RES26-076
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 181

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: May 13, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 0

Oppose: 1

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
PIkachu Shelby Billionaire	presidentbillionaire@gmail.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Ohana Unity Party	Oppose	May 9, 2026 @ 06:30 PM

Testimony:

> **RESOLUTION ACCEPTING A GIFT FROM THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION TO THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY TO ATTEND THE TRADITIONAL MEDICINE GLOBAL SUMMIT IN NEW DELHI, INDIA.**

Key Details:

- **Gift Value**: $4,000 (travel, registration, and/or expenses)
- **Recipient**: Executive Director of Honolulu's Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency (likely Joshua Cooper or current director)
- **Event**: World Health Organization (WHO) Traditional Medicine Global Summit
- **Dates**: December 14 – 21, 2025 in New Delhi, India
- **Purpose**: Attend the summit on Traditional Medicine, Indigenous health approaches, and climate-health linkages.

Red Flags You Mentioned (Dates Issue)

You are right to be suspicious about the **dates**:

- The summit was in **December 2025**.
- The resolution appears dated/introduced around **March 27–30, 2026** (after the event already happened).
- This is **highly irregular**. Normally, acceptance of a gift/travel should be approved **before** the trip occurs, not months after.

This looks like a **retroactive approval** (after-the-fact rubber stamp), which is a common bureaucratic workaround but raises transparency and accountability concerns.

Other Concerns:

- Using **public office** funds/time for international travel to a WHO event on "Traditional Medicine."
- Honolulu is facing a very tight FY2027 budget ($3.97B operating with low reserves). $4,000 is small, but it sets a precedent.
- Questions about the actual benefit to Honolulu taxpayers vs. international junkets.
- WHO's involvement in "Traditional Medicine" summits sometimes promotes unproven or pseudoscientific approaches.

Testimony in OPPOSITION

Aloha Chair Waters and Members of the Honolulu City Council,

I **strongly oppose** this resolution accepting a $4,000 gift from the World Health Organization for the Executive Director of the Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency to attend the Traditional Medicine Global Summit in New Delhi, India.

My reasons are as follows:

1. **Retroactive Approval**
The summit occurred in **December 2025**, yet this resolution appears to be dated **March 2026** — months after the trip. This is not proper governance. Gifts and travel should be approved **in advance**, not rubber-stamped after the fact.

2. **Poor Timing and Priorities**
Honolulu is operating under an extremely tight FY2027 budget with only +0.97% growth, major infrastructure cuts, and dangerously low emergency reserves. At a time when we are asking residents to accept higher property taxes and reduced services, spending public time and resources on international climate-traditional medicine conferences is not a priority.

3. **Questionable Value to Taxpayers**
While traditional knowledge can have value, Honolulu faces urgent local issues — flooding, housing, waste management (Waimanalo Gulch closing in 2028), traffic, and infrastructure decay. It is unclear how attending a WHO summit in India directly solves these core problems for our residents.

4. **Precedent**
Approving retroactive international travel sets a bad precedent and weakens oversight on executive travel expenses.

I respectfully urge the Council to **reject** this resolution and implement stricter rules requiring advance approval and clear demonstration of direct benefit to Honolulu taxpayers for all future gifts and travel.

Mahalo for your service.

Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM
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