



From the Office of your State Representative

2025 Legislative Session Report

Representative David A. Tarnas

Aloha

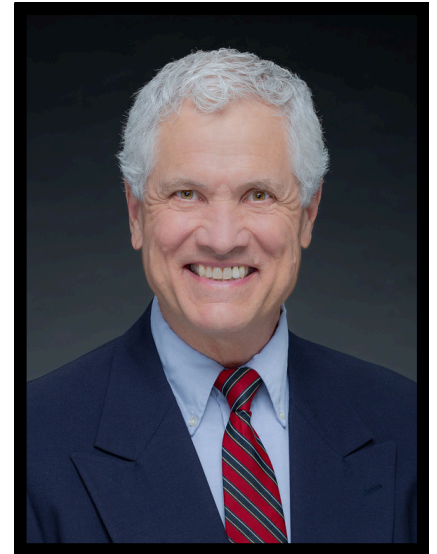
I hope you and your 'ohana are doing well. Friday, May 2, 2025, was the last day of legislative session and the bills that have passed through Final Reading are on the way to the Governor for his review and action. I am grateful to serve as your State Representative and advocate for the issues that matter most to our community, and I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation for your ongoing support and engagement.

As described in this report, the bills cover a diverse range of subject matters that directly impact our community and State. I'm pleased to report significant strides have been made to secure funding for capital improvement projects and grants-in-aid aimed at improving infrastructure and enhancing quality of life on Hawaii Island and across the state. I encourage you to visit the State Capitol website at www.capitol.hawaii.gov to learn more about each bill and how it aims to address the challenges facing our community.

As we conclude this session, let us continue our partnership in building a stronger, more prosperous state. Mahalo for your steadfast support.

Mahalo,

David A. Tarnas
State Representative
North & South Kohala



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2025 State Legislative Report

This session, the House Majority achieved major milestones, advancing fireworks safety and regulations, significantly boosting Judiciary funding, enhancing biosecurity measures, and securing settlements for Maui Wildfire victims, among other key initiatives.

Wildfire Prevention & Mitigation

HB300: \$14,820,456 and 22 positions for Fire Protection Program.

HB1001 - Appropriates \$807.5 million to fund the settlement of claims related to the Maui wildfires.

HB1064 - Fulfills the recommendations of the "Phase 3" Forward-Looking Report by Fire Safety Research Institute on the August 2023 Maui wildfires and classifies role of the State Fire Marshal. Appropriates funds.

SB223 - Requires DLNR to establish an independent program relating to the prevention, control, and extinguishment of wildland fires within forest reserves. Authorizes the Administrator of Forestry and Wildlife to establish and maintain facilities for the performance of fire protection, fire prevention, pest control, and forest and range protection and enhancement activities. Requires DLNR to establish and implement the Community Fuels Reduction Project.

SB897 - Allows electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repair, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism. Requires the Public Utilities Commission to adopt rules, subject to the Governor's approval, to determine an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from a covered catastrophic wildfire.

Climate & Environmental Protection

HB316 - Appropriates funds to the DLNR to continue the Green Jobs Youth Corps Program.

SB1396 - Mandates the Governor to allocate additional Transient Accommodations Tax (TAT) revenue in the budget for climate change mitigation and tourism projects.

Agriculture

HB427 - Renames the Department and Board of Agriculture to "Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity" and "Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity" respectively. Establishes and makes funds for Deputy Director of Biosecurity. Changes plant and animal declaration form to "biosecurity form." Authorizes the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to declare a biosecurity emergency and outlines actions the Department and Governor can take to prevent spread of organisms.

SB1249 - Establishes the temporary Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program within the Department of Law Enforcement.

Firearm Safety

HB300: \$825,000 for Gun Buyback Project

HB125 - Requires retail sellers or transferors of firearms to provide purchasers with notice regarding the law on firearms storage. Expands requirements for secure storage and clarifies offense of criminally negligent storage of a firearm.

HB137 - Provides that violent felons that are in violation of the prohibition against owning, possessing, or controlling a firearm or ammunition are subject to a mandatory prison term.

HB392 - Prohibits the possession, transfer, and sale of ghost guns. Establishes mandatory minimum sentencing for use of a ghost gun in the commission of a felony.

HB995 - Amends the annual reporting requirements imposed on the Department of the Attorney General and the chief of police of each county regarding licenses to carry firearms.

Fireworks

HB300: \$5,234,951 and 8 positions for Fireworks Enforcement Section

HB806 - Appropriates funds for the Department of Law Enforcement to conduct sting operations on Oahu to enforce fireworks ordinances or laws.

HB1483 - Amends definitions and penalties for fireworks offenses, including heightened penalties if another person suffers substantial bodily injury, serious bodily injury, or death.

Roads in Limbo

HB860 - In Hawaii County the State or county may repair or maintain any street of which the ownership or jurisdiction is in dispute between the State and county.

SB321 - In Hawaii County fee simple absolute title of a privately owned highway, road, alley, street, way, lane, bikeway, bridge, or trail is deemed transferred to adjacent property owners or the community association if certain conditions are met.

Housing

HB420 - Reforms the contractor repair laws.

HB431 - Establishes requirements for kauhale projects, including reporting requirements by the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (OHHS). Establishes the Ohana Zones Program as a permanent program within OHHS. Requires OHHS to submit a report every four months to the Legislature detailing the expenditure of funds appropriated toward the kauhale and ohana zones initiatives and conduct a comprehensive needs assessment. Changes Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness to "Coordinator on Homelessness".

HB735 - Allows an individual wastewater system to serve up to five bedrooms, regardless of the number of dwellings, dwelling units, or accessory units, whether attached or detached.

HB736 - Establishes and appropriates funds for a three-year new wastewater system and individual wastewater system technology testing pilot program within the UH Water Resources Research Center.

HB879 - Appropriates funds to establish a position within the Department of Health to assist with the upgrade and conversion of cesspools and perform any other related responsibilities as designated by the Wastewater Branch.

HB830 - Authorizes the State Historic Preservation Division to contract its review of proposed state projects and projects affecting historic properties to third-party consultants under certain circumstances.

SB15 - Amends the definition of "historic property" to require that the property is over fifty years old and meets the criteria for inclusion in the Hawai'i Register of Historic Places.

SB79 - Requires DLNR to determine the effect of any proposed state or county housing projects that may affect a historical property, an aviation artifact, or a burial site within ninety days of a request for determination.

SB825 - Extends the period for a notice of termination of a rental agreement from five business days to ten calendar days; requires landlords, or their agents, and tenants to engage in mediation and requires landlords and their agents to delay filing an action for summary possession if a tenant schedules mediation; and requires mediation to take place within thirty days from the date that a mediation center makes contact with both the landlord, or the landlord's agent, and tenant.

SB1044 - Expands the powers of the Hawai'i Property Insurance Association and reactivates the Hawai'i Hurricane Relief Fund to help stabilize the property insurance market in the State. Establishes the Condominium Loan Program and the Condominium Loan Revolving Fund, to be administered by the Hawai'i Green Infrastructure Authority on behalf of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, to provide financing for essential repairs and deferred maintenance to condominium associations.

SB1170 - Authorizes the director of a county planning department to issue a special management area use permit to redevelop permanent affordable multi-family rental housing that has been substantially destroyed as result of certain natural disasters, with certain exceptions.

SB1263 - Amends the procedures and required information for DLNR historic preservation review of proposed state projects, privately owned historic property, and other proposed projects that require entitlement for use.

Education

HB300: \$2.4 billion in FY26 and \$2.4 billion in FY27, including:

\$150M	for deferred maintenance on school facilities
\$41.98M	for summer education programs
\$7.55M	for workforce readiness
\$999,600	for advanced placement exam
\$20M	for skilled nursing services in schools
\$3,579,360	and 20 mental health interventionist positions
\$927,248 and 6 positions	for mathematics and financial literacy curriculum initiatives and instructional support for classroom teachers
\$13,264,299 and 109 positions...	for public pre-kindergarten expansion

HB692 - Expands the Preschool Open Doors Program's eligibility criteria. Repeals the requirement that Preschool Open Doors Program providers be accredited. Effective 1/1/2026.

HB862 - Authorizes the use of motorcoaches, small buses, and vans for school bus services.

SB1300 - Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, expands free school meal coverage to students who currently qualify for reduced-price lunch. Beginning with the 2026-2027 school year, expands free school meal coverage to students whose family income is not more than 300% of the federal poverty level.



Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

As of April 28, Governor Josh Green, M.D., signed 27 bills into law, with 18 led by the JHA Committee.
This milestone highlights JHA's impactful efforts for reform and strengthening the justice system.

Judiciary Support

- HB400** - Appropriates \$203.6 million in FY26 and \$201.4 million in FY27 for the Judiciary
- HB399** - Establishes one additional district court judgeship in the First Circuit.
- HB401** - Establishes one additional district court judgeship in the Third Circuit.
- HB280** - Permanently establishes and appropriates funds to the Department of Law Enforcement, Office of the Public Defender, and City and County of Honolulu Department of the Prosecuting Attorney for the Community Outreach Court as a division of the District Court of the First Circuit.
- HB396** - Increases the compensation rate and maximum allowable amounts per case for court-appointed counsel in criminal proceedings. Appropriates funds.
- HB398** - Increases the compensation rate and maximum allowable amounts per case for court-appointed counsel and guardians ad litem in family court proceedings.
- HB648** - Establishes a two-year pilot program in the Probate Court and Family Court of the First Circuit to fund certain guardianship- and conservatorship-related court resources in situations where the respondent does not have sufficient funds to pay for one or more of the resources and the court has deemed the resource(s) beneficial.
- HB727** - Permanently establishes the Women's Court Program in the First Circuit. Establishes a temporary two-year Women's Court Pilot Program within the Kona division of the Third Circuit.
- SB264** - Establishes the amount of compensation for private-sector examiners who evaluate a criminal defendant's fitness to proceed or penal responsibility in a legal case. Appropriates funds.
- SB304** - Establishes positions and appropriates funds for the Adult Client Services Branch of the First Circuit Court.
- SB428** - Increases the fees paid to witnesses in civil and criminal trials. Changes the fees paid to witnesses in civil trials for travel expenses from 20 cents a mile to the mileage allowance prescribed by the Administrator of General Services. Authorizes reimbursement to witnesses in civil trials for use of common carriers.
- SB601** - Requires law enforcement to post notice that a warranted or warrantless search has been conducted on a property. Requires a law enforcement officer to secure any entrance used by an officer in the search. Requires law enforcement agencies to develop a policy for securing the entrances to a house, store, or other building designated as a place to be searched after a search is completed.
- SB1651** - Requires board packets to be posted at least three full business days before a public meeting. Requires boards to provide notice to persons who have requested notification of meetings at the time the board packet is made available for public inspection.

Hawaiian Affairs

- HB410** - Appropriates moneys to fund the operating expenses of OHA for the fiscal biennium including:
- \$836,400 and 3 positions for the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program.
 - \$2,400,324 for additional staff.
- HB1091** - Requires a county to accept, within 60 days after receipt of a completed application for maintenance request, license or dedication of sewer transmission lines and related sewerage facilities servicing Hawaiian Home Lands that are brought into compliance by the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL).
- SB1051** - Designates September as Hawaiian History Month.

Office of Representative David Tarnas E-Newsletter

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with my e-newsletter,
providing updates from the
district and State Capitol.

SCAN



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Judiciary Reform

- HB300: \$8.2M** to provide Reentry services to help connect offenders with community-based resources, including replacement vital documents, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and transitional housing.
- HB103** - Prohibits sentencing persons who were under the age of twenty-one at the time of the offense to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.
- HB111** - Authorizes civil claims to be made against a person, business, business owner, or business operator that profits from sexual exploitation or sex trafficking. Extends the statute of limitations for civil claims related to sexual exploitation or sex trafficking to ten years.
- HB126** - Increases transparency and accountability surrounding property forfeiture. Requires the Attorney General to adopt rules necessary to carry out the purpose of the Hawai'i Omnibus Criminal Forfeiture Act.
- HB132** - Amends pilot project for a state-initiated expungement process of arrest records concerning promoting a detrimental drug in the third degree to improve effectiveness.
- HB145** - Authorizes the Hawai'i Criminal Justice Data Center to transmit all expungement orders to the Judiciary to effectuate the purposes of Act 159, SLH 2023.
- HB277** - Establishes requirements related to vehicular pursuit by law enforcement agencies.
- HB998** - Clarifies that the omission of certain information or any error in a citation does not constitute ground for dismissal of a charge or for reversal of a conviction, if the omission or error did not prejudice the defendant.
- HB1002** - Beginning July 1, 2025, extends the term of the Oversight Coordinator for the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission.
- SB104** - Reforms solitary confinement policies in Hawai'i's jails and prisons.
- SB112** - Allows surviving immediate family members of deceased persons for whom law enforcement initiated an investigation to receive a copy of the closing report prepared by the investigating police department after a specified period of time.
- SB224** - Requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to assist inmates with obtaining civil identification cards and other identification documents within a certain time.
- SB281** - Defines and prohibits the offense of torture. Makes torture a class A felony.
- SB295** - Increases the penalties imposed on individuals convicted for violations of temporary restraining orders and orders for protection.
- SB544** - Requires courts to consider certain factors when sentencing a person convicted as an adult for an offense that the person committed when the person was a minor.
- SB694** - Prohibits minors from being held in jails, lockups, or prisons for adults, except temporarily.
- SB1231** - Updates laws relating to parentage.
- SB1319** - Requires that the Attorney General's identification system include criminal cases initiated via citations that resulted in conviction, deferred acceptance of guilty or nolo contendere plea, or conditional discharge, and that a court order identification processing in such cases.

Elections, Ethics & Campaign Finance

- HB300** - Creates two new positions in the Campaign Spending Commission for an investigator and an elections assistant, and \$2.4 million to build a new electronic filing system.
- HB134** - Requires the Chief Election Officer to provide a system for the electronic filing of nomination papers.
- HB408** - Extends the deadline to register to vote by mail from 30 to 10 days prior to a primary or general election.
- HB412** - Creates presumptions about lobbying for private clients and broadens the definition of "lobbying" to include certain communications with top government officials.
- HB413** - Clarifies that the regular or special sessions in which lobbyist contributions are prohibited are periods during which both houses of the legislature are in session.
- SB176** - Allows for ballots designated by the county clerks for inclusion to be included in the initial tabulation for purposes of initial recounts. Increases the minimum threshold required to trigger an automatic recount.
- SB1030** - Specifies that the practice of election fraud intimidation includes carrying any unconcealed firearm or dangerous instrument at or within two hundred feet of a voter service center, place of deposit, or polling place.
- SB1202** - Allows campaign funds to be used for a candidate's child care and vital household dependent care costs under certain conditions.



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House Majority Package

The 2025 House Majority Package successfully passed through the legislature with House Bills (HB) passing final reading in both chambers, adopted through companion legislation, or funded through the state budget.

Bills	Description	FY26	FY27
HB427: BIOSECURITY	Hawaii Invasive Species Council Hawaii Ant Lab Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle response effort led by UH Biosecurity program in Act 231 2024 Biosecurity positions	\$4,250,000 \$500,000 \$500,000 \$12,735,015 \$589,716	\$4,250,000 \$500,000 \$500,000 \$12,735,015 \$589,716
HB428: FARM TO FAMILIES	"Farm to Families" program	\$500,000	\$500,000
HB429: EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING	Positions for Executive Office on Early Learning	\$5,027,927	\$8,236,302
HB430: INTERNSHIPS	Establish a state internship and workforce development program	\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000
HB431: OHANA ZONES & KAUAHALE	Ohana Zones Pilot Program Kauhale Initiative Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) related to the Kauhale Initiative	\$2,525,000 \$18,575,000 \$24,400,000	\$5,855,000 \$24,325,000 \$13,000,000
HB432: RENTAL HOUSING REVOLVING FUND	Affordable housing	\$50,000,000	\$50,000,000
HB433: REENTRY SERVICE	Connect offenders with community-based reentry services	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000

Funding for our District

Capital Improvement Projects

Kawaihae North Small Boat Harbor:	Design and construction for improvements to harbor dock, break wall, and related improvements.	\$9,450,000
South Kohala District Courthouse:	Plans and design for a new South Kohala District Courthouse.	\$4,000,000

Grants-in-Aid

St. James Episcopal Church	Help fund the construction of a new community center in Waimea to host weekly meetings of AA, NA and the Community Meal.	\$200,000
Hawaii Island Humane Society	Help fund the expansion and operation of low-cost and free spay and neuter services for pets in the County of Hawaii.	\$100,000
Fire Mountains Hawaii	Help fund the construction of a Native Hawaiian Focused Federally Qualified Rural Health Clinic in Waimea.	\$200,000



Hawai'i Island delegation in the House from left to right: Rep. Kahaloa, Rep. Kusch, Rep. Lowen, Rep. Keohokapu Lee-Loy, Rep. Todd, Rep. Illagan, Rep. Kapela and Rep. Tarnas

