

Town & Upcountry Update

2016 Midsession Newsletter



Aloha Neighbors!

Thank you for the honor of serving you in the House of Representatives.

The 2016 legislative session has passed the midway point and I want to update you on our progress.

This newsletter also describes some of the bills that affect the pressing needs of Hawaii's people.

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.

I hope these legislative highlights are informative and useful. I look forward to hearing from you and continuing to work with you for our community.

Mahalo,

Back to Basics At Kula Elementary

In an increasingly technologic world, an agricultural program such as the one being launched at Kula Elementary School is not only rare, but incredibly important. Agriculture has always played a vital role in Hawaii's culture, and by keeping students informed and involved, the culture is kept alive.

It was a sad day when Keokea Elementary School closed its doors for the final time, and that sadness translated and contributed to the deterioration of the once immaculate campus grounds.

Mr. Chris Bachaus, Principal of Kula Elementary School, saw opportunity where so many others saw only weeds. In the fall of 2015, he contacted the Department of Land and Natural Resources about plans to use parts of the former School's lands to expand Kula Elementary School's own agricultural education efforts.

On February 2, 2016, the Department signed off on an exemption which would allow his plan to become reality. At the Keokea site, Kula's students will be able to experience a richer agricultural education. Not only will they get more space for their garden, but they will also have enough space to raise and care for livestock. The additional space will aid the students in learning some basics in animal care and management, animal health, and animal physiology, anatomy, and nutrition.

Additionally, Kula Elementary School is excited to continue the Agriculture Club and 4-H curriculum this quarter with the help of a new Leader, Ms. Erin Guzman. 4-H projects are real-life experiences that help students learn to make decisions, develop good work habits, and work together. Students also focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) learning objectives.

Besides working in the school garden, students are participating in projects that will develop citizenship and leadership skills. Students create their own garden maps, which will be used to create a garden landscape this quarter.

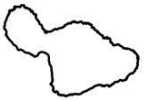


Second grade teacher, Ms. Gourlay, demonstrates planting techniques.

Simultaneously, students are engaged in the importance of nutrition and "eating the rainbow," are having a great time learning, and getting their hands dirty!

We congratulate Mr. Chris Bachaus for his hard work and persistence in expanding the agricultural program at Kula Elementary School.

Garden tools and soil may be donated to the school for their agriculture program. If you have any donations, please contact Kula Elementary School at (808) 876-7610.



Members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) stopped by on opening day.

Supporting Farmers & Agriculture

HB 1999 HD1 — Relating to Agriculture

Addresses the high cost of feed and the lack of local feed mills in Hawaii by establishing and funding a grant program for qualified livestock feed developers to cover a percentage of their feed development costs.

HB 2424 — Relating to Biosecurity

Controls and prevents invasive species threats to the State by allowing the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to establish or participate in private-public partnerships.

HB 2546 HD1 — Relating to Agriculture

Establishes the Agriculture Grant Program and Agriculture Grant Program Special Fund to provide grants to qualified farmers.

For those of you who received an events calendar earlier this month, the Upcountry Farmers Market is now located beside the football field in Kula Malu near Long's Drugs, Kula.

Engaging in Education & The Environment

HB 539 HD2 — Relating to University of Hawaii

Requires that UH-Manoa men's teams collectively be self-sufficient, while the women's teams may still be aided by state funds.

HB 2085 HD2 — Relating to Energy

Updates goals and targets in the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative Program and State Planning Act to reduce and ultimately eliminate Hawaii's dependence on fossil fuels for electrical generation and ground transportation by 2045.

HB 212 HD2 — Relating to Renewable Energy

Establishes a nonrefundable income tax credit for taxpayers who purchase and install battery backup systems for solar energy systems.

HB 2517 HD2 — Relating to Cesspools

Adds county-certified cesspools within 200 feet of an existing sewer system to the definition of qualified cesspool for the purposes of determining eligibility for an upgrade, conversion, or connection income tax credit.

HB 2266 HD2 — Relating to Early Learning

Supports Early Learning in Hawaii by funding necessary staffing and expenses.

Promoting Sports & Entertainment

HB 1847 HD2 — Relating to Entertainment

Establishes the Sports and Entertainment Authority to coordinate and develop a thriving entertainment and sports industry in the State.



Together with the Public Safety Committee and Public Safety Director Nolan Espinda during a hearing.

Caring for the Community

HB 1878 HD1 — Relating to Aging

Appropriates funds for the Kupuna Care Program, Aging and Disability Resource Center, fall prevention and early detection services for the elderly, the Healthy Aging Partnership Program, and an Alzheimer's disease related program.

HB 2736 HD2 — Relating to Ballots

Requires that Hawaiian language ballots be made available upon voter request in all elections held within the State.

HB 1580 HD1 — Relating to Crime Prevention

Appropriates funds to maintain and expand the Weed and Seed strategy, which is a collaborative crime fighting effort to reclaim, restore, and rebuild communities.

Supporting Our Veterans

HB 2491 — Relating to Vietnam War Commemoration

Appropriates funds for programs, ceremonies, and activities commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War.

HB 2490 HD1 — Relating to Veterans

Exempts selected disabled veterans from motor vehicle registration fees and taxes.



Visiting the King Kekaulike High School Auditorium construction site.



Sampling a dessert during the Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association Day at the Hawaii State Capitol.

Extending A Helping Hand

The U.S. Department of Labor has determined that HC&S's workers are eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA). This program will provide millions of dollars of federal funding to aid displaced HC&S workers as they enroll in job retraining. Job retraining expenses such as tuition, books, and transportation will be alleviated through the compensations provided by the TAA program.

State benefits such as those proposed in HB 2186 HD1, which provides funding for the retraining of workers affected by the cessation of sugar production on Maui, will work alongside the federal funding to provide additional support to HC&S workers.

Any displaced HC&S workers who have questions on accessing federal relief can contact their local Workforce Development division One -Stop Office at (808) 984-2091.



Donations we collected during our recent Pet Project.

Representative Kyle Yamashita

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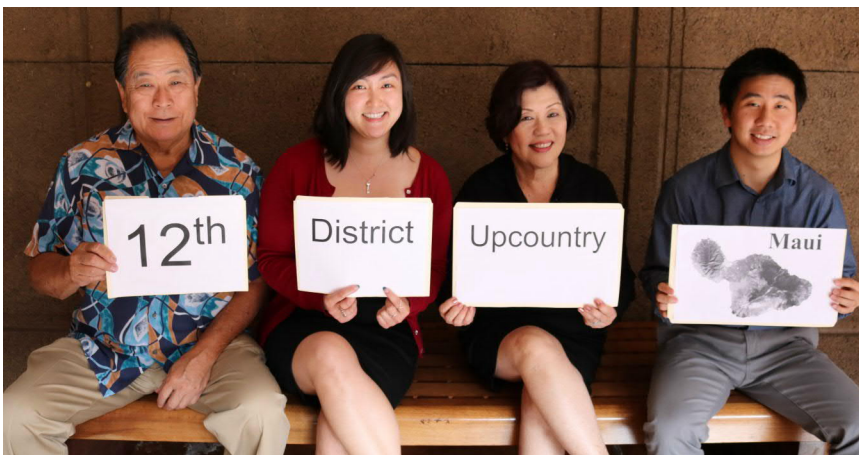
Presorted Standard

U.S. Postage Paid

Honolulu, Hawaii



Celebrating Verizon's contributions of tablets to
Kalamia Intermediate School.



Representative Yamashita's 2016 Staffers Eddie, Lauren, Lois, and Toren.
Call us with your concerns and questions!

CONTACT INFORMATION

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