

# STATE REPRESENTATIVE MATT LOPRESTI, Ph.D

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

DISTRICT 41 NEWSLETTER - September 2021

STAY CONNECTED WITH  
REPRESENTATIVE MATT LOPRESTI

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## Our Schools Need Help with Contact Tracing

Cases of the COVID-19 Delta variant continue to rise across the state, but on O'ahu, 'Ewa Beach continues to among the communities with the highest number of cases.

We're beginning to see this trend in our schools, as well. Campbell High School, being the largest high school in Hawaii, is also experiencing the highest number of positive cases.

I've heard recently from some faculty that school staff is having to conduct their own contact tracing programs because the State Department of Health (DOH) doesn't have enough people doing this important work.

With this in mind, I have sent a letter to Governor Ige urging him to tap some of the Hawaii National Guard to assist with contact tracing in our schools.

This is much needed. Not only because the work of contact

tracing is so important, but also because school faculty have important responsibilities to their students. They should not be spending significant time doing work the DOH is currently unable to do.

Tasking some within the Hawaii National Guard to do this work at our schools would both free up faculty so they can focus on their primary responsibility to our keiki, while also ensuring the necessary contact tracing is being done teachers, staff, students, and parents know better how the disease is being spread.

I hope the Governor will take my request to heart and implement this necessary effort in our schools.

With Aloha,  
Matt LoPresti

## Kumu Kahua Theater 51st Season

#HAOLEBOYFRIEND  
RUNNING SEPT. 2-19

THE KAUSA OF KAIMUKI  
RUNNING OCT. 28 - NOV. 14

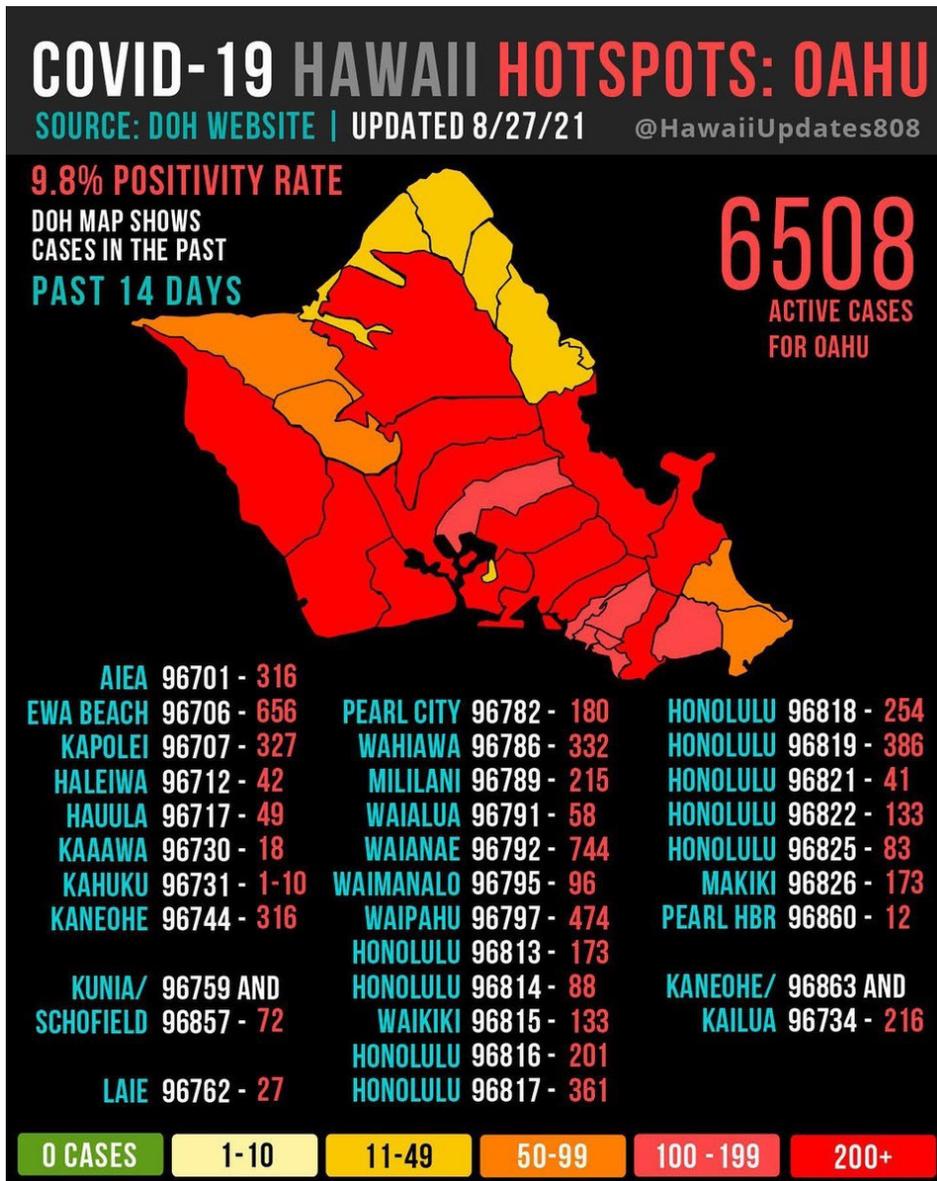
THE CONVERSION OF KA'AHUMANU  
RUNNING JAN. 20 - FEB. 20 (2022)

WHO YOU AGAIN?  
RUNNING MAR. 24 - APR. 24 (2022)

BLUE  
RUNNING MAY 26 - JUN. 26 (2022)

Kumu Kahua Theater is a wonderful artistic resource for our island. Subsidized by patrons and community non-profits, they offer local stories told by local people at very low cost to the audience. Ticket prices start as low as just \$1; the theater asks you to pay what you can.

Find out more and purchase tickets here:  
<https://www.kumukahua.org/51st-season>



## Find a Vaccination Site Near You

Use the Center for Disease Control's Vaccine Finder to find a location in your neighborhood: <https://www.oneoahu.org/find-vaccine>

Read more about the vaccine and eligibility requirements: <https://hawaii-covid19.com/vaccine/>

If you or someone you know needs to receive a COVID-19 test, you can find a location here: <https://health.hawaii.gov/coronavirusdisease2019/testing-locations/>

## Share Your Bill Ideas For 'Ewa Beach

Don't Be Shy!

[repropresti@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto: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 mind, 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 to 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

# City May Look to 'Ewa for New Landfill Site



One of the potential sites identified is just north of the 'Ewa Beach community.

On August 27, the Star-Advertiser reported that the Honolulu Department of Environmental Services (ENV) has narrowed its search for a new landfill to a handful of areas for which no mandated restrictions apply. Those restrictions include:

- Cannot be within a 1/2 mile of a residential community, any school, or any hospital
- Must be sufficiently distanced from any airport
- Cannot be in a conservation district
- Cannot be located in a tsunami evacuation zone
- Cannot be located on land which has been developed or which is planned for development

- Cannot be on federal lands

Having identified all those restricted lands, only those areas identified in white on the above map are suitable locations for the new landfill.

The landfill at Waimanalo Gulch is very near capacity and has been ordered closed by 2028. The City must identify a location for the new landfill by the end of next year.

The 'Ewa community already has located within it the island's largest wastewater treatment facility. Do we really want to be home to the new landfill as well?

As the map indicates, there are other, potentially more remote locations the City can choose as the new landfill's home. While my office confirmed with ENV that no decisions have been made at this stage, beyond eliminating all the restricted land from consideration, it is important that 'Ewa residents make their

position know.

I am opposed to putting the new landfill in or near 'Ewa and believe it makes more sense to choose a location closer to the North Shore.

I urge everyone to complete this resident survey: <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=SYoRxe3EiEggQpyNS-O1IzxHgPQXnvhHlHhLsh2vS7hUNDMYT1BISDZXOEHYUFhXOUtZNDBoVUjYVC4u>.

You can also find more information at the ENV website (<http://www.honolulu.gov/opala/newlandfill.html>) and you can email any questions, thoughts or concerns you have to [newlandfill@honolulu.gov](mailto:newlandfill@honolulu.gov).

It is so important to make your voice heard on this issue that could directly impact our community.

# Hawaiian Humane Society West O'ahu Campus: Update



I've been getting a lot of questions about the construction site, so I thought an update was in order.

Earlier this year, I was fortunate to be present at the Hawaiian Humane Society's groundbreaking ceremony for their brand new 'Ewa campus.

Despite some attention this project has gotten in the Hawai'i news media, many in our community are still unaware of the project.

You can see the location for the campus in the aerial image on the next page. There is also a digital mock up of the campus layout. The new campus is being built on the parcel at the intersection of Old Fort Weaver Rd. and Fort Weaver Rd.

According to the Hawaiian Humane Society, mass grading of the site is underway and they expect the general contractor to begin construction in late October or early November. At that time, construction fencing will be erected around the site as well as increased

construction activity.

Once the general contractor takes over and begins work, the Hawaiian Humane Society plans to install a construction camera so they can easily share the progress with the community.

The planned completion date for the new Ewa campus is around the end of 2022 or in early 2023.

Included in the plans for the campus is a dog park, which our community is sorely lacking.

West O'ahu pet owners are underserved in a variety of ways. Access to veterinary care is limited, which contributes to pet overpopulation, unnecessary suffering of sick or injured animals and the outbreak of preventable illnesses. Having a campus closer to this population will improve access to care for animals where they live.

West O'ahu is home to 32 percent of the island's homeless population, and approximately 29 percent of unsheltered homeless individuals on O'ahu report having at least one pet. Low income and

homeless pet owners face additional challenges in feeding, sterilizing and caring for their animal family members. The 'Ewa campus will strive to keep these vulnerable families together.

I am so excited to finally have this facility available to our community and am looking forward to its grand opening. As the project moves along, I will do my best to keep our community updated on its progress.



# Traffic Improvements for 'Ewa



Our community continues to need more traffic lights and pedestrian safety measures.

Earlier this month, I sent a letter to the City and State traffic divisions asking for updates on a couple of previously requested improvements. That letter also included a number of requests for new improvements for the 'Ewa community.

Though hope remains that the new rail system (once completed) will help alleviate rush hour traffic, it will do nothing for community traffic and nothing for pedestrian safety.

The first update request is for a raised crosswalk at the intersection of Keoneula Boulevard and KaMakana Street. I have been told, and I hope the letter will confirm, that the administrative hurdles for this project have been cleared and now we are waiting for construction to begin.

The second is for a traffic light at the intersection of Kapolei Parkway and Kuhiuka Street.

In addition to an update on these previously requested improvements, I asked for the following:

- A raised crosswalk or traffic light at the intersection of Kapolei Parkway and Kaimalie Street.

This intersection needs some infrastructure for pedestrian safety, especially given its proximity to 'Ewa Beach Elementary School.

- A crosswalk at the intersection of Kapolei Parkway and Ko'ana Street. Pedestrians need a safe place to cross from the Parkside neighborhood to the Laulani Community Park.
- A study for a possible traffic light at the intersection of Geiger Road and KaMakana Street. A number of residents have expressed frustration with attempting a left turn onto Geiger Road.
- During peak travel times, there is a tremendous back up at the intersection at Franklin D. Roosevelt Avenue and Fort Barrette Road. In addition to traffic lights there, I believe the area would benefit from a widening of the road to allow for the creation of turning lanes, thus further alleviating traffic.

I was also recently informed that the request for a raised crosswalk at Keoneula Blvd. and Kamakana St. have been approved by the City. The project

is now in the bidding stage and unless material shortages cause delays, it should be completed in approximately three months.

Finally, as you may recall, the Legislature in two prior sessions, appropriated \$33 million for widening Fort Weaver Rd. and the installation of sidewalks. Both times these funds were appropriated, the State Department of Transportation refused to expend the moneys. Despite efforts to understand this, I have never received a full explanation. Included in my letter is a request for one.

All these improvements are important for the safety and vitality of our community and I will continue to work with the City and State administrations, as well as all the elected officials that represent the Ewa community. We're in this together for you.



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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

September 2, 2021

Hawaii Department of Transportation  
Director Jade Butay  
Aliiimoku Hale  
869 Punchbowl St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Department of Transportation Services  
Director J. Roger Morton  
650 S. King St., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Honolulu, HI 96813-3017

Dear Director Butay and Director Morton,

Traffic and pedestrian safety is and has been an ongoing issue of great concern affecting my district and the broader Ewa community. This concern is growing as our community grows and our keiki walk, ride, or bike to schools along major thoroughfares without sidewalks, crosswalks, or stoplights at clearly dangerous intersections and roadways.

There are a number of areas in which there is no, or very little, infrastructure for kids going to and from school. As our community continues to grow, so does the volume of traffic and the safety infrastructure clearly is not keeping pace with that growth. Our community contributes far more to the state tax base than we reap; our schools are outdated, our roads often unsafe, and sidewalks and safety in the heart of our community main roads are in some places non-existent despite years of pleas and multiple budgetary acts by the legislative bodies of our state and city, dedicating tens of millions of dollars for improvements, some of which have not been acted upon.

With this in mind, I am writing to request an update on several projects that have been advocated for by me and my office at the request of my community, but to date have not been started.

- (1) First is the promise of a raised crosswalk at the intersection of Keoneula Boulevard. and KaMakana Street. My understanding is administrative hurdles for this project have been cleared, though no actual construction has begun.
- (2) The other project is a traffic light at the intersection of Kapolei Parkway and Kahiuka Street. I understand this project is also in process awaiting completion.

Please provide me with an update on the status of these two projects.

In addition to the above projects, which I believe are already underway, I request action or at least information regarding the following, some of which I have written to your department about in in the past.

- A raised crosswalk (with a push-button flashing crosswalk system) or traffic light at the intersection of Kapolei Parkway and Kaimalie Street. This intersection needs greater measures

for pedestrian safety, especially given its proximity to Ewa Beach Elementary School and heavy vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

- A crosswalk (with a pushbutton flashing crosswalk system) at the intersection of Kapolei Parkway and Ko'ana Street. Pedestrians need a safe place to cross from the Parkside neighborhood to the Laulani Community Park and crosswalks can signal to drivers that they need to exercise greater caution and awareness of pedestrians.
- A study for a possible traffic light at the intersection of Geiger Road and KaMakana Street. This is a relatively new intersection that has opened access to one of only three ways out of our community of 70,000 people. A number of residents, including myself find it difficult and less than safe to attempt a left turn onto Geiger Road from KaMakana.
- Further down Geiger where it turns into Roosevelt, especially during peak travel times, there is a tremendous back up at the intersection at Franklin D. Roosevelt Avenue and Fort Barrette Road at the heart of Kalaeloa. In addition to a longstanding need for a traffic light there, I believe that the intersection area would greatly benefit from a widening of westbound section of Roosevelt at the intersection to allow for the creation of turning lanes, thus further alleviating a major traffic bottleneck for those traveling back and forth between Ewa Beach and Kapolei.
- Despite my advocating for this up for years now, there still is no bus route the runs up and down Kapolei Parkway in Ewa Beach, even though the population density of the community is moving westward away from just Fort Weaver Road and uses Kapolei Parkway as a major traffic artery for more than half of our population. Also despite the fact that the state's largest Middle School would be located in the middle of that route and a major increase in bus ridership in that area would occur if a route ran north-south in Ewa along Kapolei Parkway just because so many students would likely use it to travel to and from the school. All of the students access the school along that road as it is the only possible route and yet our bus routes do not reflect this evolving picture of traffic flow in our community. For example, the 44 could do this and still meet most of its targeted area as well as finally provide a long-desired simple bus route for people in Ewa to the growing commercial center of Kapolei where an increasing number of Ewa residents work, shop, and attend school (K-12, and college). The "second city" is finally beginning to function as one, but we still don't even have a basic bus route through what is becoming the new central artery of most of Ewa (Kapolei Parkway with major schools and a relatively new shopping mall) to and from Kapolei.

I am also requesting that additional traffic cameras be installed along Fort Weaver Road down to Keoneula Boulevard and along Kapolei Parkway for the Joint Traffic Management Center. I believe additional cameras along these routes will benefit the community and help the city and state better understand and manage the increasing traffic density in the Ewa community.

Perhaps most importantly, I would like some information as to the apparent longstanding and ongoing opposition to widening Fort Weaver Road to three lanes north of Keanui Drive, south of Keoneula Boulevard, and a sidewalk from Geiger Road to Keoneula Boulevard. In a large part of this stretch of road, literally the only thing that needs doing is restriping (southbound between Geiger and Keanui) to alleviate the daily massively back-ed up afternoon traffic south of Geiger road. Drivers no longer even acknowledge that it is two lanes but drive on the very wide shoulder as a third lane already – because the intransigence of the state to simply restripe that area makes no practical sense. The Legislature has twice previously approved appropriations of approximately \$33 million for this work (I believe it was in both the 2015 and 2018 state budget). On both occasions I was told by Deputy Director Ed Sniffen that he would not do these projects, the appropriated moneys were never spent, and traffic congestion and pedestrian safety issues have only gotten worse and continue to be a daily serious safety and quality of life concern in the very heart of my community. We have a long-standing desperate need for these basic improvements and our community's patience is wearing thin.

Lastly, it is my understanding that the Honolulu City Council in the past has also approved monies for expansion and major improvements of roads in our community, like Papipi Rd. (including sidewalks all the way down that road) but despite some construction work in the area near the entrance of Oneula Beach Park, little progress it seems has been made to improve the road and pedestrian safety, besides in the installment of a crosswalk and stop sign at one intersection.

I would very much appreciate a written response to all of these requests. Naturally, some are for the city and some are for the state, I leave it to you to respond to the appropriate projects, but find it beneficial

that we all be aware of the necessary partnership between state and city projects in helping to ensure the safety and navigability of our large and still growing community's roads, especially since some of these areas involve a complex mix state, local, and at times even federal jurisdictions.

If there is anything more that I or my partners in elected office representing this community can do that I am not already doing to help with regard to these projects or any other projects not mentioned herein, please do not hesitate to let me know. I invite all those to whom I am writing to please partner with me so that we can work together to improve the safety and navigability of the larger Ewa community.

Yours in Service,



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

Cc: Councilmember Augie Tulba  
Councilmember Andria Tupola  
Deputy Director – Highways, Edwin Sniffen  
Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization, Executive Director Alvin Au