

FROM THE OFFICE OF

SENATOR STANLEY CHANG

East Honolulu Community Newsletter

July 2026



FUNDS SECURED FOR WAIKĪKĪ AQUARIUM AND DIAMOND HEAD STATE MONUMENT IMPROVEMENTS

Senator Chang has successfully secured \$8 million in Capital Improvement Project (CIP) funding in the 2026 state supplemental budget for two treasured cultural and natural landmarks in Senate District 9, Waikīkī Aquarium and Diamond Head State Monument.

\$7 million has been budgeted for comprehensive infrastructure upgrades at the Waikīkī Aquarium. The upgrades will include a complete overhaul of the specialized seawater intake and discharge systems, structural repairs to the exhibit gallery ceilings and floors, and necessary electrical modernization to support the facility's marine life systems.

Judith Lemus, Interim Director of the Waikīkī Aquarium, said, "The aquarium is so appreciative of the support from Senator Chang. This funding will allow us to make much-needed upgrades to our infrastructure and continue providing the excellent visitor experiences we are known for."

The budget includes an additional \$1 million for the Diamond Head State Monument. The funding will repair deficiencies in infrastructure, including fire hydrants and other elements that would assist in containing wildfires adjacent to residential neighborhoods, thereby protecting homes.

This work includes fire hardening electrical utilities that run through the tunnels at Diamond Head, including the Kapahulu Tunnel. This is to ensure that lighting is maintained to aid a possible

evacuation of the crater and to expand the PA system for public messaging during an emergency. This project would also lessen the likelihood of a disruption in water service within the crater to aid the Honolulu Fire Department and Division of Forestry and Wildlife.

Alan Carpenter, Acting Administrator for the Department of Land and Natural Resources, said, "We envision this funding being expended for utilities that run through Kapahulu Tunnel. These funds will allow us to ensure that the Kapahulu Tunnel is a safe egress in the case of an emergency." Carpenter added, "As always, we appreciate Senator Chang's engagement and support."

Senator Chang said, "Our iconic landmarks define the spirit, history, and natural beauty of Hawai'i. I am proud to have advocated for this critical funding, which ensures that both the Waikīkī Aquarium and Diamond Head State Monument can serve the public with world-class spaces for education, conservation, and community gathering."

Governor Green has until July 15th to sign the budget into law.

For more information, please contact the Office of Hawai'i State Senator Stanley Chang at (808) 586-8420.



Waikīkī Aquarium



Kapahulu Tunnel

CALL US

808-586-8420

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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

Free Summer Meals for All Keiki 18 and Under End July 17th



Image Credit: Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE)

This summer, the Hawai'i State Department of Education (HIDOE) has been providing free meals at 74 public schools to children ages 18 and under. The free meals end on July 17th.

According to the Hawai'i Food Bank, nearly 1 in 3 students in our state is facing food insecurity. Also, millions of students nationwide participate in food programs like the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. While these have been effective in reducing hunger, they only operate during the school year. This often leaves a gap for students who still need nutritional support during summer vacation.

The USDA's Seamless Summer Option (SSO) program is working to fill the gap. This federally supported meal program is focused on providing a streamlined pathway with less administrative delay to provide meals to students in need during the summertime. The implementation of this program here in Hawai'i serves as a great step toward providing relief for families facing food insecurity.

If you are interested in getting a meal for your keiki, here's what you need to know!

Meals are available Monday through Friday, ending on July 17. Breakfasts are served from 7:15am to 8:45am and lunches from 10:30am-12:00pm. Meal service will not be provided on June 11 (Kamehameha Day) and July 3 (Independence Day). If you live in East Honolulu, some nearby participating schools include Pālolo Elementary School, Jarrett Middle School, and Kaimuki High School. You can view a list of [all participating public schools here](#).

Children must be ages 18 and younger, and they do not need to be enrolled in public school to participate. There is no income requirement. All meals must be eaten on campus (no grab-and-go options are available). For special diet accommodations, email specialdiets@k12.hi.us with as much detail as possible. For more information, please [visit HIDOE's website](#).

NEW CELL PHONE POLICY AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The State Board of Education has adopted a statewide policy establishing consistent expectations for student cell phone use in public schools. The Board's new policy prohibits all cell phone use during school hours for elementary, middle,



Image Credit: KHON2 News

and intermediate schools. For high schools, cell phone use is prohibited during instructional time. The Board has allowed each school to exercise discretion regarding use outside of instructional time, including before and after school, and during designated breaks, recess, lunch and free periods. The purpose is to maximize student attention on learning.

Senator Chang said, "The new policy is intended to balance the benefits of technology with the need to minimize classroom disruption." During the 2025–26 legislative session, Senator Chang introduced Senate Bill 1264, which would have required similar cell phone restrictions. For example, Senator Chang's bill would have required the Board of Education to adopt a comprehensive policy banning student use of cell phones and connected accessories during regular school hours.

Regarding the new policy, the Board believes that the new policy promotes a safer and more respectful learning environment. Overall, Board members noted that while the policy establishes statewide expectations, its impact will ultimately depend on a thoughtful and consistent implementation plan that is aligned with the commitment to student learning and well-being.

Currently, the Department is developing implementation guidelines to take effect during the 2026–27 school year. For more information, please contact the Hawai'i Department of Education at (808) 784-6200.

DLNR COLLABORATES WITH HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY TO RESTORE CORAL IN EAST HONOLULU

The Department of Land and Natural Resources and the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) have teamed up to restore coral on Oahu. HTA has received a grant from the U.S.



Image Credit: BeachSearcher

Department of Commerce, Economic Development Agency (EDA) to complete this work. One of the coral outplanting restoration projects will take place in East Honolulu at Maunalua Bay, near the Hawai'i Loa Ridge SCUBA dive site. The site sits roughly off the shore of Kawaikui Beach Park.

The outplant site was carefully selected by DLNR's Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) to minimize the risk of accidental human disturbance, and in turn maximize the chances for coral survival.

The site is also a popular destination for ocean users. DAR Coral Aquatic Biologist Christina Jayne explains that visiting such areas to observe the restoration efforts "provides experiences and educational opportunities for both residents and visitors." The aim will be to plant and grow around 80 to 100 of these corals.

Senator Chang said, "Corals serve essential purposes for our oceans. They provide habitat for fish, protect our coastlines, create beauty and recreation, and sustain cultural resources. I am thankful for the joint effort by DLNR and HTA to restore our coral in East Honolulu."

For more information, please email DLNR.comms@hawaii.gov.

NEW AND IMPROVED HNL 311 APP AND WEBSITE

The City and County of Honolulu recently announced their new and improved HNL 311 app and website. If you are reporting a city issue or want to request a city service, you can now do so from the comfort of your own home.

The improved HNL 311 system enhances citizen participation and makes city services easier to access. HNL 311 allows residents and visitors to submit service requests via a mobile app or website. Those service requests are then automatically routed to the appropriate city departments for resolution. Additionally, users have the option to track their service requests and receive notifications when the requested service has been assigned and completed.

The HNL 311 system can connect you to over 70 different service categories and departments. Users can submit requests for service by pinpointing their location and including images and details. Once requests are submitted, users will receive a

confirmation number that will allow them to track the status of their request. Another feature of the program allows users to view reports made nearby. This helps prevent duplicate submissions and allows others to keep up with what is going on in their neighborhood.

Issues that can be reported include:

1. **Traffic/Parking Concerns**
2. **Pot Holes**
3. **Sidewalk Repair**
4. **Animal Cruelty**
5. **Homeless Activities**
6. **Stream/Canal Cleaning**
7. **Dumpling/Litter**
8. **Abandoned Vehicles**
9. **Gang Activity**
10. **Road Restriping**

The HNL 311 mobile app is available through the Apple App Store and Google Play. For more information or to submit a request, please visit HNL311.com.

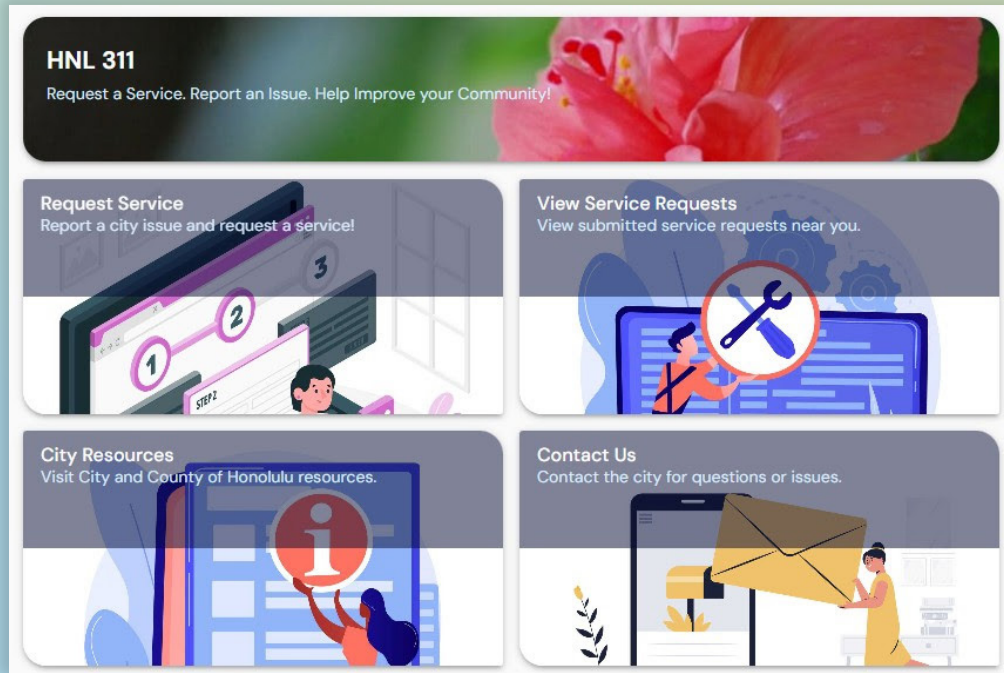
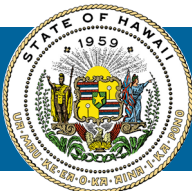


Image Credit:HNL 311



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