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Mayor of Honolulu**

State-of-the-City Address 2010
February 22, 2010
Frank F. Fasi Civic Center Grounds

Good evening and welcome, distinguished guests, friends.

I chose this place for a special reason. Behind me is the Mission Memorial building. This structure and its sister to your right were constructed in 1916 as a tribute to the American Protestant mission, and they actually predate historic City Hall by more than a decade.

The City acquired these buildings in 1945 and used them for a variety of public purposes. As a matter of fact, my transition team and I spent two months on the second floor in late 2004 before moving into Honolulu Hale. The building was largely empty and had fallen into disrepair by then, but little did we realize at the time that its condition would be emblematic of the state of City government. While the City had shown off plenty of glitzy new projects in the years leading up to my election, little did we know how much of it had been at the expense of basic City services.

Today, this building has been renovated and, in many respects, so has the City. This work hasn't consisted of a shiny patina, a bright red brick exterior masking a rotting interior. Rather, what we've achieved over the past five years has reflected a very consistent adherence to the promises we made when we sought this office and the public policies we instituted when we took office.

I speak of our commitment to fiscal accountability, a focus on core services, and ensuring a quality of life second to none. Our achievements thus far show that our vows were not political rhetoric, not empty promises, but the substance of sound leadership, collaborative partnerships, and decisive governance.

Fiscal Accountability

These have been recurring themes of my administration, and I ask for your indulgence in allowing me to delve into them now, if only because they have a direct bearing on where

we are, and where we're going.

In my first state-of-the-City address in 2005, I pointed out how our Mayor's Review, the blue-ribbon panel of private citizens, revealed that the City had deferred maintenance of our infrastructure, had not budgeted for anticipated employee pay raises, had taken money from the sewer fund, and spent freely on visioning projects.

Well, we've righted the course of the City by restoring accountability and openness to our finances. We've balanced our budget every year, focused spending on core services, and used special funds only for the purposes for which they were intended.

But as an unintended consequence, we find that we're now the victims of our own fiscal discipline. A few of our co-leaders in government across the street seem to believe that because we have a balanced budget without yet implementing furloughs, that we're flush with cash. That's led to proposals to take away the county share of the hotel room tax and the transit revenues.

These proposals ignore the fact that this administration and the City Council took the necessary, I daresay courageous, step of raising property taxes and fees when they needed to be. As a prime example, the Legislature gave us the authority to impose a surcharge on the general excise tax to pay for mass transit, and we've used it to bring rail transit a hair's breadth from reality. We raised property taxes and we raised sewer fees. We've hiked admission fees, motor vehicle fees, and parking meter rates—some for the first time in decades, and taken just about every other revenue-enhancement measure at our disposal.

It hasn't been easy, mind you, but the public never asks for less. There's never a demand to scale back services, no clamor for fewer police officers and fire fighters, no calls for less road repaving, no push for outhouses instead of sewers.

This is not to say we're not feeling the impact of the economic downturn. As property values have fallen, so, too, have our tax revenues. The result is that we'll be facing a shortfall for the fiscal year beginning this July. But I'm also pleased that we will again submit a balanced budget to the City Council next week and I'll unveil the details of our budget at that time. However, let me make a few points about the budget.

We're in this position because of the across-the-board cutbacks we've already begun, restrictions on spending, and other measures. We know—as a City team—that if one person asks for more, someone else will have less, and so the fiscal discipline we've exercised and the sacrifices we've made will hold us in good stead in the months ahead.

As we indicated all along, we will be implementing two furlough days a month for City employees and closing the Fasi Municipal Building and Kapolei Hale on public school furlough days, beginning this July. That will amount to a four-and-a-half percent reduction

in our payroll costs.

Members of my cabinet and certain appointees not covered by collective bargaining will take a 5-percent pay cut, and they'll be expected to work. You'll recall that my cabinet voluntarily took what amounted to a 5-percent pay cut beginning last July in recognition of the seriousness of our budget situation. That gesture moved me deeply and I salute them for the personal and financial sacrifices they continue to make to serve the people of the City and County of Honolulu.

Even as we've made cuts and raised fees, we've also insisted on saving. I've always maintained that if we can't save money in good times, then we can't save in bad times. We've been able to put away money in the rainy day fund and for long-term obligations, and that's why we earn consistently high bond ratings, some of the best in Hawaii.

Core City Services

Let's move on to our second theme of core City services.

I know it seems that rail and sewers have consumed most of our time and resources. And for good reason. Rail and sewers go to the very heart of our quality of life, not only for us but for many generations to come. I might add that these projects will generate jobs and stimulate the economy at a time when we most need this catalyst. But while rail and sewers have garnered the lion's share of the headlines, that's not to say they've been all-consuming. In fact, let me tick off a number of things we're working on right now to leave this a better place than we found it.

We plan to move forward on a hundred capital improvement projects during the next six months, valued at \$220 million, to help stimulate the economy and bolster the construction industry. The projects will include everything from fire house repairs, to parks improvements, to our standbys of roads and sewers. These are not only necessary investments in our future, but will generate jobs at a time when so many of our people are searching desperately for work.

We've fixed our parks and public facilities, like the Blaisdell Arena, to keep up with heavy usage and a backlog of long-needed repairs, and we're not letting up. For example, we'll install a new sound system at the Waikiki Shell and replace the air-conditioning at the Blaisdell exhibition hall, just as we did for the arena. We broke ground in January for a new gym, multi-purpose building, play courts, and parking lot at Ewa Mahiko Park, which will become a wonderful gathering place for Ewa residents.

A new entrance to Honolulu Zoo is now under construction, complementing the learning center, Keiki Zoo, vet clinic, and orangutan exhibit we opened earlier. We'll soon begin construction for a new elephant exhibit, as well as repaving the parking lot after I don't know how many years.

Earlier this month, we opened a long stretch of Kapolei Parkway to give Ewa residents another means of reaching Kapolei and accessing the freeway. We've repaved, or rehabilitated, in the parlance of the engineers, 500 lane miles of City roads during the past five years. We spent \$124 million on repaving the last three years and committed \$77 million this year and another \$77 million next fiscal year for even more. We'll be testing something called "slurry seal," in which a thin layer of asphalt and sand is placed over a pavement to fill cracks and prevent water from penetrating the roadway, which leads to potholes.

We've now put City parks play court resurfacing and parking lot repaving under what's called I-D-I-Q, an acronym for indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity. It's an idea we borrowed from the federal government and essentially means that these improvements will be completed much quicker than under the prolonged, job-by-job bidding process.

You know we've replaced old fire engines and police cars and reconstructed rusting telecommunications towers, and we'll continue to do so. But there's more. The police department's indoor firing range is ready to be opened. Our emergency medical services paramedics will be completing the transition from outdated UHF communications to an 800 megahertz system, putting them fully in synch with other first-responders. We will break ground in a matter of weeks for the East Kapolei fire station to serve a new community, and have completed the McCully-Moiliili fire house to serve an older one.

We've invested \$1.2 billion in our sewer and waste water infrastructure during the past five years and we've budgeted another \$1.6 billion over the next six. That's why our sewer spills continue to decline, now for the third consecutive year. To the web of sewer pipes and treatment plants we're now adding a cogeneration system at our Kailua plant to generate electricity from the methane gas.

As promised, by this May we'll have taken curbside recycling island-wide, and we're following through on several pilot projects that will expand recycling and further reduce the amount of waste going to our landfill.

We'll be activating traffic cameras covering key points in Windward Oahu and testing an in-road pedestrian signal light on North King Street. And we'll be looking to test LED and plasma arc street lights to save on electrical and maintenance costs.

We've been very aggressive in adopting our information technology capabilities to streamline and improve our delivery of City services. We're making good on our

commitment to have you spend your time on-line, rather than stand in-line. You can now apply for certain types of building permits and pay your property taxes on-line. By June, we'll have collapsed 14 old telephone systems into none, meaning our City phone system is entirely Internet protocol-driven, something we achieved at no cost. In one of Honolulu's best-kept secrets, we've expanded free Wi-fi capability all over the island, and we'll be reminding the public of the availability of this service. We just unveiled a total overhaul of an ancient financial and payroll system that is much more efficient and precise.

This should reassure you that this administration continues to do the business of the City despite the fiscal constraints we're experiencing.

Homelessness

It wouldn't be a state-of-the-City address without discussing homelessness. It's been a struggle, to say the least, to find the right mix of measures to deal with this widespread problem.

Some believe that the problem will disappear if only the homeless are ordered to move elsewhere, but that's a myopic point of view. To be clear, the City is responsible for maintaining parks, sidewalks, and other public areas, and that's what we'll continue to do. We've cleared beach parks all along the Waianae Coast, Ala Moana, and elsewhere, but as we all know, that's only one part of making our parks safe and accessible for everyone.

Housing and mental and social services remain the most urgent requirements of the homeless. While we no longer have a housing department, we've joined with developers and non-profit organizations to build 360 units in the past five years, with another 1,300 units in development. While we don't have responsibilities for social or mental health services, we've used our federal funding to support service providers and others who help the homeless and to prepare people for the workforce and find jobs.

This past December, I broke ground for a model solution to dealing with these needs. The City, state and federal governments, and non-profit sector, working closely with the developer and community, are building Sea Winds in Waianae, which will provide transitional and long-term affordable rental housing. I was so taken by the sincerity and dedication of every stakeholder to the success of this project.

We have developed a similar, very promising initiative right here in downtown Honolulu, but some people instead want the problem to be moved out of sight, out of mind, and out of their backyard. It's unconscionable that some want Waianae to continue to be the answer to all of our homelessness problems. Folks, if we're not willing to step forward, homelessness will continue to plague us. The City's managing director heads an ongoing working group of the Corporation Counsel, Police, Community Services, and Parks departments that meets weekly. They stand ready to work with other government

jurisdictions, businesses, foundations, faith-based groups, the news media, and the community at large to work with us honestly and openly on an issue that is beyond the capability of a single entity to solve.

Quality of Life

But there's an even bigger challenge before us. As I read the newspapers and watch the nightly news, and as I listen to what people are saying about our future, I feel a sense of despair, of frustration that somehow our troubles are too daunting, that viable solutions are nowhere in sight.

On the national scene, we see polarization in Congress. Local governments are grappling with their own fiscal crises. And our state, in particular, is struggling with a humungous budget deficit, furlough Fridays, and cuts in services like never before. But everyone is asking: Where's the hope?

Maybe it's just the athlete in me. I played basketball and football in high school and college, and I still enjoy a vigorous game of racquetball regularly at the Y and coaching basketball now and then. I'm just competitive. I can't say if it was an outgrowth of my athletic experience, or athletics just brought out the competitor in me. But, let me tell you, I never accepted defeat before we even started the game. Even when our team was behind, we never gave up.

I'm a glass-half-full kind of guy. I see opportunity in every crisis. I see the promise of success where others are resigned to the expectation of failure. I always feel hope and optimism, never despair or defeat.

And hope must begin with the economy. Yes, we're in a recession and a fiscal crunch, but how are we proposing to get out of it? While we cut and trim and slash, what realistic ideas do we have to create jobs and stimulate business growth?

Rail

I say to you again, the most obvious is something the City has been pursuing for more than 40 years [*let audience say it*]: rail.

That's right, rail. There is no other shovel-ready project anywhere in this state that will create as many jobs, in as short a time, as rail. Rail will create an average of 10,000 jobs a year. Once we get the go-ahead to begin construction, we'll be pumping \$300 million into our local economy. And once we break ground, we believe 4,000 people will be put to work right away.

And this just in: We just received a great bit of news with the second set of design-build

proposals to construct the maintenance facility and purchase track for the entire 20-mile length. The proposals indicate we'll enjoy substantial savings, as we did with the contract we signed late last year for the first section of the guideway. We'll be saving tens of millions of dollars, demonstrating that contractors will bid low during an economic downturn. That's just another reason we need to move quickly on rail.

You know that rail has been a centerpiece of the Obama administration, which has told us our system stands ready to receive \$1.55 billion in federal money. I can't thank the President and Federal Transit Administration enough for their vote of confidence in our proposal. Honolulu is the envy of the nation to have such an unheard-of commitment so early in the game.

Yes, despite the encouraging and positive news, there are still some out there who are trying to pooh-pooh, un-do, and delay five years of hard work and the will of the voters. One of the lessons my parents always taught me while growing up in Kalihi, was this: If you don't have a better idea, then go with the one before you. I don't see any meaningful, tangible alternative to our project that is as important to our economy, environment, and quality of life, as rail.

TOD

Just as this Mission Memorial building serves as a symbol of something much larger, so too, does an unheralded announcement made a few weeks ago. Honolulu was selected as one of only four cities in the nation for a Living Cities grant from the foundation of that name. The other three were Portland, Denver, and Indianapolis, putting us in great company. The foundation consists of 22 of the world's largest philanthropic organizations and financial institutions and focuses its efforts on improving the lives of low-income people and urban areas.

Now, as grants go, this initial one was modest: \$25,000. But we believe it will lead to much more because of the merits and appeal of our rail project.

It goes hand-in-hand with a much larger effort by the Obama administration at the national level, called the Sustainable Communities partnership. It was brought to my attention at a U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting, and involves three federal agencies: the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Transportation, and Department of Housing and Urban Development. Its broad purpose is to improve the environment, provide access to affordable housing, and offer low-cost transportation for the nation's cities.

Here at home, I can't think of a more perfect encapsulation of our rail project and transit-oriented development. To illustrate this point, we'll be using a portion of our Living Cities grant to host a TOD symposium on April 6 through the Department of Planning and

Permitting, featuring experts from throughout the nation on how we can create sustainable communities with rail as the catalyst.

To further leverage the anticipated federal money that will come from the national partnership I just mentioned, we're looking for opportunities to use our Affordable Housing and Clean Water and Natural Lands funds. We're working on a package of City tools, such as funding, planning, and zoning, to help create livable communities that will include affordable housing, open space, pedestrian and bicycle-friendly paths, and a sustainable environment, while also making this vision appealing to private developers to participate with us in this exciting venture.

Keep in mind that the private sector has invested \$15 billion in TOD in Washington, D.C., \$7.4 billion in Phoenix, and \$3 billion in Portland. My administration has begun meeting with a developer who has announced plans to build housing and retail space on the Kam Drive-in property, within walking distance of a proposed transit station. We believe this development will serve as an example of how TOD can work in our city. We will collaborate with the surrounding community and developer to see how we can create something that will truly be precedent-setting and transformational.

I have one final thought on this subject. With us this evening are students from Honowai Elementary and Waianae, Farrington, and Nanakuli high schools. They participated in the transit youth summit we held earlier this month at Leeward Community College. I wish you could have seen the excitement and creativity of these future leaders that day, who so clearly support this transportation alternative. Some of their work is on display around the corner at the Mission Memorial Auditorium. To our youth I say, share your enthusiasm with other members of your generation because rail is really about your future.

APEC

If the rail funding announcement weren't enough, President Obama delivered another major coup for us when he announced that Honolulu would be the host city for the APEC summit in 2011. We were selected from among some key destinations, showing that we can compete against the best.

APEC stands for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, and it's an organization of 21 nations, including the United States. The group will convene in Honolulu next November, bringing an estimated 20,000 visitors to our island and, I believe, tremendous prestige to Hawaii. Just the presence of the President, in the city of his birth, not to mention a pantheon of world leaders, will shine a light on Hawaii that will illuminate our strengths.

APEC didn't fall in our lap. We worked for months with the East-West Center and state to package a proposal and to lobby for its acceptance. I committed the City and County of Honolulu to supporting it and visited the White House and State Department to tout our

advantages, specifically our standing as one of the safest and securest big cities in the nation.

We must take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. That's why I'm forming an APEC 2011 committee. The City's first-responders will be key members of this group, but we'll have representation from federal and state agencies, businesses, and other interested parties that want to contribute. While security will rightfully be the priority and demand the lion's share of resources, we have to be prepared to look our best and be our best. As one example, APEC will use City facilities, so that's a reason we're making more upgrades now. As another, we want to join with the private sector to spruce up Waikiki, and I've already broached the subject with hoteliers and business leaders to come up with ideas. Undoubtedly, the state needs to beautify Nimitz Highway, especially along the Kalihi stretch. As one of only two routes from the airport to Waikiki, it seems to have defied beautification. We have so much to share and be proud of, and that's why we need to get started now.

This will be costly, but I see this as a need-to-have economic opportunity and we're budgeting for the effort. We hope to be reimbursed for our expenditures by the federal government.

I'll never forget the words of Bud Smyser, the longtime editor of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, during the time when I headed the state's Office of International Relations. He envisioned Hawaii as the "Geneva of the Pacific," a destination where world leaders could gather. This will be a golden opportunity to capitalize on solidifying that reputation for a global audience and demonstrate that we're more than just a place to vacation ... that Hawaii is also a great place to do business.

Honolulu's reputation for safety and security was one of the prime reasons we were selected as the host city. I would hope this would serve as a reminder to those who seek to take away our share of the TAT revenues and of the important role that counties play in ensuring public safety, which directly contributes to the growth and economic strength of tourism.

Pro Bowl

On the sports tourism front, the National Football League's Pro Bowl returns next year, bringing 20,000 visitors and a national TV audience. I've had discussions with Commissioner Roger Goodell and other NFL officials to assure them of Honolulu's support for this game, as with the Pro Bowl Block Party that we initiated a few years ago. And when I met with NFL officials at the Super Bowl earlier this month, I agreed to help form a Honolulu Pro Bowl host committee. Last year, the Hawaii Tourism Authority worked with me to bring the Pro Bowl back for 2011 and 2012. The challenge for us is to develop a well-thought-out strategy to strengthen our partnership with professional sports'

premier league.

The host committee's priority should not only be to keep the game here, but look for other ways to expand our relationship. I've suggested a preseason game along with the Pro Bowl, which would afford us more options to have an NFL presence in Hawaii.

Which brings me to something I've spoken about time and time again. You may have noted that collaboration and cooperation in the pursuit of a cause have been mentioned throughout much of my talk. In this case, the cause is our economy. But it applies to just about any endeavor.

HCOM

Let me talk about a group of four island leaders, collaborating and working together in a way so many folks tell us is unprecedented. I'm speaking of my fellow mayors: Bernard Carvalho of Kauai County, Billy Kenoi of Hawaii County, and Charmaine Tavares of Maui County. We've heard from so many of you that you've never seen four mayors work together so closely. I can tell you we've been joined at the hip in lobbying the Legislature for our legislative priorities, lobbying Congress and the White House on the federal stimulus package, taking active roles in the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and in joining the HVCB and Marriott in successfully promoting tourism on the West Coast and Japan, among some of our many joint endeavors.

And even in the area of collective bargaining, where mayors have traditionally taken a secondary role to the governor in leading the negotiations on behalf of the employers, the Hawaii Council of Mayors stepped up to break a logjam in the talks with the United Public Workers. Just hours ago, the counties, through HCOM, signed an agreement in principle with the UPW for a new collective bargaining pact for this fiscal year and next. We believe the state will find this to be a reasonable settlement that reflects the most recent position the governor communicated to us, and we're optimistic the employees will approve the terms.

Some of our agencies have formal inter-county councils, such as the police and fire chiefs and water managers, but we plan to encourage others to form working groups to seek mutually beneficial solutions to our common challenges, and in the end, bring our islands closer together. We are one people and there's no reason geography should be barriers to communication and collaboration.

H-POWER

The City's H-POWER plant offers another such opportunity. We're investing \$302

million in the expansion of our waste-to-energy capacity. Meanwhile, our sister counties have been struggling with their solid waste needs. We've had preliminary discussions with Kauai County on accepting their waste. Kauai's volume is modest by Oahu's standards, so we can help them by taking their waste at H-POWER while we benefit by having their trash generate more electricity for our island. The net result is that by working together synergistically, we bring about outcomes that benefit all of us.

Payroll Software

Just this month, the City introduced a new human resources and payroll system to replace one that was 20 years old. It was a multi-million-dollar, three-plus-year undertaking that will significantly improve our fiscal management in a critical area. Given that investment, we plan to invite our sister counties and the state to take advantage of this state-of-the-art system by adapting it for their uses. There's no reason government jurisdictions in Hawaii need to be spending millions of dollars to buy or develop proprietary software when we can work together to devise something we can all share.

Public-Private Partnerships

Continuing with this theme of collaboration, a hallmark of my administration from day one has been public-private partnerships. We've used PPPs to great advantage in saving Waimea Valley and Pupukea-Paumalu from development, in resolving the longstanding Kawai Nui jurisdictional dispute, in continuing Sunset on the Beach and creating a Month in Chinatown, and expanding Wi-fi across the island. We know the benefits of leveraging public assets with private sector resources to benefit our people. I'd like to share some of the exciting PPPs coming up in the next few months, an effort that has required the time and resources of a number of City agencies, headed by the deputy managing director.

Clean Water

At the top is the Clean Water and Natural Lands Fund, where we are proceeding with one of the recommendations of the commission bearing that name. The group created the template for community input on the use of the fund, and we will be moving ahead with a partnership involving the federal and state governments, conservation groups, and owner of Sunset Ranch to preserve that agricultural open space. By the way, we're also proposing to use Clean Water money to buy land in Nanakuli for a park. Yes, Nanakuli has parks, but they're beach parks. What the community needs is space for active recreation and that's the goal we are pursuing.

Ocean Pointe

The Ocean Pointe development in Ewa was completed some time ago. As an expression of its commitment to the community, and recognizing that it may take the City time to

appropriate money for needed park facilities, Haseko Corporation will be building two comfort stations, play courts, and other improvements before turning over the park to the City.

Honolulu Zoo

At the Honolulu Zoo, we're working with our concessionaire, Service Systems Associates, to come up with a way for both of us to benefit. We hope to revise our contract to give better terms to the concessionaire. In exchange, that business will invest in a \$1.2-million live bird exhibit, a feature proving very popular at mainland zoos. This is something that would take many years for the City to propose, plan, budget, appropriate, design, and build under normal conditions. But this partnership would enable us to begin construction within a few months of us agreeing to the terms of an amended contract.

Kapolei Property

In Kapolei, we've worked closely with Kapolei Property Development on a number of projects. Most recently, KPD partnered with the City on developing the area's sewage, water, and road infrastructure. But sometimes, when conditions change or new opportunities arise, it makes sense to revisit our agreements or understandings to see if there are other ways for us to mutually benefit. In the most recent example, KPD will turn over construction of the last section of Kapolei Parkway to the City in exchange for some valuable property along the parkway and ease its restrictions on how we can use that land. Why this makes sense is that the City can use federal money to build this link much sooner and we can then use the land for public-private ventures, like Alii Place.

You remember how selling public assets always comes up during tough times as a way to generate income. Here's an example of how the City, with the Council's concurrence, can gain an asset despite the economy. With the acquisition of this land, I am reiterating my invitation to the state and federal governments to partner with us on using it to bring more services to this rapidly growing area. I remain committed to building a great city in Kapolei, not just a second city.

Kamehameha Schools

Here's yet another example. Kamehameha Schools has worked with us to ease deed restrictions that will enable the Board of Water Supply to build a baseyard in East Honolulu. This will allow the board's crews to save on travel time in responding to assignments and emergencies on that side of the island. This has the added impact of freeing up BWS space on Beretania Street so we can find a higher and better use for that prime piece of downtown real estate, which I predict will generate much interest from the private sector.

Conclusion

In closing, I'm in public service because I believe it's a noble calling. No other profession gets as much grief or public criticism, but no other profession is as fulfilling and rewarding.

I've led my administration through maxims that have served as guiding principles to leading our great city. Despite what the cynics, doubters, and naysayers may proffer, I offer this message of faith, hope, and optimism.

The first is, "Never base decisions on fear," but on courage, conviction, and commitment. People in the political world all too often give up when things get rough, reverse course when their positions are challenged, or throw up their hands and say, "I'll leave these problems for the next person to fix." A leader has to have the courage of his convictions and the commitment to champion causes that may not always be popular, but which are ultimately the right things to do.

And sometimes a leader has to leave this good earth to be appreciated for his courage and good works. That might have been the case with Frank Fasi. As someone who admired his accomplishments, I thought, why wait to honor someone who gave so much to the people of this city? I'm grateful that the City Council joined me in naming the building behind you as the Frank Fasi Municipal Building and these grounds as the Frank Fasi Civic Center. His legacy is beneath our feet, it's all around us.

A second maxim holds that, "Problems are not as important as solutions." I've pointed out a few examples of how we're going about the business of the City in creative ways, in partnering with others, in finding new means of dealing with old problems, in looking for more effective ways of fulfilling our responsibilities. We can complain, complain, complain, monku, monku, monku, but what solutions, what ideas are we offering? And at the end of the day, it's not who got the credit for those solutions, but how those solutions have enriched our lives.

The last is collaboration. Another of my maxims is, "No man is an island; a leader brings people together." Public-private partnerships and intergovernmental cooperation have been mainstays of my administration. We have emphasized community-based planning and many of our key achievements have been predicated on collaboration. I'm one person. Our City team is just one entity. But each of you can be a leader in your neighborhood, your profession, your community to make this a better place to live for all of us.

That brings to mind the late Eddie Hamada, who passed away earlier this year. He was my coach and athletic director at Iolani and a wonderful man who became my mentor and friend. He would remind his players that it was all about one team, not one individual. A victory was a team victory and a loss fell on the shoulders of all members of the team. It

was about sharing and caring for each other. And that's the spirit that we should all hold in our hearts.

When I first spoke to you in my inaugural address of January 2005, I used the analogy of the *Hokule`a*. In ancient times, the launching of voyaging canoes required the teamwork of entire communities to navigate the Pacific: canoe builders, farmers and fishermen to provide food for long journeys, weavers to craft sails, navigators and sailors to guide the ship. In contemporary times, reaching our destination of making this the best place to live, work, and raise our families, requires the same kind of collaborative commitment and kokua.

As President Jimmy Carter stated during my college years, a government is only as good as its people. I've always laid claim to having the honor and privilege of serving the best people in the nation as your mayor. Given the enormity of the challenges now before us, the time has come for you to bring forth your creativity, your passion, and your talents to working with your government collaboratively to make our city, our state, our team, the very best. We are no ka oi!

Aloha and mahalo.

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