

POLICY ADVISORY BOARD FOR ELDER AFFAIRS (PABEA)  
IN-PERSON AND VIA ZOOM  
No. 1 Capitol District | 250 South Hotel Street | Conference Room 410  
Friday, July 11, 2025 | 12:00 p.m. (Noon)

**MEETING MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Beverly Gotelli called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Appointed members present: Beverly Gotelli, William Kinaka, Louise Johnson, Stephen Lung, Sara Lenzer Medeiros, Shelly Ogata, Gary Simon, Lisa Spencer (joined meeting at 12:10 p.m.), Rick Tabor, Leslie Tanoue, and Raelene Tenno (joined meeting at 12:12 p.m.).

Appointed members excused and absent: Poki'i Balaz, Suzie Schulberg, Marilyn Seely, Barbara Service, and Charlene Taketa.

(A quorum was established as nine members were present at roll call. This board requires eight members to be present in order to establish quorum.)

Ex-officio members present: Alan Burdick, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) Office of Community Services (OCS) and Paula Cerio, Department of Health (DOH).

Executive Office on Aging (EOA) staff and Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) staff present: Derrick Ariyoshi, Caroline Cadirao, Rowena Dagdag-Andaya, Emily Ishida, Norma Kop, Josephine Lum, Candace Nakamoto, Lynn Niitani, Lauryn Reich, Naoki Roos, Lani Sakamoto, Tani Salazar, Erin Samura (Executive Assistant for Health, Equity, and Human Services, County of Hawai'i), Cristina Valenzuela, Jazlyn Wandasan, Jason Wong, and Jeffrey Woodland.

Guests present: Audrey Suga-Nakagawa, Advocacy Associate Director, AARP Hawaii.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

The draft of the minutes of the June 6, 2025 in-person and Zoom PABEA meeting was corrected by changing "*Table*" to "*Tabor*" in the fifth sentence of the last paragraph under Election for Fiscal Year 2025 – 2026 on page 4. The draft of the minutes of the June 6, 2025 in-person and Zoom PABEA meeting was approved as corrected.

**EOA DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Attached is Caroline's report. Caroline provided highlights from her report:

- The Federal reconciliation bill was signed into law on July 4, 2025.
- On July 3, 2025, a bill signing ceremony was held at the Hawai'i State Capitol to commemorate the enactment of several key legislative measures aimed at supporting Hawai'i's kūpuna and underserved populations:

- SB 1252 and HB 703 were signed into law, officially extending the Kūpuna Rent Supplement Program through 2028. This extension ensures continued housing assistance for older adults facing financial challenges.
- SB 1252 also provides funding for Alzheimer's Disease and dementia education and training within the University of Hawai'i's John A. Burns School of Medicine. This initiative supports workforce development and improved care for individuals affected by cognitive conditions.
- Earlier on July 3, 2025, Medi-Medi bill HB 705 was also signed into law. This measure establishes a Medi-Medi Project within the Executive Office on Aging (EOA). The project is designed to assist older adults, Medicare beneficiaries, individuals with disabilities, and other underserved communities in accessing benefits through various low-income subsidy programs. The bill requires EOA to submit regular reports to the Legislature, allocates funds for staff and operations, and mandates the creation of a one-year pilot project in the Kalihi Valley catchment area to directly serve disadvantaged kūpuna and families.
- Aging Network Awareness Campaign with Spectrum: Spectrum is partnering with Hawai'i's four Area Agencies on Aging to produce a series of four 30-second commercials focused on key services that support older adults statewide. The commercials will highlight:
  - Caregiver Supports
  - Transportation Services
  - Nutrition Programs (including home-delivered meals)
  - Social Activities and Engagement

The campaign aims to raise public awareness about these vital programs, which serve as a safety net allowing kūpuna to age in place with dignity and independence. As many of these services face potential funding reductions in future years, the commercials will emphasize their value and impact on the well-being of older adults and their caregivers.

This outreach effort reinforces the importance of continued investment in community-based services that help kūpuna remain at home for as long as possible—improving quality of life and reducing reliance on institutional care.

EOA is researching ways to repurpose funds to offset decreases in Federal and State funding. Caroline's message to EOA staff is "continue EOA's good work." The Senior Companion Program and the Foster Grandparent Program are closing. Derrick is examining ways to connect the volunteers of these two programs to other programs to offset the loss of benefits and non-taxable stipends provided to these volunteers.

### CHAIR'S REPORT

Beverly congratulated Rick for the successful Older Americans Month (OAM) luncheon celebration. All attendees enjoyed the luncheon and program. Beverly has been in communication with Caroline regarding the PABEA meeting agenda and PABEA issues. Beverly asked PABEA members to email to her the PABEA committees on which they wish to serve and their contact information, including their home and cell phone numbers for the PABEA directory. Beverly encouraged members to consider serving on the Recognition and Awards Committee (RAC) to assist with the planning of the OAM celebration.

Rick commented that the RAC meetings are held via Zoom at either 9:00 a.m. or 9:30 a.m. on the Thursday before the PABEA meeting.

### RECOGNITION AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (RAC)

Rick thanked PABEA members who volunteered at the OAM celebration. Rick encouraged PABEA members to serve on RAC. Planning for the 2026 OAM celebration will begin in October 2025.

### LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Rick reported that Cristina emailed a legislative update which included aging and disability related bills that the Governor has signed into law and aging and disability related resolutions that were adopted. The legislative committee will resume meeting in August. The next meeting is scheduled for August 1, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. Rick commented that now is the best time to meet with legislators before the session begins in January. The Committee will prioritize the issues on its legislative agenda. Rick commented that Senator Sharon Moriwaki and the Lieutenant Governor encourage him to continue advocacy for health insurance benefits for hearing aid.

### PLANS AND PROJECTS REVIEW COMMITTEE (PPRC)

Shelly reported that the Committee will submit its minutes for its last meeting.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Review proposal on Homelessness and determine PABEA's role in this proposal. Consideration for an ad hoc committee or PPRC to explore this initiative further.

Beverly asked Sara to examine what elements Sara would like to include in a legislative bill, what Sara would like the bill to accomplish, and the amount of funding needed. Beverly suggested that Sara seek assistance from the Public Access Room at the State Capitol.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### Adoption of Proposed Calendar for 2025-2026

A motion to reschedule the January PABEA meeting from January 2, 2026 to January 9, 2026 was moved, seconded, and approved. A motion to adopt the proposed calendar as amended was moved, seconded and approved.

#### Adoption of Committee Chairs for 2025-2026:

Plans and Projects Review Committee, Lisa Spencer; Legislative Committee and Recognition and Awards Committee, Rick Tabor

A motion to approve Lisa Spencer as Chair of the Plans and Projects Review Committee for 2025 – 2026 and Rick Tabor as Chair of the Legislative Committee and Chair of the Recognition and Awards Committee was moved, seconded, and adopted.

Beverly reminded PABEA members to email to her the PABEA committees on which they wish to serve and their contact information. The directory of PABEA members and their committee assignments will be emailed to PABEA members.

### PUBLIC TESTIMONY

No public testimony was offered.

### APPOINTED MEMBERS' REPORTS

No appointed members' reports were offered.

Beverly requested that PABEA members who have a topic they would like to discuss at a PABEA meeting to email her for the issue to be included in the PABEA meeting agenda.

### EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS' REPORTS

Attached is the Department of Health report. Paula reported that the DOH Office of Health Care Assurance is examining the State's adult day care regulations for potential improvements.

Alan reported that the second year of the second grant from the USDA to DLIR OCS has an appropriation of \$23,000 for food security. Appropriations in the Federal Farm Bill are unchanged. Hawaii's Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) offers eligible seniors \$50 worth of coupons (10 coupons valued at \$5 each) to obtain eligible foods from participating farmers and farmers' markets. Hawaii County Economic Opportunity Council has 200 participant openings available on the Big Island. Maui Economic Opportunity has 50 openings available in Maui County. Kauai has 30 openings available. Oahu has been oversubscribed since March 2025 and has a waiting list of more than 1,000 applicants. Coupons may be redeemed from participating vendors from April 1st – October 31<sup>st</sup>. Applications are accepted in March. HB 428 died in conference committee but has been resurrected via a onetime appropriation of \$500,000 to DLIR. The Senate companion also died in conference committee. The \$500,000 appropriation will support the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program to alleviate food shortages in the State. The Program supports families of all ages with local produce from Hawaii farms for one year. The Governor signed a bill to distribute \$50 million to nonprofits impacted by Federal funding reductions. The appropriation will be administered by Aloha United Way. Alan requests that PABEA members encourage nonprofits with which they are affiliated to apply for funds from the appropriation. Alan will research how neighbor island nonprofits can apply for funds.

### CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU ELDERLY AFFAIRS DIVISION (EAD)

Attached is Derrick's report.

Derrick shared that the EAD staff helped connect Lori Kahikina, the Executive Director and CEO for the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART), with caregiver services. Lori was grateful and surprised with the level of support provided by EAD to caregivers. Lori has been inspired to organize a support group for HART employees. EAD is working with Lori to embed caregiver support in the HART work setting.

### HAWAII COUNTY OFFICE OF AGING (HCOA)

Attached is the HCOA report.

Erin shared that a kūpuna was a victim of a scam and lost approximately \$50,000. He came to the ADRC seeking help. He has \$50 remaining in his savings account. The ADRC is assisting him in exploring every avenue for support, including applying for Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) funds to avoid defaulting on his mortgage. HCOA is working with Hawaii County I. T. and Hawaii County Research and Development to develop kūpuna classes and resources to educate kūpuna on scams and fraud. HCOA also is working with Hawaii County Elder Abuse to share resources. HCOA is considering providing vaccinations at Hawaii County senior facilities. A candidate was offered and has accepted the position of the Hawaii County

Executive on Aging. Her first day on the job will be August 1, 2025. She is a clinical psychologist and has a master's degree in gerontology.

#### KAUAI AGENCY ON ELDERLY AFFAIRS (KAEA)

Attached is Emily's June 2025 Executive Report.

Emily shared two success stories:

- One of KAEA's consumers has been postponing medical treatment. She has no support – no family and no friends. KAEA assisted her in getting her to her appointment after a year.
- KAEA helped a homeless person to get housing. He has been having issues with his property manager, e.g. the property manager is not available, is difficult to contact, and does not respond. Legal Aid Society was able to help and educate the consumer as to his rights.

Beverly also shared a success story: In one week, KAEA secured housing for three clients.

#### MAUI COUNTY OFFICE ON AGING (MCOA)

Attached is Rowena's report.

Rowena entered in the Zoom chat, *"Hi Bev, I am so sorry, but I need to log off. I have no other additions to my report. I did however, want to spread awareness of recent contractor scams affecting our seniors. We've teamed up with members of our elder justice team (MPD, Prosecutor's Office) in increasing outreach and education in the community. We recently held presentations with our Council on Aging and all of the senior club presidents on Maui. I'd be more than happy to share the pdf of the presentation with all of you. Please let me know if you're interested in a copy, or if it should be distributed in next month's packet. Thank you!"*

Beverly commented that cryptocurrency scams are increasing. The two Safeway supermarkets on Kauai have cryptocurrency ATMs. Beverly suggested helping a senior who might look a bit lost while standing near a cryptocurrency ATM, especially if a conspicuous person is standing near the senior, to prevent potential fraud.

Beverly thanked the AAA Executives for their work in the community, especially considering the uncertainty in funding for senior programs and supports and services.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Kupuna Caucus: Friday, July 11, 2025, 2:00 p.m., via Zoom.
- PABEA Monthly Meeting: Friday, August 1, 2025, 12:00 p.m.

Audrey entered in the Zoom chat, *"One of AARP's priority bill for 2026 is consumer protection against crypto-currency scams."*

#### ADJOURNMENT OF PABEA MEETING

Beverly adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m.