



Our Mission

To prepare individuals to embrace a diverse community, attain their personal goals, and aspire to become contributing citizens by providing assistance and support.

June 8, 2009

The Honorable Todd Apo, Chair
and Members of the City Council
City and County of Honolulu
530 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

- SUBJECT: Regular City Council Meeting, Wednesday, June 10, 2009 regarding Bill 15 Executive Operating Budget, CD2

Aloha Honorable Todd Apo and Members of the City Council:

My name is Denice Keliikoa and I'm the President of Making Dreams Come True, Valley of Rainbows, a 501.c.3 nonprofit agency serving youth and families on the Leeward Coast. I am writing in support of the Office of Economic Development and maintaining their current budget level. We have been working with the City staff and OED since 2002 to provide our residents with a quality *free* community event each year. Since 2000, over 15,000 community members, families and kūpuna enjoy the annual Wai'anae Coast Sunset on the Beach held at Mai'li Beach, a total of 120,000+ children, families and senior adults over the 9 years. Our families and kūpuna looks forward to this annual community event as it is one of the few *free* family events offered on the Leeward Coast. Other ways the OED has helped our agency and community through this popular community event:

- 180 restaurants and food vendors have been able to promote their place of business and increase sales at their establishment; generating over a million dollars in revenue.
- Over 300 craft, artists and shop owners have sold local made products and their merchandise.

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- Over 175 entertainers, hula halau, musicians and musical groups have been able to share their musical talents with businesses, community residents and producers creating new bookings and gigs.
- 200+ nonprofit agencies have been able to share their programs and showcase their services, reaching thousands of residents.
- Over 150,000 individuals have been able to receive *free* health screenings and various tests at our health expo each year. Many are not able to see a doctor or have physicals due to their limited income or lack of insurance and use our event to receive medical care and advice.
- With OED's grant support Valley of Rainbows has contracted many local event, sound and rental vendors to assist with the production of this annual event over the 8 years, helping their businesses grow, prosper and become economically independent – an estimated:
 - \$700,000 spent on sound, stage, video and equipment contracts
 - \$420,000 on tent, chairs, tables, siding and other equipment rental fees.
 - \$100,000 on signage, banners and exhibit display items.
 - \$ 75,000 on printing of event shirts.
 - \$ 72,000 on food/beverages locally purchased locally for volunteers.
 - \$35,000 on media contracts and advertisements to promote and market our event.
 - \$27,000 in transportation and shuttle vendors.

As you can see this has been a positive partnership for thousands of community residents, businesses and smaller companies and we strongly urge our Council Members to maintain the level of support and funding for OED in this budget year.

During these economically challenging times, it is even more important to ensure public/private partnerships between the city and non-profits and small businesses to leverage available resources.

I thank you for your past and continued support and especially your time as you review my testimony. I can be reached at (808) 286 7869 or email at denicek@hawaii.rr.com if you have any questions.

Mahalo nui loa,

Denice Keliikoa
President