

NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD REPORT

REPRESENTATIVE HENRY J.C. AQUINO

District 38 – Waipahu

March 2021



REP. HENRY J.C. AQUINO
38th House District

Chair, House Committee on
Transportation

Member, House Committee on
Consumer Protection & Commerce

Member, House Committee on
Housing

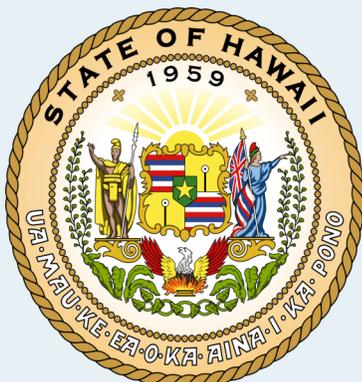
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL
415 S. BERETANIA STREET
ROOM 419
HONOLULU, HI 96813

OFFICE: 586-6520

FAX: 586-6521

EMAIL:

repaquino@capitol.hawaii.gov



Aloha Board Members and Neighbors,

As March ends and we welcome Spring, the 31st Legislature heads into the second half of the legislative session. In spite of operating under strict COVID-19 health and safety protocols, my colleagues and I have been working diligently and collaboratively with the public to pass legislation to benefit the community and state. A summary of a few bills are high lighted. These bills have crossed over to the Senate for further deliberation.

I've introduced resolutions to address specific community and national issues including improvements to Hans L'Orange Park, traffic safety analysis for Waipahu streets, immigrant access to government services, and addressing anti-Asian hate crimes. I will continue to advocate for the adoption of these measures.

I will continue to work on issues impacting our community and state. Please feel free to call my office, (808)586-6520, or send an email to repaquino@capitol.hawaii.gov if you have any questions or concerns.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Henry J.C. Aquino".

Dedication of Kapalama Container Terminal Phase 1 & Groundbreaking of Phase 2

The Hawaii Department of Transportation dedicated the Kapalama Container terminal (KCT) Phase 1 and broke ground on Phase 2 of the project designed to improve cargo handling capabilities at the hub of Hawaii's commercial harbor system. KCT Phases 1 & 2 are the centerpiece of the Harbor Modernization Program.

Pictured above: (L to R)
House Transportation
Committee Chair Henry
Aquino, Pasha Senior
Vice President Michael
Caswell, HDOT Deputy
Director for Harbors
Derek Chow, HHUG
Executive Director Gary
North, Pasha President
and CEO George Pasha
IV, Gov. David Ige, HDOT
Director Jade Butay,
Kiewit Project Manager
Kyle Nakamura, Senate



Transportation Committee Chair Chris Lee, and Kahu Kordell Kekoa prepare to break ground on KCT Phase 2.

ACT 1 - RELATING TO EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

The Legislature is currently advancing several bills designed to help working families and promote economic activity and resilience. **HB1278 HD1** quickly made its way through the Hawai'i State House of Representatives and State Senate, and signed into law as **Act 1** by Governor Ige on March 2, 2021. This bill will bring much needed unemployment insurance relief to employers and small businesses across the state. **Act 1** aims to mitigate the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic by reducing employer contribution rates. Without these protections, struggling businesses would face the highest rate, Schedule H, at a time when they can least afford it. By lowering this to Schedule D, the Legislature's goal is to help our local economy stay afloat without the need for layoffs or other cost-cutting measures that would effect workers. Hawai'i faces a long path to economic recovery, but I am confident that **Act 1** will be a critical part of that process.

2021 Mid-Session Highlights

The following is a summary of selected accomplishments of the Hawaii House of Representatives during the 2021 Regular Session, as of March 9, 2021. These bills have crossed over to the Senate for further discussion and deliberation. For more detailed information regarding any legislative measure, please visit www.capitol.hawaii.gov.

CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

Fireworks Control Law; Permissible Uses; Fines. Promotes compliance with the Fireworks Control Law by increasing the fines associated with the illegal use of consumer fireworks, display fireworks, articles pyrotechnic, and aerial devices outside of the times permitted by law. [HB508 HD1](#)

Residential Landlord-Tenant Code; Housing; Remedies; Failure to Pay Rent; Expiration of Eviction Moratorium. Amends a landlord's remedy for a tenant's failure to pay rent by: extending the period for a notice of rental agreement termination by a landlord from five business days to fifteen calendar days; specifying the required contents of the notice; requiring landlords to provide the notice to mediation centers that offer free mediation for residential landlord-tenant matters and to enter into mediation if scheduled by their tenants; delaying when landlords may file an action for summary possession if mediation is scheduled by their tenants; and restricting when landlords may bring a summary proceeding for possession dependent on the amount of rent due. Appropriates funds for the Judiciary to contract for mediation services. Repeals one year after the expiration date of the final eviction moratorium imposed pursuant to a COVID-19 state of emergency proclamation. [HB1376 HD2](#)

CORRECTIONS, MILITARY & VETERANS

Residential Landlord-Tenant Code; Rental Agreements; Early Termination; Servicemembers. Establishes a process for the early termination of a rental agreement for certain active duty servicemembers who: (1) receive military orders requiring the servicemember tenant to vacate civilian housing and move into on-post government quarters, and failure to move into on-post government quarters will result in a forfeiture of basic allowance for housing; and (2) die while serving on active duty. Specifies that the early termination process does not apply if the military orders are a result of disciplinary action or court order. [HB391 HD3](#)

EDUCATION

Executive Office on Early Learning; Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program; Early Learning Special Fund. Addresses the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawaii by establishing an Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning. Requires stipend fund repayments for the Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program to be deposited into the Early Learning Special Fund. [HB1360 HD1](#)

Department of Human Services; Department of Education; Preschool Open Doors Program; Executive Office on Early Learning. Addresses the shortage of early childhood education educators by establishing the Hawaii Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning. Clarifies and makes adjustments to Act 46, Session Laws of Hawaii 2020, which relates to access to learning, to reflect the current situation brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. [HB1362 HD1](#) & [HB290 HD2](#)

HOUSING

Affordable Homeownership; Revolving Fund. Provides homeownership opportunities for low-income families by establishing the Affordable Homeownership Revolving Fund to provide loans to nonprofit community development financial institutions and nonprofit housing development organizations for the development of affordable homeownership housing projects. Authorizes monies in the revolving fund to be used for loans for affordable for-sale housing units. Appropriates funds. [HB79 HD1](#)

Rental Assistance; Low-Income Household Renters Income Tax Credit. Helps individuals and families needing rental assistance by increasing the amount of the tax credit and adjusted gross income eligibility thresholds for taxpayers claiming the Low-Income Household Renters Income Tax Credit and providing for inflation increases every three years based on the Consumer Price Index. [HB131 HD1](#)

PANDEMIC & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Commercial Rent Relief Grant Program; Establishes a Commercial Rent Relief Grant Program to be administered by the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Requires that the Commercial Rent Relief Grant Program be given priority for monies received through federal funding. Appropriates funds. [HB1324 HD2](#)

TRANSPORTATION

Peer-to-peer Car-sharing; Surcharge Tax. Authorizes and regulates peer-to-peer car-sharing by requiring certain insurance, notice, recordkeeping, and disclosure requirements. Establishes the peer-to-peer car-sharing surcharge tax on the operator of the peer-to-peer car-sharing program. [HB333 HD3](#)

Counties; Outstanding Charges; Abandoned or Derelict Vehicles; Vehicle Registration. Authorizes the Director of Finance of each county to require payment of outstanding charges owed to the county for the towing, removal, or disposal of an abandoned or derelict vehicle within the county before renewing a motor vehicle certificate of registration or transferring interest or title, except when the motor vehicle was stolen or taken without permission or authorization. [HB161 HD2](#)

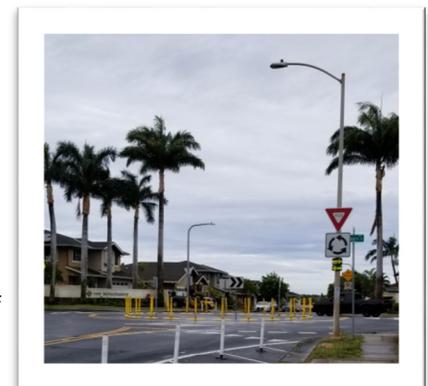
Ignition Interlock; Operating a vehicle under the influence; Penalties; Compliance. Establishes a system of graduated penalties for violations of the ignition interlock law. Requires proof of compliance with the ignition interlock law to be eligible to apply for a driver's license. [HB1263 HD1](#)

Resolutions

The following House Concurrent Resolutions (HCR) and House Resolutions (HR) were introduced to address community and national issues including:



Hans L'Orange Park: Encouraging the City and County of Honolulu to plan for the necessary improvements to, and revitalization of Hans L'Orange Park. [HCR47 HD1 & HR38 HD1](#)



Traffic Safety: Requesting the Department of Transportation Services of the City and County of Honolulu to conduct a traffic safety analysis regarding the implementation of traffic calming systems throughout Waipahu. [HCR78 & HR66](#)

As a Co-Convener of the Joint House and Senate Filipino Caucus, the following HCR and HR were introduced by the Filipino Caucus for consideration:

Anti-Asian Hate Crimes: Condemning and denouncing all forms of anti-Asian sentiment and all acts of racism, xenophobia, intolerance, discrimination, hate crime, and hate speech against Asian Americans and individuals in the United States. [HCR 168 and HR 142](#)

Government Services for Immigrants: Requesting the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to convene a working group to improve access to government services for immigrants and increase immigrant opportunities to make civic and economic contributions to the community. [HCR169 & HR143](#)

Capital Improvement Projects

Funding for the following Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) were recently released:

State wide Planning, Statewide Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): \$750,000 in total funding for multiple TOD projects statewide.

Traffic Signal Modernization: \$3,779,250 to finance additional construction for traffic signal modernization at various locations statewide.

Waipahu High School:

1. **\$50,000** in total funding to finance construction for an electrical upgrade at Building A.
2. **\$498,000** in total funding to finance construction to replace the sewer line at Building I at Waipahu High School



Pictured above: (L to R) Bob Bean, Hawaiian Humane board member; Councilmember Augie Tulba, Representative Matt LoPresti; Representative Aquino; Hawaiian Humane President & CEO Anna Neubauer; Hawaiian Humane Board Chair Ginny Tiu; Hawaiian Humane Outreach Manager Suzy Tam; Representative Ty Cullen; Councilmember Brandon Elefante.

Pictured at Right: (L to R) Representative Aquino, and Councilmembers Tulba and Elefante

Community Support



Pet Kokua Outreach Center

Hawaiian Humane Society celebrated the grand opening for its new Pet Kokua Outreach Center in Waipahu on March 10, 2021. The new pet outreach center is inside the Filipino Community Center and offers Pet Food Bank services, along with information on reduced or waived-fee spay/neuter services and other supportive functions for pet owners. The mission of the Pet Kokua Program, according to the nonprofit, is to “keep pets and their people together,” and improve the quality of life for all animals by providing assistance. The center offers services Monday to Thursday, 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The center is closed on Friday and Saturday.



Read Across America

March is Read Across America Month. Promoting literacy puts students on the pathway to a lifetime of learning and success. Due to COVID restrictions, Hawai'i State Representatives were not able to visit schools to read to students in-person. This year, legislators brought the story-telling to students by video-taping Representatives reading select works from Dr. Seuss's book—“Seussisms”.