



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 6, 2022

**STATEMENT REGARDING DBEDT'S ACTION RELATED TO HTA CONTRACT**

**Attributable to Kūhiō Lewis, CNHA Chief Executive Officer**

“The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) plans to update its protest against the unlawful actions of the Department of Business and Economic Development & Tourism’s (DBEDT) former director Mike McCartney, who rendered a determination yesterday - just minutes before his term expired - to rescind our award of the State’s primary tourism marketing and destination management contract.

“To cancel a solicitation after an award, a State agency must determine that the award or RFP ‘is in violation of law.’ Mr. McCartney violated Hawai‘i procurement law by purporting to cancel the RFP and rescind the award without making that determination.

“CNHA won the award based on a fair and thorough procurement process. But the State, led by Mr. McCartney, has refused to allow CNHA to provide its services to the people of Hawai‘i.

“Instead, the State has twice extended the expired contract of HVCB, thereby cutting into CNHA’s properly won contract in favor of the losing bidder. At its Dec. 7 meeting, the HTA board is considering another extension to HVCB. This is again flatly contrary to law and deprives the State of the services of the superior provider, as determined by the procurement process.

“CNHA filed a Dec. 1 protest of Mr. McCartney’s verbal statement on Nov. 28 that he would cancel the solicitation without a legal basis. We will now update that protest because Mr. McCartney continued to ignore Hawai‘i procurement law until the moment he left office.

“Finally, CNHA remains committed to helping to transform Hawai‘i’s main economic driver. We look forward to working with the newly inaugurated Governor and his DBEDT leadership team to find an expeditious resolution to this dispute.”

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