



RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE CITY AUDITOR TO CONDUCT AN AUDIT OF THE HONOLULU AUTHORITY FOR RAPID TRANSPORTATION'S CONTRACTS AND SPENDING FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SERVICES.

WHEREAS, according to information provided by the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation ("HART") to the Honolulu City Council, HART has contracted with at least two major contractors, who in turn have hired at least eleven subcontractors, to provide "public involvement" services at a cost of about \$4 million (Dept. Com. 405, 2012); and

WHEREAS, the public involvement services from these contracts are over and above the services already provided by the five HART employees who are dedicated to public relations and involvement and make a combined \$362,000 in salaries (Dept. Com. 405, 2012); and

WHEREAS, additionally, large contractors hired by HART to work on the rail project often employ their own public relations teams on staff or through subcontract, such as Kiewit Infrastructure, which has its own public information employees and contracts with a separate public relations firm for even more public information help with the project; and

WHEREAS, HART has stated that its public involvement work is a requirement of any federally funded project to encourage public participation during all stages of the rail project, although no citation for this federal requirement has been provided and concerns have surfaced regarding what appears to be excessive spending on public involvement; and

WHEREAS, additional concerns have been raised that HART's public involvement work, contracts, and spending have crossed the line from public information to political programs and efforts designed to influence public sentiment, lobby elected officials, and push the project forward at an unreasonable pace; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds that the large amount of money spent by HART on public involvement, both in-house as well as through contractors and subcontractors, seems increasingly political, excessive, and unjustifiable; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes there is a public need to examine the contracts and spending for the rail project's public relations and public involvement services to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being used wisely and not misused; and



RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it urges the City Auditor to conduct an audit of the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation's contracts and spending for public relations and public involvement services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Auditor, among other audit tasks, determine what specific public involvement service or services each employee, contractor and subcontractor provides, and provide an opinion on whether these services, and the amount paid for these services, individually and collectively, are objective, required by federal law, and therefore justified; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Office of the City Auditor, the Chair of the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation, and the Mayor.

INTRODUCED BY:

Melvin Hablard
[Signature]
Tom Kobayashi

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

JUN 19 2012

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers