

EVENT: 2023 Annual Hawai'i State Association of Counties Conference

DATES: September 21 to 23, 2023

ADDRESS: 2641 Poipu Rd, Koloa, HI 96756

ATTENDEE: Richmond Luzar, Office of Councilmember Tyler Dos Santos-Tam

OVERVIEW

Introduction:

The Hawai'i State Association of Counties (HSAC), representing the legislative jurisdictions of Hawai'i, Maui, City & County of Honolulu, and Kaua'i, operates as a governmental advocacy association. Encompassing the legislative assemblies and mayors from each county, HSAC serves as the Hawai'i chapter for the National Association of Counties.

Objective and Mission:

Guided by its Bylaws, HSAC's objectives are:

1. Promoting county program coordination to best serve the Hawai'i through collective county legislative bodies.
2. Advancing pragmatic and efficient county legislation, administration, and procedures.
3. Centralizing county information to benefit the Governor, the Legislature, and pertinent officials.
4. Elevating the standard of county governance.

Annual HSAC Conference:

Annually, the HSAC conference gathers county officials from across Hawai'i to deliberate on shared challenges impacting their communities. The conference theme, "He Ali'i ke Āina," translates to "the land provides, so we need to do all to ensure the land is taken care of," furthers the core goal of the conference: to inspire meaningful dialogue, encourage the dissemination of pioneering concepts, cultivate fresh partnerships, and identify pathways to elevate Hawai'i's future.

Details and Venue:

The 2023 HSAC conference was hosted in Koloa, Kaua'i, primarily at the Koloa Landing Resort, located at 2641 Poipu Rd, Koloa, HI 96756. The two-day event spanned from September 21 to September 22, 2023, and witnessed a robust participation from county-elected representatives from all over Hawai'i.

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Thursday, September 21, 2023
Official Opening Day

5:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Welcome Reception

Introduction:

The Welcome Reception was hosted by former Mayor Bernard Carvalho. This gathering evidenced the vast representation and dedication from the four Hawai'i counties, as councilmembers from each region graced the event. Supplementing this local leadership, stakeholders from both Hawai'i and mainland U.S. were in attendance, underscoring the conference's ethos of collaboration.

Key Attendees:

- **Matt Chase:** As the CEO/Executive Director of the National Association of Counties (NACo), Matt Chase has provided steadfast leadership since his induction in September 2012. Governing NACo, the sole national association championing the interests of America's 3,069 county governments, Chase oversees its operations ensuring it continues to be a formidable advocate for county governments across the nation.
- **Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire:** Elevated to the position of NACo's President in 2023, Commissioner McGuire boasts an illustrious career. Representing Ramsey County, Minnesota since 2012, her service predates this, with 16 years dedicated to the Minnesota State Legislature. McGuire's influence permeates both NACo's Executive Board and the Association of Minnesota Counties, making her a pivotal figure in county governance.
- **James Gore:** A representative for California's Wine Country for nearly a decade, Gore has adeptly managed a spectrum of crises, from devastating wildfires to destructive floods. His leadership qualities shone brightly as he helmed the California State Association of Counties during the pandemic's tumultuous times. Recognized for his collaborative approach with county leaders nationwide, Gore was deservedly elected as the 1st Vice President of NACo.

Conclusion:

The Welcome Reception set a constructive tone for the HSAC conference. Through the presence of esteemed figures like Chase, McGuire, and Gore, the event foregrounded the dedication, collaboration, and leadership driving county governments in addressing contemporary challenges.

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Friday, September 22, 2023

Panel Discussions

10:15AM - 11:15AM

Panel: Leveraging Resources to Support County Functions with Innovative Financial Technology

This panel gave attendees a clear look into managing money or liquidity. With money changing rapidly, knowing how to handle and use cash is very important. The workshop aimed to teach participants better ways to handle money and find new ways to earn.

Main Points from the Workshop:

The discussion covered a number of important topics, including:

1. **Understanding Cash Flow:** predicting how much money comes in and goes out, ensuring there's always enough on hand.
2. **Testing for Risks:** checking if there are any weak spots or risks in how money is managed.
3. **Working with Banks:** having a good relationship with banks, especially when interest rates change.

The workshop also highlighted the use of new technology to help manage money better. This is especially useful today when considering factors such as rising costs, budget issues, helping workers on the frontline, and funding community projects.

About the Speaker:

Garrett Macdonald led the workshop. He's been with a company called three+one since 2015 and works with public groups to help them manage and save money. Before that, he helped non-profit groups in places like Singapore, Indonesia, and the UK manage their resources. He studied at St. John Fisher College and has a degree in finance and a master's in business. He's also written on money matters and has a special certificate from MIT about using technology in business.

Conclusion:

The workshop was useful and gave attendees the tools and knowledge to manage money better during uncertain times.

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11:15AM - 1:00PM

Panel: Legislative Forum

A recent Hawaii legislative meeting offered participants a glimpse into the 2023 session's deliberations and potential topics for 2024. Distinguished speakers such as Senate President Ronald D. Kouchi, House Speaker Scott K. Saiki, Representatives Luke A. Evslin, and Daynette "Dee" Morikawa discussed several key issues. They highlighted concerns like emergency preparedness, effective money management, and the Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL). Additionally, an interactive Q&A segment allowed for further clarity on various issues, including clean water and the Lahaina fires.

Main Points from the Workshop:

Highlights of the discussions included:

- **Emergency Preparedness:** The importance of being ready for unexpected challenges.
- **Effective Money Management:** Fiscal responsibility and best practices for managing public funds.
- **Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL):** An overview of initiatives and programs associated with the DHHL.

About the Speakers:

- **Ron Kouchi:** Chosen by Governor Linda Lingle in 2010, Kouchi has been representing Kaua'i and Ni'ihau. By 2015, he advanced to the position of State Senate President.
- **Scott Saiki:** A local from Honolulu, Saiki ventured into politics in 1994. He's been the House Speaker since 2018, representing House District 25.
- **Luke Evslin:** A resident of Kaua'i, Luke was appointed by Governor Josh Green in 2023 to serve District 16. His diverse roles range from entrepreneurship to teaching and local journalism.
- **Dee Morikawa:** Dee's journey began with the local Parks & Recreation department. Since 2011, she's been part of Hawaii's House of Representatives, holding significant leadership roles.

Conclusion:

The legislative forum was revealing - it gave attendees insights into the workings and future plans of Hawaii's government.

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1:15PM - 2:15PM

Panel: Introduction to Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program

The Department of Defense hosted a session on their REPI Program, aiming to demonstrate the importance of forming resilient, sustainable partnerships for environmental protection in surrounding communities. The session delved deep into how strategic relationships could lead to safeguarding natural habitats and promoting responsible land use.

Main Points from the Workshop:

The seminar elaborated on a few things, including:

- **Role of REPI Projects:** Discussed the criticality of REPI initiatives in conserving both cultural and natural resources close to DOD facilities.
- **Funding and Partnerships:** Discussed the \$27 million budget allocated for REPI projects in Hawaii for 2023. Highlighted the collaborative nature of these projects, supported by external contributions and in tandem with other federal conservation endeavors.
- **Importance of Strategic Partnerships:** Emphasized the need for alliances between different sectors for the dual goal of defense readiness and environmental conservation.

About the Panelists:

- **Kristin Thomasgard:** Heading the REPI Program since 2013, Kristin's leadership has witnessed the conservation of a significant amount of land across many states and territories.
- **Susan Veazey:** A seasoned professional, Susan's role as a Project Manager at the Western Regional Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation has been instrumental. She has a rich history of service, including with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- **Lena Fowler:** A trailblazer as the first Native American Chair for Coconino County's Board of Supervisors, Lena shared valuable insights from her region.
- **Carlos Castillo:** An expert in environmental and land-use planning, Carlos brings a holistic perspective, especially regarding the Hawaiian Islands and Pacific Region.

Conclusion:

The session provided attendees with an in-depth understanding of the REPI program's potential in ensuring sustainable defense and conservation measures. Attendees left better equipped to envision how such partnerships can reshape communities, making them both secure and green.

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6:00PM - 9:00PM

Closing Ceremony and Dinner

The HSAC conference wrapped up with a finale event held at a ranch owned by Arryl Kaneshiro, former Chair of the Kauai County Council. Delegates from all four Hawaiian counties were present, showcasing the unity and dedication of Hawaii's officials.

Co-hosts Bernard Carvalho and Billy DeCosta spoke about the value of continuous dialogue and teamwork. Their words highlighted a common goal among attendees: pushing Hawaii towards a brighter future based on the ideas and partnerships formed at the conference.

To sum it up, the closing event solidified the dedication of Hawaii's leaders to work together for the betterment and growth of the state.

Saturday, September 23, 2023

10:00AM

Hotel Room Checkout

City Council
City and County of Honolulu

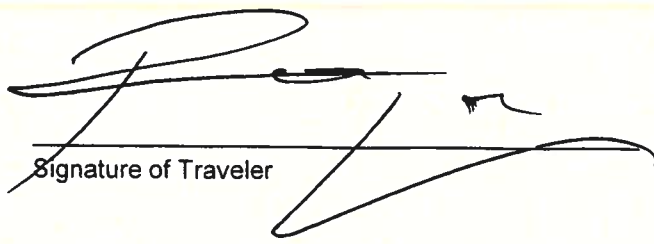
CLAIM FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Date: 9/27/2023

Traveler: Richmond Luzar
 Event: Hawaii State Association of Counties 2023 Conference
 Location: 2641 Poipu Rd, Koloa, HI 96756
 Dates: From September 21 To September 28, 2023

Description	Amount	Notes:
1. Registration Fee	482.02	Early bird rate.
2. Airfare	126.80	
3. Hotel	1012.10	Initial payment of 917.74, final cost of 1012.10
4. Meals		
5. Ground Transportation	55.95	Lyft from Hale to HNL, LIH to hotel.
6. Tips		
7. Other		
Other		
Other		
8. Adjustment		
TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT	1676.87	

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

9/27/2023
Date