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DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
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**DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL RICH STACEY HONORED WITH
PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL LAURIE LOVELAND AWARD**

*Award Recognizes Exceptional Leadership, Collaboration and Service in Multistate
Tobacco-Related Enforcement and Policy Work*

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HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of the Attorney General is proud to announce that Deputy Attorney General Rich Stacey, a national leader in tobacco law and supervisor of Hawai'i's Tobacco Enforcement Unit, was selected as the recipient of the Laurie Loveland Award.

The award, presented by the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) in Washington D.C., honors an attorney general's staff member who demonstrates outstanding leadership, collaboration and determination in advancing the states' united efforts on tobacco-related matters.

"I am so very pleased that Rich has been honored with the Laurie Loveland Award. Preserving the benefits of the Master Settlement Agreement takes ongoing dedication, perseverance, and a spirit of community and collaboration among the states," said

Michael Hering, director and chief counsel of NAAG's Center for Tobacco and Public Health. "Rich is the embodiment of these values and his leadership on tobacco issues is recognized by his peers across the nation. Rich's efforts have not only served to benefit the people of Hawai'i, but also those in every other state and territory."

Stacey leads the Tobacco Enforcement Unit, which administers, monitors and enforces the Master Settlement Agreement (MSA). In 1998, Hawai'i and 45 other states signed the MSA with the four largest U.S. tobacco manufacturers to settle smoking-related claims. Under the MSA, these manufacturers provide annual payments to the signing states and last year, Hawai'i received \$33 million. These annual payments are critical for the University of Hawai'i's John A. Burns School of Medicine, the Rainy Day Fund and tobacco prevention and control programs across the state.

A Deputy Attorney General for nearly 15 years, Stacey is widely recognized across the nation as a leader in tobacco law. He played a pivotal role in stabilizing funding for Hawai'i's Cancer Center amid declining cigarette tax revenues and recent federal funding changes. He led a collaborative effort with the Department of Health, Department of Taxation and the University of Hawai'i to pass legislation increasing Hawai'i's cigarette tax from 16 cents per stick to 18 cents per stick – the first increase since 2011. This legislation not only secures funding for critical health programs but also positions Hawai'i among the states with the highest cigarette taxes in the nation, helping reduce tobacco consumption statewide. He previously helped pass landmark legislation taxing electronic smoking devices at 70 percent of wholesale value and establishing licensing and permitting requirements.

Building on that success, he worked this year with the AG Investigations Division and the Department of Taxation to investigate retailers and distributors attempting to evade the new excise tax — efforts that have led to multiple vape business license revocations. His oversight and enforcement leadership have strengthened Hawai'i's regulatory framework while safeguarding youth and the public from the harms of tobacco use.

In addition, Stacey has advanced enforcement efforts around electronic smoking devices, leveraging Hawai'i's Altria settlement dollars to strengthen vaping enforcement initiatives. He championed robust education campaigns to notify retailers and distributors about the FDA's list of authorized e-cigarette products and the consequences of violations. His work brought numerous retailers into voluntary compliance with federal law. Stacey also collaborated with states across the country to utilize federal Tobacco Enforcement Fund grants to address internet sellers of electronic smoking devices in violation of the Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking (PACT) Act.

“The Laurie Loveland Award is one of the highest honors given to attorney general staff engaged in tobacco-related enforcement and policy. Rich’s thoughtful leadership, integrity and commitment make him exceptionally deserving of this recognition. I am incredibly proud of his work and grateful for all that he and his team do to protect the public health of the people of Hawai‘i,” said Attorney General Anne Lopez.

“I am deeply honored to receive the Laurie Loveland Award,” said Deputy Attorney General Rich Stacey. “This recognition reflects not just my work, but the dedication and collaboration of our entire team in the Tobacco Enforcement Unit, our partners across Hawai‘i and our sister states. Together we’ve strengthened tobacco enforcement, expanded public health protections and helped secure essential funding for prevention programs across the state.”

Laurie Loveland Award History and Background: The Laurie Loveland Award was established by NAAG in 2004 to honor the legacy of Laurie Loveland, a North Dakota assistant attorney general and later solicitor general who played a pivotal role in the states’ collective litigation against the tobacco industry. Known for her collaborative spirit, strategic insight and unwavering commitment to the public good, Loveland was instrumental in negotiating the landmark, multistate settlement of 1998 (known as the Master Settlement Agreement) between many U.S. states and major tobacco companies. Her work helped unify the states in achieving one of the most significant public health settlements in U.S. history. States secured not only financial compensation for health care but also long-term commitments and public health safeguards such as restrictions on advertising, youth targeting and other measures designed to curb the harms of tobacco use.

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