



# NATIVE HAWAIIAN LEGAL CORPORATION

*Serving Hawai'i since 1974*

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## MAHALO FOR YOUR KÖKUA!

June 1, 2009

Aloha e nā hoaloha, dear friends,

We want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the outpouring of support demonstrated by you -- all of our friends and supporters as NHLC faced critical funding challenges this past legislative session. It really was a matter of survival for our program, and your support made all the difference in the world! Key legislative leaders were swamped with many hundreds of phone calls, e-mails, faxes, visits, etc. Because of you, they knew that there was broad support in our community to continue legal services for the Hawaiian community.

When we first wrote you to ask for your support, NHLC was threatened with funding cutbacks that would have zeroed out its state funding and chopped services in half. With an extremely large caseload, we worried what would happen to all of the people NHLC attorneys currently represent, including many whose cases are in the courts. Thankfully, because of your support, the legislature agreed to a cutback no greater than what other state-funded programs were being cut by -- 20%. While a 20% cut is substantial for a small program like NHLC, it is fair, and we are taking steps to adjust. All staff have agreed to salary decreases to avoid layoffs. We are also in the process of cutting back on our office space by renegotiating our office lease. These are tough economic times and we're willing to do our part.

The legislative hearings on this budget bill dragged out night after night for many weeks. In the House of Representatives, Rep. Mele Carroll, Chair of the Hawaiian Affairs Committee, and Rep. Marcus Oshiro, Chair of the Finance Committee, championed our cause. We owe these legislators and the members of their committees a great debt of gratitude.

I close this letter with an appeal for your support in the form of a monetary donation if you are able. A donation of \$10, for example, would help immensely and be greatly appreciated. Donations may be sent payable to "NHLC" at the address on this letterhead. For NHLC clients who have been able to reimburse legal costs for their cases, your support and kokua have been much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mahealani Perez-Wendt  
Executive Director

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