



Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Hawai'i State Senator



Hawaii State Senate

District 22

Serving Mililani Mauka, Wahiawa, Whitmore Village, Waipi'o Acres, Wheeler, part of Poamoho—and the State of Hawai'i

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Majority Whip

Vice Chair: Committee on Ways and Means

Member: Committees on Education; Government Operations; Water, Land and Agriculture.

You can view Senator Dela Cruz's senate website at www.capitol.hawaii.gov. If you would like to receive our monthly newsletters and quarterly updates via email, we suggest that you email us your request via the Senate website.

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HAWAII 3-6 PROGRAM

According to The Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center project, Hawaii ranks 25 out of 50 when it comes to how children are faring across the 50 states. Using an index of 16 indicators, their latest report ranks states in these four domains: (1) economic well-being, (2) education, (3) health, and (4) family and community

Their report highlights that seventy percent of fourth graders in Hawaii are not proficient in reading and sixty-eight percent of eighth graders are not proficient in math. To date there are 90,000 children (thirty-one percent of the total aged 0-17) living in single-parent families, 7,000 teens who abuse alcohol or drugs, and 6,000 teens who do not attend school and are not working.

There are approximately 20 to 25 hours per week that children are out of school while most parents are at work thus creating an after-school gap. A report commissioned by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time in association with the Boston After-School for All Partnership program discussed the following: (1) the developmental needs of children that are critical pre-conditions to academic success and how after-school programs can help meet these needs, (2) how after-school programs can help overcome some of the risk factors to academic learning, and (3) the characteristics and features of effective learning environments.

Recognizing the importance of after school programs, this past session Senator Dela Cruz introduced SCR185 which requests the Department of Education to organize and coordinate out-of-school programs for kindergarten through twelfth grade and identify funding opportunities for current and future Department of Education out-of-school programs.

The intent is to provide structured care and activities for children who may be home alone and susceptible to risky behaviors and other dangers. Programs that include sports, art, and music have fostered positive youth development helping them build character, specific abilities, fitness, and academic commitment. Aside from their child-care and supervision value, these programs provide youth development and skill building that have been reported to reduce and prevent delinquent behavior.

In conjunction with DOE and PlayRugby USA, Senator Dela Cruz is working on developing a program for middle-school students to play flag rugby during after-school hours. The Department of Public Safety reports that Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) comprise over forty percent of Hawaii's inmate population. This program will focus on three DOE complex areas with the highest population of students that are from NHPI communities. By incorporating a physical activity, academic development, and a social environment, students will not only have a safe haven from the hours of 3 – 6 PM, but they will also learn the necessary discipline that is required to be successful in society. The idea is to take the program statewide after the first year.

Afterschool programs are increasing in number and popularity but Hawaii is one of the most costly states for child care and out of reach for many working families. We work to provide affordable after school programs to ensure that Hawaii's youth are in safe and nurturing environments in the after school hours.

SENATOR RECOGNIZES YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT



Senator presents a senate certificate to one of Mililani Mauka Elementary School's outstanding students of the year.



Senator presents senate certificate to one of Mililani Ike Elementary School's outstanding students of the year.



Senator presents a senate certificate to Tyler Villegas at his Eagle Scout ceremony.

SENATOR WORKS ON HIS “PRECISION ALIGNMENT TO WORKFORCE READINESS” PLAN. THIS PLAN CONNECTS AND ALIGNS STUDENT CURRICULUM WITH THE LOCAL INDUSTRY CREATING JOBS SO OUR CHILDREN CAN STAY AND LIVE IN HAWAII.



Senator and Dept. of Education officials visited with HART officials and discussed future job positions at the Rail Operations Center. This facility will create 300 jobs.



Senator and officials from the Dept. of Education and Dept. of Business, Economic Development and Tourism visited with Queens West administration and discussed current and future job positions at their hospital.