



*Maui Hotel & Lodging*  
ASSOCIATION

2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

1. **COVID RULES AND PROCEEDURES:** In an effort to combat the global spread of COVID-19, the MHLA is firmly committed to following all safety and health recommendations set forth by the Federal government, the State of Hawaii and the County of Maui. Furthermore, we have and will continue to review all such recommendations to make sure that they are fair and based upon accurate information as gathered by local health departments and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Government COVID policy must be shaped with input from community stakeholders and the MHLA has and will continue to fill this role for the industry. It is the MHLA's position that government must also consider the holistic health of the community while making decisions.
2. **TAX RELIEF:** The COVID-19 pandemic devastated the visitor industry in Maui County in 2020 and continues to prevent an economic recovery. Occupancy rates for hotel, condominium and timeshare properties continue to fall anywhere between 15 to 50 percent and many operations continue to lose money, much less make a profit. The situation is not sustainable and MHLA continues to lobby for property tax relief on the county level. On the state level we continue to oppose any bills that are aimed at raising taxes on the hotel industry, especially at a time when the industry is attempting to build back up again.
3. **PROPOSED SHORELINE MANAGEMENT RULES:** As we are part of an island community in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, the MHLA understands the importance for government to address climate change, rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, as these changes affect us all. However, the need to do so should be tempered by Maui County rules and regulations which are already being strictly adhered to as well as being based upon the proper ocean and geological sciences. The solution should not be based upon "one size fits all" but more of a carefully crafted solution depending on the individual challenges that each property faces.
4. **MANAGING TOURISM:** As we prepare for the eventual return of tourism, we have an opportunity to continue in our efforts to better manage it by working together with government, private industry and community members. Visitors could pledge to follow island guidelines, such as driver courtesy on the road to Hana, respecting local fishermen and divers, never swimming alone or turning your back on the ocean, being prepared while hiking and always leaving our 'aina as you found it. By working together, we can manage tourism better so that we promote more cultural respect and environmental responsibility.
5. **TRANSIENT VACATION RENTALS:** In Hawaii there are an estimated 23,000 transient vacation rentals that are likely not paying General Excise Tax (GET) and/or Transient Accommodations Tax (TAT). Equally important, most of these accommodations may not adhere to all Federal and

State Codes and Regulations (Fire Safety, ADA, etc.). We feel strongly that all properties accommodating our visitors should have to pay the necessary taxes that our government imposes, as well as adhere to all Federal and State Codes and Regulations.

6. **AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** Approximately 40% of Maui County's workforce is directly employed by the Visitor Industry. We are deeply concerned in the lack of adequate affordable housing and affordable rentals for our workers and consider it an immediate priority. We support further modifications to the current Maui County Affordable Housing Bill to allow for more housing that will be affordable for our workforce.