



Session 2017...

We are mid-way through the first year of the Twenty-Ninth Legislative Session — Senate bills are crossing over and committee hearings are being scheduled for House bills. By the time you receive this we should be nearing conference - an exciting and busy time as all the bills that are still alive are hammered out for final wording or deferred.

It has been a balancing act as Chair of Transportation and Energy, to weigh the needs of my committee and the needs of my constituency. I am also a member of the Water and Land and the Ways and Means Committees. Our staff has been busy managing our workload and are pictured on the back page. I appreciate all the calls to our office and hope we have been able to serve you knowledgeably and respectfully.

The intent of this newsletter is to give you an idea of my priorities this session, the Capital Improvement Programs (CIP's) that we are requesting for our district, and a glimpse of some of the people with whom we have had the honor to work. Please continue to participate in the legislative process by calling our office with your concerns or comments and submitting testimony on bills about which you feel strongly.



Serving Hawaii's Senate District 4

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Clockwise from left: Floor presentation for Mele Spencer (Hilo), Zonta International, District 9 Governor; Attending the Pu'u'alala Village (Pepeekeo) Blessing; Senator at NELHA for late 2016 road ground-breaking, and conferring with Dept. of Transportation officials on Opening Day.



2017 CIP Requests for Senate District 4

Kohala High School



Kohala High School, established in 1936, is in desperate need of a new gymnasium. Termite damage to the roof and the water damage to an exterior wall, coupled with rain water leaking in through windows, the gym is a risk for student athletes. Maintenance staff cannot even replace ceiling light bulbs due to the lack of structural integrity. The school has to schedule all games during the day! We have asked for CIP funds to support the planning and design phase for a new gym.

Livestock Harvest Facility



The cattle industry currently has to ship 75-80% of their cattle to the West Coast for finishing and processing, while only 6% of the beef available in Hawaii's stores is locally grown. Processing beef in-state would be more sustainable and cost-effective. This project provides funding to develop a set of architectural plans for a scalable and replicable plant that can be adapted to any specific parcel for the purpose of building a livestock processing plant. The plan will also incorporate new technologies to enhance energy and waste management, food safety and animal welfare.

Honokaa High and Intermediate School



Honokaa High and Intermediate School (HHIS) was founded in 1889, and is located directly across the street from the Elementary School. Besides the community of Honokaa, HHIS serves students from as far as Kawaihae, some 20 miles away. Our CIP request is to provide planning, design and construction for a covered walkway that will connect smaller walkway sections. This project will improve cross-campus mobility while improving sidewalk ADA ramps and access and help HHIS reach their goal of providing a healthy and safe environment for students and teachers.

2017 Bills of Interest

The Twenty-Ninth Legislature

SB655 SD2 Media Access

Allows the news media, under certain conditions, to access areas that are closed pursuant to emergency management powers of the governor and mayor. Limits the liability of the State and counties. Specifies that the State, counties, and emergency management authorities are not responsible for providing logistical support to media accessing emergency areas.

SB658 SD2 Airport Corporation

Creates an Airport Corporation within the Department of Transportation on July 1, 2018 that will oversee all state airport operations, maintenance, and regulations. Currently airports are under the jurisdiction of several departments (DOT Airport Division, HTA, DOH, BLNR, and Department of Budget and Finance). The governing board of the Airport Corporation will consist of 9 members appointed by the governor, with at least one member from each county.

SB665 SD2 Renewable Energy Storage

Expands the current renewable energy technology systems tax credit to include energy storage, and gradually ramps down the tax credit at the same time. Applies to taxable years beginning after 12/31/2017. Sunsets tax credit 12/31/2035.

SB1129 SD2 Aid in Dying

Establishes a medical aid in dying act that requires a regulatory process under which an adult resident of the State with a medically-confirmed terminal disease may obtain a prescription for medication to be self-administered to end the patient's life.

SB 1183 SD2 Rail; GET Surcharge

Returns the 10% "skim" to the City and County of Honolulu for the remaining years until the county surcharge expires in 2027 (10% of revenues from the county surcharge on state tax are withheld to reimburse the State for administrative costs). If the mayor of the City and County of Honolulu does not enact an ordinance to pay for the rail with county funds before December 31, 2017, this bill will not take effect (the skim will not be returned).

SB1290 SD2 Transient Accommodations Tax

Repeals the amount of the transient accommodations tax (TAT) revenues that goes towards the statewide tourism special fund. Increases the allocation to the counties from \$93 million to \$108 million for fiscal years beginning after 6/30/2017.



Anekona Ouli Kanehoa (Kawaihae Road) Volunteer Fire Department Groundbreaking and Blessing



Waimea Middle School STEM Building Site Visit



Senator Inouye was on hand to welcome the Inaugural Hawaiian Airlines flight from Haneda, Japan to Kona on December 21st. While this is the first of many new international flights planned for Kona, also planned is the building of a new Federal Inspection Service facility to streamline Customs processing for our visitors.



Henk Rogers with Senator Inouye after being awarded a Senate certificate.

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Greeting well wishers on Opening Day.



Senator Inouye's 2017 Office Staff—Left to right: Julius Fischer, committee clerk; Alana Folen, assistant committee clerk; Jennifer Belon and Sara Perry, legislative aides; Wesley Smith, UH Manoa intern and Angela Thomas, office manager.



With Paulius Museikis, student intern for a day. From Lithuania, Paulius is a participant in the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) program and a student at Parker School.



Senator confers with Senators Dela Cruz and English in a Transportation and Energy committee hearing.