

**From:** [Doreen Kupau](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Salaries testimony  
**Date:** Thursday, February 20, 2025 2:49:38 PM

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I highly oppose any raise increase in salaries for any elected officials.

**From:** [Marcos Flores](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Testimonial Against Raises for the Governor and High-Level Public Officials  
**Date:** Thursday, February 20, 2025 9:00:38 PM

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Aloha

As a concerned citizen, I strongly oppose any salary increases for the governor and other high-ranking public officials while our state struggles to fund essential services like infrastructure, public safety, and education. It is unacceptable to prioritize raises for top officials when our police officers, firefighters, corrections officers, and teachers those who serve and protect our communities daily are underpaid and overworked.

Our roads and bridges are deteriorating, our schools lack proper resources, and our first responders face staffing shortages due to low wages. Yet, instead of addressing these urgent issues, some propose giving more money to those already earning the highest salaries in government. Leadership should be about service and sacrifice, not personal financial gain at the expense of those who truly keep our state running.

Until our essential workers receive the pay they deserve and our infrastructure is properly funded, no additional taxpayer dollars should be spent on raising the salaries of high-level officials. Our states budget should reflect the priorities of the people, not the interests of politicians.

**From:** [marc@hanamaui.com](mailto:marc@hanamaui.com)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] I object to the large proposed pay raises for state officials  
**Date:** Thursday, February 20, 2025 10:19:24 PM

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Aloha! I'm opposed to the large raises being reviewed by the salary commission for Hawaii's senior government leaders, including Governor Green's 61% increase. I understand the desire to provide a competitive wage for a single-income household, but public service is a special opportunity that provides its own rewards to those elected. I note that Governor Green himself proposed a smaller increase, so I urge the Salary Commission to lower the increases. Earlier today, I also saw that typical electricity rates in our state are roughly 3X the average rates in the rest of the country. In East Maui, our families are struggling with high costs and low wages, and it feels terribly disrespectful for our leaders to receive these raises when local families are struggling. Please bring the raises down to levels that respect the hardships facing our communities.

Mahalo,  
Marc Sanders, Vice-President  
Hana Business Council

**From:** [Bernadette Pada](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Opposition of Pay raises  
**Date:** Friday, February 21, 2025 8:56:27 AM

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Aloha,

My name is Bernadette Pada. As a constituent of the state of Hawaii, I am in strong opposition to the proposed pay raises for government employees. Those voting on this need to remember that they are servants of the constituents of Hawaii, not government employees. The community is saying NO to the pay raises. Listen and understand that this is not what the community wants. There are pressing issues that need to be addressed (homelessness, DOE, substance use, mental health services, and rising cost of living). The proposed funding can go to different programs that will benefit the community. I am one paycheck away from being homeless. Please do not further perpetuate the oppression of the people of Hawaii. NO PAY RAISES!

Mahalo,  
Bernadette Pada

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Samantha Moore](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Proposed Salary Increases  
**Date:** Friday, February 21, 2025 9:36:56 AM

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To: Hawaii State Legislature

Subject: Opposition to Proposed Salary Increases for Governor and State Officials

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to deeply express my opposition to the proposed salary increases for Governor Josh Green and other top state officials. As a business owner in Hawaii, I witness firsthand the financial struggles of local residents and the direct impact of economic policies on consumer spending.

My business experiences revenue spikes on paycheck days, highlighting the fact that many residents live paycheck to paycheck. This is a clear indication that Hawaii's economy remains unstable, and many households are struggling to keep up with the rising cost of living. Despite these challenges, the governor and state officials are set to receive substantial salary increases, while small businesses and working families continue to bear the burden of high taxes, housing costs, and inflation.

If the state were seeing strong economic growth, a reasonable salary adjustment for top officials might be justified. However, given the current financial climate, where many local families are barely making ends meet, this proposed increase is both tone-deaf and irresponsible. The focus should be on addressing economic issues, supporting local and small businesses, and improving the financial well-being of residents—not significantly raising government salaries.

I urge the legislature to reconsider these salary hikes and prioritize policies that directly benefit the people of Hawaii rather than increasing the pay of those who have yet to effectively address the state's ongoing economic challenges.

Sincerely,

Samantha Moore

**From:** [Paula Blum](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Potential Pay Raises  
**Date:** Friday, February 21, 2025 9:59:22 AM

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Really? They need more money to rule their Kingdom? To instruct the mindless voters that keep voting for these feel good Despots to tell them how to live and what to put in our bodies?

Give people papers to travel to make them feel special? Force small businesses to shut down. No no no no !

#NEVERFORGET!

They don't need a raise they need to be VOTED OUT!

“Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely!”

Where did all the Billions from the Feds go for the outdated rail to nowhere?????

Give me a break A Pay RAISE?

Best Regards

From a citizen that asks questions with a Mind!

Sent from Gmail Mobile

**From:** [Mike Kerr](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: Proposed salary raises  
**Date:** Friday, February 21, 2025 10:33:12 AM

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Obviously Hawaii needs a DOGE! These proposed raises are preposterous. Maybe these people need to get out of their bubble and see how their constituents are living -many of them paycheck to paycheck.

There is far too much needless spending, and I'm sure fraud and abuse. Every session of the legislature, they do nothing but consider more regulations and taxes. Of course they want Hawaii to become a sanctuary state for "trans kids".

No raises for any of them please!

Sincerely,  
Michelle Kerr



**From:** [Freebird](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Pay Raises  
**Date:** Friday, February 21, 2025 11:54:15 AM

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Dear [Recipient Name],

The proposed executive compensation increase (50-60%) contrasts sharply with employee increases (2-3%), raising serious equity concerns. This disparity impacts morale and productivity. My own 2.1% increase reflects the common experience. A review of the proposal and alternative strategies to ensure fair compensation for all employees is needed. A detailed justification for the executive increase would be appreciated.

Sincerely,  
Walter Miske

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

**From:** [Thomas Tantog](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] State pay hikes  
**Date:** Friday, February 21, 2025 9:02:26 PM

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I'm am furious our state is even putting this up for debate no one especially in our states government deserves a raise while the citizens are struggling to make ends meet!! Legislature just gave themselves a 64% raise which should have never been passed! Our roads/ highways are a decimated the inflated cost of that useless rail that nobody voted for schools falling apart parks are unkept and it goes on. It's insane to even think any of these ppl should get a raise and I'm against this idiocy!!!

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [A Wong](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] No to pay raise for state leaders  
**Date:** Friday, February 21, 2025 10:33:13 PM

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Absolutely no pay raise for the state leaders! People of Hawaii are suffering and the leaders are just helping themselves. Stop this corruption.

**From:** [Joelle Seashell](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] I OPPOSE THIS PROPOSAL  
**Date:** Saturday, February 22, 2025 1:20:47 PM

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You, the political leadership of Hawaii have been doing a terrible job in the management of this state. You do not deserve a pay raise, much less one of this magnitude. You really should be very ashamed of yourself to even propose this. We need term limits and politicians to serve once and move on. We do NOT NEED OR WANT people who are serving decades and getting rich doing so. Instead of a pay raise, we should be docking your pay to create incentive for you to come live under your horrific policies and legislation like the rest of us struggle to do. We need to whack the government teet of your mouth.

Joelle from Palolo

**From:** [shidell parks](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Proposed pay raises for elected officials  
**Date:** Saturday, February 22, 2025 2:57:06 PM

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To whom this may concern,

I am a native Hawaiian born and raised working mother living in Oahu. My husband and I are a working class family with 4 children, with one more child on the way- and I strongly oppose this bill. A 40% pay increase for elected officials is extremely insulting to all families here residing in Hawaii. After Covid 19, many families lost their jobs, had to drain their savings to survive and many people including myself are still trying to recover from that financial burden from 2020.

My husband and I both have fairly good paying jobs but we still live paycheck to paycheck. How can elected officials receive a pay increase while many families in Hawaii are still struggling? It is very greedy, selfish, and insulting to families who are trying to pay their mortgage, land tax, home owners insurances, and other bills to care for their families while paying state and federal taxes. Hawaii elected officials need to listen to the community and the concerns of their people and not just drastically receive pay increases to elected officials. I strongly oppose this bill.

Governor Green is currently receiving almost \$190,000 a year for his job and a \$65,000 pay increase is not what Hawaii's people need to be spending their state tax dollars on. We need to find other ways to help the community and families who are struggling.

Mahalo,  
Shidell Kealoha

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

**From:** [Nani aloha Bee](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Commission Salaries  
**Date:** Monday, March 3, 2025 12:52:53 PM

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Aloha,

As a tax paying resident of Hawaii for over 5 generations I would like to state for the record, I OPPOSE any further pay increases. The normal annual pay increase is usually between 1.5 to 5%.

Not only has the Governor, directors , and deputy directors not been doing a good job, they are failing the people of Hawai'i. Between bad deals that pad investor pockets like the sky Alamoana on affordable housing projects all the way to legislation. This money should be put back into Hawaii for self sustainability and reduction of import reliance to Hawaii. Lobbyists have taken over our government. As a double slap in the face, now you want to reward that bad behavior that allows more of our longtime generational Hawaii residents to have to move away from their home land.

Why would we tax payers want to give more and entice more people to come here and do a bad job for the people? This is the same nonsensical atmosphere that is permeating in legislators right now.

Get to work, work for the people and stop thinking of only lining your pockets. As Taxpayers we want accountability not more bureaucracy.

Sincerely,  
Nani B

**From:** [Todd Jegglie](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Proposed Salary Increases for Governor and State Officials  
**Date:** Monday, March 3, 2025 12:54:55 PM

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To: Hawaii State Legislature

Subject: Opposition to Proposed Salary Increases for Governor and State Officials

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to deeply express my opposition to the proposed salary increases for Governor Josh Green and other top state officials. Exactly. Who do you think you are? NO ONE should be able to vote for such an increase of their own salary! Each one of you should be ashamed of yourselves to think this would be okay. People are struggling. And that's not how the world works. Ultimately we pay your salaries, and we vote. NO!!!!



**The Senate**  
**Ka 'Aha Kenekoa**

STATE CAPITOL  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

March 3, 2025

Colleen Hanabusa, Chair  
Wes Machida, Vice Chair  
State Commission on Salaries  
Department of Human Resources Development  
235 South Beretania Street, Room 1403  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Hanabusa and Vice Chair Machida:


First, thank you for the work done by the Commission. Determining appropriate salary levels for public officials is especially difficult and complicated in 2025 when we in Hawaii – like residents of the other 49 contiguous states – are facing unpredictable reductions in federal funding for programs that directly serve Hawaii residents.

Amongst the comments that I have received is a suggestion from a constituent who is also a state employee that I believe is worthy of your consideration.

The suggestion is to revise the Commission on Salaries process to allow voters to approve (or disapprove) the percentage increases recommended for state legislative salaries.

The constituent's rationale is that state legislators derive their authority from the voters. By requiring public approval for salary increase percentage adjustments, the process reinforces that these public officials are answerable to the people. The salary question may also require a determination on whether the legislature should be a full-time body rather than one operating on a part-time basis.

Mahalo for your consideration,

  
Carol Fukunaga  
State Senator, District 11  
Manoa-Makiki, Punchbowl, Papakolea, Tantalus & University



**From:** [Pam](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Proposed salary hikes  
**Date:** Monday, March 3, 2025 2:57:00 PM

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Aloha,

I am opposed to this pay hike because I don't feel it is deserved first of all and I also don't feel the people of Hawaii should continue to suffer while you and the rest live in your luxury ! This pay hike is a slap in the face to all who live in Hawaii that barely can live and eat and get by, you should be ashamed and embarrassed to even ask or feel like you deserve such a drastic huge amount of money when you are already way over paid as it is !! Shame on you all, I oppose this bill 100%

Pam Anderson  
Big Island resident  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Phebe Kahoiwai](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Testimony for Hawaii Salaries  
**Date:** Monday, March 3, 2025 4:31:48 PM

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I OPPOSE THE SALARY HIKE.

Hearing: 3/4/25 11:30am

Resending to oppose this outrageous salary hike!!

Phebe K.

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Phebe Kahoiwai <haunani711@yahoo.com>  
**Date:** February 19, 2025 at 1:33:02 PM HST  
**To:** dhrd.compensation@hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony for Hawaii Salaries

Hearing: Feb 20, 2025 at 2 pm

To Whom It May Concern:

I am submitting a written testimony for the upcoming hearing scheduled on the above date. This is in reference to Hawai'i officials receiving a salary increase with taxpayers' monies. I formally and fully oppose this salary increase. This would further cause undue financial hardship on Hawai'i taxpayers and is not warranted.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email or via my mobile below.

Very Respectfully,

Phebe Kahoiwai  
808-222-0397

**From:** [Eric Apaka](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Salaries  
**Date:** Monday, March 3, 2025 9:31:39 PM

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There should be no raises for those who hold public office. Why should they line their pockets while the Hawaii people suffer? NO TO ANY RAISES!

Mahalo,

Eric Apaka

**From:** [Lawrence Ramirez](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#); [Lawrence Ramirez](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Opposed to any increase in pay.  
**Date:** Monday, March 3, 2025 9:44:28 PM

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"As a concerned citizen of Hawaii, I strongly oppose the proposed pay raises for state workers, including the Governor, judges, and legislators. A pay raise should be a reward for excellence, not a handout demanded by the deeply entrenched corrupt machine that holds power in our state.

Our hard-working taxpayers deserve better than to see their money funneled into the pockets of those who have failed to demonstrate exceptional leadership and results. Where is the accountability? Where are the measurable improvements in our education system, infrastructure, and cost of living that would justify such raises?

The political elite in Hawaii have long operated with a sense of entitlement, insulated from the struggles of everyday residents. This pay raise is just another example of their self-serving agenda, prioritizing personal enrichment over the public good. I urge our leaders to reject this proposal and instead focus on earning the trust and support of the people through tangible achievements, not padded paychecks. Excellence should be the standard for any increase in compensation—not the demands of a corrupt system that has lost sight of who it serves."

Lawrence Ramirez  
Lardg@yahoo.com  
Kailua-Kona, Hawaii

**From:** [Jamie Yamamoto](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] HRS 26-56 Commission on Salaries 3/4/2025 testimony - strongly oppose  
**Date:** Monday, March 3, 2025 10:20:13 PM

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TWIMC:

Strongly oppose salary raise. It's not like public servants are unique in working extended hours or taking on additional responsibilities, majority of the workforce has been doing the exact same thing since 2020. I personally took a 10% pay cut so my employer could stay solvent during covid, why is the suffering Hawaii public funding 18-32% immediate salary increases? This means over 50% and some over 60% pay increase in the next 6 years? Must be nice.

Jamie Yamamoto  
Hilo, HI 96720

**From:** [Rob Jones](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Hawaii Commission on Salaries  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 5:37:07 AM

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Testimony against these raises!

What justifies these raises? The Governor and staff already make enough money, they work for the people!

People of Hawaii are struggling with inflation, poor decisions on energy like eliminating the back up power plant.

Vote no on any political monetary raises!

Robert H Jones

**From:** [Karissa Fuller](#)  
**To:** [DHRD.Compensation](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Testimony in Strong Opposition to the Proposed Salary Increases for the Governor and State Officials  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 8:23:48 AM

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Dear Members of the Commission on Salaries,

I am writing in **strong opposition** to the proposed salary increases for the Governor and other high-ranking state officials. The proposal to increase the Governor’s salary from **\$189,000 to \$304,000 by 2031** would make Hawaii’s Governor the **third highest paid in the nation**, despite the state facing a **housing crisis, failing infrastructure, and deep economic inequalities**.

## **Kuleana: Leadership is a Privilege, Not a Self-Serving Opportunity**

Hawaiian values teach us that leadership is not about personal gain, but **kuleana (responsibility) to serve the people with integrity**. True leadership is rooted in **pono (righteousness, fairness, and justice)**—and yet, the proposed raises contradict these principles.

- **The cost of living in Hawaii is 93% above the national average**, and many local families are struggling to afford housing, food, and healthcare World Population Review, 2024 .
- **Hawaii has the highest per capita homelessness rate in the U.S.**, yet essential funding for affordable housing and services remains inadequate HUD Report, 2024 .
- **Native Hawaiians are disproportionately impacted** by economic instability, overrepresented in **homelessness, lower-income jobs, and the lack of affordable homeownership options** Office of Hawaiian Affairs, 2024 .

At a time when the people of Hawaii are calling for relief, how can our leaders justify **rewarding themselves with six-figure pay raises**?

## **Aloha ‘Āina: The State Must First Care for the Land and People**

Hawaiian culture emphasizes **aloha ‘āina (love for the land and community)**—yet our leaders are failing to protect what makes Hawaii home:

- **The Honolulu Rail Project**—initially budgeted at **\$5.2 billion**—has ballooned to **\$12 billion**, riddled with **delays, fraud, and mismanagement**, while local families pay the price Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transit, 2023 .
- **Public school conditions remain unacceptable** despite Hawaii spending **\$19,700 per student per year**—ranking only **32nd in national performance** NCES, 2024 .
- **Hawaii ranks 47th in the U.S. for road conditions**, forcing residents to pay an **extra \$818 per year** in car repairs TRIP Report, 2023 .

The Governor and state leaders are entrusted to **care for the people and the land first**—not themselves. Until the state fulfills its commitments to infrastructure, education, and housing, **no raises should be considered**.

## Pono: True Leadership Means Putting the People First

Hawaii's leadership must be held to the highest standards of **pono**—acting in the best interest of the people, not personal enrichment.

- The **median individual salary in Hawaii is \$46,000**, while state legislators have already given themselves a **64% raise**, bringing their salaries to **\$104,000**. Meanwhile, teachers, firefighters, and healthcare workers continue to struggle US Census Bureau, 2024 .
- **Hawaii residents already pay among the highest taxes in the U.S. (11.8% of income)**—yet our roads, schools, and public services remain **underfunded and mismanaged** Tax Foundation, 2024 .
- **Government raises should reflect performance**—yet Hawaii's **public safety, education, and infrastructure rankings remain among the worst in the country**.

Raises should be **earned through measurable improvements in government performance**—not handed out while corruption, waste, and financial mismanagement persist.

## Community Voices: The People of Hawaii Oppose These Raises

Testimonies from **residents, small business owners, and working families** overwhelmingly reject this proposal:

- **“My business survives on paycheck-to-paycheck spending. The Governor gets a raise, but my employees struggle to pay rent.”** – Samantha Moore, Small Business Owner
- **“Public service is about helping the people, not enriching politicians. We cannot afford more government waste.”** – Marcos Flores
- **“Our kupuna, our keiki, and our working families are struggling. But instead of caring for them, our leaders are rewarding themselves.”** – Shidell Kealoha
- **“The cost of living is forcing locals out of Hawaii. How can we stay when our own government is working against us?”** – Bernadette Pada

## Conclusion: Leadership Must Be Earned, Not Bought

In Hawaiian culture, leadership is about **humility, service, and responsibility**—not self-interest. **Elected officials are servants of the people** and must be held accountable for their actions **before** they are granted financial rewards.

Hawaii's government must prioritize **public accountability, economic relief, and meaningful reforms** before considering salary increases. **Until our infrastructure, schools, and public services reflect the taxpayer dollars invested, no raises should be granted.**

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to **reject the proposed salary increases**.

Respectfully,

Karissa Fuller  
Small Business Owner  
Hau'ula, Oahu, Hawaii



Ms. Colleen Hanabusa  
Chairwoman, Commission on Salaries  
c/o Department of Human Resources  
State of Hawai'i

4 March 2025

Dear Chair Hanabusa and Commission Members:

Thank you for your diligent efforts to recommend fair and equitable compensation for our colleagues in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the State of Hawai'i.

We respectfully propose that legislators' base salaries be set at 100% of the Area Median Income (AMI) for Honolulu for a single earner. Based on current guidelines, this amount would be \$97,500. We further suggest that annual raises be linked to the Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers (CPI-U). And consistent with current practice, additional amounts should be added for individuals in leadership positions and for neighbor island legislators.

By taking this approach, we align legislators' compensation with the principle that one job should be sufficient to live, work, and raise a family in Hawai'i. This structure also encourages legislators to champion policies that promote living wages, bolster local businesses, and foster a strong, diversified economy—ultimately benefiting all residents.

Thank you for your consideration. We appreciate your service and the important work you do for our state.

Sincerely,

Representative Della Au Belatti  
Representative Tina Grandinetti  
Representative Ikaika Hussey  
Representative Amy Perruso