

Senator Shan S. Tsutsui



District 5- Wailuku, Waihe'e, Kahului



Aloha,

Thank you for the honor and privilege to serve as your Senator in the Hawaii State Legislature. I am deeply humbled by your continued support and remain dedicated to serving the needs of our community.

In this Legislative update I would like to share with you some of the issues my colleagues and I addressed over the legislative session as well as their outcomes and impacts on the State of Hawaii.

Mahalo to everyone who has taken time to e-mail, write or call with concerns or your suggestions for action, I appreciate your involvement in our community. As always, please contact my office if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Shan S. Tsutsui
President of The Senate

District 5 Awarded over \$300 Million in Capitol Improvement Projects

Baldwin High (R&M)	\$840,000
Central Maui Middle School	\$500,000
Iao Intermediate (R&M & IT)	\$570,000
Kahului Elementary (R&M & IT)	\$685,000
Lihikai Elementary (R&M)	\$315,000
Maui Community (R&M)	\$15,000
Maui High (R&M)	\$589,000
Maui Waena Intermediate (R&M)	\$346,000
Waihee Elementary (R&M)	\$517,000
Wailuku Elementary (R&M & IT)	\$590,000
Maui Memorial Medical Center	\$8,645,000
UH Maui College (Science Bldg. Renovation & R&M)	\$6,492,000
War Memorial Gymnasium (AC Upgrades)	\$920,000
Heritage Hall, Inc.	\$1,500,000
Boy Scouts of America, Maui County	\$1,500,000
Hoapili Hale (AC/Energy Improvements)	\$3,365,000
Maui Baseyard	\$1,120,000
HPHA, Maui Developments	\$4,000,000
Kahului Airport	\$264,465,000
Kahului Harbor	\$20,000,000
District Highways	\$10,325,000
Total District 5 Funding	\$327,299,000



Funding Provided for Increased Agricultural Inspector & Other Positions at Kahului Airport

In Sept. 2011, the State was informed that federal (FAA) funds for plant and quarantine inspectors at Kahului Airport were to be discontinued. At the time we were down to only 13 positions on all of Maui. As a result, Maui has and would continue to suffer from the need to reroute food shipments to Honolulu for inspection, which can delay inspection, pose an increased risk for spoilage, and delay receipt by Maui consumers. In order to combat this problem, as well as to protect against invasive species, Senator Tsutsui was able to ensure the addition of 9 new plant and quarantine inspectors at Kahului Airport. These positions will help to provide early detection and ensure that individuals are not bringing in plants or animals that could harm our agricultural industry or environment. Also, to address staffing shortages at Kahului Airport, the Senator was successful in ensuring the State budget also provided for 11 new positions, including janitor, plumber, auto technician, property manager, and office assistant positions. These positions will help the airport to better manage and maintain a high quality facility for all travelers.

Maui Youth and Educators Excel!



Senator Tsutsui and his Maui colleagues with the Boys and Girls Club of Maui and Youth of the Year winner Lopaka Matos from Waiehu.

Maui High students Roselyn Domingo, Alyssa Ferrer and their advisor Clint Gima were honored by the Senate for winning 1st place at the Student Television Network Challenge on March 12, 2012.



Kamehameha School student Kaili Mossman joined Senator Tsutsui's staff for a few days as a student intern in March of 2012.



During her time at Maui Waena Intermediate School, Principal Jacquelyn Davis was awarded the Hawaii State Principal of the Year award. She is currently the acting Principal of Baldwin High School.



Senator Tsutsui with Molokai High senior Moriah Jenkins and Iao School seventh grader Chayse Tamaki, the top Senior and Junior Division winners of Maui Schools' 53rd Science and Engineering Fair.

Interisland Transmission Cable Sets Framework for a Sustainable Future

For years, Hawaii has been at the forefront of the movement to generate and distribute renewable energy resources. With our abundance of solar, wind and geothermal resources, we can lead the nation in the use of renewable energy and set the standard for energy independence. This session, the Legislature took the first step in an historic process to ensure that all of our major populated islands can use and distribute their renewable energy resources at the highest levels of efficiency and reliability. **SB2785** merely lays the groundwork for a future electronic transmission cable system by establishing a regulatory structure under which interisland undersea transmission cables can be developed, financed, and constructed. This measure puts any interisland transmission cable system under the jurisdiction of the PUC, thereby assuring many of the concerned groups that there will be a process for the public to participate in how, when and where such a system can be introduced to our State in the future.

OHA Ceded Lands Settlement

For decades, the State has been struggling with the question of what is the correct amount of past and current ceded lands proceeds that is owed to OHA for lands held in trust for the benefit of the Hawaiian people. Based on court rulings, the amount owed was a political question for the Legislature to resolve. Many past Legislatures and Governors have tried to settle this question with no resolution being acceptable to all stakeholders. This session, the Legislature heard and passed **SB2783** a momentous bill introduced on behalf of the Abercrombie administration and OHA to settle a large portion of this claim. **SB2783**, which became **Act 15, SLH 2012**, on 4/11/12, conveys Kaka'ako Makai lands to OHA and resolves all disputes and controversies and claims to OHA's portion of income and proceeds from the public trust lands for the period 11/7/78 through 6/30/12. This settlement, estimated to be worth approximately \$200M, is being heralded by Hawaiian Rights advocates as a positive first step toward self-determination for the Hawaiian people and by State budget officials as a positive financial sign for bond rating agencies that have questioned the State's financial stability due to this unresolved legal claim.



Pension Spiking within the Employees' Retirement System (ERS)

Our State's debt is growing at an alarming rate and one of the biggest contributing factors is the unfunded liability in our public employees' pension fund, currently estimated at \$8.1B as of 6/30/11. Our distressingly low-funded ratio puts us in the bottom 25% of all public pension funds in the U.S. Contributing to the problem is the incidence of ERS employees who earn substantially more than their base salary near the end of their careers to boost future retirement pay—a practice known as pension spiking. While pension spiking is not against the law, the overtime hours authorized by supervisors is one of many factors that has allowed the unfunded liability to balloon. The growing shortfall, which represents the cost of covering future pensions beyond the ERS' existing balance, will ultimately have to be covered by the taxpayers. The Legislature passed two measures, **HB2487** and **SB1269**, to begin to address the unfunded liability problem. **HB2487** ensures that government agencies monitor overtime by making them responsible for any additional cost to the ERS that is incurred from overtime, and **SB1269** amends the definition of compensation for future employees, hired after 6/1/12, to exclude overtime.

Justice Reinvestment Initiative

With a recidivism rate of 50%, our current corrections system is inefficient and ineffective at rehabilitating our criminal population. Senate President Tsutsui, other Legislative leaders, Chief Justice Recktenwald and Governor Abercrombie all participated this last interim in the Federal Justice Reinvestment Initiative. This national project targeted critical areas in our correctional facilities to increase public safety and offender accountability. With the help of national experts and local policy leaders, the Legislature was able to identify inefficiencies and develop cost effective policies and plans using the JRI's empirically driven data. Born of this process, **SB2776** improves pre-trial detainee processing, adds two additional Paroling Authority Members, increases victim restitution payments, uses a better method of validated risk assessment and adds staff positions to the Public Safety Department, including more probation officers. Through the JRI's initiatives the State is looking to save \$150M. This will help the State avoid having to be forced to rely on unsuccessful programs and early release policies that have long plagued our criminal justice system. The hope is that some of that cost savings can be used to create and foster more efficient programs and processes to help bring down our high rate of recidivism and incarceration.



Health Measures Ensure Continuation of Critical Services

Early in the session, the Legislature took immediate steps to address the current health care crisis and find ways to ensure we have a viable health care system for the long term. In Dec. 2011, Hawaii Medical Center (HMC) announced that it was closing its doors. HMC was the only organ and bone marrow transplant program center in the State, and the closure jeopardized the ability of our residents to receive proper transplant care in Hawaii. To meet this immediate need, the Legislature passed two measures **HB608** and **SB2958**, which appropriated \$1.8M to The Queen's Medical Center to take over the kidney and liver transplant center and \$500K to Kapiolani Medical Center to support the bone marrow transplant program. Next, the Legislature turned its focus on two other measures that were introduced to address low Medicaid reimbursements for our hospitals and long-term care facilities. **HB2275**, relating to hospitals, and **SB2466**, relating to long-term care facilities, establish provider fees, which is a model used currently in 47 states and D.C. to draw down federal funds to sustain Medicaid programs.

Session Snap Shots



Senator Tsutsui with Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Ben Villafior, a Golden Gloves boxing champion and recent appointee to the State Boxing Commission.



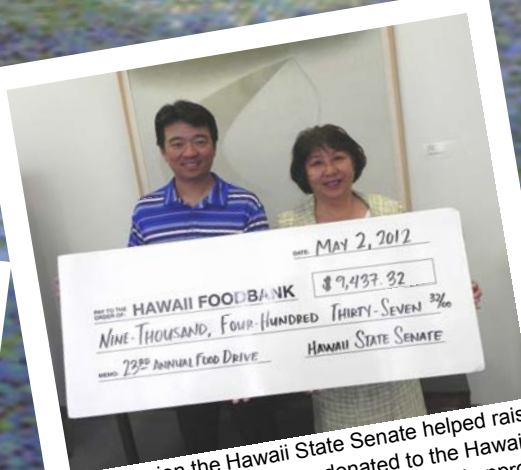
Senator Tsutsui and his Maui colleagues congratulate the Maui Invasive Species Committee for its work guarding the Valley Isle against non-native wildlife.



Senator Tsutsui participating in Senator Hee's dunk tank to benefit the Hawaii Food Bank



Senators have a quick huddle before taking on the Governor's Office and House of Representatives in Education Week's Punt, Pass, Kick Challenge.



This session the Hawaii State Senate helped raise over \$9,000 dollars to be donated to the Hawaii Food Bank. Senator Tsutsui's office raised approximately \$783.00 for the Maui Food Bank.



Norm Chow, Head Coach of the University of Hawaii football team and Senator Tsutsui.