

# CAPITOL UPDATE

## REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI



### DEAR FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS:

It has been my great privilege to represent you in the Hawaii State House and serve as House Majority Leader during these past two challenging years. Due in part to funds provided by the federal government, the reopening of our tourist economy, and increasing tax revenues, we had unanticipated funds flowing in to the State during this legislative session.

Because of these unexpected revenues, we were able to address long-standing issues in our community and provide historic levels of funding to support our working families, affordable housing, Native Hawaiians, and our public schools.

In this newsletter, I report on highlights of this session, including key legislation affecting Hawaii's working families and funding for District 24's public schools in the McKinley-Roosevelt complex area. Please contact me with your feedback about these or other legislative matters.

While we continue to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, there is still much work to be done to ensure that the investments made today will deliver on an improved, sustainable economy that benefits all of Hawaii's residents.

To stay up-to-date on the latest news from the State Capitol and our community, please sign up for my weekly e-newsletter at [mailchi.mp/6b4ab930a238/district24newsletter](mailto:mailchi.mp/6b4ab930a238/district24newsletter). You can also always reach me by email at [repbelatti@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repbelatti@capitol.hawaii.gov) or by phone at (808) 586-9425. Please stay in touch!

With warmest aloha,

Della Au Belatti



# HELPING WORKING FAMILIES

## Raising the Minimum Wage to \$18

Minimum wage has been a long-standing issue especially given the economic consequences of the pandemic. **HB 2510** incrementally increases the minimum wage in Hawaii beginning with \$12/hour starting October 1, 2022. The minimum wage will continue to incrementally increase to \$14/hour in 2024, \$16/hour in 2026, and finally \$18/hour in 2028.

## Making the EITC Permanent

With the passing of **HB 2510**, the Earned Income Tax Credit will also be made permanent and refundable. This tax credit allows qualified workers to regain more of their earned income by increasing their tax refund.

## Expanding the State's Safety Net

**HB 2512** appropriates **\$15 million** to continue the 'Ohana Zones initiative to address homelessness in the community. This program seeks to improve the health and well-being of individuals experiencing homelessness through outreach, shelters, triage facilities, and permanent housing.

The Legislature also made strides for adult Medicaid enrollees, providing **\$25 million** to reinstate basic adult dental services that were previously eliminated in 2009.

**\$5.8 million** was also appropriated to provide postpartum Medicaid coverage from 2 to 12 months following the end of pregnancy.

## Rebate for All Hawaii Taxpayers

All Hawaii taxpayers who filed in Hawaii for 2021 are eligible to receive either a \$300 or \$100 rebate subject to Governor Ige's approval of **SB 514**. Each qualifying resident taxpayer may claim their rebate, including rebates for eligible dependents.

State Capitol (May 5, 2022) : Representative Belatti delivers remarks on the last day of session, adjournment sine die.

On May 5, 2022 the Hawaii State Legislature adjourned sine die. Of the over 2,500 bills introduced this session, 343 measures passed. The following is a list of some of this year's highlights. For a full list and to read more about each bill, visit the Capitol webpage at [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov).

# ADDRESSING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing is the paramount issue for working families attempting to make ends meet in Hawaii. Building on a multi-year effort to address affordable housing, the Legislature made a **\$1 billion** commitment to build affordable housing.

In addition to **HB 2511** that provides **\$600 million** in funding to DHHL for affordable housing development, **SB 3048** appropriates **\$300 million** dollars to the Rental Housing Revolving Fund with **\$150 million** dollars set aside to develop rental housing for middle-to-low income workers and their families.

**HB 1600** appropriates another **\$20 million** into the Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund to facilitate development of affordable housing infrastructure and **\$5 million** to provide gap-financing through the Affordable Homeownership Revolving Fund; while **HB 2223** allocates approximately **\$23 million** for housing subsidies of up to \$500/month to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Temporary Assistance for Other Needy Families (TAONF) participants.

**HB 1752**, relating to Section 8 vouchers, appropriates **\$1.5 million** to the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority to incentivize landlords to take part in the Tenant-Based Assistance Housing Choice Voucher Program.

## REBATE

for all Hawaii taxpayers who filed in Hawaii for 2021

\*Subject to Governor Ige's approval

<p>Taxpayers earning less than \$100,000 will receive</p> <p><b>— \$300 —</b></p> <p>Taxpayers earning more than \$100,000 will receive</p> <p><b>— \$100 —</b></p>
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Each qualifying resident taxpayer may claim their rebate including rebates for eligible dependents.

**Funding for DHHL**

The Legislature passed **HB 2511** appropriating **\$600 million** to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to develop lots, purchase lands, and provide down payment and rent subsidies for beneficiaries on the wait list to obtain homestead lots. The Legislature also provided **\$10 million** for homestead services, **\$20 million** for additional home development, and **\$5 million** for repair and maintenance projects statewide.

**Kalima Settlement**

The long-standing 23-year old Kalima case, was also addressed through **SB 3041**, funding a **\$328 million** settlement of all claims of wait listed beneficiaries in the case.

**Protecting Culture, Advancing Innovation, & Fulfilling Public Land Trust Obligations**

Through **HB 1600**, the Legislature provided support to perpetuate Hawaiian culture and history by funding Bishop Museum, 'Iolani Palace, and Kaho'olawe Island Reserve, while also providing funding in **SB 3357** to support Native Hawaiian business training, entrepreneurship, and mentoring. Lastly, through **SB 2021**, the Legislature appropriated **\$64 million** to OHA as part of ceded lands proceeds, and a working group will be convened to further determine the State's ongoing obligations under the public land trust law.



*State Capitol (May 4, 2022) : Representative Belatti joins Majority Floor Leader, Representative Dee Morikawa and Dr. Noe Noe Wong-Wilson at the Native Hawaii press conference.*

**SUPPORTING OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Teacher Salaries**

This year, the Legislature appropriated a total of **\$34.5 million** in adjustments for teachers working in hard-to-fill areas, special education, and Hawaiian language immersion. These appropriations will help to improve the compensation and retention of experienced, hardworking educators by addressing compression which has locked teachers into salary steps and providing for paid professional development.

**A/C for Schools**

Many schools have yet to receive AC units or other heat abatement measures. Through **SB 2862**, the Legislature appropriated **\$10 million** for the installation of air conditioning in numerous public school classrooms. Nearly **\$21 million** was also funded for Capital Improvement Projects relating to heat abatement projects.

**Title IX Funding**

Title IX opened the door and has given millions of women and girls opportunities to excel in education. **HB 1775** ensures these opportunities by requiring annual reporting by UH, the DOE, and the Public Charter School Commission, and appropriates **\$350,000** for equity training. The Legislature has also committed over **\$115 million** in funds for Title IX related projects.

**Funding for District Schools**

**FY 22/23**

McKinley High School—Athletic Complex Improvements	\$22,730,000
McKinley High School—Architectural Barrier Removal	\$1,500,000
McKinley High School—Exterior Painting and Related Improvements	\$1,400,000
Roosevelt High School—New Music Facilities	\$19,000,000
Roosevelt High School—Construction and Equipment for a New Gymnasium	\$18,000,000
Roosevelt High School—Locker Room Renovation	\$550,000
Washington Middle School—Construction of a New Band Room	\$10,000,000
Washington Middle School—Campus-Wide Telecom Upgrade	\$2,200,000
Washington Middle School—Heat Abatement	\$500,000
Stevenson Middle School—General Repairs, Refurbishment, and Renovations	\$300,000
Kaahumanu Elementary School—Cafeteria, Ground, and Site Improvements	\$300,000
Halau Ku Mana Charter School—Structural and A/C Repairs	\$700,000

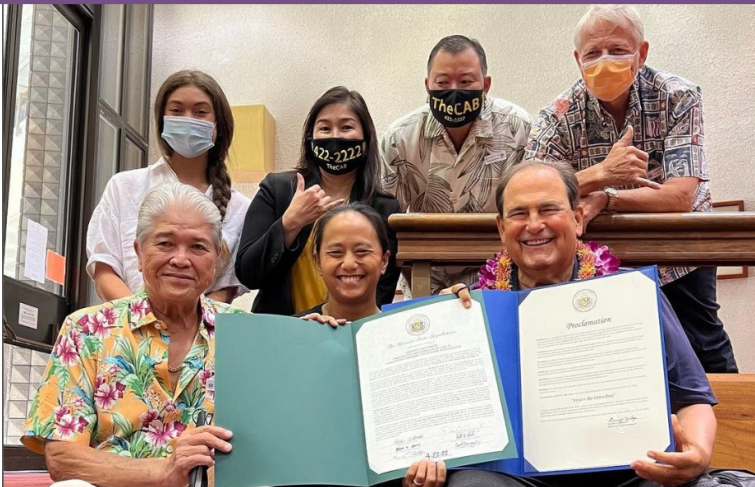


# STATE REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI

**State Capitol**  
415 S. Beretania St., Rm. 439  
Honolulu, HI 96813

(808) 586-9425  
repbelatti@capitol.hawaii.gov  
f @repbelatti

## CELEBRATING COMMUNITY



State Capitol (April 22, 2022): Representative Belatti celebrates Frank De Lima Jr. Day with beloved Makiki resident Frank De Lima, Jr., Dr. Stephen Arnold, Howard Higa & staff from The Cab. Best known as a comedian, actor, writer, composer, and performer, De Lima is also a philanthropist who founded his own Student Enrichment Program encouraging and nurturing Hawaii's youth statewide. Mahalo Frank for being a beacon of laughter, service, and joy in our community!

State Capitol (May 2, 2022): Representative Belatti celebrates 44 years of public service by Senator Brian Taniguchi, her Senate counterpart. Senator Taniguchi has served in both the House and Senate, including chairmanships of the Senate Judiciary, Ways & Means, and Labor, Culture & the Arts Committees. Senator Taniguchi will be greatly missed. We wish him a joyous and family-filled retirement!

