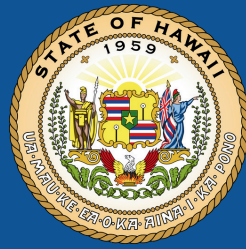


COMMUNITY REPORT

SENATE DISTRICT 18 | SEPTEMBER 2023

Serving Mililani Town, Waipi'o Gentry, Crestview, Waikele, portion of Waipahu, Village Park, Royal Kunia



Michelle
KIDANI

Senate Vice President

Chair
Committee on Education

Vice Chair
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Committee on Ways and Means

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Aloha Friends and Neighbors,

With September in full swing, I hope you and your 'ohana are enjoying a delightful transition into the fall. As we approach the end of this month, I'm excited to present our September newsletter, packed with important updates and engaging community visits.

Over the past month, we've been hard at work in the community, representing the Senate on visits to Kaua'i and Japan. I've gained first-hand insight into a range of critical issues that challenge us, including education access, infrastructure financing, and economic recovery, all with you — my neighbors — in mind.

Within this newsletter, you'll find a detailed overview of what I've been up to in the last month, along with information on an exciting teacher initiative that aims to address the teacher shortage. Additionally, we pay tribute to a cherished friend and community member, Police Chief Lee Donohue, for his unwavering commitment to the Honolulu Police Department and the youth of Honolulu.

I'm grateful to have the honor of representing you in the Legislature. Together, we'll continue to work tirelessly to ensure that the spirit of aloha radiates for the remainder of the year.



Mililani For Maui featured on Mililani High School's marquee! Mahalo for your support!



Admiring student art at Waikele Elementary



Certificate Presentation in honor of Chief Lee Donohue



Representing Mililani for Maui on the Senate Floor

Ways and Means: Kaua'i Visit

As a member of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM), I had the opportunity to participate in a two-day visit to several sites on Kaua'i. The purpose of this trip was to gather updates on state initiatives and connect with community stakeholders and officials. Starting at Lihū'e Airport, the first day included the Hawai'i State Energy Office outlining strategies for 100% renewable energy by 2045. Plans for transit-oriented development were presented at Lihū'e Civic Center, highlighting their benefits to the community. Additional presentations included the urgency of relocating Kaua'i Community Correctional Center due to climate risks, infrastructure financing, healthcare strategies, and a present-

ation on the Ka Lei Momi initiative for affordable housing. Day two in Kaua'i highlighted agriculture, wastewater management, language access, and alternative learning, with concerns raised about local food production and cesspool conversion financing. We

focused on addressing language access for limited English and 'Ōlelo Hawai'i speakers and visited Kaulu I Ka Pono Academy, observing their support for youth with substance abuse issues and discussing plans to expand alternative learning programs statewide.



WAM Committee Members at Lihū'e Airport



Sen. Kim and I with an Alternative Learning Programs Supports and Services (ALPSS) student leader



WAM Committee Members at Ke Kula Ni'ihau o Kekaha Public Charter School

Visit to Armed Services YMCA Hawai'i, Wheeler Army Airfield Branch

I had the opportunity to visit the Wheeler Army Airfield & Schofield Barracks branch of the Armed Services YMCA Hawai'i (ASYMCA) at the end of August. I toured their Tūtū and Me program, which aims to encourage development and enhance bonds between parents and their children. The program is working towards preschool accreditation, aligning with Lt. Gov. Luke's Pre-K Keiki Ready program to provide quality early education opportunities.

I also visited the ASYMCA's food pantry, where food assistance is provided to military families. It is estimated that more than 25% of active-duty military families and 10% of veteran families in Hawai'i are in need of food support. The program is designed to alleviate food insecurity and financial stress by offering grocery aid, thus helping these families maintain nutritional well-being.

The ASYMCA shared that they are forging meaningful partnerships with community organizations, such as the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, to incorporate Hawaiian values and culture into their programs to foster greater unity between our local community and the military. I'm grateful for the ASYMCA's efforts to support our military and local communities and the positive impact they continue to make.



At top, ASYMCA Teacher Melissa Stowe and I interacting with children; above L-R: ASYMCA staff Megan Roper, Executive Director Laurie Moore, Deputy Director Keola Taniguchi and I in their Tūtū and Me area; Visiting the food pantry.

“Grow Our Own” Teachers Initiative

I am thrilled to share that the Grow Our Own (GOO) Teachers Initiative, a program I helped establish, is awarding nearly \$1 million in scholarships through the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa’s College of Education. As Chair of the Education Committee and Vice Chair of Higher Education, I continue to support this initiative to tackle Hawai‘i’s teacher shortage.

Our goal is to nurture and retain our local educators, particularly those interested in working in the Hawai‘i Department of Education (HIDOE) or seeking to obtain licensure in HIDOE Federal Teacher Shortage Areas, such as science, mathematics and English. I firmly believe that we have the skills, talent, and commitment needed to effectively address the teacher shortage right here at home.



Photo Courtesy: College of Education, UH

Special Session: Judicial Confirmation

The Senate met in a special session in late August to fulfill its constitutional authority to advise and consent to nominees to fill judicial positions. Following the committee hearings, my colleagues and I confirmed the appointments of Jordon J. Kimura to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, and Erika E. Ireland, Robert J. Brown, and David M. Hayakawa to the District Court of the First Circuit.

Since special session followed the weekend after Mililani For Maui, I updated my colleagues on the results of our fundraiser and showcased my daughter Malia Cook’s beautifully designed t-shirts on the Senate floor! Check out the design featured on the front page.



At top, my colleagues and I with the newly confirmed judges; above L-R: updating my colleagues during special session; Sen. DeCoite, Sen. San Buenaventura, Judge Erika E. Ireland, Sen. Kim, and I; Sen. Lee, Sen. Richards, and I.

Waikele Elementary Career and College Fair



Students asked our firefighters questions about the job



The Waikele Community Association showcased their patrol bikes

Waikele Elementary School recently hosted its 6th annual Career & College Fair, emphasizing the importance of early exposure to various professions for our young students. I was delighted to join the Fair and see our keiki engage with a variety of occupations, such as healthcare professionals, first responders, engineers, arts and communications, and hospitality managers.

Waikele Elementary School is the first elementary in the state to fully integrate an Academy Pathway program that aligns with Waipahu High School’s six academies. Witnessing the students’ enthusiasm exploring their interests reinforces the significance of such initiatives, and I commend the school’s innovative approach.

Early exposure to various career opportunities can play a pivotal role in broadening children’s horizons and help them make informed decisions about future career paths. This program exemplifies our commitment to equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary for their future, ensuring they are college and career-ready.



With the K9 units from the US Customs and Border Protection, Field Operations

Hawai'i Business Mission Trip to Japan

Together with my colleagues, I embarked on the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism's (DBEDT) Hawai'i Business Mission Trip to Japan earlier this month.

As an advocate for youth engagement in the arts, we were proud to support Honolulu's youth in showcasing the impactful musical, *Peace On Your Wings*, at the Aster Plaza in Hiroshima.

This production tells the story of Hiroshima victim Sadako Sasaki, and aims to educate audiences on the profound consequences of nuclear warfare, while championing messages of peace and unity.

During the trip, my colleagues and I, DBEDT, Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), and HTA Japan participated in interviews with travel industry stakeholders from

Japan. These interviews allowed us to express our gratitude to Japanese businesses who have supported Maui's recovery and discuss collaborative efforts to revitalize tourism between Japan and Hawai'i, particularly in the non-affected areas of Maui following the devastating wildfires.

The trip emphasized the growing relationship and promising future initiatives between Hawai'i and Japan.



Above L-R: Hawai'i's own "Peace on Your Wings" performers on stage in Hiroshima; delegation at Hawaiian Town; Aaron Lau of Lau Lau Woodworks and I at the Tokyo Gift Show.

At left to right, with the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology; HTA Chief Administrative Officer Daniel Nahoopii, Rep. Holt, DBEDT Business Development & Support Division Administrator Dennis Ling, and Mitsue Varley, Director of HTA Japan Bureau.

In Memoriam: Chief Lee Dixon Donohue

8th Police Chief of the City and County of Honolulu

We say a fond aloha to Chief Lee Dixon Donohue, 80, who passed away on July 9, 2023 surrounded by family and friends. Chief Donohue's dedication to the Honolulu Police Department is evident, where he achieved the remarkable feat of serving in every rank, ultimately ascending to the position of the 8th Police Chief of the City and County of Honolulu. After 40 years of service, Chief Donohue retired in 2004 and was later honored with an induction into the HPD Hall of Fame in 2019.

Chief Donohue's legacy reaches far beyond law enforcement. He established Kick Start Karate to empower at-risk youth through martial arts, and the Honolulu Police Community Foundation to foster positive relations between police and the community.

As a City Councilmember, he played a pivotal role in introducing and passing the illegal aerial fireworks ban to enhance the safety of our neighborhoods. I was proud to serve on his staff at the City Council. Chief Donohue also held leadership positions in numerous community organizations, most recently as President of Crime Stoppers.

Chief Donohue is survived by his wife, Lucille Donohue, children Darlynn Donohue, Leanne Donohue-Williams, Lee (Karen) Donohue, Jr., as well as 8 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his son Steven Donohue and one great-grandchild. Let us honor his memory by continuing the work he started.

