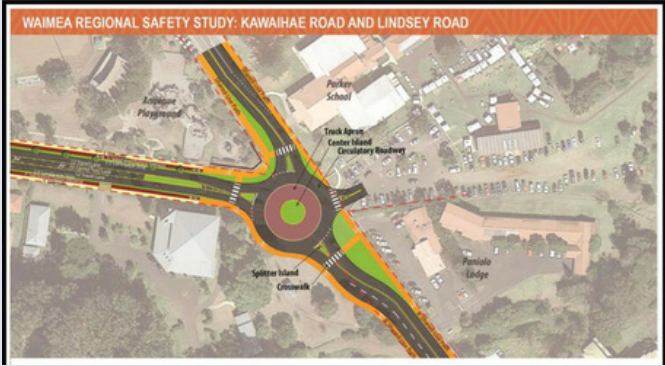




2026 State Legislative Report

HOUSE DISTRICT 8 | NORTH AND SOUTH KOHALA

During the 2026 legislative session, key district projects received funding that will help move them forward into the next phase of development.



RELEASED FUNDING IN 2026

Waikoloa Public Library

A **\$21 million** appropriation for a modern 12,000-square-foot community facility accompanied by a 3,000-square-foot Early Learning Center. The project will include community meeting and programming spaces, shelving for at least 50,000 books, and 71 on-site parking stalls.

Waimea Roadway Improvements Project

An appropriation of **\$1.4 million** for the design and construction of a roundabout at the currently unsignalized intersection of Kawaihae Road and Lindsey Road, median turning and refuge lanes, curbs and gutters, bike lanes, sidewalks, landscaped medians, and the relocation or adjustment of existing utilities along 'Ōpelo Road to Māmalahoa Highway, Māmalahoa Highway, and Kaomola to Lindsey Roads.

Akoni Pule Highway

The Department of Transportation has planned **\$12 million** in improvements to rehabilitate the pavement on Akoni Pule Highway from mile marker 15 to Hawi Road.

Kawaihae North Small Boat Harbor

An appropriation of **\$9.45 million** for design and construction of improvements to the harbor dock, break wall, and related improvements.



Representative Tarnas presenting a certificate to the Hawai'i Youth Symphony after their performance at Kahilu Theatre.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FUNDING

Pololū Trailhead

An appropriation of **\$1 million** to improve the parcel to accommodate parking, build and install interpretive panels, and provide bathrooms and safe pedestrian access to the trailhead.

Waimea Emergency Response and Community Center

A **\$5 million** appropriation to be matched by **\$5 million** in county funds and **\$5 million** in private funds for plans, design, and construction of a new community center and emergency shelter at Spencer Kalani Schutte Park.

South Kohala Courthouse

\$20 million in appropriations were included in the Judiciary budget (HB2095) to build a new South Kohala Courthouse. The updated facility will be equipped to address sustainability and energy-efficiency issues, the significant concerns raised about the current courthouse's safety, temperature, noise levels, and overall adequacy.

Waimea Irrigation System Improvements

An appropriation of **\$1.15 million** for construction of improvements to the Waimea Irrigation System.

Kohala Hospital

An appropriation of **\$2.5 million** to plan, design, construct, and procure equipment for hazard mitigation and infrastructure resilience at the Kohala Hospital.

GRANT-IN-AID FOR DISTRICT 8

Hawaiian Cattlemen's Council

\$58,300 to support "educational exchange" through on-the-ground learning, the Hawaii State Law Enforcement Executive Association Conference and Hawaii Cattleman Council Convention.

Ho'ola

\$325,000 for plans & design to improve the former Coast Guard facility at 'Upolu point to support the activities of Hawaiian Home Lands communities in North Kohala and surrounding regions.

Kahilu Theatre Foundation

\$50,000 to upgrade key equipment in the theatre facility to improve performance quality, safety, and community access.

The Queen's Clinically Integrated Physician Network

\$350,000 to support the continued equitable delivery of healthcare services, particularly for independent primary care providers and neighbor island communities, chronic disease management, behavioral health, and social support services for high-risk and medically complex patients.



Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

This report highlights bills relating to the Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee that are currently on their way to becoming law.

JUDICIARY SUPPORT

HB2095 - Judiciary Budget

- **Total Operating Budget:** \$218,767,071
- **Capital Improvement Projects:** \$45,400,000

HB1667 - Lowers the age to obtain a state civil identification card without a signature from a parent or guardian from eighteen years old to sixteen years old.

HB1962 - Establishes an exemption from mediation in parentage proceedings where there are allegations of domestic abuse.

HB2094 - Increases the amount each juror or prospective juror is paid for each day of actual attendance at court.

HB2096 - Clarifies and expands procedures for aggravated circumstances determinations in Child Protective Act proceedings.

SB2727 - Lengthens the statute of limitations to file a complaint of discrimination with the Hawaii Civil Rights Commission to one year.

JUDICIARY ENFORCEMENT



HB2137 - Prohibits certain harmful uses of realistic digital imitations generated by artificial intelligence.

HB389 - Clarifies the applicable felony offenses for using an uncrewed aircraft in the furtherance of the commission of a felony.

SB2568 - Elevates the offense of harassment to a misdemeanor when committed against a public servant because of or during their performance of official duties.

SB2135 - Establishes the nonconsensual disclosure of intimate or private images as a criminal offense. Amends the criteria for an extended term of imprisonment to include defendants whose act of attempting to commit or committing the offense of nonconsensual disclosure of intimate or private images against a minor or vulnerable adult was the proximate cause of the victim's death.

SB2108 - Amends the factors a family court is required to consider in deciding whether the family court may waive jurisdiction over a minor or adult held for criminal proceedings for acts committed during the person's minority and other requirements.

SB3076 - Clarifies that untaxed tobacco products are subject to forfeiture as contraband, without regard to the procedures set forth in Hawaii's asset forfeiture law in the same manner as untaxed cigarettes. Confirms the authority of the Department of Taxation and the Department of the Attorney General to inspect and seize tobacco products.

HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

SB903 - Transfer \$55 million from the Carry-Forward Trust Holding Account to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to be expended solely for Native Hawaiian programs and services with critical, short-term funding needs.

HB2104 - Extends the time to fill vacancies that occur during an Island Burial Council member's term.

HB2309 - Amends the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, to include children of a sibling as qualifying relatives of lessees for the purposes of lease transfer and lease successorship.

HB2592 - Clarifies the powers of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority so that it may carry out its intended duties regarding land use on Mauna Kea.

HCR122 - Recognizes the importance of preserving the unique language structure of 'Ōlelo Ni'ihau and the resilience of 'Ōlelo Ni'ihau speakers who have managed to continue their unique Hawaiian dialect.

IMMIGRATION

HB1548 - Limits the maximum term of imprisonment for misdemeanors that are not crimes of violence, or for offenses that are not crimes of violence punishable by up to or not exceeding one year, to three hundred sixty-four days.

HB1838 - Establishes uniform statewide requirements for policies and processes for the issuance of U or T visa certifications for noncitizen victims of crime that are consistent with federal laws and regulations governing U and T visas.

HB1839 - Requires state and county law enforcement agencies to notify an individual in the custody of a state or county law enforcement agency of their rights before any interview with federal immigration authorities pertaining to certain matters regarding civil immigration violations can commence.

SB2057 - Prohibits any law enforcement agency or law enforcement official from entering into an agreement under federal law that permits state or county agencies to engage in immigration enforcement.

ELECTIONS & ETHICS

SB2471 - Reaffirms that artificial persons created under state law possess only those powers that are necessary or convenient to carry out lawful purposes, and that those powers do not include the power to spend money or contribute anything of value to influence elections or ballot measures.

SB2239 - Requires a person who applies for an identification card or driver's license to be automatically registered to vote unless the person affirmatively declines, subject to certain conditions.

HB2050 - Increases the expenditure limit and the amount of partial public campaign financing available for all elective offices. Adjusts the minimum amount of qualifying contributions certain candidates must receive to participate in the program.





House Majority Priority Bills

This report highlights bills prioritized by the House Majority that are now on their way to becoming law.

EDUCATION

HB1888 - Requires the Department of Education and state public charter schools to take certain steps to better address the harassment of educational workers, including sports officials.

SB3123 - Clarifies that free tuition at private educational institutions or school-conditioned enrollment at private educational institutions where no tuition or other monetary consideration is required or paid by the recipient are to be considered conditional gifts that support educational advancements rather than contractual obligations unless the parties agree otherwise in writing.

TRANSPORTATION

HB469 - Requires the Disability and Communication Access Board to issue a disability travel placard to an applicant who has a valid removeable windshield placard or disabled paid parking exemption permit but does not have a valid special license plate, and provides proof of travel.

HB2021 - Establishes safe riding behaviors for electric bicycles. Prohibits the operation of high-speed electric devices in certain locations. Establishes labeling and signage requirements for electric bicycles.

HB2023 - Requires the Department of Transportation to administer a statewide program for certification of active intelligent speed assistance systems and select a vendor for the installation and maintenance of systems.

HB1696 - Lowers the age of who may drive commercially within the State from nineteen to eighteen.

LAND USE & AGRICULTURE

HB1737 - Clarifies the allowable uses within agricultural districts with respect to farm dwellings and farm employee housing.

HB2152 - Clarifies liability and increases penalties and enforcement mechanisms for dog attacks on livestock occurring on land or premises within the agricultural district.

HB1823 - Applies a definition of "development" to special management areas within counties with a population between one hundred fifty thousand and two hundred thousand to exempt from special management area use permit requirements.

HB1728 - Requires the counties to allow for the installation and operation of rainwater catchment systems for potable and nonpotable uses on all properties.

HOUSING

HB1741 - Deems a county inclusionary mandate as a form of development exaction and treats the mandate as a housing affordability impact fee.

SB3219 - Proposes constitutional amendments to expressly provide that the Legislature may authorize political subdivisions, such as the counties, to issue resilient infrastructure for shelter and equity bonds for specified public works, public improvements, or other actions necessary for housing and community development.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

HB1875 - Strengthens protections for lawful reproductive and gender-affirming health care by protecting patients and health care providers from out-of-state legal actions related to care that is legal in Hawai'i.

HB1961 - Prohibits intentionally interfering with access to health care facilities through obstruction, intimidation, or harassment.

HB1573 - Prohibits the sale of electronic smoking products unless they are approved for sale by the federal government.

SB1432 - Strengthens protections for lawful reproductive and gender-affirming health care by protecting patients and health care providers from out-of-state legal actions related to care that is legal in Hawai'i.

PUBLIC SAFETY & CRIMINAL JUSTICE

HB1682 - Establishes civil remedies for the unauthorized disclosure of intimate images.

HB2279 - Amends the expungement orders law to reflect that a person who is arrested for or charged with a crime but convicted of a violation is eligible for an expungement of their arrest record for that incident.

HB2289 - Repeals the statutory expenditure ceiling on the Automated Victim Information and Notification System Special Fund to address rising program costs and growing victim service demands.

HB1960 - Requires the Department of the Attorney General to develop a Human Trafficking Awareness Training Program, or approve externally developed programs, to educate and train workers in the transient accommodations sector.

SB2519 - Establishes new deadlines for the completion of Law Enforcement Standards Board certification responsibilities.

COMMERCE & CONSUMER PROTECTION

HB1642 - Beginning 10/1/2026, prohibits the ownership, operation, or management of a digital financial asset transaction kiosk that accepts United States currency from a customer in exchange for a digital financial asset.

HB1753 - Requires certain social media platforms to provide an accessible mechanism for users to delete their accounts on the platform and permanently erase all personal information and sensitive personal information associated with deleted accounts.

SB3001 - Requires operators of AI companions in the State to issue certain disclosures to users. Requires operators to develop certain protocols to respond to user prompts regarding suicidal ideation or self-harm.



Representative Tarnas with fellow Conference Committee members.



From the Office of Representative

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From the Office of your State Representative

David A. Tarnas

Aloha,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your 'ohana well. As we conclude the 2026 Legislative Session, I would like to share several accomplishments from this year, including important measures and capital improvement projects that are now awaiting the Governor's signature.

If you have any questions, concerns, or feedback, please feel free to contact me at (808) 586-8510 or via email at reptarnas@capitol.hawaii.gov



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Mahalo,

David

