

Senator Michelle Kidani

(D) Senate District 17– Serving Mililani Mauka, Mililani Town, Waipio Acres and Waipio Gentry



Aloha, friends and neighbors:

Our Legislative session officially ended more than ten weeks ago, but legislative business continues. The Senate Ways and Means Committee has already held one informational briefing this summer jointly with the Committee on Tourism, and we anticipate more as we keep an eye on Hawaii's economy. Our State Department of Business and Economic Development reports record numbers of visitors - and visitor spending - in the last couple of months. The State Council on Revenues, whose economic forecasts are critical to our budget deliberations, will meet again on August 2. And the latest news on Hawaii's unemployment figures will be released this week. We're expecting that the many new jobs created with the passage of our \$400 million repair and maintenance construction program will begin to show positive growth in the next few months. Look around Mililani and you will note the many projects already in progress at our schools.

Of more immediate concern to Mililani residents, of course, is the uncertainty and anxieties that have come with the announced cuts to school bus service that came way too late for families to plan around their schedules, and with serious concerns about the safety of our students. See below for more on my plea to the Board and Department of Education to revise their proposal to address parents' concerns.

With the school year already underway at Mililani Middle and classes about to begin at the remaining schools in our district, my hope is that we can successfully work around the transportation challenges to eliminate or minimize any barriers to a safe and positive learning environment for our youngsters.

Me ke aloha,

Taking the school bus cuts to the Department and Board of Education

By now, students at all four Oahu schools on multi-track schedules – including Mililani Middle School – are back in their classrooms. Cuts to school bus services were announced at a time that left families just a few days to plan for changes, and, in some situations, placed students at risk in making their way to school.

I immediately contacted Schools Superintendent Kathryn Matayoshi requesting that existing bus services be extended for all multi-track schools through the end of July to give families more time to come up with transportation alternatives. I took my appeal to the Board of Education meeting the next day, and the Board agreed to delay the announced cuts until the end of the month.

Additional changes were made to the planned cuts that will assure that students will not have to cross the freeway in either direction to get to Mililani High School or Middle School. Middle School students living in Mililani Town as well as Mililani High School students living in Mauka will still have access to bus service.

Thank you to the Department of Education for having a representative present at tonight's Neighborhood Board meeting. We hope for a speedy resolution of our concerns.



Testifying at the Board of Education, July 3, 2012

Senator Kidani's Legislative and Community Calendar

Here are some of the legislative business and community events on my calendar since the last Mililani Mauka Neighborhood Board meeting:

- June 21 – Condominium Association Institute Legislative Seminar
- June 21 – Town Hall meeting – presentations by UH Athletics Department, UH West Oahu Chancellor and Hawaii Air National Guard
- June 23 – Emergency Preparedness Fair, Mililani Town Center
- June 28-29 - Special Session of the Senate for judicial appointment confirmations
- June 27 – Rotary Club of Mililani Sunrise – Rotary Scholar recognition program and installation of officers
- July 3 – Board of Education meeting regarding school bus service cutbacks
- July 10 – Joint meeting of the Senate Ways and Means and Tourism Committees – informational briefing on airport taxi and shuttle services and transportation infrastructure

More than a hundred people from our community came to a Legislative Town Hall meeting in June. Our guests included UH Head Football **Coach Norm Chow** (*at right, speaking*); UH West O`ahu **Chancellor Gene Awakuni** and Hawaii Air National Guard **Brigadier General Brad Sakai** (*seated, far right*). My colleague, Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, and House Representatives Marilyn Lee and Ryan Yamane joined me in summarizing this year's legislative session.



The Senate met in Special Session to fulfill our constitutional authority to consider judicial appointments. We voted to confirm Mililani's **Richard W. Pollack** to be Associate Justice of the Hawaii State Supreme Court.



The City's Department of Emergency Management, American Red Cross, and UH Sea Grant staged an All-Hazards Preparedness Fair in June. My booth distributed nearly 400 complementary DNA and fingerprint kits to families with children to assist in case of missing-child emergencies. *If you are interested in obtaining one of these child safety kits, please contact my State Capitol office at 586-7100.*

Finishing touches . . .

. . . are being applied to the new athletic field and track at Mililani High School in preparation for a blessing next week—**Friday, July 20**—as the Trojan football team begins practice session for the fall season. The Official dedication for the field will be **August 11**, right before MHS plays Moanalua in season opener. The beautiful stadium is something of which the Mililani community can be very proud.



I visited Mililani High School last week to tour John Kauinana stadium with Principal John Brummel and Trojan Athletic Director Glenn Nitta.

