



Representative Andrew Takuya Garrett 2026 Spring Newsletter

Proudly serving District 22 (Mānoa/Tantalus/McCully-Mō'ili'ili)

Aloha!

As we reach the halfway point of the 2026 Legislative Session, we are navigating an uncertain economic landscape. Global instability—including the latest war in the Middle East—could impact Hawai'i's economy, from energy prices to tourism and state revenues. At the same time, families continue to feel the strain of our high cost of living. With less than 1,000 bills still alive, we must be disciplined about the policies and fiscal commitments we advance, protecting essential services while maintaining long-term stability.

I am also deeply troubled by aggressive immigration enforcement tactics being deployed on the continent, including masked federal agents operating without clear identification. Hawai'i has always stood for fairness, due process, and respect for civil liberties. We are reviewing proposals to protect immigrant communities, strengthen transparency, and require clearer identification standards for federal agents operating in our state.

Even in uncertain times, my priorities remain steady: accountability in government, strong public education, and policies that support working families and our most vulnerable residents. As always, my office is here to serve you. If you need assistance with a state agency, have questions about legislation, or want to share your thoughts, we are only a phone call or email away.

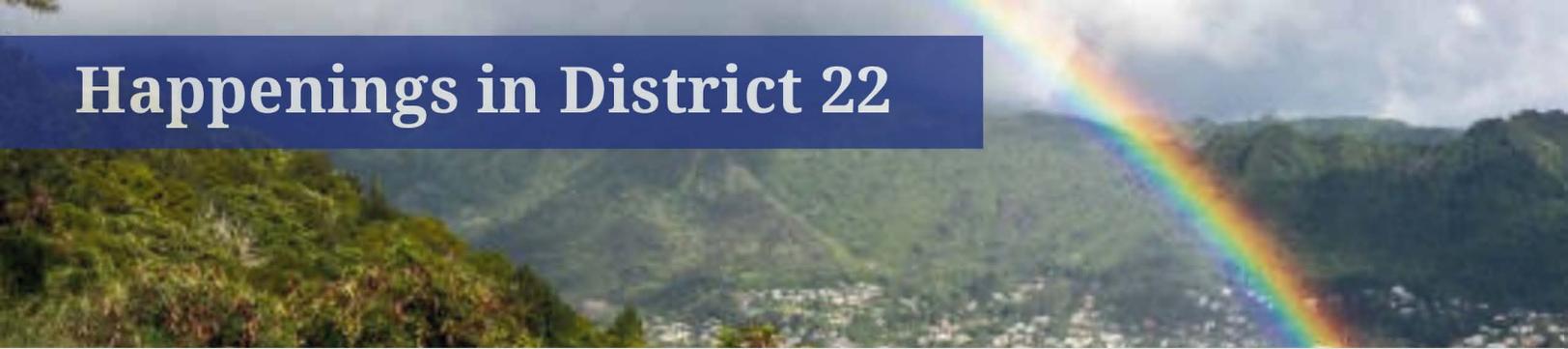
Mahalo for your continued trust and the privilege of serving as your state representative.



It was an honor to present legendary UH Baseball Coach Les Murakami with a certificate from the Legislature congratulating him on his induction into the College Baseball Hall of Fame.

The very next day, I flew to Hawai'i Island to umpire UH-Hilo's softball series against rival Chaminade. Let's go 'Bows and Vulcans!

Happenings in District 22



Harry Mamizuka Swimming Complex at Mānoa Valley District Park (MVDP) to open in Late March

The City and County of Honolulu has announced that the pool at MVDP is scheduled to reopen in late March following needed repairs and upgrades. In addition to structural improvements, new flooring has been installed in the showers and locker rooms, and—thanks to a generous donation from the Mamizuka ‘ohana—new starting blocks have been added to the 50-meter pool. This is welcome news for swimmers and families who rely on this important community facility.

Mānoa Japanese Language School Receives \$130,000 in State Grant Funding

I was proud to support and help secure \$130,000 in state grant funding for the Mānoa Japanese Language School, a treasured institution in our community. As a parent of a former student, I have seen firsthand the important role the school plays in preserving Japanese language and culture for the next generation. The funds will be used to renovate campus bathrooms, and I am grateful to the dedicated staff and board members who continue to serve our keiki and families.



City Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) to review “Aria Lane” Project Approvals

The Mālama Saint Francis Mānoa community group has filed an appeal challenging City and County approvals granted in 2025 for the proposed Aria Lane residential project at the former Saint Francis School site. The ZBA will take up the matter on March 19 (after this newsletter went to print). I will continue keeping our community informed as it moves forward.

House Higher Education Committee holds hearing on UH-Mānoa Campus

As a proud UH alumnus, I was pleased to bring the House Higher Education Committee to the UH Mānoa campus to hold a hearing on HB2384, a bill I introduced that would allow our student-athletes to benefit from their Name, Image and Likeness (NIL). College athletics has changed dramatically in recent years, and we must adapt to ensure UH remains competitive in this new environment. Mahalo to the many student-athletes and coaches who showed up to testify in support!



2026 Bill Updates

At the midpoint of the '26 Session, less than 1,000 bills remain alive. As your representative, it is my duty to explain the reasons why I support or oppose legislation before us. Bill updates are available on our user-friendly website at www.capitol.hawaii.gov.

HB1811: Educator Loan Repayment Program

Description: Establishes an educator student loan repayment program that provides up to \$25,000 in loan relief to public school teachers, counselors, and librarians who complete 5 consecutive years of service.

Position/Rationale: **SUPPORT.** Reducing student loan burdens helps recruit and retain qualified educators in Hawai'i, strengthening stability and quality in our public school classrooms.

HB2021: E-Bike Regulation

Description: Modernizes Hawai'i's laws governing e-bikes by establishing clearer safety rules, helmet requirements for riders under 18, and standards for where certain high-speed devices may operate.

Position/Rationale: **SUPPORT.** As these devices become more popular, we need common-sense rules to protect riders, pedestrians, and drivers alike.

HB1690: Naming Rights for State Facilities

Description: Allows for the leasing of naming rights and installation of signage on facilities (i.e. New Aloha Stadium and Hawaii Convention Center).

Position/Rationale: **OPPOSE.** Hawai'i has a proud history of limiting intrusive advertising and prohibiting billboards. This proposal would undermine that policy by increasing commercial signage on state facilities. *Dead for 2026.*

HB2570: Sports Wagering

Description: Allows for the regulation of sports wagering and imposes a tax on sports wagering operator licenses.

Position/Rationale: **OPPOSE.** Allowing gambling in any form undermines what makes Hawai'i a special place. We must pursue alternative revenue sources that do not compromise the safety and well-being of our communities. *Dead for 2026.*

HB2159: Healthcare Workforce Development

Description: Establishes positions and appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i (UH) to support health care workforce development in the areas of cancer, dementia and behavioral health.

Position/Rationale: **SUPPORT.** Strengthening UH's training pipeline is the most effective way to address Hawai'i's persistent healthcare workforce shortages and improve access to care.

HB1779: Free School Meals

Description: Expands free school meal coverage, beginning with the '29-'30 school year, to all public school students.

Position/Rationale: **SUPPORT.** Ensuring every student has consistent access to nutritious meals helps reduce food insecurity, supports student health, and improves learning outcomes in our public schools.

Why I Opposed Eliminating Parking Requirements



Protecting the quality of life and character of our neighborhoods is one of my most important responsibilities as your representative. The places where we live should feel livable and safe. We must also ensure infrastructure keeps pace with development so our communities continue to function well. At the same time, housing costs remain one of our biggest challenges, and I support efforts to remove barriers that drive up the cost of building homes.

Recently, the House considered HB1919, which would have eliminated parking requirements for many types of development. While the goal was to encourage more housing, eliminating parking requirements does not eliminate the need for parking. Many neighborhoods already struggle with crowded streets and limited parking. When developments provide less off-street parking, those vehicles often spill onto streets that were never designed to absorb that demand.

For these reasons, I opposed the bill and was glad to see it defeated on the House floor. Hawai'i needs more housing, but policy must be thoughtful so we do not create new quality-of-life challenges or strain neighborhood infrastructure.



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Come visit us at the State Capitol!



One of the best parts of my job is hosting students and other constituents at the State Capitol. Please contact our office at (808) 586-8475 if you'd like to schedule a tour!

Top left: Hawaii State Student Council. Left: Voyager PCS Students. Above: Mid-Pacific Institute MPX Students.