

American Legislative Exchange Council
2023 States & Nation Policy Summit
November 28 - 30, 2023 | Scottsdale, AZ
Travel Report by Meeka Sarabano-Garcia

Tuesday, November 28th

12:00 PM-2:00 PM Registration and Exhibit Hall

3:30 PM-4:15 PM First Time Attendee and New Member Orientation

The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) is a nonpartisan organization of legislators from across the country. ALEC's policy initiatives focus on three main goals: 1) limited government, free markets, and federalism. ALEC is not only composed of policy makers, it also includes businesses from the private sector to help address different economic issues from each of the states. Members of ALEC form different task forces (i.e. Criminal Justice, Homeland Security, Education, Energy, Agriculture, etc.) to help create model policy that can then be introduced by legislators on the state and county level. Because the model policy created through the task forces is debated and discussed with members of both the government and private sector, the model policy is often very well-rounded and offers solutions to top issues. One of the focuses of ALEC is to exchange and share ideas, and the task forces help to do just that because of the public-private partnerships. They are able to discuss the successes and failures that they've experienced in their own states and share them with the other members of ALEC to help create valuable solutions through model policy.

5:45 PM - 8:30 PM Jefferson Awards Reception and Dinner

Tom Lewis, T.W. Lewis Company, is an entrepreneur from Phoenix, Arizona. He has over twenty-five years of experience in business as a developer and investor. He has since authored the book, Solid Ground: A Foundation For Winning In Work And In Life. In his speech at the dinner, Tom stated, "Replace chaos with common sense." Oftentimes, in the midst of chaotic situations, the easiest solution can be found through common sense.

Tom went on to explain that in order to utilize common sense, you need to have a strong foundation of principals and values. This defines your personal character, and without personal character any success you experience in life will be short-lived. Your personal character is what defines your personal growth. He compared it to planting and caring for a Chinese Bamboo Tree - initially you will not see much visible growth despite efforts to nurture it; however, the growth is happening below the surface and the tree is developing its root structure that will provide the foundation for future growth. Developing personal character takes time and patience, it must be nurtured and built.

Wednesday, November 29th

8:00 AM-9:00 AM General Session

Essential Policy Solutions for 2024 was published by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) to help advance its principles of limited government, free markets, and federalism.

9:15 AM-10:15 AM End Cash Bail - And Then What?

Eliminating “cash bail” has been a major political movement over the past decade, and yet little debate has been had as to what the new system would look like. In this session, three national experts will educate state policymakers by providing a framework for understanding bail reforms and evaluating the policy impacts of various proposed pretrial reforms. The experts will explain landmark research on the federal and New York models and provide useful tips on how to avoid the pitfalls of such reforms while also reducing unnecessary pretrial incarceration.

11:50 AM-1:30 PM General Session

1:45 PM-4:45 PM American City County Exchange (ACCE) Meeting Part 1

Homelessness and Housing Presentation by Carol Hollowell, Switchpoint

Switchpoint is a nonprofit organization with private sector components. Its mission is to help homeless individuals through empowerment. Switchpoint helps the homeless to address the root cause of their poverty, create a plan, and teach them how to be self-sufficient. They focus on restoring self-esteem and providing opportunity with accountability. Accountability is important because without it there will be a lot of chaos.

Switchpoint’s goal is provide deeply affordable housing in the 30% AMI for those on a fixed income (vets, seniors) getting priced into homelessness. To accomplish this, they find vacant buildings and convert them into housing with wrap-around services (soup kitchen, thrift shops, child care, pet care, gardens, etc.). Switchpoint essentially builds a full service community surrounding their homeless shelters/housing complexes.

Switchpoint also does not use a lot of government funding. It is primarily self-funded because of the private businesses it creates to surround the shelters. Those businesses (thrift shop, child care, pet care, gardens, and soup kitchen) generate funding to help switchpoint avoid the red tape that comes with government dollars.

On the local and national levels, Switchpoint is working to 1) End Generational Poverty 2) Provide Affordable Housing for Everyone and 3) Build Tiny Homes for Chronically Homeless.

Thursday, November 30th

8:00 AM-9:00AM Ranked-Choice Voting Threatens State and Local Control for Elections

Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) is a new ballot initiative in which voters pick multiple candidates in a race, and if no one gets a majority of the votes, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated. The eliminated candidate’s votes are then dispersed to the other candidates based on the subsequently ranked votes choices. This process repeats until one candidate gets the majority of votes and is declared the winner.

Supporters of RVC believe that it will encourage more diversity in candidates, because it inherently encourages more people to run for any given political seat. Many jurisdictions across the US have implemented RVC. Hawaii in particular has only approved of RVC for special elections on the federal and county level only. Governor Ige signed SB 2162 into law as Act 47 in 2022.

Despite it being a primary vehicle for election reform, RVC is extremely complicated and confusing. It has been found that in states that have implemented RVC it has cost taxpayers millions of dollars to educate voters on the new system. It will also require voters to spend a lot of time learning about each individual candidate since they will be casting ranked votes for each race. It was also found to take voters much longer to complete RVC ballots.

9:15AM-11:45AM American City County Exchange (ACCE) Meeting Part 2

During this session, we learned about the School Community Councils (SCC) implemented in Utah public schools. The purpose of SCC is:

- To build consistent, effective collaboration and communication among parents, employees, and administrators
- Provide a forum for parents to be actively involved with the school in their children's education
- To identify academic needs and implement interventions that will measurably improve student performance

The council's members consist of the school principal, school employees, and parents/guardians who have children at the school. Each member is limited to a two year term. The council is responsible for:

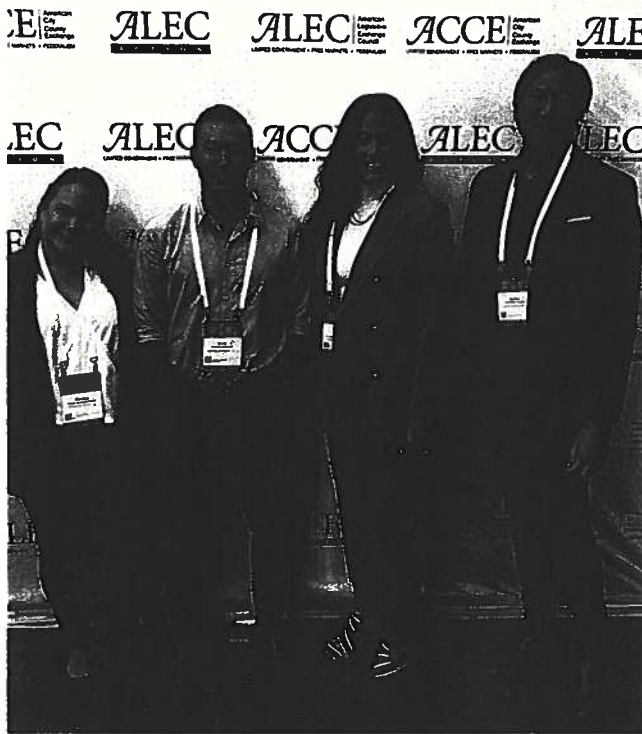
- Mandatory Data Review to Identify Critical Academic Needs
- Consult with Principal on Teacher and Student Success Plan
- Prepare and Implement School LAND Trust Plan
- Digital Citizenship and School Safety

Recently, there has been a significant increase in violence at Nānākuli High and Intermediate School (NHIS). In September 2023, a freshman was beaten so badly by eight other students that he was sent to the emergency room with a fractured nose and concussion. NHIS has since hired additional security to help mitigate these problems. I believe that our public school system, NHIS in particular, would greatly benefit from the implementation of SCC.

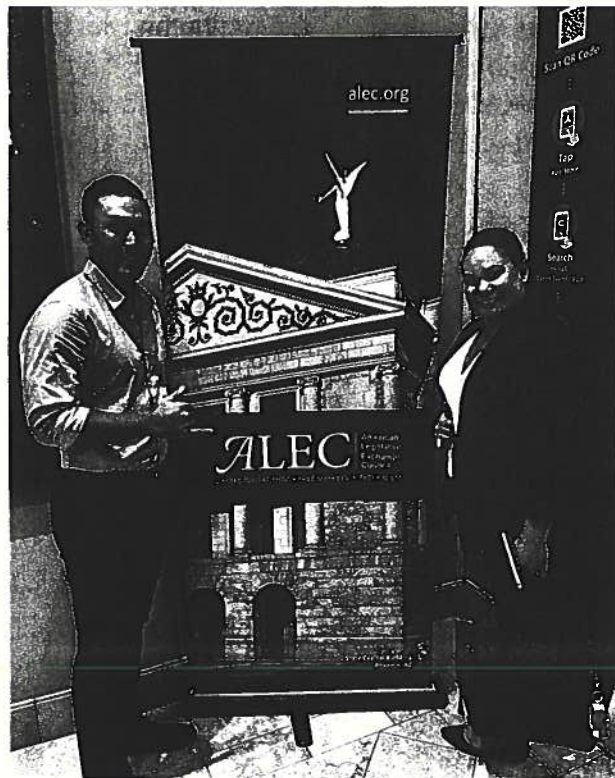
12:00PM-1:30 PM General Session

2:30 PM-4:30 PM CARE Training

Come learn about ALEC CARE, the constituent management system for legislative members. This digital platform provides officeholders with a reliable CRM database, while enhancing the interactions they have with their constituents and building better relationships with those they serve. Stop by this session to learn how CARE can benefit you.



Meeka Sarabano-Garcia, Treyson Suemori, Councilmember Andria Tupola, and Kaiwi Coakley



Treyson Suemori and Meeka Sarabano-Garcia



Kaiwi Coakley, Councilmember Andria Tupola, Meeka Sarabano-Garcia, and Treyson Suemori

City Council
City and County of Honolulu

CLAIM FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Date: 03/06/2024

Traveler: Meeka Sarabano- Garcia

Event: ~~2023~~ American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) Conference

Location: Scottsdale, AZ

Dates: From 11/27/23

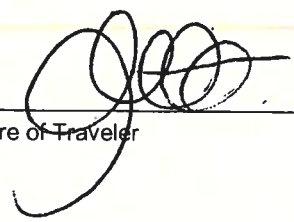
To ~~12/01/23~~

28

11/30

Description	Amount	Notes:
1. Registration Fee		
2. Airfare		
3. Hotel		
4. Meals	93.16	Meals- CM Tupola, Kaiwi, Treyson and Meeka
5. Ground Transportation	20.09	Valet fee plus tip at the conference venue
6. Tips		
7. Other	20.06	
Other		
Other		
8. Adjustment		
TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT	113.12	

This is to certify that the above data, based upon receipts submitted to Council Administrative Support Services via a CCLTRVL02 form, is accurate. Further, I am claiming reimbursement for expenses associated with a trip in which City business was conducted and personal funds were used to advance payment:



Signature of Traveler

3/08/24

Date