



Hawaii State Senator Bennette E. Misalucha

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Report to the 'Aiea Neighborhood Board No. 20 July 2021

Dear Neighbor,

The Legislature convened for special session last week to override Governor David Ige's veto of 26 bills, one of which was HB 862 relating to State Government. The measure which calls attention to the Hawaii Tourism Authority and its management of a \$79 Million annual budget and marketing efforts amidst a pandemic has been a great concern of constituents. As Vice Chair of Energy, Economic Development and Tourism, I delivered my remarks to senate colleagues in support of HB 862 as tourism is the major economic driver of our state, but after much consideration there were enough votes (17-8) to override Governor's veto of the bill. See my remarks in the newsletter. Also, I am pleased to report that SB 1421 that I introduced was signed into law. The act is designed to create a dual use task force to explore how dual use technology can promote economic recovery and diversify the State's economy.

I hope you will find the rest of our monthly report resourceful. As always, please let me know if there are any issues you see facing our community that I can help to address. Mahalo for the opportunity to serve you.

Very Truly Yours,

Senator Bennette E. Misalucha
Senate District 16

Calendar of Events

July 2021

- 4 July 4th Holiday
- 7 Legislative Special Session
- 10 2nd Annual 'Aiea Complex School Supply Drive, 8:00am - noon
- 12 'Aiea Neighborhood Board Meeting, 7:00pm
- 19 'Aiea Community Association Meeting, 7:00 pm

August 2021

- 16 'Aiea Community Association Meeting, 7:00 pm
- 20 Hawaii Statehood Holiday

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CAPITOL UPDATES

Senator Misalucha Remarks on HB 862 at Special Session

Senate President, Colleagues, I speak in strong support of HB 862.

What is NOT debatable is this: we all love this island state we call home, and we would like to continue to share its grandeur and beauty with the rest of the world...but it needs to be done in appropriate ways, using effective tools, and ensuring that the funds dedicated towards its purposes are spent wisely and effectively.

In my experience as Vice Chair of Energy, Economic Development and Tourism, I saw a sincere acknowledgement from my colleagues of the importance of tourism as a major economic driver for our state, and as such we are mindful that the industry needs to continue to be supported.


With this override, I'd like to cite the main reasons why I voted for the bill in the first place, and now will vote to seek for an override of the veto.

1. The transparency and effectiveness of the Hawaii Tourism Authority in handling the issues related to the pandemic. I was privy to meetings where data was not provided, despite repeated requests. I found that management decisions were slow amidst the crisis, and may have led to unnecessary waste of government resources.
2. Because we are all in this crisis together, I support the notion that special funds should not be held sacred for just one industry alone. As such, the Ways and Means Committee made a concerted effort to sweep all these dedicated funds into the general fund. This includes the TAT. This would provide the Legislature the ability to manage the coffers and ensure parity in the distribution of required resources.
3. Every year, every state agency is required to validate its budget, and to present its plans, and along with it, its financial objectives to support these plans. It is part of the checks and balance in state government. Since its inception, HTA has been exempted from this scrutiny. However, based on its past performance the past few years, HTA will need to convince the Legislature that it is deserving of this autonomy. It will require HTA to be more forthcoming with its strategic plans and force greater communication between HTA and the Legislature.
4. Much has been said about the reduced funding for HTA. From \$79 million, it is now at \$60 million. The Legislature is not micromanaging how those funds will be spent. However, considering the fact that most residents are now less supportive of tourism, it may be prudent for HTA to focus its attention on resource management rather than just marketing to tourists. This means funding to more community based non-profit groups, including VASH.

At the end of the day, we would like to support HTA and be their partners towards a good tourism platform. This can be done with greater transparency and accountability. I urge my colleagues to vote for an override of the veto.

CAPITOL UPDATES

Legislative Special Session



VETO OVERRIDE SESSION OVERVIEW

VETO OVERRIDE MEASURES

- HB53: Relating To State Bonds
- HB862: Relating To State Government
- SB263: Relating To Economic Development
- SB404: Relating To Electioneering Communication
- SB811: Relating to the Department of Education
- SB1387: Relating To Microchip Identification

AMENDED MEASURES

- HB54: Relating To State Budget
- HB1299: Relating To Non-General Funds
- SB589: Relating To The University of Hawai'i

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In the special session, legislators convene to override certain bills vetoes by Governor Ige. In addition, we also amended some measures that had legal or minor issues. You may be able to view all the current bills signed and vetoed at <https://governor.hawaii.gov/2021-bills/>.

Lastly, I want to share that I have been appointed to serve on the Senate Ways & Means Committee. Last month, committee members and I went on a three-day site visit to Hawaii Island to learn about different facilities and programs and meet with county legislators. Later this month, there will be a scheduled site visit to Kauai.



Sen. Shimabukuro and Sen. Wakai flanked Sen. Misalucha at Ka'u High School where a pilot program on a new integrated approach to learning is being implemented.

COMMUNITY UPDATES

'Aiea Complex School Supply Drive Fundraiser

The community turned out to donate school supplies and monies at the 'Aiea Complex School Supply Drive in honor of the late Senator Breene Harimoto on July 10, 2021. The items will benefit students in seven public schools in the 'Aiea community. Mahalo to Nancy Hsu and her team of volunteers organizing this event.



Front row: Cheryl Harimoto and Sen. Misaalucha
Back row L - R: Naomi Tully Ungacta, Nancy Hsu, Councilman Brandon Elefante, Wayne Suzuki, Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, and Sen. Donna Mercado Kim



Chase Urasaki who interns at The Office of Senator Misaalucha was busy sorting and boxing school supplies all day today with other volunteers.

4 Keiki Program



In partnership with the [Kaukai 4 Keiki](#) program, there will be a food distribution happening every Friday this month from 12:00 - 2:00pm at the Aiea Hongwanji Mission. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Claire at Claire2164@gmail.com no later than the Wednesday prior to the Friday distribution you would like to help with. Volunteers are asked to arrive by 11:30am. The final distribution at this location is Friday, July 30, 2021.

COMMUNITY UPDATES

New Restrictions for Individuals with Disability Parking Permits



A gentle reminder for our individuals especially Hawaii's kupuna who have been issued disability parking placards. Effective July 1, 2021, the temporary (red) placards, long-term (blue) placards, and special license plates no longer allow a permittee to park in a metered parking space without payment of the parking meter fee. Those disability parking permits will still allow a permittee to park in reserved accessible parking spaces.

Permittees who have a valid driver's license and a physical disability that prevents them from reaching or operating a parking meter or unattended pay station are now eligible to apply for a DPPEP. The DPPEP allows the permittee to park in a space where payment is made (1) a parking meter without payment of the fee for the first 2.5 hours or the maximum time the meter allows, whichever is longer; or (2) an unattended pay station for 2.5 hours. The DPPEP may also be used to park in a reserved accessible parking space.

A physician or Advanced Practice Registered Nurse must complete and sign page 2 of the application form, certifying that the applicant qualifies for the DPPEP. For more information or to retrieve a copy of the application form, please visit: <https://health.hawaii.gov/dcab/disabled-paid-parking-exemption-permit/>.

COVID-19 Update

Starting Monday, July 12, 2021, the Hawaii Pacific Health Pier 2 Vaccination Center will have new hours of operation:

*Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8am to noon
Tuesday and Thursday from noon to 4pm
Saturday from 8am to 4pm*

Walk-ins are welcome, or schedule an appointment at <https://www.hawaiipacifichealth.org/>

