



Alewa Heights
Kalihi
Kalihi Valley
Moanalua Gardens
Moanalua Valley
Kapalama
Red Hill
Halawa Heights
Aiea

community bulletin

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Aloha, Friends and Neighbors

The Twenty-ninth Legislature wrapped up its 2018 session with the passage of a number of significant proposals that should have far-reaching impacts on our community. They're described below and in the legislative recap elsewhere in this edition.

My priorities this year were three-fold: kupuna, women, and the environment. Kupuna because they represent a growing, often vulnerable, segment of our population, women because of what I believe is a need to preserve our hard-won gains and advance the cause of women's rights, and the environment because we must balance our desire for growth and prosperity with the protection of our precious island environment.

We also kept an eye on housing, as challenges with homelessness and lack of affordable housing persist.



Senator Kim joined fellow legislators and other supporters of the "Our Care, Our Choice" bill (House Bill 2739) when Governor David Y. Ige signed the legislation into law.

KUPUNA CARE

We appropriated an additional \$1.2 million for the Kupuna Caregiver program, which was established a year ago. Kupuna Caregiver provides up to \$70 a day to support caregivers with such costs as adult day care, transportation, home care, and so forth. It has proven so popular that the additional funding was approved.

DEATH WITH DIGNITY

The governor signed into law, as Act 2 (**House Bill 2739**), a measure named the "Our Care, Our Choice Act," which establishes a process under which an adult resident with a medically confirmed terminal disease and less than six

months to live may choose to obtain a prescription for medication to end his or her life.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

I co-introduced **Senate Bill 2351**, which prohibits prospective employers from requesting or considering a job applicant's wage or salary history as part of an employment application process or compensation offer. It also prohibits enforced wage secrecy and retaliation or discrimination against employees who disclose, discuss, or inquire about their own or co-workers' wages. The legislation, if signed into law by the governor, will take effect this January 1.

Women continue to be underpaid, and undervalued, in the workplace, and I expect his legislation will help create a level playing field for women and others who are seeking employment or new career opportunities.

House Bill 1489, which I supported, will prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, including gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation, in any state educational program or activity, or in any educational program or activity that receives state financial assistance.

The purpose of this bill is to prevent the erosion, locally, of the spirit and provisions of Title IX, known as the Patsy Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act, the landmark federal law that prohibits discrimination by educational institutions receiving federal money.

I also sponsored **Senate Concurrent Resolution 24**, which designates March 19 as Hawaii Celebrating Women in Public Office Day, in conjunction with Women's History Month that month. This resolution was adopted by both houses of the Legislature.

We must encourage more women to seek public office and this resolution, approved by both houses, is one step in that direction.

ENVIRONMENT

Senate Bill 3095, which I endorsed, will require all users of restricted-use pesticides to report on that use to the

Department of Agriculture, prohibit the use of pesticides within 100 feet of a school during school hours, and ban any pesticide containing chlorpyrifos, effective January 1, 2019. The Agriculture Department will be required to develop a pesticide drift monitoring study by next July.

This bill was signed into law by the governor as Act 45. The prohibitions should limit public exposure to these harmful chemicals and protect the long-term environmental impact of these poisons on our environment.

Another measure I supported was **Senate Bill 2571**, which will ban sunscreens containing oxybenzone or octinoxate, or both, without a medical prescription. The bill takes effect January 1, 2021.

Researchers have discovered that these chemicals are causing long-term harm to coral reefs, fish, and sea mammals. We must do all we can to protect our fragile ecosystem.

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

With Hawaii facing a critical shortage of affordable housing, **House Bill 2748** authorized spending \$570 million to construct 25,000 affordable rental housing units across the state.

We also approved a \$3-million increase in the executive budget request for homelessness services, including Rapid Rehousing, Housing First, Homeless Outreach, and others. The total amount allotted for these programs will stand at \$15 million this coming fiscal year.

ALL-MAIL ELECTION

It was back in 2013 that I called for all-mail elections. I was frustrated by our historically low voter turnout and thought circumstances required some creativity in stimulating citizen participation. While my legislation has earned support over the years, it also failed to win agreement during the conference committee negotiations, including as recently as last year.

At long last, we passed **House Bill 1401** this year, which authorizes a pilot

all-mail voting program for the 2020 primary and general elections in any county with a population of less than 100,000. The only qualifying county is Kauai.

I hope many more voters will use this opportunity to have a say in their government and popularize mail-in voting, and reverse our poor record of participation in our democracy.

PROCUREMENT CODE

As chair of the Senate Committee on Government Operations, we approved an appropriation of \$500,000 to conduct a comprehensive review and analysis of the Hawaii Public Procurement Code. This code covers almost all purchasing by the state and county governments and we thought it necessary to exercise some legislative oversight on how this code is working and perhaps modify it to better suit our requirements.

As always, your input and ideas were invaluable in my legislative decision-making, and I thank you for your interest in our democracy and the laws that govern us all.



Senator Kim is interviewed by a television reporter during the session.

Mahalo,

Donna Mercado Kim
Senator, 14th District

Disaster Relief, Housing Among Top Priorities for 2018

The Legislature approved about 200 measures this session. Described below are bills that may be of interest to *Community Bulletin* readers.

For a complete list, see capitol.hawaii.gov/advreports/main.aspx and select "Bills That Passed Legislature."

DISASTER RELIEF

Senate Bill 192 authorized a sum of \$125 million for disaster relief and recovery efforts, with \$100 million of that earmarked for Kauai and \$25 million for East Oahu and other areas damaged by the spring flooding.

The measure also set aside \$84.7 million for the state's rainy day fund, which is used in emergencies. The governor signed this measure into law as Act 12.

EDUCATION

Senate Bill 2922 calls for voters to decide on a constitutional amendment authorizing the Legislature to impose a surcharge on investment real property, with the money going to fund public schools, the University of Hawaii, and public libraries.

The question on this year's general election ballot will read, "Shall the legislature be authorized to establish, as provided by law, a surcharge on investment real property to be used to support public education?"

HEALTH

The Legislature approved **House Bill 2739**, and the governor signed into law as Act 2, the "Our Care, Our Choice Act" that sets forth a process in which an adult Hawaii resident with a medically confirmed terminal disease and less than six months to live may choose to obtain a prescription for medication to end his or her life.

House Bill 1911 authorizes the Department of Health to investigate care facilities reported to be operating without an appropriate certificate or license issued by the state and sets forth penalties for violations and for knowingly referring or transferring patients to uncertified or unlicensed care facilities.

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community survey 2018

LEGISLATURE
2018



Community Survey Results

Mahalo for participating in our annual community survey on matters before the Legislature and community. Your input was welcome and helpful in shaping Senator Kim's views on the many bills that were under consideration during the session. Here are the results of the survey.



Minimum Wage

The minimum wage was raised to \$10.10 an hour this past January, following four consecutive annual hikes in that rate. We asked readers if they supported further increases.

53% Yes
47% No

Suggested wages ranged from a low of \$10.50 to a high of \$20.00, with most suggesting a range of about \$12-\$15.

Proposals to raise the minimum wage were not reported out of the Ways and Means Committee.



Prison Relocation

The state has completed a draft environmental impact statement on the relocation of Oahu Community Correctional Center to Halawa Valley. We asked if you supported that proposal.

66% Yes
34% No

The Legislature did not authorize any major spending for the OCCC relocation but did appropriate \$500,000 to renovate the Maui Community Correctional Center and \$40 million for new housing and other improvements at the Women's Community Correctional Center.



Traffic

We polled District 14 residents to evaluate the impact of the Department of Transportation's projects to alleviate traffic congestion on our freeways.

Are you experiencing less traffic on our freeways?

29% Yes
71% No

Do you believe these changes have saved you driving or commuting time?

49% Yes
51% No

In district-specific transportation projects, the Legislature authorized spending \$20 million for various improvements to the airport viaduct as well as an additional \$1.5 million for Kalihi Street (see capital improvements report in this edition).



Bicycling

We asked about the popularity of Bikeshare Hawaii to gauge whether the state government should continue its investment in bicycling.

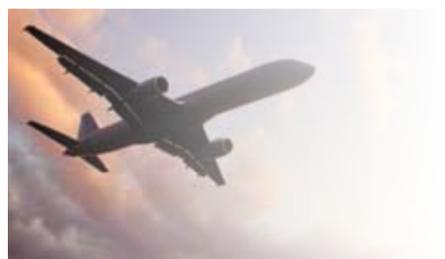
Have you used the Biki bikes?

3% Yes
97% No

Do you support creating more protected bike lanes?

38% Yes
62% No

The Legislature did not adopt any bicycling-related bills this year.



Federal Travel Ban

The state administration has been aggressive in fighting some of the immigration and travel bans taken by the Trump administration. We asked about public support for these efforts.

Were you in favor of Hawaii's Attorney General filing multiple lawsuits against the Trump administration's travel ban?

29% Yes
71% No

If so, do you think taxpayer money should be used for Hawaii to be the lead in fighting the travel ban?

23% Yes
77% No

The U.S. Supreme Court has upheld the administration's travel ban on entry from citizens of certain nations, including Iran, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Venezuela, and North Korea. Most are predominantly Muslim, which led to this policy being called a "Muslim" travel ban.



Sanctuary State

Last year, the Legislature declared Hawaii to be a sanctuary state and requested local law enforcement agencies to decline to work with federal immigration authorities. The declaration was a statement of support, not a law.

Do you think Hawaii should become a sanctuary state?

12% Yes
88% No

The Legislature took no action on the sanctuary state issue.



Health Care

We asked readers about their interest in a single-payer national health insurance, dubbed "Medicare for all," in which a single public or quasi-public agency organizes health care financing, with the provision of care remaining largely in the private sector.

Would you support a national single-payer health care system?

25% Yes
75% No





Senator Kim on the hotseat



In this edition, Senator Kim responds to a constituent regarding her decision to run for the U.S. Congress

I see you're running for Congress. I think you're doing a great job representing our district, so why are you seeking that new office?

It wasn't an easy decision to make but I believe that we need leaders on Capitol Hill who are willing to fight to preserve the progress we've made, push back against attempts to erode our social safety net, and enact legislation that serves citizens rather than special interests.

My goal is to exercise the oversight responsibilities of the legislative branch. During my terms in the Senate and on the Honolulu City Council, I brought to the taxpayers' attention such problems as overtime abuses, uncollected salary overpayments, construction mismanagement, contracting irregularities, and other instances of government inefficiency. The federal government is likely facing similar problems, given its sheer size and scope. Demanding accountability and transparency on the part of public agencies is very tough work, but I'm up to the challenge.

As for a platform, I'll continue to fight for middle- and working-class families. I grew up in Kalihi, a child of parents who both worked long hours to make ends meet. They worried about education and health care for their children and caring for their aging parents—and it's no different today. In fact, I would argue that it's

even tougher today because of the high cost of living in Hawaii.

I will put people first: our kupuna, keiki, and working families. With a Republican majority in both houses of Congress, a Republican administration, and a conservative majority on the Supreme Court, we must work in a bipartisan manner to protect Hawaii's interests, our environment, and our values. In this regard, I'm in favor of more federal support for education and affordable housing, protecting Social Security and Medicare, preserving the safety nets for the elderly and disadvantaged, and helping the small businesses that fuel our economy.

HEALTH CARE

In particular, we have to fight against rollbacks on the Affordable Care Act while making it more affordable for everyone. We must resist attempts to cut Social Security and Medicare, because those safety net programs continue to face assaults by Republicans. Health care must be a human right. Hawaii has long led the nation in providing quality and affordable health care through our Prepaid Health Care Act and the nation should follow suit. At the same time, we must seek ways to better manage health care costs and effectiveness.

EDUCATION

Public education is a critical equalizer. If not for public education, I wouldn't be who I am today. There are too many federal mandates and too little funding to

implement them. We must insist on greater local home rule and fight to have more control over our public education system so we can tailor our teaching needs to suit our particular strengths and weaknesses.

It's also imperative that our youth have access to high-quality, affordable higher education. The skyrocketing cost of college is unsustainable and is burdening graduates with huge loan debts—not to mention making college unaffordable for many others. We need low- to zero-interest rates on student loans and make it easier for graduates to pay off their debts. The federal government can offer incentives like granting funds to states that lower tuition costs while retaining educational quality.

FIGHTING FOR WOMEN

I have long championed a woman's right to choose. As a senator, I supported initiatives to increase access to safe emergency contraceptives and quality reproductive health care, and to provide better care for low-income women and children.

As a working single mom, I support legislation to ensure equal pay for equal work, eliminate pay discrimination on the basis of gender, and give women greater protection from sexual harassment, violence, and domestic abuse.

I assure you that I'll continue to represent our district and the entire state, if elected.

\$35.5 Million in Projects Slated for District 14

The Legislature has appropriated funds—totaling \$35.5 million—for major construction projects or grants in Senate District 14.

SCHOOLS

Aiea High School: \$5.5 million to design a new building and renovate and expand various athletic facilities, with \$3.9 million of this sum allocated for this fiscal year and the balance for next year.

Aiea Intermediate School: \$550,000 to complete the renovation of the cafeteria and purchase equipment.

Farrington High School: \$2 million for design and construction in conjunction with the campus modernization program.

Fern Elementary School: \$450,000 to plan, design, and construct a covered walkway from Building B to the cafeteria.

Fort Shafter Elementary School: \$350,000 for a master plan on the expansion of the administrative/classroom building to a multi-purpose science center.

Kalihi Elementary School: \$300,000 to repair or replace basketball poles and resurface the volleyball and basketball court.

Kalihi Uka Elementary School: \$3 million to design and construct campus facilities, including Americans with Disabilities Act improvements.

Kalihi Waena Elementary School: \$760,000 to design, construct, and equip a utility center with basketball courts, restrooms, classrooms, and equipment storage.

Moanalua High School: \$15 million to construct a performing arts center.

Red Hill Elementary School: \$5 million, of which half will be to design, construct, and equip a covered playcourt and the remaining half to renovate classrooms and support facilities.

ROADS

Kalihi: \$1.5 million in design funds for road improvements and widening and repairing Kalihi Street, from Kalaepaa Drive to Kalihi Street.

GRANTS-IN-AID

Moanalua Gardens Foundation: \$890,000 for planning, land acquisition, construction, and equipment for the Moanalua Valley master plan.

Kalihi-Palama Health Center: \$200,000 for planning, land acquisition, design, construction, and equipment for women and children's services.

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FIREARMS

Incidents of gun violence and mass shootings prompted the Legislature to pass **Senate Bill 2046**, which prohibits the manufacture, importation, sale, transfer, and possession of bump-fire stocks, multi-burst trigger activators, and trigger cranks.

Senate Bill 2436, meanwhile, shortens from 30 days to seven days the period for the voluntary surrender of firearms and ammunition on disqualification from ownership, such as in cases of felony conviction or domestic violence.

CIVIL RIGHTS

House Bill 1489 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in state educational activities and **Senate Bill 2351** prohibits prospective employers from requesting or considering a job applicant's wage or salary history as part of an employment application process or compensation offer. Both are described in Senator Kim's message.

Senate Bill 270 bans licensed professional counselors from engaging in or advertising the offering of sexual orientation change efforts on minors, commonly called conversion therapy. The bill establishes a sexual orientation counseling task force to address concerns of minors seeking counseling. This bill was approved by the governor and became Act 13.

FAMILY LEAVE

Legislators could not agree on the provisions regarding a paid family leave program and so **Senate Bill 2990** will ask the Legislative Reference Bureau to conduct an analysis of the impacts of and best framework for such a program, if established.



Senator Kim joined members of the Women's Legislative Caucus at the YWCA to outline the group's legislative priorities for the 2018 session. Attending were representatives of various women's organizations and students from nearby Saint Andrew's Priory. One of the caucus's bills was Senate Bill 2351, an anti-discrimination employment bill that Senator Kim co-introduced and which is awaiting the governor's signature.

Aloha Spirit Honorees

Three middle school students who embody the qualities of aloha—Akahi, kindness expressed with tenderness; Lokahi, unity expressed with harmony, ‘Olu‘olu, agreeableness expressed with pleasantness; Ha‘aha‘a, humility expressed with modesty; and Ahonui, patience expressed with perseverance—were recognized by Senator Donna Mercado Kim at the conclusion of the spring semester.

Senator Kim has presented her annual Aloha Spirit Awards to students at Aiea Intermediate, Dole Middle, and Moanalua Middle schools for many years. The recipients are selected by their schools. Each honoree receives a \$50 cash award, a plaque, and his or her name on the school’s perpetual plaque.



IWALANI BELTRAN
Aiea Intermediate School

Iwalani, the daughter of David and Jeanette Beltran of Aiea, has a 4.0 grade point average and was on the principal’s list four times in the past two years, as well as being named the student of the year in the seventh grade. She excels in algebra and has developed an interest in cooking, baking, and sewing thanks to her home economics class. Iwalani’s passion is volleyball, which she plays at school and for the Pure Aloha volleyball club.

Her counselor describes Iwalani as “always respectful to her classmates and teachers. She is someone others can count on for help, academically and socially. Although Iwalani is shy and quiet, she is willing and eager to participate. She always tries to do her best in class. Her grades are always good and she strives to do well and humbly accepts acknowledgments of recognition for the things she does.”

JAYDEN-JOSEPH ACOBA
Dole Middle School

Jayden-Joseph is showing all the signs of becoming an exceptional student: he is the president of the student body at Dole, maintains a 4.0 grade point average, and has organized several student committees on such concerns as health and safety, bullying, spirit, respect, and fund-raising. The son of Mary Jane and Joseph Acoba has a goal of improving the school’s image in the community and inspiring other students to become campus leaders.



One teacher says of Jayden-Joseph, “Jayden has been an exceptional student throughout his middle school career. He leads student council meetings, supports all activities planned by his peers, and continues to maintain a 4.0 GPA.”



JAMES ISENHOWER
Moanalua Middle School

James maintains a straight-A grade point average, but doesn’t spend all of his time at Moanalua Middle School. The son of James and Sherrill Isenhower also enjoys photography, hiking, and swimming at the beach or a pool. He swims for the Kamehameha Swim Club and represented the school at the Hawaii State Geography Bee.

His counselor writes, “James is a very polite and incredibly bright young man. He was one of the 10 finalists at the ... Geography Bee, yet with all his accomplishments he is very modest and humble. He is well-spoken and articulate but does not like to draw attention to himself. James is an awesome science student. He got a 499/500 on the Hawaii State Science Assessment this year. In science class, he excels in almost everything he does. He is humble, kind, a great role model, and has a wonderful sense of humor.”



Meals on Wheels Drums Up Support

Senator Kim joined backers of Lanakila Meals on Wheels during a rally at the State Capitol to help end hunger among the state’s kupuna. Lanakila operates the largest and only island-wide meal service for seniors, delivering nutritious meals and serving as a link between seniors and local services to help seniors maintain their independence in their own homes.

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Senator Sells Papers for Great Cause

Senator Kim hit the streets with other public-spirited volunteers to support the annual “Keiki Day,” sponsored by PACT (Parents and Children Together), during which they sell the Honolulu Star-Advertiser on street corners across the island. PACT is a non-profit group that provides diverse educational and social services for families in such areas as early childhood education, domestic violence prevention, and mental health support.



Head Start Kids Make an Impression

Children enrolled in the Head Start program visited legislators, including Senator Kim, to urge the community to “Invest In Kids!” Head Start serves children ages three to five and their parents to provide a head start for school success. The Kalihi-based program offers early education classes, parental involvement, and health and social services.



Shafter Students Learn About Government

Students from Shafter Elementary School were given a lesson on the legislative process in the Senate Chambers by Senator Kim. The senator frequently welcomes classes to the Capitol and explains how a bill becomes law.