

PoKa Laenui  
(Hayden F. Burgess)  
86-226 Farrington Hwy.  
Wai`anae, HI 96792

Tel: (808) 200-2682  
plaenui@hawaiianperspectives.org

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Duke Bainum, Councilman  
City Council  
City & County of Honolulu  
Honolulu Hale

Re: Community Revitalization Package to meet Economic Recovery Needs

Aloha Duke:

May I take this opportunity to introduce to you an economic recovery package that is community based along the lines that self-help is the best help. We already have much of the resources needed for economic recovery, our people, our lands and ocean. The major barrier is in the proper management and guidance of these resource uses. By providing assistance through changes in existing laws and pinpoint funding for community based organizations, we will not only meet the immediate needs in our communities but we will form the necessary infrastructure for long term economic health.

The essential elements necessary in this economic recovery package are:

a) **identifying select communities (at least five) throughout Hawai'i to be used for model revitalization programs** - Along with the identification of such communities, there should be a process by which organizations may submit themselves or a hui of community organizations to act as the core community organization (or hui) to carry forward the program(s). Such organization should meet the requirement of being 1) community based (specific to that community), 2) not for profit, 3) experienced in providing the services to the community for which it submits itself to perform for, 4) has a proven administrative (including fiscal responsibility) capability to undertake the task, and 5) is accepted by the community from which it comes.

b) **liberate land use from current restrictions** - Land owners or long-term lessees of non-productive lands should be encouraged to place such lands in more productive hands. This could be done through the stick or the carrot approaches. There could be tax penalties or relief/credits to owners or lessees to encourage their working with the core community hui. Placing such lands in such hui will allow the community opportunity to use such non-productive lands. For example, there could be a law which would identify certain lands as tax exempt if the lands are dedicated to the community hui for a period of 10 years or more. If withdrawn from this dedication, the taxes previously waived would have to be repaid at a percentage, depending

on the number of years the land was actually left in the dedicated state. This would allow the community to garden or farm and turn currently non-productive lands into productive lands.

There should also be a provision for streamlining or waiving building permits for structures under \$100,000 providing they meet basic health and safety codes. Ohana housing codes should also be extended into areas that qualify as designated communities.

**c) protect more vigorously our ocean resources for our community use** - Create a regime of shoreline rehabilitation including the replanting of limu, the limited taking of ocean resources (such as tropical fish for export), the protection of our reef life, setting boundaries close to the shore for community fishing, a second boundary for non-motorized vessels, a third for small motorized boats from within the community, and a fourth for larger boats, charters, sports fishing, and others from outside the community. Establish authority in the community hui to designate an ocean master to determine when certain sea life is kapu (beyond currently set restrictions), with capacity to enforce said determination. Review the schedule of charges for fishing license and be sure that the State receives an amount appropriate to the amount of fish being extracted from Hawaiian waters.

Permit the hui to assess from every motorized fishing vessel taking from the community waters, a portion of the catch for distribution to members of the community.

**d) support the core community organizations** - Create within the State of Hawai`i, or the county, an entity to provide to the community hui, technical assistance to be sure that the organizations understand the interaction with government, maximize their opportunities to assist their communities, and are adequately introduced to technical matters with which they may not be familiar, such as efficient methods of farming, fishing, use of traditional healing methods, new technology, and protection for the environment.

**e) invest public funds to support this initiative** - Set aside for each community, \$1 million for the operation of the community hui and another \$1 million as a revolving fund for the members of the community as they develop their self-sufficiency projects. The actual award to the community hui would be based upon its application and program design.

The Wai`anae Coast Community Alternative Development Corporation is presently attempting to identify key individuals to develop further the ocean management aspect of this program. We are also circulating this proposal among other communities and, so far, have had excellent response from them. We would be most happy to have your consultation, support, and even incorporation into your overall program for restructuring Hawaii's economy.

Aloha a hui hou,

Pōkā Laenui

cc: Community Empowerment, a paper on a common sense approach to Hawaii's economic dilemma