



Senator Michelle Kidani

District 17- Mililani/ Mililani Mauka/ Waipi'o/ Waipi'o Gentry

Committees: Vice Chair- Education and Housing
Ways and Means, Public Safety and Military Affairs, Tourism

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October 2009

Aloha,

As the Vice Chair of the Senate Committee on Education and Housing, I have been especially concerned regarding the state furloughs which would close schools on 17 Fridays, reducing Hawaii's school year to 163 days.

Following the announcement of the furlough plan, the Senate held an informational briefing to ask questions of the BOE, the DOE and HSTA. We have learned that the DOE alone would save about \$3.5 million per furlough day. In other words, the furloughs are a way to help the DOE address a substantial budget shortfall in a way that also works for the teachers.

Right now, the legislature's responsibility is to deal with the situation as we find it: not enough money to fully fund our educational system, and a negotiated contract between the state, the DOE, and Hawaii's teachers. I believe we have a duty to respect the terms of the contract that the parties negotiated. Consequently, if we want to change the situation, we will have to find more money to fund education.

Every proposed solution—drawing from special funds, implementing a targeted tax, reducing costs in other areas—has its advocates. However, I think we all realize that rushing into action while running in ten different directions will not solve the problem. We, along with the community, need to measure and debate our options. My colleagues and I are doing just that: reviewing what is on the table, discussing how to proceed, and listening to everyone—from experts to people in the community with deep concerns—while we plan our next action.

For right now, then, our goal is to help reduce the impact of furloughs while seeking a permanent, effective solution. We know that the answer will be neither simple nor painless. However, we also know that an answer is vital to ensuring the long-term success of our children. I am committed to this task and the effort required to fulfill my duty.

Me ke Aloha Pumehana,

MILILANI HIGH SCHOOL HOMECOMING



Senator Kidani showed her Trojan Pride at the Mililani High School Homecoming Parade on October 2.

HAWAII METH PROJECT AT THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH DAY CELEBRATION



Senator Kidani participated at Children and Youth day by advocating against first time Meth use among teenagers and young adults with the Hawaii Meth Project. She is pictured above with several Hawaii Meth Project volunteers on October 3.

SCHOOL VISITS

Senator Kidani joined Board of Education members Carol Mon Lee and Janis Akuna during a two-day walk-through of Mililani Complex schools from September 22-23.



They visited Mililani Waena, Mililani Middle School and Mililani High School. **ABOVE:** With Complex Area Superintendent Patricia Park, Mililani Middle School Principal Valerie Kardash and staff. **BELOW:** The walk-through tour visiting with Mililani High School Principal John D. Brummel.



COLLEGE OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM (COP)

The College Opportunities Program (COP) is an entry-level freshman program that provides a summer and first-year residential college experience. COP recruits individuals who may not meet the requirements for regular UH Manoa admission, are academically underprepared, economically disadvantaged, non-traditional, or in need of a structured college entry.

For more information, Mililani H.S. will have a presentation on October 26, 2009, 9-10 a.m., or visit <http://www.hawaii.edu/cop/>.

MAKING STRIDES AGAINST BREAST CANCER



Senator Kidani and her staff the inaugural Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk on October 4. The Hawaii State Senate raised over \$2,840.00 to go towards efforts to fight breast cancer.

SAFE HALLOWEEN TIPS

- S** Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.
- A** Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.
- F** Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you.
- E** Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them. Limit the amount of treats you eat.



- H** Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see and others see you.
- A** Always test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent skin and eye irritation.
- L** Look both ways before crossing the street. Use established crosswalks wherever possible.
- L** Lower your risk for serious eye injury by not wearing decorative contact lenses.
- O** Only walk on sidewalks or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.
- W** Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.
- E** Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats unless you know the cook well.
- E** Enter homes only if you're with a trusted adult. Otherwise, stay outside.
- N** Never walk near lit candles or luminaries. Be sure to wear flame-resistant costumes.

From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website