



CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
530 SOUTH KING STREET, ROOM 202
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-3065
TELEPHONE: (808) 768-5010 • FAX: (808) 768-5011

BRANDON ELEFANTE

Councilmember District VIII

Aiea, Pearl City, Waipahū

Chair, Committee on Public Health, Safety & Welfare

Telephone: (808) 768-5008

Email: belefante@honolulu.gov

August 3, 2017

MEMORANDUM

To: Donna Chun, City Council Administration

Fr: Councilmember Brandon Elefante 

Re: 2017 Hawai'i State Association of Counties Annual Conference

Attached please find my 2017 Hawai'i State Association of Counties Annual Conference report which was held on June 19, 2017 to June 20, 2017 in Lihue, Kauai.

2017 Annual Conference Hawai'i State Association of Counties
June 19 – 20, 2017
Koloa Landing Resort at Poipu | Kaua'i, HI
Report By: Brandon Elefante, Honolulu City Councilmember, District 8

BACKGROUND

The Hawai'i State Association of Counties ("HSAC") is a non-profit organization that consists of elected officials representing the County of Kaua'i, County of Maui, County of Hawai'i, and the City and County of Honolulu. Members of HSAC work collaboratively to ensure the best interest of the people in the State of Hawai'i.

This year's conference was held on the County of Kaua'i at the Koloa Landing Resort at Poipu. Majority of the conference sessions were held at this location from June 19 to 20, 2017.

The purpose of this conference was to unite and to move forward by learning about various topics ranging from the millennial revolution to the future of real property tax.

I hope this information will provide you with a better understanding of local issues.

Monday, June 19, 2017
Arrival Day in Kaua'i

I arrived on Kaua'i in the morning before the first session.

8AM to 10AM
Registration

9AM
HSAC Executive Meeting and General Membership Meeting



HSAC Executive Committee

The Executive meeting was called to order at 9:10AM. Reports were given from all counties. The meeting adjourned thereafter.

At 9:31AM the HSAC General Membership meeting was called order.

- Members discussed the HSAC 2017 package
- How can we be more successful advocating for the HSAC 2017 bills?
 - Reach out to state elected officials with county officials who have relationships already
 - Educate general public
 - HSAC hired a public relations firm, Becker Communications, to assist with media and outreach
 - Goal is to:
 - Branding on HSAC
 - Be proactive and be a team effort

The meeting adjourned at 10:50AM.

11AM

HSAC Golf Tournament

For this session, I participated in the golf tournament and paid from my own personal funds to participate.

5:30PM to 8:00PM

Golf Awards & Welcome Reception

Council Chair Mel Rapozo thanked everyone for attending the HSAC conference and this reception was an opportunity to network with other folks.

Tuesday, June 20, 2017

8AM to 8:30AM

Welcome/Opening Remarks

8:30AM to 10:30AM

Panel 1: Food for Thought

Representatives from Hawai'i Agricultural Foundation ("HAF") discuss how to support and sustain Hawai'i's agricultural industry by addressing the critical needs and services of farmer sand the agricultural industry in Hawai'i.

- Connecting communities to farming
- Agriculture Park in Kunia
 - 220 acres of land dedicated to diversified food production
 - 24 farmers occupy and farm in four parcels
 - Created the "Grown in Kunia" brand
 - Renewed soil

- Farmers Assistance and Agriculture Program
- A video was shown about the Hawaii Agriculture Foundation
 - Education was started with the state Department of Education from Kindergarten to 12th grade
 - Agriculture program at every grade level
 - Veggie kit
 - Field trips
 - Three different farms
 - Partnered with two restaurants
 - Three times over six weeks
 - Cooking education and demonstration
 - Started second grade
 - Localicious Hawai'i
 - Originally came from the Maui Farm Bureau
 - Started with 82 in 2014 and grown to 173 participating restaurants
 - www.localinside.org
 - Eat, Think, Drink
 - Target: Millennials and Gen Xers
 - Hawai'i Food and Wine Festival
 - Started at Roy's Hawaii Kai
 - 2016 Highlights
 - 8,765 attendees
 - 2,114 visited from the U.S. mainland or International Countries

10:45AM to 12PM

Panel 2: The Millennial Revolution

What are Millennials? Why are they so important? Where do we go from here? These are just some of the questions facing policy makers today. The purpose of this breakout session is for our elected leaders and business leaders to talk story with some pretty awesome and fearless millennials. We hope participants will gain an understanding of why there is such a buzz around the term "millennials" who they are, how they think, and what they foresee as the future needs to create communities that they want to live in.

Moderator: Kaua'i County Planning Director Michael Dahilig



Pictured with Millennial Panelists

I participated as a member on the panel invited by the HSAC. We had an awesome panel of millennials who shared their knowledge from their professional background and experience. The session was conducted in one large circle. On the panel we also had:

- Mr. Mike Dahilig, Director of Planning County of Kaua'i and Moderator
- Mr. Kaaina Hull, Deputy Planning Director for the County of Kaua'i
- Ms. Marisa Valenciano, Planner County of Kaua'i
- Mr. Luke Evslin, Community Advocate
- Ms. Juno Ann Apalla, Community Advocate
- Mr. Tim Burr, Director of West Coast Public Policy for Lyft

We covered key issues that relates to millennials. Most notable, I started my portion by asking these three questions:

- 1) How many are millennials?
- 2) Have children who are millennials?
- 3) Have grandchildren who are millennials?
- 4) Work with millennials?

The main purpose for these questions was to identify that we all have some form of relationship with a millennial.

- The 2008 recession and 9/11 were life changing events for millennials
- Average college debt for a millennial is \$27,000
- 75% of the workforce by 2020 will be millennials
- One out of every three Americans will be millennials
- 44% view the opportunity to change the world as something that motivates them to be successful

Presentations were followed by a lively and wide-ranging question and answer period.

12:00PM to 1:45PM

Lunch and Speaker Mr. Howard Dicus

Our Economy

Mr. Howard Dicus worked in Washington D.C. for 20 years, anchoring for three radio networks and covering Capitol Hill and two inaugurals. He moved full-time to Hawaii at the end of 2000, working first for Pacific Business News and then for KGMB. For 17 years he's done business reports on Hawaii Public Radio and for 10 years he's been a volunteer host on the classical channel, doing a weekend show called "Howard's Day Off."

- Price ourselves out for hotel rates, rental cars, etc.
- Tourism appreciates
- Decrease from Japanese spending (visitors from Japan)
- 110 yen to the \$1 U.S. Dollar
- Visitors for past decade still continue to come and visit
- National economy is difficult to predict
- Defense sector will survive and we'll be able to protect
- Hawai'i will continue to be on our own and a good time to be in business
- Economists believe that:
 - 3% is full employment
 - Official unemployment rate is 3%
 - Maui, Kaua'i, and Lāna'i are: 3%
 - Hawai'i County and Moloka'i: 6% (1/2 decrease from the recession)
- Those seeking employment have different skillset
 - Sugar Plantation Workers on Maui
- Endless jobs in the hotel and retail businesses
- Difficulty getting accountants, legal professionals, and human resources
- From a business perspective, which is the best solution to finance the Honolulu Rail Transit project? (Question was asked by an audience member)
 - Disclaimer: Mr. Dicus is a rail supporter
 - Cost us more not to build it
 - Any big projects with delays will make costs rise
- Economics needed in public schools
 - Being taught by other subject matter teachers rather than economic based instructors
 - Reach and connect with second and third tier in the state Department of Education to educate about economics
- Affordable Housing
 - Serious shortage of housing
 - Can artificially keep homes affordable
 - Closest to a real home is a tiny house
 - More leasehold options
 - You don't need a view (of an ocean)
 - Real issue is overall lack of housing
 - Can build a new Koa Ridge every 20 years and still have a shortage of housing
- Hawai'i and China moving forward
 - China and Hawai'i will be a big deal in our state
 - China likes Hawai'i
 - Most ethnic Chinese here in Hawai'i do not speak Mandarin

- Hawai'i has always been a great place to invest
- Different set of rules for Chinese and Hawai'i investors regarding building

Panel 4: Legislative Forum

Ms. Deborah Cox, NACo Legislative Director

Hawai'i State Senate President Ronald Kouchi

Hawai'i State Speaker of the House Scott Saiki



Pictured with Honolulu Council Chair Ron Menor and Ms. Deborah Cox

Senate President Kouchi

- Explained that the largest restaurant is the DOE school cafeterias
 - Don't prepare meal from scratch

Speaker Saiki

- Explained demographics of the members of the State House
 - 51 members
 - 12 members were around during the 2005 session that approved the initial GET

Ms. Deborah Cox

- Explained brief synopsis of role and function of NACo (included a short video and background of NACo)
- 20% approval rating of Congress
- In the U.S. Senate, 52 seats are by Republicans
- 239 seats are Republicans (218 seats are needed in the House) for majority
 - House Freedom Caucus 30+ members who are conservatives

- Tuesday Group (Moderate Republicans 20 to 30+) members
- In D.C. alot of political theater
- Only 100 out of 1200 high level or cabinet members have been confirmed by Congress thru the Senate
- Federal waters → jurisdictional issue
 - Agencies rewriting waters of the U.S. rule
- New air quality standards
- Department of Labor (OT rule) is stuck in the courts
- There are proposals for replacing every county fire hydrant and light fixtures in public places in the county
- Moving forward, will Congress appropriate levels by President Trump
- Increase for Defense programs
- Priorities for Congress
 - Healthcare reform
 - Tax reform
 - Looking at chopping blocks
 - Municipal bonds
 - State tax
- Marketplace Fairness Act
- National Flood Insurance (Reauthorization up in September 2017)
- FAA – Drone issues
- Bipartisan Task Force (Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi)

**Panel 5: The Growing Business of Medical Marijuana
3PM to 4:30PM**

- Hawai'i moving towards testing cannabis
 - What is tested?
 - Test identity and quality
 - Heavy metals
 - Residual solvents
 - Pesticides
 - There is a network of laboratories

Mr. Keith Ridley, State of Hawai'i Department of Health (“DOH”)

- Office is responsible for inspection for hospitals, etc.
- Takes policy from the State Legislature and implements it
- Medical marijuana program
 - Patient and Product safety
 - Registry
 - Dispensaries
 - Lots of regulation and reporting requirements
 - DOH can suspend operations for a dispensary
 - No smokable or eatable substances are allowed
 - No banks are accepting medical marijuana transactions in the state
 - Banks are federally regulated
 - Cash business
 - Inspects from seed to sale (If diversion, will call 911)

- <http://health.hawaii.gov/medicalmarijuana/>
- Cole Memorandum (Eight Priorities)
 - U.S. Deputy AG → James Cole
 - Written: 8/29/2013
 - Department of Justice expects state and local government to enforce laws
- Patient registry
 - General statistics
 - 1,200 (329 cards) HRS 329
 - Increase of 30% since program began in 2000
 - Over 90% of registered patients indicate pain
 - About 10% of all registered patients have caregivers
 - Hawai'i County has 40% of the most patients
 - 60% of patients are over the age of 45 years old
 - Must have medical conditions

Mr. Richard Ha, CEO of Lau Ola

- 12 years ago started growing hydroponic tomatoes
- Hawai'i is susceptible to diseases
- His farm had a lot of white flies
- Workers had to wear masks
- If the farmer makes money, the farmer gonna farm
- Massive amount of data to track
 - Convert data into break-even analysis

Mr. Darryl Perry

- Medical marijuana is a thriving industry
- A lot of agencies are not supportive of medical marijuana
- Example: Sandy Hook Case
 - Shooter in the case had marijuana in his system

Closing Remarks

Council Chair Mel Rapozo thanked everyone for their participation in the conference and thanked all the people who assisted in making it a success. In closing, I broadened my understanding of local, state and national issues from this conference, and enjoyed being a part of the millennial panel. It was particularly interesting to hear what the neighbor island counties are doing in their communities as they address issues similar to those we face in Honolulu.

City Council
City and County of Honolulu

CLAIM FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Date: 7/6/2017

Traveler: Brandon Elefante

Event: 2017 HSAC Annual Conference

Location: Kauai, HI

Dates: From June 19, 2017

To June 20, 2017

Description	Amount	Notes:
1. Registration Fee		
2. Airfare	141.99	
3. Hotel	287.99	
4. Meals		
5. Ground Transportation		
6. Tips		
7. Other		
Other		
Other		
8. Adjustment		
TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT	429.98	

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

07/06/2017

Date