



Third Special Session Report (The week ending October 26, 2001)



Senator J. Kalani English
Senate District 5
Wailuku-Upcountry-Kahului

We are in our Third Special Session convened to seek economic relief after the September 11th attacks. A total of seventeen bills were put forward in the Senate and the House, and the bill I sponsored, SB15, requests that \$1,500,000 be appropriated to establish an Emergency Environmental Workforce to deal with the dengue outbreak and other environmental hazards. SB15 proposes workable solutions to our current health, environmental, and employment issues.

The 15 bills that are currently working their way through the legislature represent a collective effort towards

shoring-up Hawaii's civil society during this time of economic crisis. While I have reservations on some of these proposals, I am nonetheless supporting all of them.

In the end, most of these bills have a shelf life of only a few months. I am cautious on bill 17, which would allow the Governor to declare an economic emergency. However, because of some strict language on checks and balances, and a reverter clause (which returns everything to the way it was before the declaration of economic emergency), I can support it. Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures.

I have given a brief description of the bills put forward this Third Special Session on the following page.

I'm pleased to announce my new website at:

<http://www.kalanienglish.com/>

Check it out for the latest news articles, my legislative reports, and a direct link to the Senate website.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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The following is a summary of the bills that have passed second reading this Third Special Session:

SB1, *Relating to social welfare:* Requests that \$1,000,000 be allocated for emergency food supplies and another \$1,000,000 for housing for those left homeless as a result of the economic downturn following the September 11th attacks.

SB2, *Relating to temporary health insurance for unemployed persons:*

Appropriates \$2,000,000 to create temporary health insurance for those who lost their jobs after the September 11th attacks.

SB3, *Relating to unemployment:*

Creates a temporary program providing additional benefits to unemployed workers by extending their benefits for another 13 weeks, for a total of 26 weeks of unemployment benefits.

SB5, *Relating to filing thresholds for certain taxes:*

Relieving certain taxpayers by increasing the filing thresholds for withholding, general excise/use, transient accommodations, and rental motor vehicle and tour vehicle surcharge tax returns.

SB6, *Relating to taxation of transportation service providers:*

Provides relief to transportation service providers by allowing them to pay the general excise tax instead of the public service company tax.

SB8, *Relating to income tax credits:*

Proposes to revitalize the construction industry by providing a residential construction and remodeling tax credit of 4% of the costs incurred up to \$250,000, and providing a 10% hotel construction and remodeling tax credit.

SB9, *Making an appropriation for the immediate implementation of an integrated marketing plan to market and promote the State of Hawaii as a visitor destination:*

Appropriates \$10,000,000 for marketing tourism.

SB10, *Making an appropriation for marketing and promoting the safety of and increased security at state airports:*

Appropriates \$5,000,000 for increased security at state airports.

SB11, *Relating to transportation:*

Strengthens security at state airports, state harbors, and state highways and for other improvements at state airports.

SB12, *Relating to the emergency budget and reserve fund:*

Appropriates \$33,270,403 from the Hawaii tobacco settlement special fund to the emergency budget and reserve fund.

SB13, *Relating to state finances:*

Authorizes the University of Hawaii Board of Regents to issue \$150,000,000 in revenue bonds, and to appropriate \$150,000,000 in private donations and other university moneys, for the construction of a health and wellness center, including a new medical school facility.

SB14, *Relating to capitol improvement projects:*

Authorizes the issuance of an additional \$100,000,000 in general obligation bonds to finance the construction of the University of Hawaii, West Oahu, and the improvement of existing public school and university facilities.

SB15, *Relating to the emergency environmental workforce:*

Appropriates \$1,500,000 to create an emergency environmental workforce. Serving as 3-month contract employees, they will be deployed to all island mayors who certify a need for environmental clearance and eradication services to help deal with the dengue fever outbreak and other environmental hazards.

SB16, *Relating to procurement:*

Temporarily increases the small purchase procurement exception dollar ceiling in order to facilitate quicker administration of public contracts during the current economic crisis.

SB17, *Relating to economic emergency:*

Temporarily grants certain powers to the Governor to provide immediate relief to those who have suffered due to the far-reaching impacts of the terrorist attacks of September 11th by assisting affected businesses to continue services, minimizing employee layoffs, and preventing further endangerment to the State's fragile economy. On June 30, 2002, all statutes, rules, or orders suspended and all contract obligations that were waived, suspended, deferred, or modified by the Governor are to be reinstated in the form that existed on the day before the effective date of the measure.