



**Representative
Lauren
Matsumoto
Serving You in District 45**

Aloha friends and neighbors!

I want to first acknowledge that this is a really difficult time for our community. Many have lost their jobs and income, and everyone has had to adjust to social distancing and not being in constant contact with our friends and family. It has taken an economic toll on all of us. On top of this, the communication of leaders has been unclear and at times contradictory to itself creating frustration and confusion among our communities. The uncertainty and weekly changing of the rules in emergency proclamations have resulted in the suffering of our local businesses. This is an incredibly important topic of conversation for us at the capitol as we work on long-term solutions and create an economic recovery plan for our state.

As we have these conversations, I want to make sure that I am listening to your needs. Please do not hesitate to reach out to my office with your questions, concerns or ideas that would benefit our community during this challenging time. In the meantime I wanted to provide you with some helpful information if you are experiencing difficulties during the pandemic.

Rent Relief - It was recently announced that there is a new Rent Relief and Housing Assistance Program. This program will provide \$100 million to renters who have experienced or are facing reduced income due to COVID19. Funded by the Federal CARES Act, along with providing monthly rent they offer financial counseling. To learn more and see if you qualify to apply, please visit <http://www.hihousinghelp.com/> Applications are due by December 28, 2020.

Childcare - As a working mother I know first hand how important childcare is. For parents with keiki at home participating in distance learning, coordinating childcare with your work schedule is more difficult than ever. Hawai'i Children's Action Network is working to let families and caregivers know the rights they have regarding paid sick days and paid leave granted to them under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. To learn more, please visit the HCAN website https://www.hawaiican.org/rights_paid_leave_covid19

The Child Care Connection Hawaii (CCCH) is a Department of Human Services subsidy program that helps families not only care for their children by helping offset the high cost of child care, but it also allows parents and guardians to continue to provide for their children by maintaining employment, pursuing education and job training. Due to

COVID-19 they have temporarily lifted the income cap requirement to help families out during these difficult times. For more information and to download the application, visit <http://humanservices.hawaii.gov/bessd/ccch-subsidies/>, call (808) 356-5575, or email BESSD.Rescare.Waipahu.ChildCare@dhs.hawaii.gov.

Unemployment - The number one request my office is receiving is for help with issues that have arisen with unemployment applications and denials. While we are not in charge of unemployment and the decisions they make regarding each account, we will do everything in our power to help the process move along. If you continue to have issues or questions regarding unemployment please reach out to my office.

Further Questions - There have been a series of rapid changes regarding new regulations due to COVID19. It seems like every day there is a new change and it can be hard to keep track to ensure we are all doing our best to stay safe and protect our loved ones. If you have questions like I did, One Oahu hotline 768-CITY (768-2489) and oneoahu.org have been my number one go to for fast and accurate answers.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact my office with any questions or concerns about happenings in our community. You can reach me at (808) 586-9490 or at repmatsumoto@capitol.hawaii.gov.