



STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAII

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GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA

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ATTORNEY GENERAL

**THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND U.S.
ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AGREE PARALLEL STATE INVESTIGATION
REGARDING \$35,000 WOULD INTERFERE WITH FEDERAL
INVESTIGATION**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 7, 2026

HONOLULU – The Department of the Attorney General is deferring any investigative action at this time to avoid interference with a publicly documented federal investigation that resulted in the convictions of former Senator Jamie Kalani English and former Representative Ty Cullen for Honest Services Wire Fraud in February 2022. A previously sealed filing in the federal case references an incident where Cullen, as part of that investigation, recorded a meeting during which an unnamed “influential state legislator” accepted “approximately \$35,000 in funds that were purportedly to be used in an existing campaign.”

The decision to defer investigative action was made after direct consultation with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Hawaii, at which time it was made clear that any parallel state investigation into the \$35,000 in funds would interfere with the ongoing federal investigation. The U.S. Attorney's Office declined to share any evidence whatsoever with the state relating to this matter.

While the public nature of the existence of this federal investigation is unique because of the disclosure of a previously sealed document, as a general matter, the Department of the Attorney General, along with other law enforcement agencies, do not make statements on the existence or the status of its investigations. The reason for this practice is widely accepted across the law enforcement community: the integrity of investigations must be protected in the interests of justice, including the prevention of the compromising of evidence and witnesses as well as the successful prosecutions of cases in court. Law enforcement concerns dictate that the fruits of an investigation be withheld from the public until an indictment is secured, to avoid the concerns listed above.

In the same vein, when one law enforcement agency is conducting an active investigation, a second entity initiating an investigation into the same matter could have catastrophic consequences for both. A subject not alerted to the first investigation may be alerted by the second — evidence may be destroyed, statements coordinated, witnesses intimidated.

Based upon the above, while a federal investigation that already has demonstrated substantial success is proceeding, it is the Department of the Attorney General's position that any parallel state investigation into this matter conducted by any state governmental entity does not serve the interests of justice until the federal investigation has concluded.

"I have spoken directly with the United States Attorney, who affirmed that a parallel investigation by state authorities would interfere with their federal investigation. The Department of the Attorney General has forged a strong partnership with the Office of the United States Attorney and federal law enforcement. The United States Attorney is a highly respected prosecutor who has served in Hawai'i for years, and there was no ambiguity in our conversation that a parallel state investigation would disrupt his ongoing investigation," said Attorney General Lopez. "To the extent that the Department of the Attorney General can assist in the future, I welcome that wholeheartedly, but I appreciate and respect the U.S. Attorney's Office's current position."

Once the U.S. Attorney's Office concludes its investigation, the Department of the Attorney General will review the outcome and if appropriate, initiate a state investigation or take other action as warranted under state law.

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