



MEC COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENT: MEC SPECIAL MEETING – MEC GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE APRIL 27, 2023

Dear Fellow AFA Members,

As I have mentioned in my past Master Executive Council (MEC) President Communications, one of the biggest most pressing issue I believe we all face has been the inaction by the previous MEC Grievance Committee Chairs in processing grievances in a timely manner.

Both the Honolulu and Los Angeles Local Executive Council (LEC) Presidents appear to have done their jobs in ensuring initial grievances have been handled. The problem we all have is the huge backlog of grievances sent by the Local Councils to the MEC Grievance Committee for final processing. I will be as clear as possible here, there was no concerted effort over the past few years to actually clear up this MEC pile of grievances expeditiously. I spoke to our staff attorney, Richard Wrede, about this and he even said that prior to my election, there was this acceptance by the MEC for inaction.

I would say that next to the elected AFA Officers, the MEC Grievance Chair is the most critical position in our Union. The majority of those MEC Grievances sitting in the MEC office pertain to Honolulu. I accept this situation as the MECP. I've identified the problem and moved to put an eminently better qualified person in the job of MEC Grievance Chair. This benefits us all.

Our AFA-CWA Constitution & By-Laws lays out the rules to how MEC Chairs are removed and appointed. First, a Special Meeting must be called with 24-hour notice and agenda items stating the changes. The MEC meets and moves on the action. There is nothing shady about this process. It is how this work of the Union is conducted. We conducted our Special Meeting today concluding at approximately 338 pm.

If there were ever a dream candidate to fill the position of MEC Grievance Chair, that would be in the person of Jeffrey Fuke, our newly appointed member of the MEC team. Jeff first and foremost is an outstanding individual. Aside from that obvious trait, he brings to the MEC unmatched and unrivaled credentials. He is an accredited attorney, and graduate of Syracuse University in New York. He served as the LEC 43 HNL Grievance Chair for many years and knows intimately the issues which many of those stockpiled grievances speak to. He worked as a negotiator in our last Contract Negotiations and knows the contract inside and out. No one has a more stellar resume for the position to be our MEC Grievance Committee Chairperson. In today's Special Meeting, the LEC Presidents amended Agenda Item #1 to ensure that Melissa Teshima will remain as an MEC Grievance Committee Member.

I said that I would try to address those big issues confronting our Union. I've identified the problem, placed the best qualified person to help solve the problem and moved forward, so that even if I'm no longer around in a couple months, the next leaders will have a better time of it. I want to leave the AFA at Hawaiian in a better place than when I got here.

This has never been about individuals or the drama that some seem to bring up to divide our group. This is about getting the greatest talent to complete the job with a level head and a kind, humble approach. I know that Jeff Fuke is such that person.

Now, the next step will be for our AFA Staff Attorney, Jeff and myself, to screen this giant pile of MEC Grievances and try to get them cleared up within the next two months. This is very ambitious. But with the right people in place and the spirit to take the initiative to tackle the problem, I know this can be achieved. There is no time to lose, especially if your name is in that stack of grievances.

In Unity,

Ka'imi Lee, MEC President