

SENATOR
DONNA
MERCADO
KIM

PROUDLY SERVING
DISTRICT 14

KAPALAMA • 'ALEWA • KALIHI VALLEY • FT. SHAFTER • RED HILL • MOANALUA GARDENS & VALLEY
PORTIONS OF HALAWA & 'AIEA



HAPPY NEW YEAR FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS!

The year we leave behind was challenging and difficult.

With a major loss of revenue from tourism and the closing of businesses, the Senate moved quickly to set up a Special Committee on COVID 19, and to pass the CARES Act funding – which provided direct assistance through unemployment insurance claims, rental housing and food assistance, small business grants, child care subsidies and more - to the most affected families. We cared about keeping each other safe by following public health protocols - like wearing a face mask in public, maintaining social distancing, and constantly washing our hands. And we implemented measures to keep our borders safe by requiring travel quarantine and COVID testing.

This sense of community and togetherness is why Hawaii continues to be one of the least affected by the pandemic in real cases. As a member of the Legislature's COVID 19 special committee, we met regularly to review policies and implementation by the Governor and his team. And we heard from you, our constituents, regarding your problems.

The first few months of 2021 will continue to be difficult, but we are hopeful that the vaccine will give us a renewed sense of hope. We know it will take time for our economy to bounce back so we need to prioritize critical services with the limited budget available.

As your representative, I would like to thank you once again for your vote of confidence. I will continue to represent your concerns and protect the interests of our district. My staff and I will update you on matters relevant to our community. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the State Capitol will continue to be closed for the session and there will be no festivities or access to our office on Opening Day. Nonetheless, we will continue to diligently work to address the needs of our community and look forward to welcoming you back to the Capitol at a future date.

As usual, I hope you will participate in the survey when you receive my Spring Community Bulletin, by next month. This provides me with valuable feedback on what your interests are. For any additional comments and/or concerns, you can always contact the office at 587-7200.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Donna', with a long, sweeping underline.

Senator Kim's Committee Assignments in the Thirty-First Legislature

Chair- Higher Education Committee

This Committee has jurisdiction over programs relating to the University of Hawaii, the community college system, private higher education bond financing, and other higher education related matters.

Vice Chair- Education Committee

Member- Judiciary Committee

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) for District

I am pleased to report that the following CIP's have been approved for release:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Kapalama Elementary School- Building 1 | \$ 75,000 |
| 2. Fern Elementary School- walkway | \$378,622 |
| 3. Kaewai Elementary School- fire alarm upgrade | \$364,695 |
| 4. Aiea Intermediate School- repairs and maintenance | \$419,000 |

COVID-19 UPDATE

The COVID-19 vaccine marks the beginning of our path to recovery. So far, since the arrival of the first COVID-19 vaccines a few weeks ago, the deployment has been moving relatively smoothly through its top tier, the health care providers and the long term care residents who are most at risk. In all, officials said, about a third of the approximately 83,000 doses have been administered. The initial group of residents prioritized to receive the vaccine numbered around 50,000, officials said. What's coming next—the prioritized elders age 75 and older, as well as selected front-line workers—total nearly 160,000. Beyond that, those age 65 and up, as well as other at risk workers and those with chronic diseases, add up to about 400,000—and the rollout to the rest of the population will follow, projected to be sometime in the summer.

Much of the responsibility for the ultimate success of the vaccinations rests with the public. Once they've signed up for an appointment, they must make sure they keep it—and remain engaged until the second shot each vaccine requires, a booster, is delivered. Starting the week of January 18th, kupuna 75 and older will be able to sign up for a vaccination appointment online. The portal to do so will be announced as well.

There is a new information resource for people with **COVID-19 VACCINATION QUESTIONS**. The public can **CALL 808-586-8332** Monday through Friday 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM. But callers are told they may have a long wait and are suggested to consult a frequently asked questions page at tinyurl.com/hawaiiavax or the DOH at hawaiiicovid19.com.

Meet the Staff

L-R: Nancy Bernal– Legislative Aide/Committee Clerk
Frances Nakamura– Session Office Manager
Cecile Yasay– Legislative Aide/Community Liaison
Annika Nozaki– UH Intern
Not in photo: Lisa Vargas– office manager
Greg Hirata– Legislative Aide



How to Participate in the 2021-2022 Legislative Process

Remote Testimony Only. Testifiers may participate in committee hearings remotely by registering online in advance; no in-person testimony will be allowed. You can submit written testimonies to our office at senkim@capitol.hawaii.gov

Zoom. We will be using Zoom for our online meeting platform. Only pre-registered remote testifiers will be allowed to join the Zoom meeting. All others should be directed to the YouTube live stream to follow along.

Live Stream on YouTube. All Senate standing committee hearings will be live streamed on YouTube. This is a significant improvement in public access over previous years when only selected hearings were broadcast on cable television and streamed over the Internet. In addition to our live streams, we will continue working with public access television providers on all islands to broadcast.

2021 Spring Community Bulletin

Please look out for my spring community bulletin in the mail in the next few weeks. In it you will find my *Community Survey*. If you need a copy, feel free to contact my office and we will gladly send you one.



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