
From: Webb, Kate (FTA)
To: Day, Elizabeth (FTA); Welbes, Matt (FTA); Borinsky, Susan (FTA)
Sent: 1/27/2010 10:50:34 AM
Subject: Feedback on Mtg. w/ Mayor on Honolulu rail

Hi all,

I'm hoping one of you were in the meeting w/ Peter and the mayor of Honolulu and can give me a rundown of what was discussed or committed to. Per the e-mail below, Rep. Abercrombie's staff is asking. I have a copy of the briefing that was prepared for S-1's mtg w/ the Mayor... and assume the same was used for Peter's meeting. Playing off that briefing paper... are the talking points pretty much in line with what was discussed? Thanks much!

Kate

From: Griffo, Paul (FTA)
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2010 3:31 PM
To: 'Tabilas, Melvin'
Cc: Webb, Kate (FTA)
Subject: RE: Honolulu rail

I am forwarding your request to Kate Webb, our congressional liaison.

Paul Griffo
Senior Public Affairs Officer
Federal Transit Administration
Washington, DC 20590
202-366-4064

From: Tabilas, Melvin [mailto:Melvin.Tabilas@mail.house.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2010 3:28 PM
To: Griffo, Paul (FTA)
Subject: Honolulu rail

Paul,

Not sure if you're the right person I need to talk to. But I'm trying to get an update on any meetings that the mayor of Honolulu may have had with DOT officials last week when he was in town. Hope you can help me or at least direct me to the right person.

Mahalo,

Melvin

Melvin Tabilas
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U.S. Representative Neil Abercrombie (HI-01)
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MEMORANDUM

AR00116950

TO: Secretary Ray LaHood
FROM: Peter Rogoff, Federal Transit Administrator
DATE: January 19, 2010
RE: Meeting with Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann

MEETING OVERVIEW

Mayor Hannemann requested the meeting with you while he is in town to attend the U.S. Conference of Mayors 78th Winter Meeting. The Mayor will discuss the status of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project.

MEETING ATTENDEES

- Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann
- Toru Hamayasu, Director, Honolulu Rail Transit Project
- Bill Brennan, Mayor's Communications Staff
- Dennis J. Dwyer, Principal, Williams & Jensen
- Peter Rogoff, FTA Administrator

TOPIC OF MEETING & TALKING POINTS

- The Mayor will ask for any help that you can provide in advancing Honolulu's proposed rail project. Without any consultation with FTA, the Mayor promised the public that a groundbreaking would happen by the end of 2009. He is anxious to show progress on the project for two reasons:
 - The Mayor will almost certainly announce his intention to run for Governor. Governor Lingle is term limited. Mayor Hannemann will face Rep. Neil Abercrombie in a primary. The sooner the project is under construction, the sooner the mayor can demonstrate his effectiveness in meaningfully combating the punishing congestion on Oahu.
 - The Mayor is concerned that the state legislature will tap into tax revenues reserved for the project to close other budget gaps if construction does not begin soon. The legislature made an aborted run at doing so in the last legislative session.
- Without any consultation with the FTA, the mayor has repeatedly stated overly optimistic assumptions regarding the timeframe for completion of the project's milestones, including completion of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). As a general rule, the mayor has operated with the assumption that him saying that things will happen in a certain timeframe will automatically cause them to happen. When they don't happen on his self-created timeframe, he gets all the more frustrated.
- The FTA is working diligently to bring the environmental review of the project to closure. Remaining tasks depend largely on **actions by other agencies** that are beyond FTA control – the Federal Aviation Administration for impacts on Honolulu International Airport and the Navy and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for impacts on historic resources. Project opponents are expected to bring suit, alleging non-compliance with federal environmental requirements. Consequently, anything less than full closure on all issues would put FTA, the City, and the project at risk in court. In addition, Governor Lingle (who has always been hostile to both the project and the Mayor) has stated recently that she may conduct her own in depth review of the project and withhold her approval of the project, which is required under State environmental laws.
- **TALKING POINTS**
 - DOT very much wants to move the project forward as quickly as possible, consistent with the requirements placed on us by federal environmental law.
 - FTA will continue to give full attention to the environmental review and work with participating agencies to facilitate conclusions consistent with their responsibilities.
 - DOT can't necessarily rush the approvals of agencies outside our control, such as the Navy and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.
 - It would be best if you would stop articulating artificial deadlines into the minds of the public. Such

statements don't advance the project any quicker but it makes the public think that project is not progressing.

NOTABLE BACKGROUND

- The Hawaii congressional delegation has been very supportive of this project, particularly Senator Inouye.