

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
MATT LOPRESTI, Ph.D

HOUSE DISTRICT 41: 'EWA, 'EWA BEACH, 'EWA GENTRY, 'EWA VILLAGES, HOKALEI, OCEAN POINTE

DISTRICT 41 NEWSLETTER - August 2021

STAY CONNECTED WITH
REPRESENTATIVE MATT LOPRESTI

Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 333
415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Phone: (808) 586-6080
Email: relopresti@capitol.hawaii.gov
<http://capitol.hawaii.gov>



Surging COVID-19 Cases as the Delta Variant Spreads, Schools Resume In-Person

At the end of July, as Hawaii's economy continues to improve and students and teachers prepare to return to the class room, the number of COVID-19 cases is rising at an alarming rate.

In-classroom instruction is important for many reasons and I'm cautiously hopeful that the Department of Education is taking the necessary steps to ensure the health and safety of our keiki and teachers. But with vaccines not yet approved for anyone under the age of 12, there is reason for concern. Especially given the rising case counts and filling-up of hospital ICU beds.

We must remain vigilant.

If you haven't already taken the important step of getting vaccinated, now is the time. I was fortunate to receive mine earlier this year and have suffered no ill-effects. By all accounts they are

safe and effective.

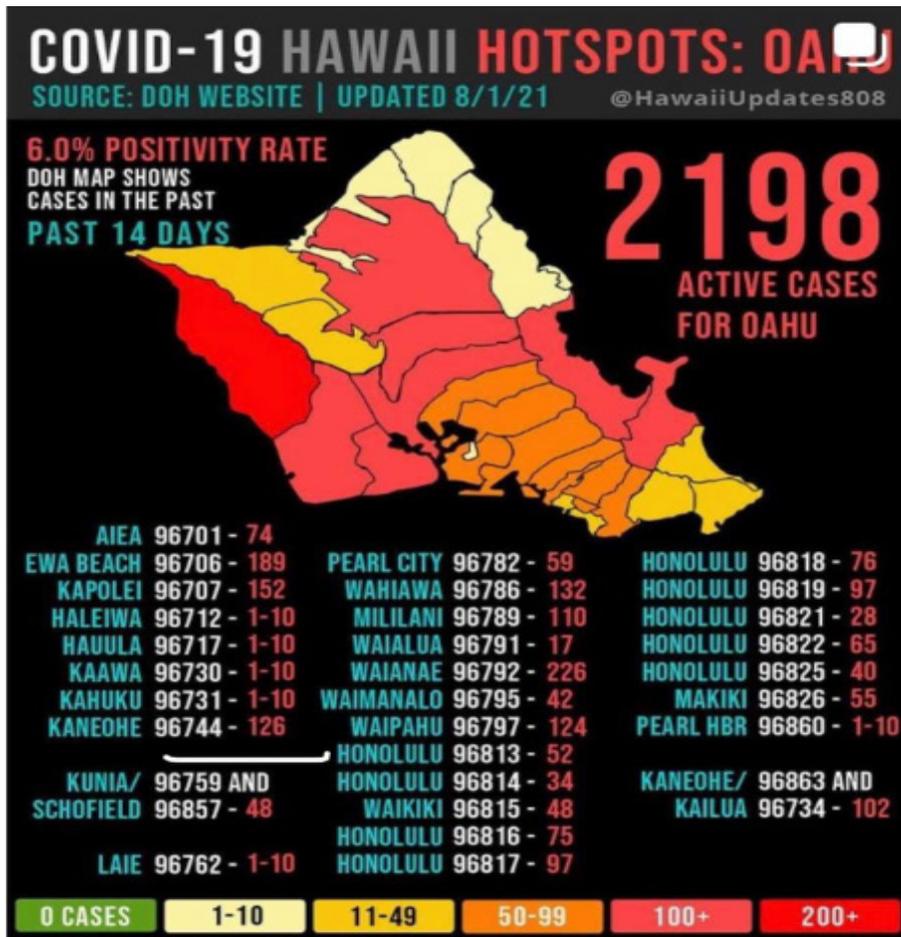
Against the new Delta variant, the vaccine is effective in reducing severity of symptoms, even if they are less effective against reducing the spread.

If you're out and about, please wear a mask. Not just for your safety, but for those around you, for your friends and loved ones.

I know its been a long year and a half, and though things are looking up, we're not out of the woods and there are at least some signals that we may, in fact, be moving backwards.

Together, by acting with caution and compassion, we can prevent the need to increase restrictions.

With Aloha,
Matt LoPresti




Find a Vaccination Site Near You

Use the Center for Disease Control’s Vaccine Finder to find a location in your neighborhood: <https://www.vaccines.gov/search/>

Read more about the vaccine and eligibility requirements: <https://hawaiicovid19.com/vaccine/>

Share Your Bill Ideas For ‘Ewa Beach

Don’t Be Shy!

repropresti@capitol.hawaii.gov

OR (808) 586-6080

Representing the ‘Ewa community for House District 41 is truly an honor. Though the 2021 legislative session was a challenging one, the work of representing you is never finished.

With this in mine, I want to take this opportunity to invite you all to contact my office with any ideas you have for introduction for the 2022 legislative session which begins next January. Sure, it seems like a long way off, but it will be upon us before we know it. It’s never too early begin thinking about my bill package and what is most needed for our community.

I can’t promise that every idea I receive will be drafted for a bill or be introduced for consideration by my colleagues. With a limit on the number of bills I can

introduce in any given session, a certain amount of triage and prioritization must be weighed. As well as the potential for each bill’s success.

What I can promise is that I will review every suggestion and give them the attention they deserve.

I hope you will contact my office with your ideas. I will look forward to reading them.

Some examples include:

- New traffic signals
- Locations for crosswalks
- Loud mufflers
- Traffic safety
- Guidance for HOAs

When you contact my office, please include the following information:

- First & Last Name
- Residential Address
- Phone #
- Email Address



Useful Contacts

1

REPORT GOVERNMENT FRAUD, WASTE & ABUSE

ethics.hawaii.gov/fraud_complaint/

Confidential Call: 587-0000

Email: anti-fraud@hawaii.gov

2

Non-Emergency Police Assistance

Call: (808)529-3111

4

Crimestoppers

Call: 955-8300

5

Hawaiian Humane Society

General Inquiries: (808) 356-2200

6

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance

<https://pua.hawaii.gov/>

A Fowl Odor Pervades at Hau Bush Park



Thanks to the 'Ewa residents who made me aware of this issue and to is working to address it.

Late in the afternoon on the last Thursday in July, I received several phone calls from residents complaining about a terrible sewer-like stench at Hau Bush Beach Park.

I quickly hopped in my car and drove to the nearby park to see first hand what was happening. I spoke to some folks at the park to try to get a sense of where it might be coming from.

Before long, it was clear the stench was originating from a nearby Haseko digging site. My first thought was they might have accidentally punctured a sewer line coming down from the water treatment plant.

I called Haseko to see what, if anything, they might know about it and I was told they were aware of the problem. They said it wasn't a sewer line, but rather their digging had unearthed some decaying organic material and that was the source of the odor.

To be sure, first thing the next morning, my office contacted the Wastewater Division for the City and County, but was informed that sewers in the area were still owned and maintained by Haseko.

Eventually, I was able to meet with someone from the treatment plant at the park and learned that the hydrogen sulfide levels were twice what was deemed safe. At that point my office contacted the State Department of Health Clean Air Branch, shared with them what I had learned and connected them with a point person at Haseko to see what might be done to address the issue.

At the time of this writing, a resolution is still in process.

When residents, elected officials, and city and state agencies work together quickly and seamlessly, sharing information, there is no problem we can't solve. There's no solution we can't find.

This is a perfect example of why I am in public office. To work on behalf of my constituents to address concerns and find solutions.



New Animal Laws

Hawaiian Humane Society and its fellow animal welfare advocates were instrumental in the adoption of three new laws in 2021 that protect the animals we love. These laws are outlined below.

ACT 31

What: Establishes the crime of sexual assault of an animal. Standard veterinary, animal husbandry and conformation judging practices are exempt.

When: Took effect June 7, 2021

ACT 91

What: Protects veterinarians from civil liability for rendering emergency aid to an animal, even if an owner is not available to consent to care.

Requires veterinarians to report suspected animal cruelty or the injury or death of an animal as part of a staged fight. **Protects** veterinarians from civil liability for making such reports.

When: Took effect June 25, 2021

ACT 182

What: Buzz's Law **bans** the unsupervised tethering of a dog under the age of six months. **Bans** tethering in a configuration that endangers the dog. **Bans** the use of tow or log chains to tether a dog.

When: Took effect July 6, 2021

Take Action

To report a suspected violation of any of these laws, **call 911** if an emergency response is required, **call Hawaiian Humane's dispatch** number at 356-2250 or **visit hawaiianhumane.org** to file a complaint.

Eviction Moratorium Ended August 6

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF HAWAII:

Phone: Legal Aid Intake Hotline - 808-536-4302
 Monday-Friday from 9:00 am - 11:30 am and from 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm.
 Website: <https://www.legalaidhawaii.org/housing-covid-19.html>

MEDIATION SERVICES ON EACH ISLAND:

O'ahu: Mediation Center of the Pacific **East Hawai'i:** Ku'ikahi
 Mediation Center **West Hawai'i:** West Hawai'i Mediation
 Center **Maui County:** Maui Mediation Services **Kaua'i County:**
 Kauai Economic Opportunity, Inc. Mediation Program

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (DCCA) LANDLORD TENANT INFORMATION:

Landlord/Tenant Information Center: 586-2634. Staff can provide
 you with information about Hawaii's Residential Landlord/Tenant
 Code
 Hours: 8:00am- 12:00pm, Mondays- Fridays, except state holidays.
 Website: [https://cca.hawaii.gov/blog/category/landlord-tenant-
 information/](https://cca.hawaii.gov/blog/category/landlord-tenant-information/)

HONOLULU TENANT'S UNION

Website: <https://hnltenantsunion.org/contact.html>



It's important for you to know your rights and what you might expect if you are facing eviction.

On Friday, August 6, the State's eviction moratorium ended. While Hawaii's economy continues to improve, however slowly, there are still countless individuals and families at risk of losing their housing.

I want to share this information with the district in case you are one of those who is behind on rent as a result of COVID-19 related circumstances. Whether you are currently unemployed, partially employed, or were unemployed but have returned to work, if you are behind on your rent, the end of the moratorium may affect you.

Though the State's moratorium has ended, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has established an extended

moratorium if you meet certain requirements. All the details about the CDC moratorium can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-eviction-declaration.html>.

With regard to Hawaii's moratorium ending and what that might mean for you, you can check out the resources in the graphic above, but here are some highlights:

- The eviction notice MUST be in writing. Phone calls, texts, emails, etc. are insufficient for official eviction notice.
- Before evictions can take place, a process of mediation is required between the tenant and the landlord.
- Those processes will be first for those who are four months or more behind in their rent.

- [ACT 57 \(21\)](#) is a bill I co-sponsored with several of my House colleagues which sets in place several temporary restrictions to eviction and creates processes to minimize the threat of homelessness to those who are behind in their rent.

If you have received an eviction notice, or believe that you might, I encourage you to contact the Legal Aide Society of Hawaii with any questions you may have and to potentially find someone who can help guide you through the process.

You can also call the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) Landlord-Tenant Information Center with questions or concerns.

By being proactive, you can educate yourself on the process. Though the moratorium has ended, that doesn't mean those who are behind on their rent will automatically lose their housing. Please share this information with anyone you know who may be facing eviction. It is important to get this information out as far and wide as possible so no one is caught unaware and unprepared.

MATTHEW S. LOPRESTI, PhD
Representative, District 41



Telephone: (808) 586-6080
Email: replopresti@capitol.hawaii.gov

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF HAWAII
STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 333
415 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

July 26, 2021

Hawai'i Department of Health
Office of Health Status Monitoring
Attn: Lorrin Kim
P.O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378

Dear Chief Kim,

I had the honor and privilege of introducing the bill that became Act 174, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2018. This past session I introduced HB1215 Relating to Fees for Birth Certificates to extend the sunset established in Act 174 (18). Having learned of the memo you sent to your department dated July 7, 2021 regarding "Waiver of Fees for Homeless Service Providers" I wanted to take the opportunity to sincerely thank you and the entire Department of Health leadership team for taking this important step to ensure vital records are available for certain homeless individuals.

If I may make a friendly suggestion, please consider releasing the memo, or some version of the decision announced therein, to be issued publicly. I believe this would be an important step to help educate the public as well as government and social workers on a broader platform.

While I imagine that homeless service providers have already been informed, it would be helpful if this was provided to news outlets, etc. to ensure the public is made aware of the continuation of this service. Indeed, it was my experience interacting directly with homeless persons in my district and the general public that brought me to this idea in the first place due to the hurdles that everyday folks face when they find themselves or attempt to help others in these desperate circumstances, and thus it is the general public that would benefit the most from learning that this service has not only been available in the past, but will continue to be available thanks to the compassionate leadership you have shown.

If I can be of any assistance in this whatsoever, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Thank you again.

Matthew S. LoPresti, Ph.D.
State Representative, District 41
Hawai'i State House of Representatives

Cc: Director Elizabeth A. Char, MD.

MATTHEW S. LOPRESTI, PhD
Representative, District 41



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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF HAWAII
STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 333
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HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

August 10, 2021

City & County of Honolulu Department of Parks & Recreation
Director Laura Thielen
1000 Ulu'ohi'a St. #309
Kapolei, HI 96707

Director Thielen,

I am writing to you again today to ask that more resources be expended on parks in my district.

The first is 'Ewa Pu'uloa District Park. I have heard from several residents in the area complaining about the large field of dead grass. It seems there is no sprinkler system installed and I am told by residents who frequent the park that there is no longer any city staff assigned to it. Is that in fact the case, because it's obvious the park has deteriorated.

The second is One'ula Beach Park (commonly referred to as Hau Bush). I have been informed that the one worker who is tasked with maintaining One'ula is significantly under-equipped to maintain the seven-acre park. I've heard the worker has no means of transportation around the park (a golf cart, for example) and little-to-no equipment for watering the grass. I have been informed by frequent visitors to One'ula that the maintenance worker in fact uses his own equipment for some of the maintenance performed there, including his own sprinkler, which is outrageous if true.

I often drive around other parts of the island and notice, with some frustration, how well other parks are maintained to high standards. Why does it seem that the 'Ewa community is so often neglected in this respect?

If the Department of Parks and Recreation is limited as a result of budget constraints, I ask you to do what you can to adjust the Department's resource allocation to provide more for the parks in the 'Ewa community. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to assist in this capacity.

I have cc'd on this letter Councilmembers Tulba and Tupola and in doing so hope they will encourage the Council to address this, as is needed, so 'Ewa is not so sorely neglected in future budget or other considerations. I look forward to working with them to ensure that is the case.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew S. LoPresti".

Matthew S. LoPresti, Ph.D.
State Representative, District 41
Hawaii'i State House of Representatives

Cc: Councilmember Augie Tulba
Councilmember Andria Tupola