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CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
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MEMORANDUM

To: Heather Murakami
Administrative Services Officer

From: Councilmember Ron Menor
Council District 9

Re: Travel Report: NACO Legislative Conference; Washington, D.C.

Introduction

The following is a summary of events and activities which I attended during the 2018 NACO Legislative Conference that was held on March 3 – 7, 2018. I attended the conference to represent the Honolulu City Council as Council Chair. The other purpose for my trip was to join Councilmembers Ikaika Anderson and Brandon Elefante in an important meeting with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Executive Director Matthew Welbes and FTA team at their headquarters in Washington, D.C. to discuss the status of the City's Recovery Plan.

We also had the opportunity to join representatives of the neighbor island counties to meet with members of Hawaii's congressional delegation to discuss federal issues affecting the counties.

March 4, 2018 Meetings

I began my day by attending an early morning non-denominational worship service attended by officials from various counties. It provided an opportunity for us to share our faith and to express our strong concerns about the highly partisan and polarized environment in our nation's capitol. We agreed that the counties need to play a visible leadership role in promoting a more collaborative approach to problem solving in government.

Following the worship service, I attended a Large Urban County Caucus meeting during which officials from several counties including the District of Columbia, Georgia, and Los Angeles, shared their perspectives on issues and challenges facing their counties, and initiatives that have been undertaken to address them.

All three counties are having to deal with the kinds of difficult and complex issues that other large cities and counties, including Honolulu, are trying to grapple with. These include the lack of affordable housing, homelessness, the gentrification of neighborhoods that are undergoing major redevelopment, the need to improve transportation infrastructure, and workforce development.

The initiatives that the aforementioned counties have undertaken to address these issues include: establishing affordable housing trust funds; tax incentives for affordable housing; tax relief for residents who have been negatively impacted by rising property values and home prices; exploring rent control; adopting policies that encourage the preservation of existing affordable housing inventory; streamlining regulations that stymie the development of workforce housing; increasing funding for job training, vocational education, and apprenticeship programs; using local dollars to leverage federal funding; and making large investments in major transit

projects such as L.A. Metro. The county officials also emphasized the importance of public-private partnerships in addressing the needs of their respective municipalities.

An administrator from the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) also did a presentation on disaster preparedness. The administrator discussed the various programs and tools that are available through FEMA to assist municipalities in emergency preparedness and recovery from natural disasters.

The FEMA administrator also emphasized the importance of community involvement in planning for, and participating in relief and recovery efforts in the aftermath of a natural disaster. In this regard, FEMA offers training and other emergency preparedness programs to communities.

Moreover, the FEMA administrator also pointed out that it is important for homeowners to have adequate homeowners or renters insurance coverage to supplement FEMA assistance payments because there are limits on what the agency will pay out to a homeowner to cover disaster-related losses. In addition, the FEMA administrator clarified that the agency's principal role is to serve as a conduit for federal funds to states and municipalities to support their recovery efforts. But the ultimate responsibility for implementing and administering projects and activities in the aftermath of a natural disaster (e.g. managing contracts for the performance of recovery work) rests with the states and counties, and not FEMA.

I also attended a luncheon meeting which featured a panel of county officials who discussed strategies for creating a resilient public health system. They emphasized the need for counties to be prepared to address public health needs before, during, and after natural or manmade disasters strike. County elected officials must also work with all health and emergency management departments to prepare for and appropriately respond to public health issues. For

example, this means working with not only hospitals, but also other sectors that provide non-hospital care, such as urgent care and home-based care, in developing effective emergency response strategies.

One panelist indicated that in formulating comprehensive plans to address the health needs of residents should a disaster occur, county officials need to be prepared to address different kinds of disaster scenarios. These include relatively small local events, large scale disasters (e.g. hurricanes), complex mass casualty events (e.g. mass shootings or terrorist attacks), and nuclear detonation/chemical attacks. The latter disaster scenario is of particular concern to Hawaii given the threat of nuclear attack by North Korea.

In developing plans to address the public health needs of residents in times of disaster, the panelist pointed out that county officials should identify and build on existing federal programs that can provide healthcare and emergency preparedness relief. It is also important for counties to begin building and strengthening coalitions connecting government agencies with healthcare and community partners who would be involved in providing care and treatment for individuals in large scale disasters.

Another panelist talked about the importance for municipalities to learn from past experiences and identify and research best practices from other jurisdictions in developing emergency response plans. She also emphasized the importance of promoting trust and close working relationships among healthcare providers, first responders, government agencies and other stakeholders who would be involved in disaster relief efforts, and utilizing volunteers effectively.

Another panelist shared lessons that can be learned in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey in Texas. She indicated that in developing emergency response plans, it is important for counties

not to leave any stakeholder, whose involvement would be critical in disaster relief efforts, out of the planning process. For example, in Texas, government officials have worked with experts from diverse fields including mosquito vector control; environmental health; food and water safety; mobile service delivery; healthcare services; and other areas.

Moreover, after a disaster occurs, the affected county needs to be ready to send out response teams into the communities to survey the needs of residents so they can be referred to appropriate services. It is especially important to identify vulnerable communities (e.g. where there are large senior populations) to ensure they receive the care that they need. Furthermore, healthcare organizations and health plans will have to collaborate on ways to facilitate and coordinate the delivery of care, treatment, and supplies to larger communities.

March 5, 2018 Meetings

I attended the General Session during which U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao discussed the President's Initiatives for Rebuilding Infrastructure in America. As she explained, the key elements of the plan include: establishing an infrastructure incentives program by providing \$100 billion in Federal funding to encourage increased State, local, and private investment to modernize our infrastructure; dedicate federal funding to rural transportation needs; initiate a transformative projects program; use federal funding to stimulate investments in projects of National and Regional Significance; implement infrastructure improvement reforms; and accelerate environmental review and permitting.

I also attended a presentation by the NACO legislative team on the status of key legislation and issues affecting the counties which are currently being considered by the Trump administration and Congress. These include: the Farm bill; rural development programs;

Headstart; Community development block grants (CDBG); TANF and SNAP programs; welfare reform; healthcare reform; opioid epidemic; public lands issues; infrastructure improvements; and regulatory reforms.

The panel also summarized NACO's 2018 Legislative Priorities which include: promoting county infrastructure priorities; supporting the payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) and Secure Rural Schools (SRS) programs; supporting policies to promote mental health, substance abuse treatment, and justice reform; protect federal-state local partnership for Medicaid; work towards a more effective definition of Waters of the U.S.; supporting county authority to collect existing sales taxes; supporting programs that assist counties to prevent and reduce poverty; and supporting a comprehensive long-term Farm Bill reauthorization.

In the afternoon, I attended a panel discussion on the role that counties will play in developing transportation and infrastructure networks which incorporate and accommodate the future facing "Smart" technologies. These include: "Smart" street signage; "Smart" tech traffic and street lights; and incorporating features in road design and construction to accommodate autonomous vehicles (e.g. installing wider road striping which automated vehicles can detect). The issues that counties will have to grapple with in deciding whether to invest in "Smart" infrastructure include the overall costs of constructing and maintaining the infrastructure, and the challenge of hiring a workforce with the skillsets to perform ongoing maintenance of the "Smart" infrastructure. It was pointed out that the federal government may eventually adopt road design and construction standards which states and counties would be required to follow in order to accommodate autonomous vehicles. But again, this begs the question: at what cost to the counties and who will pick up the tab?

March 6, 2018 Meetings

Councilmembers Ikaika Anderson and Brandon Elefante, and I met with FTA Executive Director Matthew Welbes and his staff at FTA headquarters to discuss the status of the agency's review of HART's Recovery Plan. We initiated and participated in the meeting as members of the Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) which was established by Resolution 18-38 to investigate issues relating to the Recovery Plan.

In addition to the PIG members, the following individuals were also present at the meeting: Mr. Denis Dwyer of Williams & Jensen, PLLC; Mr. Alan Texeira, Legislative Aide, Office of then Vice-Chair Ikaika Anderson; and Mrs. Mary Schmidtke, Senior Advisor to Councilmember Brandon Elefante. Representing the FTA at the meeting were: Matthew Welbes, Executive Director, Office of the Administrator; Bruce Robinson, Deputy Associate Administrator; Beth Day, Office of Project Planning; Philip Neuman, Sr., Government Affairs Officer, Office of the Assistant Secretary (of DOT) for Government Affairs; Lucy Garliauskas, Associate Administrator for Planning and Environment; Bernado Bustamante, EPA Region 9 Director of the Office of Program Management & Project Oversight (via conference call).

The meeting began with introductions and I thanked the FTA team for the recent meetings in Honolulu reviewing the Recovery Plan. I explained that in February 2016, the City Council voted for, and Mayor Caldwell signed into law, a \$1.1B, 5-year extension of the 0.5% general excise tax (GET) surcharge. In September 2017, the Council voted again for, and the Mayor signed, an additional 3-year extension of the 0.5% GET surcharge. These actions, combined with the State of Hawaii's dedicated proceeds from its Transient Accommodations Tax, and the City's share of Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transit (HART) administrative costs included in the FY '19 budget proposal, bring Honolulu's total local share of the Project to 82%.

These actions reflect the City's ongoing and repeated commitment to the completion of the Project and the City's commitment to continue to work with HART to assure the necessary funding.

Mr. Welbes noted that the FTA team is working through the information from the meetings of the previous week and is looking at the resources needed to support completion of the project.

Mr. Robinson, who participated in the Honolulu meetings, indicated more time was needed to review the Recovery Plan and conversations will continue through an iterative process. Their response to the Recovery Plan will depend on the results of the Risk Assessment process which might necessitate revisions to the Recovery Plan. They will be looking at the costs, schedule (including schedule contingency), accounting, project risks, and financial plan. These will determine their comfort level in moving forward with the Project. They will also be evaluating the risks associated with the City Center section and the Pearl Highlands contracts and at procurement efficiencies and possible public-private partnership options.

In response to Councilmember Anderson's question about the necessity for funding in the City's FY '19 budget and whether this money must be appropriated for the FTA to approve the Recovery Plan, the FTA team indicated that this funding is critical and the City funding has to demonstrate good faith. FTA will be watching to assure that the funding is approved in the City's FY '19 budget, which is currently scheduled for a final vote on June 6, 2018.

In response to Councilmember Elefante's question as to when federal funds might be released for the project, Mr. Welbes stated that while the money has been appropriated, they are not releasing the funds until they have confidence that the project can move forward through a final Recovery Plan. He recognized and commended the profound steps and heroic actions that

elected officials in Hawaii have taken over the past year to assure the financial viability of the Project.

Later in the afternoon, we joined the representatives from the neighbor island delegations to participate in separate meetings with Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa in the Cannon House Office Building and Senators Brian Schatz and Mazie Hirono at the Hart Senate Office Building. We urged our congressional delegation to continue to push for federal support of county issues. More specifically, I emphasized the importance of federal funding for transportation infrastructure, including rail, and for affordable housing, and homeless initiatives, including low income housing tax credits, HOME and CDBG funds.

Conclusion

As we work toward the completion of Honolulu's rail project, it was important to meet with FTA officials regarding the status of the recovery plan. It is critical for the members of the Council to keep the lines of communication open with the FTA. It was also helpful to hear first-hand about the President's Initiatives for Rebuilding Infrastructure in America.

As preparations are underway for hurricane season, we learned from other jurisdictions about disaster preparedness and coordinating recovery efforts. It is clear that more can be done by the City, the State and the community in preparing for natural and manmade disasters.



Councilmembers Menor, Ikaika Anderson, and Brandon Elefante attended the National Association of Counties Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. from March 5 through March 7. The City Council delegation, along with other councilmembers from the neighbor islands, met United States Senator Brian Schatz at the United States Senate to discuss federal support for important county issues.



The Honolulu City Council delegation also met with United States Senator Mazie Hirono in Washington D.C. to discuss federal support for municipal projects around Oahu.



During their trip to attend the National Association of Counties Legislative Conference, Councilmembers Menor, Ikaika Anderson, and Brandon Elefante met with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Executive Director Matt Welbes, third from right, at FTA headquarters to discuss the status of federal funding for Honolulu's rail project.

City Council
City and County of Honolulu

CLAIM FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Date: April 25, 2018

Traveler: Councilmember Ron Menor

Event: 2018 NACo Legislative Conference

Location: Hilton Washington, D.C.

Dates: From April 3, 2018

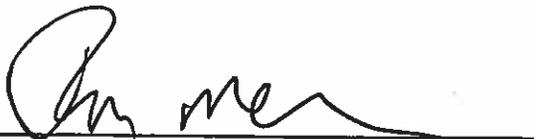
To April 7, 2018

March

March

Description	Amount	Notes:
1. Registration Fee	1,400.00	
2. Airfare	1,047.00	
3. Hotel	1,148.00 ✓	
4. Meals	71.89 58.34 ✓	
5. Ground Transportation	71.00 ✓	
6. Tips	18.00 21.00 ✓	Housekeeping Tip
7. Other	50.00 ✓	Baggage Fee (\$25.00 + \$25.00)
Other		
Other		
8. Adjustment		
TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT	2,885.89 1,348.34	

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

APR 25 2018
Date