

Letters



Photo courtesy of Kumu Mana'olana

Hula Halau o Mana'olana members and their families who helped create the lei.

A Lei for Kamehameha

At a residence in Hala'ula, North Kohala, a group of people gathered for many hours to create this special lei made of carefully prepared laua'e fern and kamani nuts that were gathered, husked, drilled, cleaned and sanded days before.

Members of Hula Halau o Mana'olana, from keiki to tutu, worked in laulima to carefully

fold the laua'e ferns to make this ku'i style lei that was presented at the Kamehameha Statue on June 11 during the sunrise protocol.

I would like to acknowledge my students as they prepared and created this lei to respectfully honor our Mo'i, Kamehameha the Great.

Our Halau members truly appreciate the Kamehameha Day

Committee for coordinating this event, the many people preparing lei and setting up, and to everyone who participated in so many ways. We truly are thankful for the for many years we have had the privilege of carrying on this tradition that we hope to continue for a long time.

Mahalo Nui Loa,
Kumu Mana'olana

Hawai'i State House of Representatives Update

From the Desk of District 8 Representative David Tarnas

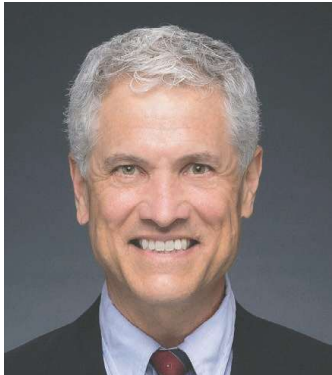


Photo courtesy of David Tarnas

Representative David Tarnas speaks for North Kohala as a member of the Hawai'i State House of Representatives.

Aloha. In today's article, I will highlight the bills passed by the legislature last session regarding housing, environmental protection, agriculture, and education,

Housing

HB431 provides \$88.6 million to help build more homeless transitional housing "kauhale" projects and 'ohana zones throughout the state and strengthens the oversight of the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (OHHS).

HB 432 provides \$100 million to the rental housing revolving fund to help build more affordable rental housing in the State.

HB420 made major reforms to the contractor repair laws to address the significant increase in class action lawsuits against housing developers that are causing increases in costs and preventing housing projects from being

completed and put on the market. The bill protects homeowners and ensures repairs are made in a timely manner.

HB735 makes it easier for homeowners to build accessory dwelling units by allowing 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, with certain exclusions.

HB736 will help identify new wastewater system and individual wastewater system technology that would be effective for Hawai'i's homeowners by establishing a three-year testing pilot program within the UH Water Resources Research Center.

HB879 improves the State's capacity to help homeowners convert their cesspools by funding a position within the Department of Health to assist with the upgrade and conversion of cesspools.

Several bills were passed to improve the historic site review process.

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 prop-

erty, an aviation artifact, or a burial site within ninety days of a request for determination.

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.

SB825 addresses issues faced by landlords and tenants by extending the period for a notice of termination of a rental agreement from five business days to ten calendar days; and requiring 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 helps to address the rising cost of home and condo insurance by expanding the powers of the Hawai'i Property Insurance Association; reactivating the Hawai'i Hurricane Relief Fund to help stabilize the property insurance market in the State; and establishing the Condominium Loan Program and the Condominium Loan Revolving Fund to provide financing to condo associations for essential repairs and deferred maintenance.

Environmental Protection

HB316 appropriates \$4 million to the Department of Land and Natural Resources to continue the Green Jobs Youth Corps Program.

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Future KMN Deadlines

It's important for the Kohala Mountain News to receive ads and news submissions by the following deadlines. Otherwise, submissions may not be accommodated.

August Deadlines

Ads and News: 8/8/25

Calendar: 8/15/25

Distribution: 8/22/25

September Deadlines

Ads and News: 9/12/25

Calendar: 9/19/25

Distribution: 9/26/25

Our purpose is to enhance and strengthen the community by fostering continuous communication and understanding among the various cultures, residents and constituents.

www.kohalamountainnews.com

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Letters to the Editor and Viewpoint articles must address issues affecting North Kohala and be accompanied by the author's name, address and telephone number. Letters and Viewpoints are subject to editing, and shorter submissions will receive preference for publication.

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HI Rep, from Page 5

SB1396 raises the Transient Accommodation Tax (TAT) and mandates the Governor to allocate additional TAT revenue for climate change mitigation and tourism projects.

Agriculture

HB427 appropriates over \$37 million to combat invasive species; renames the Department and Board of Agriculture to "Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity" and "Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity," respectively;

establishes and funds the 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 strengthens laws against agricultural theft by establishing the Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program within the Department of Law Enforcement and providing \$1.9 million for six

additional positions.

Education

HB300 provides \$13.2 million to expand the public preschool program facilities and teachers.

HB692 expands the Preschool Open Doors Program's eligibility criteria and repeals the requirement that Preschool Open Doors Program providers be accredited.

HB862 helps to address the lack of school buses in the State by authorizing the use of motorcoaches, small buses, and vans for school bus services if certain conditions are met.

SB1300 provides \$3.9 million to expand free school meal coverage to students who currently qualify for reduced-price lunch in the '25-'26 school year and expand free school meal coverage to students whose family income is not more than three hundred percent of the federal poverty level in the '26-'27 school year.

Mahalo for allowing me to continue serving as your State Representative. Please contact me anytime at (808) 586-8510 and reptarnas@capitol.hawaii.gov. Have a safe summer!

County Council Update

From the Desk of District 9 Councilmember James Hustace



Photo courtesy of James Hustace
Councilmember James Hustace represents North Kohala as part of Hawaii's County Council District 9.

Aloha Kohala!

It was wonderful to see so many of you who call Kohala home at the 2025 Kohala Reunion. This three-day celebration brought together community members from near and far. Mahalo to Kathy Matsuda, the planning committee, and the many volunteers who made this event possible. Highlights included interactive cultural displays and talk-story sessions, music and hula performances, delicious food and a zero-waste station. A special recognition of Uncle Joe Carvalho for his many decades of dedicated service to the Kohala community stood out and at Saturday evening's Bon Dance we were honored to welcome Hawaii's Lieutenant Governor Sylvia Luke.

Don't forget that the County of

Hawaii's Department of Research and Development is looking for your input with the Lāulima Community Survey, capturing the voices and sentiment of residents. Please take a moment before August 1 to complete the anonymous survey and share what is most important to you and your 'ohana. You can find the survey at www.hawaiicounty.gov/lāulima.

The District 9 office has received inquiries about the upcoming changes to agricultural property taxes. Last year, the County Council revised the agricultural tax program to address ongoing issues. I encourage you to visit www.hawaiipropertytax.com for more information about these changes. Throughout July, the University of Hawaii's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience in partnership with the County of Hawaii's held community meetings to provide clarity and guidance around the County's Agricultural Use Tax Program. There will also be a virtual meeting on Saturday, August 2 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Please contact my office if you need help navigating the application process; we are here to help.

Following my efforts on the County budget, I am now working with my colleagues on legislation to address housing challenges, public health concerns, and improve government efficiency. Some of these could become County Charter amend-

ments that you might see on the ballot next year.


The County Council has also begun its review of the General Plan. This planning document will guide growth, conservation efforts, and development across the island for the next 20-plus years. As you know, public input is essential, especially for our rural communities that often feel the greatest impact from land use changes. Special meetings will be held over the next six months as we review this document. I encourage you to participate and make your voice heard—we want the General Plan to reflect your values, priorities, and vision.

Looking ahead, I hope to see you at the Kohala Food and Music Festival on Saturday, August 2 at Kamehameha Park. This celebration of local food, music, and artistry will showcase Kohala's incredible talents and flavors. This is a wonderful opportunity to support local vendors and reconnect.

I am honored to serve as your Council Member. Please reach out if you have any questions. You are welcome to email me at james.hustace@hawaiicounty.gov or call our Hilo office at (808) 961-8564 or our Waimea office at (808) 887-6077.

Wishing you good health. Be well. Aloha!

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