



April 17, 2020

COUNCIL LEADERSHIP CLARIFIES ACTION ON STAFF PAY RAISES

Honolulu City Council Chairman Ikaika Anderson, Council Vice Chairwoman Ann Kobayashi and Budget Chairman Joey Manahan today clarified a point made by Councilmember Kym Pine in her press release on April 16 that she “cast the lone ‘no’ vote on proposed 5% pay increases for the City Council legislative staff, Office of Council Services, Office of the City Clerk, City Auditor and their respective staffs” when Councilmember Pine voted against Bill 19 on April 15. Bill 19 is the Legislative Budget for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

“The Legislative Budget was drafted in December as it occurs every year and prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, I included pay raises for Council staff,” said Chairman Anderson. “Obviously, the raises I budgeted in December are no longer feasible. During the April 15 Council meeting, I informed my colleagues that I had discussed Bill 19 with Budget Chair Manahan and that said raises, along with other originally included items, would be removed from the final Legislative Budget. Since Councilmember Pine was present and heard what I said, I am surprised and disappointed she failed to include my remarks in her press release.”

This year’s budget process was affected by the COVID-19 public health crisis and the Budget Committee was unable to hold detailed budget briefings. But Councilmembers still shared concerns and ideas. Budget Chairman Manahan confirms the discussions referenced by Chairman Anderson.

“Chairman Anderson told me he will cut the staff pay raises, originally planned back in December, and that he’d likely make further cuts due to the pandemic,” said Budget Chair Manahan. “But those cuts won’t be reflected until the next round of the budget, as the Chairman said publicly on April 15, due to the committee’s inability to meet. Councilmember Pine should have been more forthright about Chairman Anderson’s comments.”

Council Vice Chair Kobayashi, who led the Council Budget Committee for more than 10 years, knows, like her colleagues, that every year there are three votes on the Legislative Budget.

“The vote taken on April 15 was to send the bill back to the Budget Committee for further review and amendments,” said Vice Chair Kobayashi. “And because Chairman Anderson clearly stated that staff pay raises and other items would be cut prior to final reading, I voted yes on April 15.”

In a joint statement, Councilmembers Anderson, Kobayashi and Manahan said, *“Councilmember Pine’s press release unfairly implied that we, her colleagues, were not as compassionate or respectful as her to those in our communities who lost jobs and are struggling. As a seasoned lawmaker, Councilmember Pine could have easily shared the whole truth - she knows what we have shared are the facts. We expected better from our colleague.”*

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