

Representative Andrew Takuya Garrett

2026 Winter Newsletter

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

Aloha!

As we begin the 2026 Legislative Session, I want to share what's been guiding my work and why accountability, education, and community values matter more than ever.

One of the most meaningful things I did this past year was serve as a substitute teacher in our public schools. Being back in the classroom, working alongside educators, deepened my appreciation for what teachers face each day and reaffirmed my belief that strong public education is the foundation of opportunity.

Education remains my top priority, from K-12 classrooms to our community colleges and the University of Hawai'i. As Chair of the House Higher Education Committee, I'm focused on affordability, workforce pathways, and accountability as we prepare our public institutions for the challenges ahead.

We also enter 2026 facing an uncertain fiscal year. Slowing revenues will require careful choices, and we are all feeling the impact of the rising cost of living, which makes responsible budgeting and protecting essential services even more important. My commitment is clear: we must protect the social safety net—especially for kūpuna, keiki, and working families—and avoid short-sighted ideas like gambling that create bigger problems later.

Please know that my door is always open—by phone, email, or in person—and my team and I are committed to responding to every call and message from constituents.

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



Top: Partnering with University Lab School students for neighborhood graffiti removal

Middle: Participating in annual Mānoa Stream cleanup

Bottom: Hosting UH graduate students for a mock hearing at the State Capitol

Engaged with our Community

Listening and showing up (often with Rhea!) is central to how I serve



Mānoa Elementary School's
first-ever Spelling Bee



Mālama Mānoa and The Outdoor
Circle's 1,000 Tree Giveaway



"Heroes and Helpers"
Christmas Shopping Event



Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawaii Youth Council



50th Anniversary of The Early School



Advocacy with fellow AANHPI
legislators in Washington, D.C.



Ehime-Hawaii Sister-State
Goodwill Baseball Tournament



Roosevelt High School Class of
2025 Graduation Ceremony

2026 Bill Highlights

As we head into the 2026 Legislative Session, my focus is on protecting what matters most to our community: restoring trust in government, strong public education, and care for our future.

The bills to the right, just 6 of the 25 I've introduced, reflect those values by strengthening accountability at the Capitol, standing firm against legalized gambling, and preparing Hawai'i for long-term challenges ahead. Bill updates are available at www.capitol.hawaii.gov.

While these issues are diverse, they share a common goal: thoughtful, responsible policy that puts people and community first.



HB1675: Office of Legislative Ethics and Accountability

Creates independent oversight to strengthen ethical conduct, transparency, and accountability at the Legislature.



HB1527: Casino Ban at New Aloha Stadium Entertainment District

Prohibits the establishment of a casino at the future NASED project site to protect families and communities.



HB1592: Protection of Sports Officials

Strengthens legal protections for referees and sports officials to deter threats, harassment, and violence at athletic events.



HB1597: Alzheimer's Research Center at UH School of Medicine

Establishes an Alzheimer's research center to advance treatment, support caregivers, and address the needs of an aging population.



HB1598: Hawai'i Climate Institute

Establishes a statewide institute with UH to coordinate climate research and resilience efforts in response to climate impacts.



HB1676: Artificial Intelligence in Education

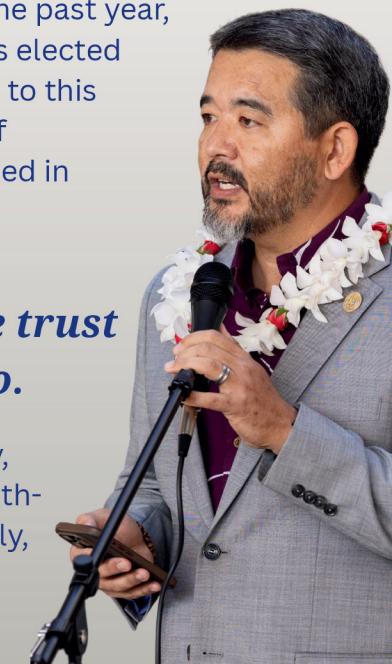
Establishes a task force to study the responsible use of artificial intelligence in education while protecting students, educators, and academic integrity.

The Importance of Restoring Trust in Government

Public service is built on trust—and once that trust is shaken, it affects all of us. Over the past year, a lingering ethics issue involving an alleged \$35,000 bribe, which occurred before I was elected to office, has cast a cloud over the Capitol. A recent citizen petition renewed attention to this matter, and I was interviewed by the Honolulu Star-Advertiser about the importance of addressing it responsibly. I have also written publicly about this issue, including an op-ed in Civil Beat, because transparency and accountability are essential to restoring public confidence. Regardless of party or position, no one is above the law.

When ethical questions remain unresolved, they undermine trust and distract from the work our communities expect us to do.

We have an obligation to address this through due process, clear lines of responsibility, and an ethics system that works as intended. That is why I remain committed to strengthening ethical safeguards at the Legislature, ensuring investigations are handled properly, and drawing clear boundaries between oversight, enforcement, and politics. We must hold ourselves to a higher standard.





Rep. Andrew Takuya Garrett

Hawaii State Capitol

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Rep. Garrett with friends and family at the annual Mānoa Holiday Parade

We're Here to Serve You!



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2026 Committee Assignments

Chair, Higher Education Committee

Member, Education Committee

Member, Labor Committee

Member, Culture and Arts Committee



Meet my 2026 staff!

*L to R: Takemi (office manager),
Kate (legislative analyst), Ximena (UH intern)
and Wren (committee clerk)*