



Representative
 Kyle Yamashita
 State Capitol, Rm. 402
 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Presorted Standard
 U.S. Postage Paid
 Honolulu, Hawaii
 Permit No. 9882



MID-SESSION 2008
 FROM REPRESENTATIVE KYLE YAMASHITA

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The legislative session is in full swing, and with less than two months remaining, bills are moving closer to becoming law.

My colleagues and I are working towards the increase of agricultural opportunities, small business rights, and the promotion of the high technology and innovation industries. However, as Hawaii moves into the future, we also recognize the importance of protecting our fragile environment. Business advancements must be made with environmental issues in mind, and the two must be balanced in order to achieve truly sustainable development.

As your representative, I am particularly attentive to the needs of Upcountry Maui, and I am focusing great effort towards the construction of a water reservoir, and the completion of the water distribution system in Kula. As our children are so important, I have also worked to get funds included in the budget for improvement projects in our schools.

We at the legislature remain committed to working with all of you towards making our community and state a better place to live, work, and raise a family. Please do not hesitate to contact me to voice your concerns.

With warmest Aloha,

REPLANTING KULA STATE FOREST RESERVE

Nearly 2,300 acres of the Kula State Forest Reserve were burned in the early 2007 wildfires. In response, the State legislature appropriated over \$3 million to support the Kula Forest Restoration Plan.

Although the fire was very unfortunate, it also holds great promise. The wild-fire burned both native and alien plants, and we are now presented with the opportunity to plant more native plants in order to support native species.

The state appropriated \$3,115,000 in special funds over the 2008-2009 fiscal biennium to aid the reforestation plan. This is the largest amount ever allotted for a reforestation project.

State forestry officers chose a mixture of both native and non-native species. Redwood trees will be planted in place of pine trees, as they have both enormous potential commercially and are less susceptible to fire.

The redwood trees will be planted with approximately 57,000 native plants that have been provided by the Native Nursery in Kula.

Tree seedlings can be planted until the end of Spring, and there is also an on-going effort to assist in hand weeding of priority areas.

Volunteers will play a key role in the reforestation efforts. To date, nearly 120 volunteers representing six organizations and schools have donated 384 hours of time, planted 1,800 seedlings, and hand weeded 3.5 acres.

Volunteers ages range from elementary school age children to adults.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact forester Lance De Silva at the Division of Forestry and Wildlife at (808) 873-3980. Volunteers should come prepared with lunch, water, gloves, sun screen, covered shoes, and warm outer layers.

Young children will require adult supervision.



Assisting reforestation efforts at the Kula Forest Reserve



MID-SESSION



Helping in the clean-up of Waiohuli after the flood

Midway through the 2008 Legislative Session, House and Senate lawmakers voted on hundreds of bills reflecting the state's most pressing needs and issues. These bills have now crossed into their non-originating chamber, so that the House can review Senate bills and vice versa. At the start of the session, the House Majority Package and the Joint House and Senate Majority Package focused on key areas.

These package ideas continue to move forward, along with other important issues facing out State.

[Bringing Water to Upcountry Maui Through a Reservoir](#)

As you know, Upcountry Maui has historically been victim to long dry spells and droughts. As our water resources are so fragile, I introduced a bill that appropriates over \$1.9 million of State funds for the planning and design phases of a 300 million gallon water reservoir. Since this reservoir will be such a large project, the State will work in collaboration with the Federal and County governments. Once complete, the reservoir will protect Upcountry residents from drought. We will provide water to our homes and farms even in the driest of times.

[Protecting Hawaii's Small Businesses](#)

The Hawaii Small Business Bill of Rights, was introduced to protect Hawaii's small businesses by providing small business owners with certain protections and guarantees when dealing with State governments. Once this important piece of legislation passes, business owners who feel wronged will be able to easily file a complaint that will be investigated by the Ombudsman. Small businesses are a major driving force in Hawaii's economy, and it is absolutely imperative that we protect them.



Flood damage community clean up at Waiohuli .

[Protecting Hawaii's Uniqueness: Energy and Environment](#)

Hawaii needs a long-term strategy to develop alternative and renewable energy resources. HB2506 directs the Legislative Reference Bureau to do just this, and look at how to best reorganize State agencies that are responsible for the monumental task of developing a long term energy strategy.

The spread of invasive species has had a major impact upon our quality of life; anyone who has had to endure the mating call of a coqui frog can attest to this. HB2501 establishes a Biosecurity Strategy within the Department of Agriculture to prevent and control the importation and spread of pests and other invasive species. This measure provides funding for the establishment of joint federal/state inspection facilities at our airports and harbors.



HIGHLIGHTS



House/Senate Majority Package Ideas:

- Renewable energy and reducing our dependence on imported oil
- Protecting our environment from invasive species
- Ensuring that Hawaii residents receive proper healthcare and housing
- Planning for growth in ways that respect land conservation
- Reducing the backlog on repair and maintenance on public schools and the University of Hawaii



Helping replant trees at Polipoli for the Kula Forest Reserve Project

The State Budget

The House is taking a fiscally conservative approach to the Executive Budget this year, and proposes to cut about \$67 million or 1.27% of the current budget. A proposed budget approved by the House of Representatives expend approximately \$10.7 billion. The House Committee on Finance emphasized the need to prepare for tough economic times ahead as the Federal economy slips into recession. However, sound fiscal management will allow us to maintain government services for the health, safety, and welfare of our people.

A New Forest Begins For Kula
 212,000 seedlings are being planted in the burned-out areas of the Kula Forest Reserve:

37,000 Koa	57,000 Redwood
22,000 'Ohi'a	13,000 Naio
37,000 Mamane	46,000 'A'ali'i

Protecting our Ohana: Investing in Healthcare

Access to healthcare for residents living in rural areas such as Upcountry Maui, is one of Hawaii's most critical health issues. The Hawaii Health Corps, established by HB2519, will provide loan repayments and stipends for physicians and dentists who agree to work areas with a shortage of health professionals and as first responders during civil defense and other emergencies.

To help the uninsured, the House has passed HB1993, which appropriates funds for nonprofit community based health care providers that will provide healthcare for those who do not have health insurance.

Lastly, HB584 and HB2778 will help those struggling with the cost of long-term care by providing a long-term care insurance tax credit.



Meeting with Retirees of ILWU Maui visiting on Opening Day of the 2008 Legislative Session.



Representative Kyle Yamashita

Perpetuating the Life of the Land: Agriculture

The state has a constitutional duty to protect agricultural lands and assist the agricultural industry. HB2361 requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture to identify public lands that should be designated as Important Agricultural Lands (IAL), and transfer the management responsibility of those lands to the Department of Agriculture.

Further, HB 2357 provides various incentives to landowners, including the exclusion of rental income from agricultural leases on IAL's from income and general excise taxes, allowing landowners to develop dwellings for farmers and employees on IAL's, establishing an IAL Qualified Agricultural Cost Tax Credit, and authorizing the Board of Agriculture to guarantee loans for the development to agricultural projects on IAL's.



Students at the Capitol

Investing in our Keikis Future: Education is the Key

Keiki First Steps is the proposed early learning system that provides quality learning programs for children from birth to the time they enter kindergarten. The early education program will be administered by an Early Learning Council, and will focus on expanding existing programs and services for 3- and 4-year-olds, with priority given to underserved and at-risk children.

The legislature also remains committed to tackling the backlog of school repairs and maintenance. HB602 requires that \$90 million be annually deposited into the State Educational Facilities Improvement Special Fund for public school capital improvement projects.

Public Schools Planned Repair and Maintenance Projects for 2008-2009

School	Estimated Cost
Kula Elementary	\$ 101,000
Makawao Elementary	\$ 135,000
Pukalani Elementary	\$ 278,000
Kalama Intermediate	\$ 121,000
King Kekaulike High School	\$ 125,000

Capital Improvement Projects in House Budget

Agricultural Water Distribution <i>Plans and design for an agricultural water distribution system in Kula.</i>	\$1.5 million
Haleakala Highway Widening <i>Land acquisition and design for widening the highway from one lane to two lanes.</i>	\$150,000
Kula Hospital <i>Replacement of the X-Ray system.</i>	\$414,000
Water Reservoir <i>Plans and design for a 300 million gallon reservoir.</i>	\$1.9 million
Pukalani Elementary <i>Design, construction, and equipment for electrical upgrades, ground and site improvements.</i>	\$909,000
King Kekaulike High School <i>Additional sum for design for a new auditorium.</i>	\$410,000
MEO Bus System Building <i>Plans, design, and construction for a bus housing and maintenance building.</i>	\$1 million
Kahului Airport <i>Construction for a new access road to the airport from Hana Highway; parking lot expansion and improvements; environmental improvements; other various improvements.</i>	\$41 million
Maui Community College <i>Design, construction, and equipment for a new science building; ground and site improvements; various equipment and appurtenances.</i>	\$5 million
Kahului Harbor <i>Design and construction for comfort station for harbor workers; various harbor improvements; land acquisition.</i>	\$35 million

Connecting our Islands: Improving Transportation

As an island state, our commercial harbors are critical to Hawaii's transportation infrastructure. HB3406 proposes to improve, develop and modernize the State's commercial harbors by authorizing the Department of Transportation to issue revenue bonds to finance harbor improvements, to extend the term for disposition of public lands for maritime and maritime-related operations from 35 to 70 years, and establish a Harbors Modernization Group to implement harbor projects within the Commercial Harbors Modernization Plan.

Contact Information

State Capitol, Room 402 Honolulu, HI 96813
E-mail: repyamashita@capitol.hawaii.gov
Phone: (808) 586-6330 **Fax:** (808) 586-6331
NI Toll Free: 984-2400 x66330

