

CITY COUNCIL
REFERRAL APPEAL FORM

DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2020

TO: COUNCIL CHAIR
FROM: TOMMY WATERS, Public Safety & Welfare
COMMITTEE CHAIR

BILL/RESOLUTION/COMMUNICATION AND SUBJECT:

RESOLUTION 20-243 SUPPORTING THE KOKUA COUNCIL FOR SENIOR CITIZENS AND URGING THE GOVERNOR AND THE STATE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH TO HIRE A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF CONTACT TRACERS, INCLUDING BILINGUAL CONTACT TRACERS

STATUS (Reading/PH):

CURRENTLY REFERRED TO
COMMITTEE(S):
PUBLIC SAFETY AND WELFARE

☒ DESIRED COMMITTEE(S)
RE-REFERRED TO:
COUNCIL FLOOR

OR

☐ DIRECT REFERRAL TO COUNCIL
FLOOR

Reason(s) for Appeal:
THE SUBJECT MATTER IS TIME SENSITIVE


Committee Chair (Requestor)

Committee Chair


Council Chair

10/1/20
Date

Granted ☒
Denied ☐

cc: Councilmembers
City Clerk
Council Assistance



RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING THE KOKUA COUNCIL FOR SENIOR CITIZENS AND URGING THE GOVERNOR AND THE STATE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH TO HIRE A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF CONTACT TRACERS, INCLUDING BILINGUAL CONTACT TRACERS.

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, Governor David Ige ("Governor") issued a proclamation declaring the existence of a state of emergency in the State of Hawaii ("State") due to the COVID-19 outbreak; and

WHEREAS, also on March 4, 2020, Mayor Kirk Caldwell ("Mayor") issued a proclamation declaring the existence of a state of emergency in the City and County of Honolulu ("City") due to the COVID-19 outbreak; and

WHEREAS, the Governor and the Mayor responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by issuing a series of proclamations, supplementary proclamations, and emergency orders, which, among other things, imposed a stay-at-home order, mandated physical distancing measures, closed certain State and City facilities, and established restrictions on social gatherings; and

WHEREAS, within several weeks, the State saw a significant drop in COVID-19 infections, with zero or single-digit new cases reported by the State Department of Health ("DOH") each day; and

WHEREAS, as a result, the Governor and the Mayor gradually eased some COVID-19 restrictions, allowing additional businesses to operate, permitting some social gatherings, and reopening some State and City facilities; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 cases began to surge in late July, and the DOH reported triple-digit new cases on Oahu on most days during the month of August; and

WHEREAS, during this surge Oahu's Pacific Islander communities were particularly hard hit and efforts to conduct effective contact tracing among these communities, particularly in the early days of the surge, may have been hampered by the lack of outreach to these communities in their native languages and the shortage of contact tracers with proficiency in these languages; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor responded to these increases in COVID-19 cases on Oahu by instituting a second stay-at-home/work-from-home order (Emergency Order No. 2020-25), which re-imposed most of the restrictions included in the earlier stay-at-home orders; and



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, as of September 6, 2020, there appears to have been a steady decline in Oahu COVID-19 case numbers over the preceding week and this may result in an easing of COVID-19 restrictions; and

WHEREAS, public health experts recommend that as the economy remobilizes and public spaces are opened up, communities should replace stay-at-home orders with scaled-up surveillance, testing, and tracing systems in order to rapidly respond to new infection clusters and prevent an island-wide resurgence of COVID-19 cases; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of County and City Health Officials estimates that, given the magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to complete contact tracing within hours as opposed to days from the reporting of a new case, 30 professionals (i.e., epidemiologists, disease investigation specialists, public health nurses, community health workers, and others) per 100,000 population are needed for a successful contact tracing program; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 321C, Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS"), requires that State agencies take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency have access to services, programs, and activities through the provision of competent, timely language services; and

WHEREAS, HRS Chapter 321C further states that when additional personnel are needed to provide language services in order to properly service the needs of persons with limited English proficiency, the State is required to hire qualified personnel who are bilingual to fill those needs; and

WHEREAS, the Kokua Council for Senior Citizens ("Kokua Council") is a public advocacy group that advocates for the well-being of the local community, with particular attention to those who need help advocating for themselves; and

WHEREAS, the Kokua Council has demanded that the DOH contact tracing operation be improved by increasing both the numbers of the professional personnel needed to conduct a successful contact tracing operation and of the bilingual personnel required to meet the needs of those persons with limited English proficiency; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, a robust contact tracing operation is necessary to lock in the gains achieved through the stay-at-home orders, and any successful contact tracing operation must include bilingual services to ensure its effectiveness; now, therefore,



CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

No. 20-243

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it supports the Kokua Council for Senior Citizens in its demand that the Governor and the State Department of Health hire a sufficient number of contact tracers, including the necessary bilingual personnel to satisfy requirements for State services to be provided to those persons with limited English proficiency, to address the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and safety of the public; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council urges the Governor and the State Department of Health to hire a sufficient number of contact tracers and bilingual contact tracers, as well as provide relevant health information to those persons with limited English proficiency, to ensure the health and safety of the public; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the State Director of Health, and the Kokua Council for Senior Citizens.

INTRODUCED BY:

Alvin Kikuyachi
Carol Fung

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

SEP 16 2020

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers