



REPRESENTATIVE SHARON E. HAR

District 40 Update

Royal Kunia - Makakilo - Kapolei - Kalaeloa

DECEMBER 2011

HAWAII STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Dear Friends:

As we enter the holiday season, I hope that you and your families had a wonderful Thanksgiving and are enjoying these special times together. During this busy time of year, it is critical to make safety and common sense top priorities, particularly on our roads. I recently attended a briefing on the progress of Hawaii's ignition interlock program, which has made significant strides in preventing drunk driving on our roads. I will also be supporting upcoming community efforts to promote safe driving, and I hope you will join me in these efforts. See page 2 for more information.

After the excitement of the holidays ends, it will be time for another legislative session, which opens on January 18 and goes until early May. Balancing the budget will again be my top priority, but I hope to hear from constituents with any suggestions on potential legislation.

Finally, see page 2 for information on upcoming area holiday events, including the Waipahu and Kapolei Christmas parades, both taking place on December 10. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me at rephar@capitol.hawaii.gov or 586-8500 or with any suggestions, questions or concerns. Have a safe and happy holiday season!

Aloha,

Sharon Har
Representative, District 40
Kapolei, Makakilo,
Royal Kunia, Kalaeloa

Preparing for the 2012 Legislative Session

With the new year just around the corner, it also means that our state's next legislative session is rapidly approaching, and things are picking up at the Capitol. The legislature's opening day will be on Wednesday, January 18, 2012.

Once again, we will be facing challenges associated with the economic downturn. In the



In October, Finance Committee members, including Rep. Har (4th from left) toured West Oahu sites, including the Kroc Center (seen here) and the UH-West Oahu construction site, in preparation for the upcoming legislative session and development of the state's fiscal priorities.

past three legislative sessions, we have dealt with deficits of \$2.1 billion, \$1.2 billion and \$1.3 billion. At its most recent meeting on September 6, the Council on Revenues projected that tax revenue growth for the rest of the current fiscal year (ending on June 30, 2012) would be 14.5 percent. Of this growth, 5.2 percent is due to economic growth and 5 percent from tax law changes. The remaining 4.3 percent is due to a "lag effect" from the Lingle administration's decision to delay income tax refunds in 2010. (Because refunds were delayed in FY2010, two sets of tax refunds were issued in FY2011 (July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011); as only one will be issued in FY2012, on paper it creates the impression that overall tax revenues have increased, though in reality the state is just "catching up" from having to issue two sets of refunds in FY2011.)

While another shortfall is not anticipated based on these current projections, actual tax collections are running behind those projections. Because of this continued uncertainty surrounding the economy, the winding down of federal government stimulus funding and the new tax changes (such as the one-year increase of the rental car surcharge from \$3 to \$7.50), the legislature will be awaiting the January 5, 2012 Council on Revenues meeting to determine what budget-balancing measures may need to be considered in 2012.

As a member of the Finance Committee, my top priority during the upcoming legislative session will again be balancing our state's budget and ensuring our core governmental responsibilities of public safety, education and health and welfare are met, but I will also be introducing bills in other areas. I welcome any suggestions from the community, though the rules of the House of Representatives do limit the amount of bills I am able to introduce and when those bill must be introduced. The bill introduction deadline is typically the fourth Wednesday of January (January 25), but as my staff and I need ample time to prepare legislation, please be sure to contact my office with any ideas by the beginning of January. We look forward to hearing from you!



Rep. Har and members of the Finance Committee, including Chair Marcus Oshiro (3rd from right) visited the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands' Kapolei headquarters in October and met with DHHL staff, including Chair Nahale-a (far right).

Driving Safely During the Holidays

With the holidays here, it is a time for enjoying the company of family and friends and giving thanks for the good fortune in our lives. In all the festivities, however, it can be easy to forget that the holidays are also a time of year when traffic accidents increase, particularly due to drunk drivers. As someone who was the victim of a drunk driver, I know all too well the dangers that can await us on the roads. That is why I worked with my colleagues at the state legislature, law enforcement, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), the state Department of Transportation and many other stakeholders to pass ignition interlock legislation over recent legislative sessions.

Under this program, which went into effect at the beginning of 2011, people who are arrested for driving under the influence must install an ignition interlock (an in-car breathalyzer which will only start the car if the driver registers a blood alcohol content of less than .02) if they wish to keep driving. Since the program's implementation, 920 devices have been installed in our state. Moreover, on more than 3,000 occasions since the beginning of this year, these devices have prevented drivers with a blood alcohol content of .02 or higher from getting behind the wheel and potentially causing an accident, injuries or fatalities.

Of course, driving under the influence is not the only dangerous activity on our roads that can lead to tragic deaths and lifelong injuries. From excessive speeding to illegally talking or texting on cell phones, these distractions only seem to increase during the busy holiday season. That is why I am also supporting the upcoming "Live and Let Live/Drive Safe 4 Ewa and Kapolei," HPD's annual campaign to promote safe driving in West Oahu communities during the holidays. The campaign will kick off with a public ceremony and sign-waving on **Saturday, December 3 at 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** in front of the **Kapolei Police Station**. Call my office at 586-8500 for information on the other sign-waving events, taking place from December 5 through December 16. As you enjoy this special time of year with your families and friends, remember to make getting home safely — whether by being or having a designated driver, calling a cab, or reminding yourself and others to avoid unnecessary distractions on the roads — a top priority.



Rep. Har speaks at a November 16, 2011 press briefing on Hawaii's efforts to combat driving under the influence.

Upcoming Events

Aloha Aina Day: Kapolei High School's next Aloha Aina community recycling event will take place on **Saturday, December 3, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.** at **Kapolei High**. For more information or to arrange free curbside pickup, call 306-1876.

Kapolei Library Book Sale: The Friends of the Library - Kapolei will be holding its annual holiday book sale from **10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, December 3** on the library grounds (weather permitting; if rainy weather, sale will be indoors).

Community Luncheon: The Kapolei Korean United Methodist Church (91-1037 Lexington St.) is hosting a **free community fellowship luncheon** on **Sat., December 3 from 12 to 2 p.m.** Contact 421-8439 or KapoleiKUMC@gmail.com for more details.

Waipahu Christmas Parade: On **Saturday, December 10 at 3 p.m.**, community members are invited to the annual Waipahu Christmas parade. The parade will start at the Waipahu District Park (Paiwa St.) and ends at the **Waipahu Town Center (94-050 Farrington Hwy)**, where community members are invited to join in the festivities. For more information, call 678-6520.

Kapolei Christmas Parade: Also on **Saturday, December 10**, the **Kapolei Christmas Lights parade** will take place at **6 p.m.**, starting at the **Kapolei Fairgrounds** and continuing to **Kapolei Hale** (1000 Uluohia St.), where there will be a tree-lighting ceremony, fireworks, food trucks and a free Keiki Village with activities.

Ewa Field Commemoration Ceremony: On **Saturday, December 10** at the **Kalaeloa Airport** (between hangars 110 and 111), there will be a commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the attack on Ewa Field and Pearl Harbor and the 100th anniversary of Marine Corps aviation. Gates open at 9 a.m., with the **commemoration ceremony at 9:30 a.m.** There will be displays of aircraft, military vehicles and classic cars, food vendors, entertainment and a screening of "Tora, Tora, Tora" at 6 p.m.