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Dear KPD Employees:

This past holiday season was a time of deep reflection for me. Even though it is a time of celebration, it was difficult for me to celebrate knowing the turmoil being experienced by the men and women of the Kaua'i Police Department.

My goal since becoming Mayor has been to help reunify KPD, so that you may move forward as one toward a better future for the Department and all of Kaua'i. However, it has become increasingly apparent to me that this is not happening. It has been extremely frustrating for me to see the situation deteriorate without having the means to take any kind of meaningful action.

I wanted to personally let you know that I have asked the Kaua'i Police Commission to remove K.C. Lum from the position of Chief of Police and begin a nationwide search for a replacement as soon as possible. This request comes after a great deal of personal deliberation and I hope the Commission will act upon it in a timely manner. My reason for doing this is twofold: 1) I do not believe Chief Lum has the leadership and communication skills necessary to reunify the department and 2) I do not believe the Chief has the necessary communication skills to effectively operate the department internally or externally.

You have difficult jobs and you deserve a work environment that is functional, supportive and cohesive. High morale is essential to your day to day effectiveness, and in the effort to successfully recruit more candidates into vacant positions.

A change in leadership will not solve all the problems within the Kaua'i Police Department. However, it is an essential part of the solution. Beyond that, each and every employee must take personal responsibility for being a part of the positive momentum toward building a healthy and highly functional police department. It is my hope that a facilitated process will be put into place to start the healing process and bring the employees of KPD together as one.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your diligence, hard work, and commitment to the people of Kaua'i and Ni'ihau throughout the year. You make us all proud.

Me ke aloha pumehana

ivan J. Baptiste