

CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
530 SOUTH KING STREET, ROOM 202
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-3065
TELEPHONE: (808) 768-5010 • FAX: (808) 768-5011

ESTHER KIA'ĀINA
VICE CHAIR
HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL, DISTRICT 3
Email: ekiaaina@honolulu.gov
Telephone: (808) 768-5003

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 25, 2024

TO: Council Administrative Services

FROM: Councilmember Esther Kia'āina *Ek*

SUBJECT: Travel Report for 2024 Communities in Action: Building a Better Hawaii
Event at the White House

Attached you will find my travel report for the 2024 Communities in Action: Building a Better Hawaii event at the White House, held on March 27, 2024, in Washington D.C.

Reimbursements include hotel and ground transportation. For air travel, I used personal airline miles.

I attended the 2024 Communities in Action: Building a Better Hawaii event at the White House in Washington, D.C., on March 27, 2024. The event, which was organized by the Biden Administration, included about 30 Hawaii participants in-person at the White House and in Honolulu, and via zoom. I represented the Honolulu City Council. The other elected leaders who attended in person included Maui County Councilmember Gabe Johnson and State Representative Adrian Tam. State Senator Chris Lee attended via zoom.

The White House and Administration officials we met with included:

- Stephen Benjamin, Director of the Office of Public Engagement, the White House
- Molly Ritner, External Affairs Director, U.S. Department of Commerce
- Jennifer DeCesaro, Senior Director for Resilience for the National Security Council, the White House
- Rob Wilcox and Greg Jackson, Deputy Directors of the Office of Gun Violence Prevention, the White House
- Ali Zaidi, National Climate Advisor to the Office of Domestic Climate Policy, the White House
- Deanne Criswell, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator, U.S Department of Homeland Security
- Michael Kikukawa, Assistant Press Secretary to the Office of the Press Secretary, the White House

During the discussions, federal officials highlighted the level of federal funding Hawaii received under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). As of February 2024, \$1.2 billion in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding has been directed to Hawaii for over 113 specific projects. This included \$1.5 billion for transportation to invest in roads, bridges, public transit, ports, and airports; \$168 million for clean water and water infrastructure; and \$232.1 million to connect everyone in the state to reliable high-speed internet.

For my part, I shared about the \$900 million in pandemic federal relief funds the City and County of Honolulu received between 2021-2024, including \$300 million for the Rental Relief program administered by the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement and Catholic Charities Hawaii. We also received \$165 million in non-pandemic federal relief funding.

I also shared how under the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), I helped to direct \$3 million to the City's first ever agriculture grants program for Phase 1, and \$8 million in food systems grants for Phase 2. In addition, I talked about the \$2 million the City provided for death benefits for citizens of the Freely Associated States of Micronesia living in Honolulu who had a family member perish during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I was also able to have a discussion with FEMA's Administrator about an area where the City and County of Honolulu is disadvantaged. For FEMA's Urban Area Security Initiatives (UASI) and Community Disaster Resilience Zones (CDRZ), I explained how the City's "relative risk ranking" is inexplicably not high enough despite our unique geographic isolation and limited on-island resources. I spoke on behalf of the Blangiardi Administration and the City Council. The FEMA Administrator was unaware of this and committed to following up with myself and city officials on the issue.



City Council
City and County of Honolulu

CLAIM FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Date: 04/08/24

Traveler: Esther Kia'aina

Event: ~~White House~~ *Communities in Action: Building a Better Hawaii*

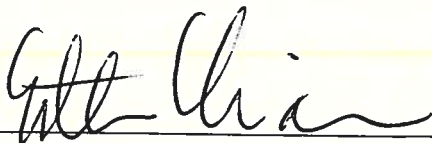
Location: Washington D.C.

Dates: From March 27, 2024

To March 27, 2024

Description	Amount	Notes:
1. Registration Fee		
2. Airfare		
3. Hotel	1142.45	
4. Meals		
5. Ground Transportation	35.85	
6. Tips		
7. Other	72.00	Parking HNL Airport
Other		
Other		
8. Adjustment		
TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT	1250.3	

This is to certify that the above data, based upon receipts submitted to Council Administrative Support Services via a CCLTRVL02 form, is accurate. Further, I am claiming reimbursement for expenses associated with a trip in which City business was conducted and personal funds were used to advance payment:



Signature of Traveler

4/9/24

Date