

August 16, 2021

The Honorable David Y. Ige
Governor, State of Hawaii
Executive Chambers, State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Governor Ige:

Re: Serious Concerns Regarding City and County of Honolulu's Departure from
Emergency Proclamation Related to COVID-19 Response and Every Other
Employer Jurisdiction in the State of Hawaii

The six exclusive representatives of public employees continue to join with other community voices to strongly encourage residents and public employees to get vaccinated to end this pandemic. We support vaccinations and working together with the Employers to collaboratively develop a plan that best serves the health, safety and wellbeing of our front-line workers and the communities they serve across the state.

However, we have serious concerns about the City and County of Honolulu's departure from your Emergency Proclamation. Your Emergency Proclamation Related to COVID-19 Response provides that beginning on August 16, 2021, all State and county employees must attest to whether they are fully vaccinated, partially vaccinated, or not vaccinated for COVID-19. Your Emergency Proclamation further provides that as an "alternative", State and county employees shall be subject to regular COVID-19 testing that shall occur either once or twice per week, at the discretion of the relevant State or county department, office, or agency.

Consistent with your Emergency Proclamation, every government employer across the state, *except the City and County of Honolulu*, is providing unvaccinated employees the "alternative" of regular and frequent COVID-19 testing to ensure they remain COVID-free. The City and County of Honolulu stands alone among Hawaii government employers, opting instead to take punitive action against all unvaccinated employees who do not qualify for a medical or religious exemption. Beginning August 16, 2021, unvaccinated City employees who do not qualify for a medical or religious exemption will be subject to forced leave without pay, disciplinary action, and job loss through termination, while their counterparts in other jurisdictions on Oahu and across our state have the option of testing to ensure they are able to safely stay on the job while continuing to earn a living and provide essential public services for their communities. The disparity between the vaccination mandate of the City and the vaccination and testing guidelines of every other government employer, including the State of Hawaii, Department of Education, University of Hawaii, Judiciary, Hawaii Health Systems Corporation, County of Kauai, County of Maui, County of Hawaii flies in the face of the merit principle, Article XVI of the Hawaii State Constitution, Chapter 76, HRS, our State Civil Service law, Article XIII of the Hawaii State Constitution and Chapter 89, HRS.

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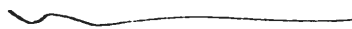
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We believe and fear that the Mayor's draconian approach to this important issue will result in serious unanticipated consequences, such as severe staffing shortages and the resultant impact on public services in areas where numbers of employees who choose not to be vaccinated are placed on involuntary leave or worse, leave the service. We feel a consistent, uniform statewide set of guidelines allowing for a regular and stringent testing option would mitigate this possibility.

Based on the foregoing, we respectfully ask you to intervene in this matter and ensure that there is equal and fair treatment of employees. While we recognize and respect the need for flexibility amongst the different employer jurisdictions in implementing vaccination and testing guidelines, there are certain rights that should be uniformly applied. At a minimum, the opportunity to submit to regular and frequent testing as an alternative to ensure that employees are COVID free and continue to safely provide essential public services is one of them.

We look forward to your prompt intervention and response.

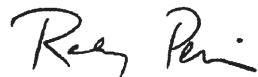
Sincerely,



Wilbert Holck, Executive Director
Hawaii State Teachers Association



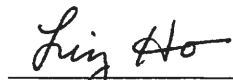
Malcolm Lutu, President
State of Hawaii Organization of Police



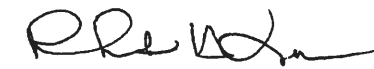
Randy Perreira, Executive Director
Hawaii Government Employees Association



Christian Fern, Executive Director
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly



Liz Ho, Administrator
United Public Workers



Robert Lee, President
Hawaii Fire Fighters Association

cc: Ryker Wada, Chief Negotiator, State of Hawaii
Mayor Rick Blangiardi, City and County of Honolulu
Mayor Derek Kawakami, County of Kauai
Mayor Mitch Roth, County of Hawaii

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Mayor Michael Victorino, County of Maui

Keith Hayashi, Interim Superintendent, Department of Education

Catherine Payne, Chairperson, Board of Education

David Lassner, President, University of Hawaii

Randy Moore, Chairperson, Board of Regents, University of Hawaii

Linda Rosen, CEO and President, HHSC

Mark Recktenwald, Hawaii Chief Justice