



# Senator Joy San Buenaventura

## Senate District 2, Puna

Chair, Senate Committee on Health & Human Services ● Vice Chair, Committee on Hawaiian Affairs  
● Committee on Government Affairs ● Committee on the Judiciary

  @sensenbuenaventura

November 2025 E-Newsletter

## NOVEMBER 2025 LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Aloha:

Thank you to everyone who came out to participate in my October 26<sup>th</sup> townhall meeting at the Pahoehoe Neighborhood Facility. For this meeting, I brought in Hawaii Department of Transportation Deputy Director Robin Shishido to provide updates on the status of highway 130 in our district and answer general questions about highway improvement projects in Puna. The public had concerns of the use of herbicides for maintenance, general maintenance issues, and their request for more speed tables.

During the interim, I was invited to attend seminars/conferences focusing on issues that affect our district and legislative subjects that will likely be of special interest during the upcoming session. The most important of these events was the National Conference of State Legislature's Health Policy Seminar and National Meeting of State Health & Human Services Committee Chairs in Denver, CO. These meetings give Health & Human Services chairs the opportunity to learn from experts and discuss policy with chairs from other states. While the travel can be exhausting, I am grateful for the opportunity to hear new perspectives on the challenges familiar to our district and learn about recent developments relating to important HHS topics such as Medicaid, Workforce Development, Child Welfare, Substance Abuse Treatment, Maternal Health, and Family Tax Credits. I intend to address the most troublesome concerns caused by the "One Big Beautiful Bill" (HR-1) such as Medicaid disenrollment.

Joy San Buenaventura



# AG CRIME REPORTING & TIP LINE

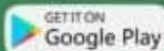
REPORT ILLEGAL OR SUSPICIOUS  
ACTIVITY ANONYMOUSLY

When Reporting: Include the Value of Any Stolen Goods

TEXT OR CALL: **808-427-3323**



SEND TEXT, PHOTOS & VIDEOS WITH  
**SAFERWATCH**



# INFORMATIONAL BRIEFING: HAWAII STATE HOSPITAL

The purpose of this informational briefing was to receive an update from the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) and the Hawaii State Hospital (HSH) regarding overcrowding and the problem of cycling of released patients being readmitted because of lack of supportive housing in the community. Because of the briefing, Ohana plans have stepped up to offer help for patients. Briefing materials and a video stream of this meeting can be found on the Hawaii State Legislature's website: [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov). If you would like assistance navigating the Hawaii State Legislature website, please do not hesitate to email: [j.honda@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:j.honda@capitol.hawaii.gov)



## MAHALO TO OUR VETERANS

I am proud to honor and stand by our veterans. Thank you to Col. Deb Lewis who organized the past 11 years of parades. I have not missed a veteran's Day parade since I was elected. This year I rode instead of walked to accompany the only other legislator in the parade: Sen. Lorraine Inouye





120th anniversary of Mountain View Elementary School. I am proud to represent the legislature in celebrating this tiny rural school's contribution in educating upper puna's children. Principal Adria Madeiros is a proud graduate of Mt. view elementary and is now its principal.



Donating to the Mountain View Elementary School Haunt-o-Ween Event with Principal Adria Madeiros.



At Pahoehigh Drive with Aloha mural unveiling. Mahalo nui to Ken Nishimura for the concept and his team of teachers and students whose artistry made this beautiful mural possible.



Thank you again to Rep. Chris Todd, Rep. Gregor Ilagan, and everyone who came to participate in my most recent town hall meeting. A special mahalo to Hawaii State Department of Transportation Deputy Director of Highways Robin Shishido for coming to Pahoehigh and providing updates on district highway projects.

**\*NEXT MEETING DEC. 18th\***

# HIGHWAY 137, UPPER & LOWER POHOIKI INFORMATIONAL MONTHLY MEETING



**3rd Friday of the month**

Sept. 19, Oct. 17, Nov. 21, Dec. 18



**12:00 PM**



QR  
ZOOM LINK



<https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJlSf--sgDkrEqmOQCWdi0H4OOiUG87-w5k>

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:  
SHERISE KANA'E-KANE, 808-961-8499**

# Community Briefing & Listening Session on **MILITARY LEASED LANDS**

*Hilo*

**Wednesday  
November 26, 2025  
6:00 - 8:30 p.m.**

***University of Hawai'i at Hilo  
University Classroom Building 100  
200 W Kāwili St. Hilo, Hawai'i 96720***

For more information, go to:

[www.oha.org/aloha-aina](http://www.oha.org/aloha-aina)

**TUNE IN LIVE!**

This event will broadcast live on 'Ōlelo and will be available via livestream. To watch go to [www.oha.org/live](http://www.oha.org/live) or go to OHA's Facebook and Youtube pages.

# Financial Assistance Options



## STATEWIDE

### HAWAI'I HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (H-HEAP)

#### Energy Crisis Intervention

Assists households in crisis who will be disconnected.

- Applications accepted year-round
- Maximum \$650 in assistance per household



#### Energy Credit

Assists households not in crisis, but who need assistance.

- Applications accepted June 1-30
- Payment amounts vary



**To apply please contact an office near your location:**

#### O'AHU

(Honolulu Community Action Program - HCAP)

**Central: (808) 488-6834**

**Kalihi-Palama: (808) 847-0804**

**Lē'ahi: (808) 732-7755**

**Leeward: (808) 696-4261**

**Windward: (808) 239-5754**

[hcapweb.org](http://hcapweb.org)

#### MAUI COUNTY

(Maui Economic Opportunity - MEO)

**MEO Maui: (808) 249-2970**

**Hāna: (808) 248-8282**

**Mōloka'i: (808) 553-3216**

**Lāna'i: (808) 565-6665**

[meoinc.org](http://meoinc.org)

#### HAWAI'I ISLAND

(Hawai'i County Economic Opportunity Council - HCEOC)

**Hilo Community Services:**

**(808) 731-7009 option 1**

[hceoc.net](http://hceoc.net)

HAWAI'I ISLAND

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAI'I**

**State Homeless Emergency Grants Program:**

For households at-risk of homelessness or homeless transitioning to housing

- ◆ Household income at or below 50% Area Median Income\*
- ◆ Open and accepting applications

 To apply, call (808) 521-4357



[catholiccharitieshawaii.org/housing-assistance/](https://catholiccharitieshawaii.org/housing-assistance/)

**State Homeless Prevention Program:**

For families and individuals seeking rent and utility assistance

- ◆ Open and accepting applications

 To apply, call (808) 961-7050



[catholiccharitieshawaii.org/housing-assistance/](https://catholiccharitieshawaii.org/housing-assistance/)

**HOPE SERVICES HAWAI'I**

- ◆ Utility assistance is available when a household faces eviction and is in arrears
- ◆ Utility assistance is available when Section 8 households have utility arrears and face losing their voucher due to non-compliance
- ◆ Currently open and accepting applications

 To apply, call (808) 935-3050



[hopeserviceshawaii.org/services/housing/](https://hopeserviceshawaii.org/services/housing/)

\* Please reference Area Median Income Limits and Federal Poverty Levels on page 7

**We're Here For You**

Hawaiian Electric offers support to customers who may be experiencing financial hardship. Please visit [hawaiianelectric.com/paymentarrangement](https://hawaiianelectric.com/paymentarrangement) to learn more about our payment arrangement options.



**Hawaiian Electric**





## STATEWIDE

**COUNCIL FOR NATIVE HAWAIIAN ADVANCEMENT****DHHL Wildfire Rent and Utility Assistance Program**

Rent and utility relief is available for DHHL lessees, undivided interest lessees, and applicants on the DHHL waitlist.

- ◆ Applicants must prove direct or indirect impact due to the wildfires in either Lahaina, North or South Kohala.
- ◆ Applicant households must NOT be receiving other subsidies (i.e., state-funded rental assistance, AUW, American Red Cross, FEMA rental coverage, Section 8, etc.) or insurance proceeds provided to such household that has been received or is available to pay costs intended to charge the NHHBG grant.
- ◆ Household income at or below 80% Area Median Income\* for renters and undivided interest lessees; at or below 120% Area Median Income\* for DHHL lessees.
- ◆ Assistance may be directed toward the following:
  - Security deposit
  - Rent (up to 6 months)
  - Utilities and home energy costs
  - Trash removal
  - Solar energy costs

 To apply, call (808) 596-8155  
OR email  
 [wildfire@hawaiiancouncil.org](mailto:wildfire@hawaiiancouncil.org)



[hawaiiancouncil.org/  
helpmaui/dhhlwildfire/](http://hawaiiancouncil.org/helpmaui/dhhlwildfire/)

**Kūpuna Rental Subsidy Program**

Rental subsidies are available for eligible kūpuna (62 years or older) on the DHHL waitlist.

- ◆ Recipients will pay up to 30% of their total household income toward their rent, and program will cover remainder of rent
- ◆ Household income at or below 80% Area Median Income\*
- ◆ Household must not be receiving Section 8 or any other type of rental subsidy.

 To apply, call (808) 596-8155  
OR email  
 [dhl@hawaiiancouncil.org](mailto:dhl@hawaiiancouncil.org)



[hawaiiancouncil.org/kupuna/](http://hawaiiancouncil.org/kupuna/)

\* Please reference Area Median Income Limits and Federal Poverty Levels on page 7

# SCAM ALERT: MEDICARE



*Scammers are exploiting the Medicare open enrollment period by pretending to be from Medicare and asking you to "update" or provide "new information" for your Medicare card. Their goal is to steal your personal and financial details. Here's how to keep safe from these scams:*



## Ignore unexpected calls

Caller ID can be faked. If you receive an unexpected call claiming to be from Medicare, asking you for your personal information, hang up and call 1-800-MEDICARE directly (1-800-633-4227).



## Get help comparing coverage options

Contact the Hawaii Insurance Division, the Hawaii State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), or visit Medicare.gov for a reliable source of official Medicare information and trusted guidance.



## Report Medicare Scams

Help keep others safe by reporting Medicare scams to 1-800-MEDICARE and the FTC at ReportFraud.ftc.gov

**Stay safe and scam-free!**



## Legislative Reference Bureau: Public Access Room



The Public Access Room (PAR) provides the public with information, facilities, and services to assist them as they engage and participate in the State legislative process. PAR's website includes guides on how to track measures, submit testimony, and subscribe to hearing notices.

To learn more, please visit: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/>