



## HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL, 415 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

March 30, 2020

Jade Butay, Director  
Hawaii Department of Transportation  
869 Punchbowl Street, Room 509  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Director Butay:

**We are writing to request an extension of the termination of lease for tenants of Dillingham Airfield until June 30, 2021.**

As you know, Dillingham Airfield has been open for public use since 1974 through a lease agreement between the Hawai'i Department of Transportation (DOT) and the U.S. Army. On February 10, 2020, DOT served tenants of Dillingham Airfield with lease terminations and notices to vacate by June 30, 2020. No input or communication with the tenants or surrounding community was sought prior to the DOT's actions. The current 3-month timeline to wind down business operations and vacate is terribly short.

Now, with the imposition of Stay at Home Proclamations by the Mayor and Governor, these businesses are even more impacted. The immediate halt to daily operations effectively locks everything in place for an unknown period of time. The 11 aviation businesses can neither operate nor begin the difficult task of liquidating their cherished businesses and laying off 130 employees.

The COVID-19 crisis is affecting nearly every aspect of life and business in Hawai'i. Without doubt, public health and safety is the highest priority, followed by the economy and viability of private business. Furthermore, it is now state policy that no evictions will be carried out for the foreseeable future. We trust DOT will take all these factors into account and support continuation of the airfield lease for one more year.

Dillingham Airfield is a thriving civil airport with 11 aviation businesses that employ about 130 people. Those businesses generate more than 12 million dollars in revenue and attract over 50,000 visitors annually to the airfield and the North Shore. Over 37,000 air operations were completed last year. The airfield has four different pilot education programs -- The Civil Air Patrol, North Shore Flight School, Paradise Air, Hawaii Glider & Sail Plane Academy. Aviation training programs are essential to meet Hawai'i's shortage of qualified pilots.

Many of these businesses do not have any option for relocation. The skydiving, glider and flight training operations are tied to the terrain and uncongested airspace that the Daniel K. Inouye

and Kalaeloa airports cannot replace. As a result, the airfield closure would cause significant loss of jobs, businesses and economic activity important to the community, and will severely impact general aviation in Hawai'i.

Save Dillingham Airfield, Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, United States Parachute Association, General Aviation Council of Hawai'i, and others are ready and willing to work collaboratively with DOT and the U.S. Army to explore ways to keep the airfield open. In the meantime, however, a lease extension for the tenants until June 30, 2021 is a more considerate and reasonable approach for both the tenants and surrounding North Shore community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

GIL RIVIERE  
Senate District 23

LAUREN MATSUMOTO  
House District 45

THE SENATE

RONALD D. KOUCHI  
President of the Senate

JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE  
District 24

GLENN WAKAI  
District 15

ROSALYN H. BAKER  
District 6

MICHELLE N. KIDANI  
District 18

THE HOUSE

STANLEY CHANG  
District 9

DONNA MERCADO KIM  
District 14

KURT FEVELLA  
District 19

SHARON Y. MORIWAKI  
District 12

TOM BROWER  
District 22

MIKE GABBARD  
District 20

CLARENCE K. NISHIHARA  
District 17

TROY HASHIMOTO  
District 8

BREENE HARIMOTO  
District 16

KARL RHOADS  
District 13

SCOT MATAYOSHI  
District 49

LES IHARA, JR.  
District 10

RUSSELL E. RUDERMAN  
District 2

SEAN QUINLAN  
District 47

KAIALI'I KAHELE  
District 1

BRIAN T. TANIGUCHI  
District 11

CHRIS TODD  
District 2

DRU KANUHA  
District 3

LAURA H. THIELEN  
District 25

JUSTIN WOODSON  
District 9

Cc: Governor David Ige