



## RESOLUTION

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URGING THE HONOLULU STAR-ADVERTISER TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATING IN GOOD FAITH WITH THE UNION FOR THE NEWSPAPER WORKERS IN ORDER TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE HONOLULU STAR-ADVERTISER'S STAFF AND THE NEWSPAPER'S JOURNALISTIC AND EDITORIAL INTEGRITY.

WHEREAS, it has been widely reported that the owners of the Honolulu Star-Advertiser intend to lay off about half of its unionized news staff, with reports of 29 to 34 staff members being affected and their last day to be at the end of the month; and

WHEREAS, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, like many newspapers in America, has undergone major staff reductions in recent years, with a quarter of their staff being lost in 2017, and more recently, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses have caused advertising – a newspaper's lifeblood – to disappear; and

WHEREAS, in May 2020, Oahu Publications, the newspaper's parent company, indefinitely furloughed 50 workers companywide, put another 125 on reduced work schedules and eliminated some freelance positions, and to reduce printing and distribution costs, Saturday editions of its newspapers became available online only; and

WHEREAS, although the Honolulu Star-Advertiser received assistance through the federal Paycheck Protection Program, which offered eight weeks of financial assistance, including for payroll, the help was only temporary with the funds having run out as of June 10, 2020, which only delayed the newspaper's need to reduce fixed expenses; and

WHEREAS, the staff members flagged for termination include: 15 of the newspaper's 34 reporters, seven clerks, three page designers, three graphic artists, two photographers, and one web designer; and

WHEREAS, many of the staff affected have been long-standing employees of and contributors to the newspaper and represent decades of journalistic and editorial experience, including columnist Lee Cataluna, photographers Bruce Asato and Cindy Russell, sports reporter Paul Honda, investigative reporter Rob Perez, Kokua Line reporter Christine Donnelly, and reporter Dan Nakaso; and

WHEREAS, also listed for untimely termination is long-time health and business reporter Kristen Consillio, while Hawaii is in the midst of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic and the devastating impact it has had on Hawaii's businesses and economy; and



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WHEREAS, even as journalists work to provide accurate coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic and deliver public health updates, the pandemic itself has severely impacted the work of the newspaper's journalists, with some workers already having been furloughed and many others on reduced work hours, and now facing pay cuts and job losses; and

WHEREAS, the staff reductions at Hawaii's principal daily newspaper will have a profound impact on Hawaii's news coverage, with fewer journalists to raise issues and questions and keep authorities in check, there will be more substandard information disseminated to the public, and less that will educate and inspire the community; and

WHEREAS, the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, among other things, protects the freedom of our press, and journalists with their vital role in keeping the people informed, especially regarding the actions of our government, serve as the public's key watchdogs in using their investigative powers to scrutinize our leaders and institutions by providing accurate and informative news coverage; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that given the exigent and unprecedented circumstances Hawaii is confronted with, amid the deadly COVID-19 pandemic, the worldwide economic fallout and uncertainty, and the growing recognition of lingering racial injustice, it is imperative that news coverage and inquiry of such issues and events should not diminish, but be maintained, if not increased to meet the public's need for trustworthy and probative news reporting; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it urges the owners and leadership of the Honolulu Star-Advertiser to continue negotiating in good faith with the union representing the newspaper workers in order to preserve and protect the newspaper's staff, as far as practicable, and the newspapers' journalistic and editorial integrity; and



**CITY COUNCIL**  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU  
HONOLULU, HAWAII

No. 20-159

**RESOLUTION**

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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, Dennis Francis, President and CEO of Oahu Publications, Inc., and the Pacific Media Workers Guild.

INTRODUCED BY:

*Carol Fukunaga*  
*Alan Kikuyoshi*  
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DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

**JUN 24 2020**

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU  
HONOLULU, HAWAII  
C E R T I F I C A T E

RESOLUTION 20-159

Introduced: 06/24/20 By: CAROL FUKUNAGA  
ANN KOBAYASHI Committee: COUNCIL

Title: RESOLUTION URGING THE HONOLULU STAR-ADVERTISER TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATING IN GOOD FAITH WITH THE UNION FOR THE NEWSPAPER WORKERS IN ORDER TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE HONOLULU STAR-ADVERTISER'S STAFF AND THE NEWSPAPER'S JOURNALISTIC AND EDITORIAL INTEGRITY.

Voting Legend: \* = Aye w/Reservations

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07/08/20 COUNCIL RESOLUTION 20-159 WAS ADOPTED.  
9 AYES: ANDERSON, ELEFANTE, FUKUNAGA, KOBAYASHI, MANAHAN, MENOR,  
PINE, TSUNEYOSHI, WATERS.

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I hereby certify that the above is a true record of action by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu on this RESOLUTION.

  
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GLEN I. TAKAHASHI, CITY CLERK

  
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IKAIKA ANDERSON, CHAIR AND PRESIDING OFFICER