

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
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**MEMORANDUM**

August 28, 2024

**To: Members, Committee on Oversight and Accountability**

**From: Committee Staff**

**Re: Subcommittee Hearing titled “Assessing the Federal Government’s Response to the 2023 Maui Wildfires”**

On Wednesday, September 4, 2024 at 10:00 AM HT at the Lahaina Civic Center, 1840 HI-30, Lahaina, Hawaii 96761, the Subcommittee on Government Operations and the Federal Workforce will host a hearing titled “Assessing the Federal Government’s Response to the 2023 Maui Wildfires.”

**I. BACKGROUND:**

The August 2023 Maui wildfires were among the worst U.S. natural disasters of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, destroying much of the historic town of Lahaina. The fires claimed over one hundred lives, caused billions of dollars in damage, and led to immense cultural loss for Native Hawaiians and local residents. Federal agencies assisted in the immediate response to the fires, and for over a year have been aiding in the longer-term recovery. Housing for displaced residents, economic recovery, debris removal, environmental remediation, and Native Hawaiian cultural concerns remain key elements of the ongoing recovery effort.

**II. HEARING PURPOSE:**

As federal recovery efforts in Lahaina continue into a second year, congressional oversight is necessary to ensure agencies remain efficient and accountable and that lessons learned from previous disasters are implemented. The field hearing will allow Members to hear from federal agencies on the ground and provide a platform for local stakeholders to provide updates on recovery progress.

**III. WITNESS:**

*Panel 1 – Federal Witnesses*

**1. Mr. Bob Fenton**

Regional Administrator (Region 9)  
Federal Emergency Management Agency

2. **Col. Eric Swenson**  
Commander, St. Paul District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
3. **Mr. Francisco Sánchez, Jr.**  
Associate Administrator, Office of Disaster Recovery & Resilience  
Small Business Administration
4. **Ms. Cheree Peterson**  
Deputy Regional Administrator (Region 9)  
Environmental Protection Agency

*Panel 2 – Local Witnesses*

1. **Major General Kenneth Hara**  
Adjutant General  
State of Hawaii
2. **Mr. Richard Bissen**  
Mayor  
Maui County, Hawaii
3. **Ms. Lauren Nahme**  
Senior Vice President, Maui Recovery Office  
Hawaii Community Foundation
4. **Mr. Sne Patel**  
Board President  
LahainaTown Action Committee
5. **Mr. Ke'eaumoku Kapu**  
President & CEO  
Nā'Aikāne o Maui