax
3 increases would cover our shortfall, and any
4 proposed additions to the budget must also be
5 balanced by a cut. I understand that this is very
6 difficult, but you know, we'll take a look at all
7 of the options that we have to come out with a
8 product that, you know, can move this County
9 forward. Not only the real property tax area that
10 we are going to be looking at -- we are going to be
11 looking at different areas in trying to raise more
12 revenues such that, you know, we can meet our
13 requirements for this County.

14 So with that, I'm just going to leave that
15 with you folks to contemplate over the weekend. So
16 I know it's going to be tough one, but we need to
17 start thinking of, you know, what we going to be
18 doing. So with that --

19 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Chairman? Sir? Just one quick
20 question.

21 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Sure.

22 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Just one quick question for
23 verification on the budget proposals with minus
24 \$18 million. Typically, the TAT monies, are they
25 -- those monies are used towards -- applied towards

1 grants or just towards operations, or I mean . . .

2 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Good question. Maybe the Budget
3 Director can provide us with some information on
4 how the \$18 million was spread.

5 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Yeah. This -- this will help me
6 with -- in formulating my proposal.

7 MR. PABLO: That's -- that's a very difficult --
8 difficult question to -- to answer because the
9 Transit Accommodation Tax is -- is a -- it goes
10 into the General Fund.

11 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay.

12 MR. PABLO: And it goes into the General Fund along with
13 other type of revenues, including the real property
14 tax, the personal -- the PSC -- the Personal
15 Service Company tax and so forth. So once it goes
16 into the General Fund, then it's distributed among
17 17 Departments that share in the General Fund as
18 well as the grant -- line item grants that share
19 out of the fund. There is no really way to say so
20 much of the personal property -- real property tax
21 went here, TAT went there. It goes into a General
22 Fund, and it's distributed. Because the General
23 Fund was very low this year, I think when people
24 look at the revenues, they say, well, revenues have
25 gone up to 12 million over the past year, it's not

1 true. Half of that is from State revolving loan
2 funds which can only be used towards capital
3 improvement projects, and also we increased the
4 bond funding for this year to also cover capital
5 improvement projects as a form of economic
6 stimulus.

7 The actual amount of general funds that went
8 into this pool available for the Departments and
9 other expenses is, I would say roughly, around 4
10 million.

11 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. So -- so Mr. Chair --
12 sorry. In short then, I guess, Mr. Chair and
13 Mr. Director, we can -- we have the wide option or
14 a lot of options, A, B, C, accounts -- accounts of
15 all Departments and grants and so forth then.

16 MR. PABLO: Yeah.

17 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: So the sky is the limit, I guess
18 if it's -- well, maybe it's not maybe the right
19 term, but just throw it out there as, I guess,
20 you're asking us to consider.

21 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you.

22 COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you.

23 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Member Baisa?

24 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: One more clarification question so
25 we have our marching orders straight.

1 We are going to prepare the budget and leave
2 out the \$18 million in TAT. The confusing part for
3 me was what you said about property taxes. There
4 are no property tax increases in the Mayor's
5 budget.

6 CHAIR PONTANILLA: I understand.

7 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Now, if we want to balance what we
8 want to do, we have to have a property tax
9 adjustment or some adjustment to show where that
10 money would come from.

11 CHAIR PONTANILLA: I understand that. And in regards to
12 the Mayor's proposed budget, without the \$18
13 million deduction, you know, we don't have real
14 property tax increases.

15 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Right.

16 CHAIR PONTANILLA: But looking at the \$18 million that
17 we probably will lose, staff will take a look at,
18 you know, how we going to meet the Mayor's 2010
19 proposed budget.

20 COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Right. And you're open to
21 suggestions about that also because we have another
22 sheet that says, what are you going to do with
23 property tax.

24 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Yeah. Right. And the other thing,
25 Members, the proposed changes to the Mayor's Fiscal

1 2010 budget will need to be submitted to the Chair
2 in an open session so that the proposal are
3 publically available for -- before the Chair uses
4 them to compile my -- you know, the Chair's budget,
5 and the Budget and Finance Committee will reconvene
6 briefly next week, Friday, April 17th, after the
7 Council meeting for the members to submit their
8 written proposals, and then we'll -- staff and I
9 will compile all of the proposals, and the Chair
10 will present their proposal on Monday, April the
11 20th.

12 Member Johnson?

13 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Just briefly. If we need
14 assistance, staff will be available to help us?

15 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Yes.

16 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

17 CHAIR PONTANILLA: Yes.

18 COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you.

19 CHAIR PONTANILLA: So Members, we'll see you on Lanai.

20 No further discussion. The Budget and Finance
21 Committee meeting of April the 9th is now
22 adjourned. ... (Gavel) ...

23 ACTION: DEFER pending further discussion.

24 ADJOURN: 11:32 a.m.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF HAWAII)
) SS.
COUNTY OF MAUI)

I, Robert K. Balian, Certified Shorthand Reporter for the State of Hawaii, hereby certify that the proceedings were taken down by me in machine shorthand and was thereafter reduced to typewritten form under my supervision; that the foregoing represents to the best of my ability, a true and correct transcript of the proceedings had in the foregoing matter.

I further certify that I am not an attorney for any of the parties hereto, nor in any way concerned with the cause.

DATED this 24th day of April, 2009, in Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii.

Robert K. Balian
Robert K. Balian, CSR. NO. 463