

FROM THE OFFICE OF

SENATOR STANLEY CHANG

East Honolulu Community Newsletter

June 2026

Aloha Neighbors,

The 2026 legislative session is now over. After four months of hearings, deliberations, amendments, testimony, and negotiations, the Legislature has passed hundreds of bills that address concerns and issues throughout our state. Most of them are on the Governor's desk awaiting his decision to sign or veto. We've compiled a number of notable bills that might impact you directly. As always, don't hesitate to email or call us at 808-586-8420 if you have any questions. Mahalo!

Very truly yours,



Stanley Chang



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HANDY CONTACTS

State Pothole Hotline
808-586-7852

City Pothole Hotline
808-768-7777

State Homelessness
gov.homelessness@hawaii.gov
808-586-0193

City Homelessness
complaints@honolulu.gov
808-768-4381

Abandoned Vehicles
808-733-2530

Building Permits
808-768-8000

Poison Control
800-222-1222

Trash Collection
808-768-3200

Street Light Repair
808-768-5300

Domestic Abuse Hotline
800-799-7233

Public Assistance
Information Line
855-643-1643



Image Credit: Hawai'i State Senate

Housing Legislation



Image Credit: Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

SB 2964: The bill addresses the growing problem of homeowners being underinsured, especially after the devastating 2023 Maui wildfires and, most recently, the Kona Low storms. The bill requires insurance companies to notify homeowners that they can submit information about upgrades or improvements made to their homes so insurers can reassess the property's replacement cost value. If a home is identified as underinsured, insurers must offer policyholders the option to purchase additional coverage.

SB 2671: Long delays for building and construction permits have made it harder for families and developers to build homes and complete renovations. This bill creates a pilot program that allows counties to strengthen staffing in permitting offices, offer incentives to recruit and keep qualified workers, and set clear goals to improve accountability and processing times.

SB 3218 and **SB 3219**: These bills create a

new financing tool for counties to invest in infrastructure projects like roads, water systems, drainage, and other infrastructure that support new housing development, especially in areas planned for transit-oriented development, and which will not raise taxes. **SB 3219** proposes a constitutional amendment to give counties the authority to use these special bonds, while **SB 3218** updates state law to support the program if voters approve the amendment. Voters must approve the use of this new program in the election in November.

SB 2543: This bill creates a five-year Office of the State Construction Manager Pilot Program, which will provide guidance and recommendations on the design review of certain state construction projects that are administered by the Department of Accounting and General Services or Department of Education on the neighbor islands. These projects should move forward more efficiently, saving taxpayer dollars, and delivering important improvements to state facilities.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS LEGISLATION

Several consumer affairs bills passed the legislature and now have made it to the Governor's desk. Below are some notable bills that seek to have a positive impact on local consumers.

SB 2175: Senator Chang was a co-introducer of this bill which prohibits disposable vape devices. Specifically, this bill seeks to reduce the use and sale of single-use electronic smoking devices and would ban the distribution and retail sale of disposable vapes due to concerns about youth nicotine addiction, environmental waste, and improper disposal of hazardous battery components. It also supports enforcement measures to ensure compliance among retailers



Image Credit: Civil Beat

and distributors. The bill aims to protect the public health—especially among young people—and reduce environmental harm caused by the growing volume of disposable vaping products.

SB 3255, relating to rounding up cash transactions, would allow small cash payments made at retail businesses to be rounded to the nearest five cents when exact change is not available. The bill is intended to reduce the need for pennies in cash transactions, making checkout faster and more efficient for both customers and businesses. Any rounding would typically apply only to the final total of a purchase and is designed to be neutral over time so that consumers are not consistently overcharged or undercharged. Overall, the measure seeks to simplify cash handling while maintaining fairness in everyday retail transactions.

HB 2583, relating to a micro lending credit enhancement program, would establish a state-supported initiative to improve access to small business loans. The bill is designed to encourage private lenders to issue microloans—small loans typically used by startups, local entrepreneurs, and underserved borrowers—by providing a state-backed credit enhancement or guarantee that reduces lender risk. This support helps increase approval rates for borrowers who may not qualify for traditional financing due to limited credit history or collateral. This bill would expand access to capital, support local small businesses, and strengthen economic opportunity for locals.

Image Credit: livinginhawaii.com



HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION

HB 1853, establishes a statewide dementia care network in Hawai'i to better coordinate services for individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. The bill brings together healthcare providers, community organizations, and state agencies to improve early diagnosis, care planning, and access to support services for patients and their families. It also focuses on expanding caregiver training and resources to help reduce the burden on unpaid family caregivers.

HB 1973 seeks to expand access to in-home health services for elderly residents. The bill creates a pilot program designed to provide kūpuna with medical care, personal assistance, and supportive services in their own homes rather than in institutional settings. It also aims to address workforce shortages by supporting the recruitment and training of in-home caregivers.

HB 1974 would establish a statewide initiative to improve prevention, early detection, and treatment of hearing loss in Hawai'i. It will expand access to hearing screenings, particularly for children, kūpuna, and high-risk populations, so that hearing issues can be identified and addressed earlier. It also supports better access to hearing aids, assistive technologies, and related services through insurance coverage improvements.

SB 3025 establishes a state program to reduce and eliminate unpaid medical debt for eligible Hawai'i residents. The bill authorizes the Office of Wellness and Resilience to partner with nonprofit organizations that purchase medical debt from hospitals and collection agencies at a reduced cost. This would allow large amounts of debt to be forgiven at once. It prioritizes assistance for lower- and middle-income individuals whose medical debt exceeds a significant portion of their income.

BILLS ALREADY SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR

On May 14, 2026, the Governor signed **[SB 2471](#)** into law, ending the impact of the Citizens United decision in Hawai'i. That Supreme Court decision allowed corporations to spend unlimited sums of "dark money" to influence elections in Hawai'i. With the enactment of **[SB 2471](#)**, corporations will no longer have the power to spend money in politics in Hawai'i, whether the corporation is from Hawai'i or anywhere else, ensuring that only individual people can participate in the electoral process. This historic act is the first of its kind in the nation.

The Governor also signed into law **[SB 3022](#)** on May 14. This act establishes the Hawai'i Leadership Awards Program to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the state and serve as an inspiration to others across 12 distinct fields, including the arts, food and drink, business and labor, and public service. I introduced a similar bill, **[SB 2198](#)**, which would create a

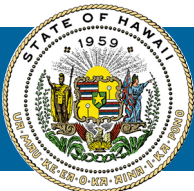
workforce excellence awards program recognizing achievements by craftspeople. **[SB 2201](#)**, which I also introduced, would have expanded on **[SB 3022](#)** to include a Fellows Program that would establish full-time, paid fellowship roles to talented individuals with career and leadership skill development training coupled with a mentorship program structure.

Governor Green also signed into law **[SB 3125](#)** which preserves income tax relief for many working and middle-class families. The bill keeps previously approved tax cuts in place for most local residents, helping families keep more of their hard-earned money to pay for housing, food, childcare, and other everyday expenses. At the same time, the measure updates certain tax credits and creates changes for higher-income earners to help maintain funding for important public services.

For more information about these bills and others, you can contact the Office of State Senator Stanley Chang at **(808) 586-8420** or visit the **[Hawai'i State Legislature website](#)**.



Image Credit: Jennifer Kelleher, Associated Press



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