


CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
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August 5, 2008

Memorandum

TO: Councilmember Barbara Marshall, Chair

FROM: Councilmember Romy M. Cachola 

SUBJECT: National Association of Counties
2008 Annual Conference and Exposition
Jackson County, Missouri
July 11-15, 2008

CITY COUNCIL
HONOLULU, HAWAII

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I attended the National Association of Counties (NACo) 2008 Annual Conference and Exposition. The four-day conference was held in Jackson County, Missouri from July 11-14, 2008. The conference provided county officials with the opportunity to hear speakers, discuss legislation, and network with other officials to exchange information on various issues.

Saturday, July 12, 2008

I arrived late Friday evening on July 11th. The following day, I attend NACo's Transportation Steering Committee meeting, of which I am a member. During the meeting, members heard reports from the Steering Committee's four subcommittees and received legislative updates. The committee also considered several new resolutions, including the future of the Federal Highway and Transit Programs and a resolution for Federal Funding for County Street and Highway Improvements.

Of particular interest to me was SAFETEA-LU, the federal surface transportation program and the user fees that support it. Funding for SAFETEA-LU expires on September 30, 2009 and must be reauthorized. SAFETEA-LU, which became law in 2005, provides \$287 billion in funding for highways and transit over its 2005-2009 authorization period. It is primarily financed by the federal 18.3-cent fuel tax. Issues that concerned Steering Committee members for 2009 reauthorization include the adequacy of current funding in face of the substantial needs of the system, adequacy of the fuel tax as a future funding source, more funding for county-owned highways, etc.

Two guest speakers discussed their views on NACo's reauthorization of the federal highway and transit programs. The first was Pete Rahn, director of the Missouri Department of Transportation and president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). Rahn discussed what the state of Missouri is doing to address transportation issues and AASHTO's plans for reauthorization. The second speaker was David Warm, executive director of the Mid-America Regional Council. He gave attendees an overview of transportation challenges in the Kansas City metropolitan area and what metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) hope to see in the reauthorization.

At the end of the meeting, the Steering Committee unanimously approved the new NACo policy which was later submitted for approval by NACo's Policy Board.

Sunday, July 13, 2008

I attended the Opening General Session at 9 am and listened to a presentation by David Walker, President of the Peterson Foundation and former Comptroller General for the United States. Walker spoke on the nation's fiscal, savings, entitlement, healthcare, tax and education challenges. To improve our economic situation, he proposed more stringent budgetary constraints and reforming our social security, tax and healthcare systems. Faced with ballooning fiscal obligations, Walker said that one of the first measures the federal government will make is to cut discretionary state and county grants, which today total over \$400 million.

Monday, July 14, 2008

Monday was the 2nd General Session. I attended a presentation by Michael Cory Davis, the writer-director of *CARGO – Innocence Lost*. Davis called human trafficking "modern day slavery" and said it was a \$9.5 billion industry in the U.S., second only to the drug trade. Between 70-80 percent of the victims are children and women, many of whom are sold into prostitution rings fronted by legitimate businesses. Davis suggested that the film and presenter's kit, "Human Trafficking 101" be used for town meetings and free trainings and workshops for county police and rescue personnel, as well as anyone else who might come into contact with traffickers and their victims. He said that human trafficking depends on a lack of public awareness to thrive, and that the majority of known cases came from tips.

The next speaker was Brian Fagan, a popular archaeologist and writer, who explained the impact of climate change on civilizations. Fagan is the author of *Drought: The Silent Elephant in the Climatic Room*. Fagan told the audience that we live in a world where drought is endemic and that it will only spread and intensify over the coming decades with serious global, political consequence. Fagan has noted a 15 percent increase in the number of droughts worldwide since 1990. The American Southwest, he said, is due for a drought more severe than the Great American Dustbowl of the 1930s. With this in mind, Fagan said political leaders face the most daunting questions of leadership and policy that humanity has faced in centuries.

I later attended a session entitled "Lessons from the Trenches: Implementing GASB 45." Guest speakers were Paula Sanford from the University of Georgia and Laurie Van Pelt from Oakland County, Missouri. Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement Number 45 (GASB 45) requires all counties to show the costs of retiree benefits other than pensions (primarily healthcare) as a part of their annual financial statements. This change has caused counties to report financial liabilities which were not previously shown on these reports, which may have an impact on counties' credit rating. Sanford discussed the results of a NACo study involving 15

counties. The study provided practical information for counties on how to successfully resolve this issue.

The last session I attended for the day was entitled “Housing and the Economy: Issues and Options for Counties.” Speakers included David Crowe from the National Association of Home Builders, Glenda Gabriel of Bank of America and John Santner of NeighborWorks America. According to Crowe, our nation’s troubled mortgage finance system has been identified as the leading cause of the country’s current economic downturn. The symposium explored both short and long term policy options for country governments in the face of current housing finance crisis.

Tuesday, July 15, 2008

On the morning of the final day, I attended a workshop entitled “Rural Counties Love Transit Too.” The workshop was moderated by Maui County chair Riki Hokama. Guest speakers were Sherry Little from the Federal Transit Administration and Chris Zeilinger of the Washington, D.C.-based Community Transportation Association. For counties that don’t have a transit system, both speakers discussed ways of creating a transit system, acquiring funding and attracting riders. They also discussed ways of improving existing transit systems and providing better service for residents.

Lastly, I attended the closing general session, which featured speakers Doris Kearns Goodwin and Ashley Rhodes-Courter. Goodwin is a historian and author of *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*. She spoke on leadership lessons to be learned from Abraham Lincoln. Rhodes-Courter is author of the memoir, *Three Little Words*, a book which details her life as a foster child over nine years and 14 placements.

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City Council
City and County of Honolulu

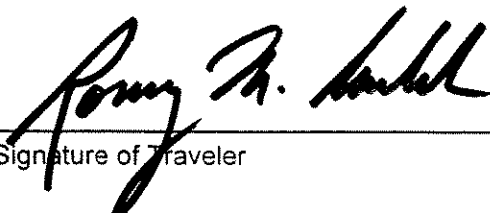
CLAIM FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Date: 8-06-08

Traveler: Romeo Cachola
 Event: 2008 NACO Annual Conference
 Location: Kansas City, MO
 Dates: From July 11, 2008 To July 15, 2008

Description	Amount	Notes
1. Registration Fee (FY08)	440.00	
2. Airfare (FY08)	1,040.96	
3. Hotel	792.20	Rate: No. of Billable Days:
4. Meals	133.82	
5. Ground Transportation	154.00	
6. Tips	9.50	
7. Other	16.13	neck pillow
Other		
Other		
8. Adjustment	(1,480.96)	
TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT (FY09)	\$ 1,105.65	FY08 - \$1,480.96
		FY09 - 1,105.65
		TOTAL TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT: \$2,586.61

This is to certify that the above data, based upon receipts submitted to Council Administrative Support Services via a CCLTRVL02 form, is accurate. Further, I am claiming reimbursement for expenses associated with a trip in which City business was conducted and personal funds were used to advance payment:



 Signature of Traveler

AUG 19 2008

 Date