



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

PLEASE JOIN US FOR LUNCH

Monday, July 25, 2016 Miyama Main Hall, Harris United Methodist Church
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Nuuanu Ave. and S. Vineyard Blvd.—Ample parking—driveway off Nuuanu Ave

Agenda:

11:30 **Luncheon (optional): Various Pizzas, Salad, and Dessert**—\$5.00 Donation

11:55 **Welcome, Introductions and Remarks**

12:00 **Program:** Diane Terada and Rona Fukumoto: **“Understanding Affordable Housing”**

Diane Terada is Division Administrator of the Community & Senior Services (CSS) Division of Catholic Charities Hawaii (CCH). **Rona Fukumoto** is Division Administrator of the Housing and Referral Programs (HARP) of CCH. They will describe the housing needs of seniors and the challenges seniors face in finding affordable rental housing, homeless issues, and the work of CCH’s Development Corporation which is currently building senior affordable housing in Mililani.

1:00 **Adjourn**

Kokua Council Windward: Thursday, July 14, 2016: Chad Blair: “Honolulu Civil Beat – Watchdog Journalism” COMMUNITY WELCOME

11:30 (Optional) — Buffet Lunch in Dining Room, \$11. Reservation and Information: Samuel Cox (808) 779-3606 or revsamuelcox@gmail.com.

12:30 Program: Chad Blair: **“Honolulu Civil Beat – Watchdog Journalism”**

Chad Blair is one of the best-known reporters for Honolulu Civil Beat. He has been a writer, editor, and teacher in Honolulu for more than 25 years. Chad has worked as a journalist for Pacific Business News, Hawaii Public Radio and Honolulu Weekly. He has taught at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu Community College, Hawaii Pacific University and Chaminade University of Honolulu.

Created in 2010 by eBay founder and philanthropist Pierre Omidyar, Honolulu Civil Beat has quickly become one of the most respected news sites in Hawaii. Civil Beat is a free on-line news site. Its mission is to inform and educate Hawaii residents so they can make good decisions about vital issues. It is a non-profit organization supported by community donations.

Chad will share his experience as an investigative watchdog journalist.

1:30 Adjourn

Editorial: Department of Health plans to contract the Long Term Care Ombudsman out of Hawaii State Government

The Executive Office on Aging, part of the Hawaii Department of Health, issued an RFI (Request for Information) [Solicitation No. RFI.LTCOP16](#) for a new individual or organization to take over the job of the Long Term Care Ombudsman as of October 1. At the same time funding for the office has been restricted to the point where it cannot fulfill its federal and state mandates to protect long-term care residents in Hawaii.

An RFI is preliminary to publishing an RFP (Request for Proposals), which is a solicitation for bids. By publishing this RFI, DOH has stated that it intends to open bidding to individuals or non-profits who would take over the work of John McDermott, who has been the State Long Term Care Ombudsman since 1998. Prior to that, he was Director of Social Services at Hale Nani Rehabilitation and Nursing Center for seven years and held that same position at Maunalani Nursing and Rehab Center the prior two years. It will be extremely difficult to match his experience and dedication.

The LTCO is a federally and state mandated state-wide program that has already been handicapped by the DOH so that it appears impossible that seniors can be protected. What does the ombudsman do? In a nutshell, when a complaint is received, the ombudsman investigates, gathers necessary information to resolve the complaint, and assures that residents have access to administrative remedies.

But DOH cut the Ombudsman Specialist and the Volunteer Coordinator positions from the office. The ombudsman is now one person mandated to serve 12,340 residents located in 1,702 long-term care facilities spread over six islands. To make the quarterly visits the federal government recommends would mean about 28 facility visits a day with no sick days or holidays allowed. Remember: to get to other islands requires flying, with all the delays that involves.

State law clearly sets out the requirement to protect residents of long-term care facilities:

[§349-21] Office of the long-term care ombudsman. (a) There is established the office of the long-term care ombudsman in the executive office on aging to protect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of residents of long-term care facilities in accordance with state and federal law. The office of the long-term care ombudsman shall be headed by the long-term care ombudsman.

The same statute clearly states that the ombudsman is to protect long-term care residents against actual or potential abuses. It states that (among other duties) he shall:

Identify, investigate, and resolve complaints, including complaints against providers of long-term care services and their representatives, made by or on behalf of residents of long-term care facilities relating to actions, inactions or decisions that may adversely affect the health, safety, welfare, or rights of residents

of long-term care facilities, including the appointment and activities of guardians and representative payees.

By underfunding and understaffing the operation, the DOH has already failed its responsibility to seniors and others dependent upon the services of the ombudsman.

Coupled with the DOH's failure to obey state law requiring the posting of inspection reports of long-term care facilities on its website (no reports have been posted at all in recent months), it appears that DOH is effectively protecting the long-term care industry from accountability at the expense of the lives and health of the state's senior citizens.

The crippling cuts in the Long Term Care Ombudsman's office, which needs an ombudsman in each of the three Neighbor Island counties plus clerical and other supports, demonstrates the complete lack of support and indifference by DOH and the Senate and Health Committees of the Legislature to protect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of residents of long-term care facilities in accordance with state and federal law.

It's all one fabric: halting the posting of inspection reports, denying unannounced inspections until (possibly) the distant future, and now crippling the office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman and preparing to outsource the work. While the RFP has yet to be issued, it appears that funding will be further cut, making fulfillment of the federal mandate difficult to impossible.

Catholic Charities Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center to host a Candidates Fair on Friday, July 22

It's an election year. Seniors vote, they say, but everyone can benefit from information on candidate positions. Catholic Charities is offering a chance to meet candidates running for statewide and islandwide offices on Friday, July 22 from 8 to 11 a.m. at their facility at [1640 Lanakila Avenue](#) in Honolulu.

According to the organizers, 25 of the candidates running for statewide and islandwide offices are scheduled to attend, with 30-35 expected as a final count. This event is open to the public and the organizers hope that many seniors will attend to impress on candidates the interest of senior voters. There will be an "all American" lunch (hot dog, chips) for attendees.

Register to vote in the primary election by July 14—it's easy!

All you need is a valid Hawaii ID and a Social Security number. Then go online to <https://olvr.hawaii.gov> to register. You can even register from your smartphone!

Do it. It's so easy.



Kokua Council for Senior Citizens of Hawaii Education Fund, Inc.
 20 South Vineyard Blvd.
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<http://www.kokuacouncil.org>

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WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

July 25 meeting: “Understanding Affordable Housing”
Kokua Council Windward: Thursday, July 14, 2016: “Honolulu Civil Beat – Watchdog Journalism”

Who Are We?

Kokua Council is one of Hawaii’s oldest advocacy groups. There is a **\$10.00 annual membership** to defray printing and postage costs. At each meeting, topical issues are presented for discussion and possible action. We embrace diversity and extend a special invitation to any senior or intergenerational-minded individual interested in advocating for these important issues in Hawaii. All are welcome. **WHEN:** 4th Monday of every month, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. **WHERE:** Harris United Methodist Church @ Nuuanu and Vineyard Blvd. There is ample parking. A light lunch is provided for a \$5 donation. **REACH US** c/o Harris United Methodist Church, 20 South Vineyard, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Mission: “Kokua Council advocates and seeks to empower seniors and other concerned citizens to be effective advocates in shaping the future and well-being of our community, with particular attention to those needing help in advocating for themselves.”

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JOIN KOKUA COUNCIL!

Yes! I want to join Kokua Council. Here are my annual dues and my contact information. I understand that my phone number will be added to the Kokua Phone Tree and I will receive the monthly newsletter and occasional e-mails. Our fiscal year starts in January. Please make checks payable to **Kokua Council**.

Individual Member __ \$10.00 Life Member __ \$100.00 Organizational Member __ \$25.00

Donations: 501(c)(4) Advocacy _____ Education Fund: 501(c)(3) _____ (Tax Deductible)

Date _____

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Mail to: Treasurer, Kokua Council, Harris United Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard Blvd., Honolulu, HI 9681