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MEDIA RELEASE

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**ANOTHER ALLEGED FEDERAL VIOLATION LODGED AGAINST
WESTERN PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (WESPAC)
Is the Federal agency now illegally lobbying the Hawai`i State Legislature?**

HONOLULU: MARCH 15, 2007 — Keiko Bonk, Campaign Director for the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Network* was told to leave a Tuesday, March 13, 2007 public meeting of a clandestine group of “certain fishermen” which was taking place “directly across the hall” from the 137th meeting of the *Western Pacific Fishery Management Council* (Wespac). Later, Bonk found out that the meeting in question, held in a Wespac paid-for conference room with members who had been flown in with Wespac paid-for tickets, was held to drum up support for three bills working their way through the State Legislature. Bonk stepped back across the hall and during a moment reserved for “public comment,” asked the full Wespac Council if they were aware of Federal Wespac monies being spent to lobby the Hawai`i State legislature. The next day, Wednesday, Bonk filed a written complaint (attached) with Wespac’s Chair, Sean Martin asking the official to investigate exactly what Wespac staff are doing and assure the public it will never happen again.

Coincidentally, Wespac Council Member, Rick Gaffney later announced to the Council's Executive and Budget Standing committee that he would be submitting a motion to the full Council to amend the Wespac “Standard Operating Practices and Procedures” (SOPP) to conform to the Federal OMB circular A-122 to prohibit Wespac members and employees from attempting to influence “Federal or State legislation” — restoring similar language that had been removed by a 2002 revision.

Bonk’s removal from the Wespac-funded meeting came at the hands of Leimana and Bob DeMate of the *Pacific Islands Resource Management Institute*. Despite strong Federal prohibitions barring agencies such as Wespac from trying to influence state law and politics, the DeMates are allegedly being paid by Wespac to organize and lobby for the passage of several bills at the current session of the Hawai`i State Legislature; SB1831, HB1578, and HB1848, HD2. The last of those three bills, HB1848, HD2 essentially requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources to follow the dictates of an “advisory panel” made up primarily of the fishing industry in making *any* fishery or marine resource decisions.

Neither Leimana nor Bob DeMate are registered as lobbyists with the *Hawai`i State Ethic Commission* as required by law, and their company, *Pacific Islands Resource Management Institute* is apparently operating with an “expired” business status at the *Hawai`i State Department of Commerce & Consumer Affairs*.

Keiko Bonk noted, “Wespac has employed a brilliant community organizing strategy by funding and convening three puwalu (all together). Organized from the top down, each influenced the next and all culminated in a master plan to influence the Hawai`i State Legislature to pass bills to benefit private industry and special interests by dismantling the protection of Hawaii's most important public resource — our oceans. I accidentally walked in on the last phase of Wespac's scheme.”

ANOTHER IN A SERIES OF COMPLAINTS AGAINST WESPAC
AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ROSE B. “KITTY” SIMONDS

This latest allegation of illegal lobbying comes on the heels of two other complaints filed against Wespac and their ED, Rose B. “Kitty” Simonds by two Hawai`i fishing organizations. In late 2005 and 2006, the *Oahu Game Fish Club* and the *Waianae Boat Fishing Club* submitted requests to the United States Department of Commerce Inspector General for an investigation of Wespac. These complaints were supported by a detailed report describing “a pattern of improper and dishonest conduct in a campaign by Wespac to undermine presidential executive orders and laws guiding the establishment of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve and a related proposal to designate the area a marine sanctuary.” SEE <http://www.scottfoster.org/wespac> for complete documentation.

KITTY SIMONDS: A LIGHTENING ROD FOR CONTROVERSY

In a revealing series of articles in the Portland Oregon-based *Cascadia Times*, recognized in 2004 for producing “the nation’s most distinguished national environmental journalism,” a litany of inappropriate actions by Wespac and their Executive Director, Kitty Simonds were revealed — including much about the politically well-connected Simonds’ highly-unusual compensation package which includes “profit sharing” of \$20,000. For whatever reasons, the Wespac Executive Director is the 5th most highly-compensated Federal official in the entire US government:

President George Bush @ \$400,000
Vice President Dick Cheney @ \$208,100
Chief Justice John Roberts @ \$208,100
House Speaker (then Dennis Hastert) @ \$208,100
Kitty Simonds @ \$187, 469 (scheduled to increase to \$220,000 by 2009)

ATT - 1 Bonk Complaint

Attachment
KEIKO BONK COMPLAINT

FROM: Keiko Bonk, NWHI Network
TO: Sean Martin, Chair, Western Pacific Fishery Management Council
Re: Formal Complaint of Staff Actions related to March 13, 2007 Meetings at Ala Moana Hotel
Date: March 14, 2007

I am writing to formally complain about Council Staff actions related to certain meetings held on March 13th at the Ala Moana Hotel that were associated with this 137th WESPAC meeting in Honolulu. I request that you investigate my complaint and take appropriate remedial actions to bring Wespac staff actions into the light of day and to ensure that similar actions do not recur.

This memo first outlines the facts relating to those meetings yesterday and then provides specific requests for investigation and remediation.

Facts

- Wespac held meetings with certain fishermen at the Ala Moana Hotel. (personal observation)
- Wespac paid for tickets and hotel rooms for participants. (Personal communication from Wespac “Puwalu” meeting participant)
- Wespac paid for meeting rooms. (personal communication Ala Moana hotel staff and management and Wespac receptionist and Wespac SSC Chairman Dr. Craig Severance)
- These meetings were not noticed to the public, nor announced in advance.
- Topic of the meetings was to discuss among the participants ways to support three bills before the Hawaii State Legislature related to fishing. (personal communication from Wespac “Puwalu” meeting participant)
- On the morning of March 13, I was at the Ala Moana Hotel for their 137th Council meeting and became aware that the meeting described above was being held at the hotel.
- I asked Wespac Economist Marsha Hamilton, about the meeting.
- She denied that any such meeting was taking place.
- I subsequently found the room in which the meeting was being held.
- Upon trying to enter the room I was told by Wespac staff that I could not enter the room.
- Because the meeting was being paid for with public funds, and its topic was of interest to me, I entered the room despite Wespac staff statement that I was not permitted to do so.
- Once inside, I saw 20 people, recognized half of them from the December 2006 “Puwalu” Policy meeting which I attended.
- I was then confronted by Wespac staff consultants, Leimana and Bob Demate who asked me to leave.
- I was told by these Wespac staff consultants that this was a “private spiritual meeting” and I was not invited. I said I understood it to be a Wespac organized and funded policy meeting and therefore it must be open to the public.
- The Demates denied it being a Wespac meeting and repeated that it was in fact a “private spiritual meeting.”
- Rather than escalate an already tense situation, I exited the room.

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- I was not the only member of the public asked to leave this Wespac meeting. Tina Owens was also asked to leave.

Complaint

Wespac is a public entity operating with public funds. Its meetings are required to be noticed and, in nearly every circumstance, fully open to the public.

Wespac is also prohibited from lobbying at either the state or federal levels.

Wespac staff on March 13 appeared to violate these rules. I therefore request that you formally investigate:

- the circumstances that led to these meetings, including whether they violated anti-lobbying rules and regulations;
- Wespac staff actions related to the funding and organization of the meetings, and the exclusion of members of the public from the meetings;

I also ask that you publicly release the results of your investigation, including whatever disciplinary or remedial actions you take in response to this complaint.

This week is “Sunshine Week” across the United States. As front page stories in the Hawaii papers state today, transparency in government actions is a central tenet of a healthy democracy. How ironic it was, therefore, that just yesterday I was so blatantly excluded from what was apparent to me to be a Wespac meeting.

Chairman Martin, you are the leader of Wespac, and as such, I ask you to exercise your leadership responsibilities to expose Wespac staff actions to the sunlight, and ensure that they do not recur.

Thank you.

/s/

Keiko Bonk

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