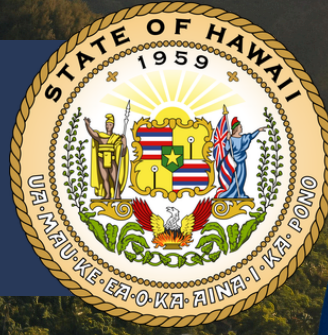


State Representative Luke A. Evslin

Serving District 16 - Wailua, Hanamā'ulu, Kapaia, Līhu'e, Puhi, portion of 'Ōma'o



From Līhu'e to the Legislature: 2026 Session in Review

2026 BY THE NUMBERS

- ✓ 286 bills passed by the Legislature.
- ✓ 7 of Rep. Evslin's introduced bills and 2 companion bills passed and heading to the Governor.
- ✓ Over \$126 million secured for major investments for Kaua'i.



Members of Kaua'i's Legislative Delegation: Representative Evslin, Representative Morikawa, Senate President Kouchi, Speaker Nakamura.

Aloha,

The 2026 legislative session has ended.

Working families kept the income tax relief promised in 2024, with further rate cuts for the lowest brackets. Native Hawaiian programs got dedicated state funding to fill the gap left by Washington. And the social safety net stayed intact through a tough budget year.

As Chair of the House Committee on Housing, my work focused on reducing the cost of housing. We've made it too hard, too slow, and too expensive to build housing in Hawai'i. Decades of well-intentioned rules have piled up to the point where local families can't afford to live here, our kids leave for the mainland, and more of our neighbors find themselves without a home.

My focus — every session, every bill — is on making it easier. Easier to build small homes, accessory units, and locals-only housing. Easier to build infrastructure. Easier for working families to stay in the communities they grew up in.

Some of that work passed this year. Some didn't. I'll keep at it.

Representing Kaua'i in the State House is something I don't take for granted. My office is open year-round. Between sessions, I work mostly from Kaua'i, which lets me be home with my family and my community, though I still get to the Capitol nearly every week. Reach out anytime if you need help navigating a state agency, want to visit the Capitol, or have an idea for legislation we should pursue in 2027.

Sincerely,

DID YOU KNOW?

Our office can help with everything from navigating state services to drafting legislation for you.

2026 LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Rep. Evslin's Legislative Wins

This year, **seven of my introduced bills, two companion bills, and one resolution passed both chambers.** These bills reflect our community's values and statewide needs.

HB1718 CD1 - Relating to Housing

Gives counties expanded authority to develop and finance mixed-use housing projects in transit-oriented areas.

HB1721 CD1 - Relating to Housing

Builds on the state's expedited permit program, which allows architects and engineers to self-certify that their plans meet code by clarifying insurance and indemnification requirements.

HB1728 CD1 - Relating to Rainwater Catchment Systems

Requires counties to allow rainwater catchment systems, ensuring housing can be built on lots where the county does not provide water service.

HB1737 CD1 - Relating to Farm Employee Housing

Allows accessory homes on agricultural land statewide, with guardrails — units cannot be CPR'd off the main house and must be under 800 square feet.

HB1740 CD1 - Relating to the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation

Exempts housing developments from certain state and county zoning, building code, and fee requirements when 80% of units are perpetually deed-restricted to owner-occupant Hawai'i residents.

HB1741 CD1 - Relating to Housing

Strengthens county affordable housing policies by grounding them in real data — so the requirements deliver homes for local families instead of stopping projects from getting built.

HB1920 CD1 - Relating to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit

Expands flexibility for the state's low-income housing tax credit by allowing developers and partners to sell or transfer credits to other taxpayers, making affordable housing projects significantly easier to finance and extends the program through 2032.

SB3219 CD1 - Proposing Amendments to Article VII, Sections 12 and 13, of the Hawai'i State Constitution

Proposes a constitutional amendment to allow counties to finance housing infrastructure, such as roads, water, and sewer systems, by using future property tax growth within designated development areas to repay bonds, without raising tax rates.

SB2398 CD1 - Relating to Residential Housing Utilities

Requires county water boards to publish online maps of their service areas and a list of service-restricted areas, improving transparency on where water infrastructure is available.

HCR83

Supporting the use of the dwelling unit revolving fund to fund predevelopment costs for any government affordable housing development project through interim loans to expedite the delivery of affordable housing.



Other Major Legislative Wins

HB1800 CD1 - State Budget

Provides \$250 million for housing programs statewide and \$126 million for Kaua'i capital improvement projects.

HB1618 CD1 - Cesspool Conversions

Establishes a low-interest loan program for cesspool conversion.

SB2471 CD2 - Artificial Persons

Prohibits corporations from influencing elections or ballots through financial contributions.

SB903 CD1 - Hawaiian Affairs

Provides \$55 million to OHA for Native Hawaiian programs facing federal cuts.

SB3125 CD2 - Income Tax

Preserves income tax cuts for joint filers under \$350,000, deepens tax cuts for the lowest two brackets. To help pay for it, a new top bracket was created for joint filers over \$1 million.

SB2866 CD1 - Kupuna Housing

Makes the State Rent Supplement Program for Kūpuna permanent, providing up to \$500 a month in rental assistance to low-income seniors 62 and older on fixed incomes.

SB2580 CD1 - Film Tax Credit

Expands Hawai'i's film tax credit program by increasing production caps, adding incentives for local hires and streaming productions, and extending the program through 2038.



Members of the House Housing Committee, including Chair Evslin and Vice Chair Miyake.

FUNDING & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)

\$5,400,000 (Revenue Bond Funds) and **\$21,600,000** (Federal Funds) for land acquisition, design, and construction for widening of Kaunalihi Highway from two to four lanes. This project is deemed necessary to qualify for federal aid financing and/or reimbursement.

\$4,100,000 for Līhu'e Health Center, Laboratory Improvements.

\$3,000,000 for Nounou mountain, Wailua for trail improvements and bridge replacement.

\$8,096,000 (Revenue Bond Funds) and **\$4,600,000** (Federal Funds) for design and construction for Līhu'e Airport Improvements including terminals, systems, and facilities.

CIP Grant-in-Aid

I Ola Wailuanui

\$80,000 to support capital improvements and restoration work at the heiau to preserve, rehabilitate, and enhance the site for cultural, educational, and community use.

Kaua'i Planning and Action Alliance

\$150,000 to support two Kauai youth and family resilience events providing workshops on financial literacy, homeownership, career pathways, wellness, food sustainability, and trade education through partnerships with local nonprofits and schools.

'Ohana Pacific Foundation

\$160,000 to support operational costs for Kaua'i's only adult day health program, providing social activities, meals, personal care, and caregiver respite services for kupuna regardless of ability to pay.

Project Vision Hawai'i

\$150,000 to expand free and low-cost dental healthcare services for underserved Hawai'i residents through school-based screenings, mobile outreach, restorative care programs for vulnerable women, and clinic-based dental treatment for low-income patients.

Language of Kaua'i Inc, Puhi

\$100,000 to design and construct covered outdoor pavilion at Kawaikini New Century Public Charter School.





Representative
Luke A. Evslin

Hawai'i State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street, Room 427
Honolulu, Hawai'i, 96813
Contact: 808-586-6270
repevslin@capitol.hawaii.gov



Staying Connected

This session brought meaningful progress for Kaua'i through efforts to expand affordable housing for local families, support cost-of-living initiatives, reduce delays that prevent homes from being built for residents, and, most importantly, do so in a sustainable way that protects our agricultural and conservation lands for future generations.

Mahalo for your trust and for giving me the opportunity to serve our community. It is truly an honor to represent Kaua'i and work on the issues that matter most to our families and local residents. Even though the legislative session has ended, my office is still here to help year-round. Whether you need assistance with a state agency, want to share ideas for future legislation, or simply have concerns you'd like me to hear, please know you can always reach out.

☎ (808) 586-6270 | ✉ repevslin@capitol.hawaii.gov



Serving Kaua'i Year-Round

No matter the season, my office remains open and ready to support you.

