

MILILANI/WAIPAHU

2020 END OF SESSION NEWSLETTER

SENATE DISTRICT 18

Serving Mililani Town, Waipio Gentry, Waikele, Village Park & Royal Kunia



Aloha Friends, Neighbors and especially our High School and University Class of 2020!

2020 has presented incredible challenges for the community and the state of Hawai'i at large. Never in the history of the state have we dealt with the kinds of concerns we have addressed during the pandemic and will continue to navigate through the coming months. It has not been an easy road thus far but I am certain that the values of aloha are stronger than ever and that we will continue to make strides together.

The pandemic has required all of us to hui together and roll up our sleeves. Many of you are doing your part through the wearing of face masks, adhering to social distancing to keep your households and 'ohana safe during this time. I am very thankful that my fellow Mililani Senator, Donovan Dela Cruz, volunteered at the beginning of the pandemic to chair the Senate Special Committee on COVID-19. I, too, am a member of this committee and am impressed by his diligence and commitment to have regular public hearings to ensure the community receives answers to their pressing concerns and that Government is accountable to respond to them. In March, the committee urged the Governor to implement a 14-day quarantine period to protect our residents from transmission of the disease through travel, a mandate which has recently been extended to September 1st. In April, our committee worked to help the State redeploy idled workers to critical State functions like Unemployment Insurance. Through our efforts, the state has made progress to forge ahead through these difficult times. I know much work remains to be done, and I look forward to continuing to serve on this important committee to ensure that the public is aware of issues during this pandemic.

The June and July reconvene of our Legislative Session tackled vast, diverse and timely issues including the State's budget and CARES Act. And while many changes lie ahead in the coming months, I am proud of the work we have done thus far and will continue to do to improve the welfare and economy of our community in a post-pandemic Hawai'i. Please continue to be vigilant, wear masks and practice social distancing when possible. I wish you and your 'ohana a safe and healthy summer!



**MICHELLE
KIDANI**

SENATE
VICE PRESIDENT

Chair:
Committee on
Education

Vice Chair:
Committee on
Higher Education

Member:
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Congratulations to Waipahu High School science teacher Tessie Ford, who was awarded a Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching! (PAEMST)

The PAEMST program, administered by the National Science, recognizes outstanding teachers for their contributions to the teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and/or computer science. Tessie will receive a certificate signed by President Trump and a \$10,000 award from NSF and will travel to Washington, D.C., for an awards ceremony at a future date.



2020 CENSUS

Due to the restrictions of COVID-19, operational adjustments to the 2020 Census data collection process has changed, as the U.S. Census Bureau adapts new policies to protect the health and safety of the staff and public. In order to account for the suspension of field operations mid-March, the Census Bureau has extended their deadline for the Self-Response Phase (online, phone or mail) through October 31st. It is incredibly important that your voice be heard to ensure the funding the state of Hawai'i needs and deserves for the next ten years so be sure to complete and submit yours today! Visit census.hawaii.gov to complete yours today!

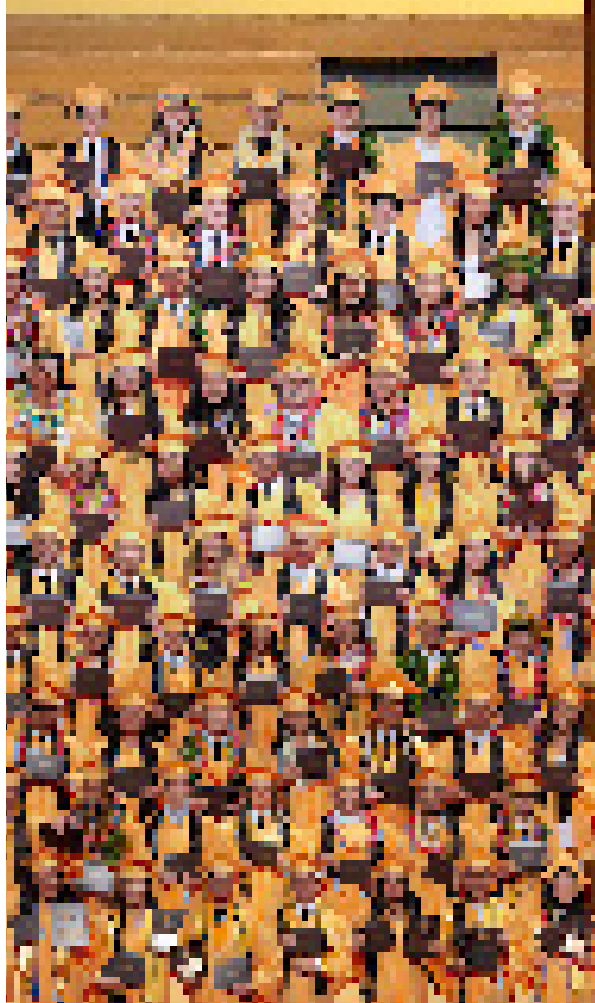
Congratulations Class of 2020



Waipahu High School Marauders!







**Congratulations
Class of 2020
Mililani High
School Trojans!**

BILL STATUS UPDATES

SB2262: RELATING TO THE HAWAII TEACHER STANDARDS BOARD

The Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) ensures our public school teachers continue to be highly qualified in their fields. This year, HTSB can offer private school teachers a mutual agreement with the Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools (HAIS). I was proud to support this initiative as I believe it not only strengthens our pool of potential public school teachers but also raises the education standard for all students in Hawai'i.

SB2262 also helps our emergency teacher hires. This includes educators who do not meet all of the qualifications as a certified public school teacher but has 3 years to complete the necessary coursework. Many of these teachers graduate into long and productive DOE careers. However, due to the COVID-19 shutdown, many were unable to complete their requirements and were at the end of their three year grace period. Without the legal authority to extend this period, these teachers would have been forced to leave the teaching profession. Mahalo nui to Lynn Hammonds, Executive Director of HTSB for ensuring that we do not unfairly penalize our teacher workforce during these crisis periods as we need all the teachers we can get.

SB2486: RELATING TO EDUCATION DATA

We all agree that it is vitally important that students have access to education. While disruptive or dangerous behaviors must be addressed, it is important to keep in mind the mitigating circumstances that can contribute to these behaviors. It is also important to have reliable data on who is disciplined, as well as the reasons why and how long these actions may take place. There is growing concern that some schools are seeing increases in suspension and expulsion rates. It is my belief that with better data collection comes better informed decision-making. Our teachers, school administrators, and principals need our support to ensure that their students and campuses remain safe and that students have access to the best resources possible. This bill is the first step towards that goal-- requiring the DOE to standardize their data collection, reporting process and provide annual report information to the BOE, legislature, and the general public.

SB3103: RELATING TO A SCHOOL FACILITIES AGENCY

As one of the joint-legislative packages this year, the establishment of a School Facilities Agency is a big step forward for our education system. The new School Facilities Agency would lead new school construction, major school renovations, and any future school redevelopment plans. Especially during the COVID-19 era, we are aware of the importance of modernizing our learning environments. This new agency will have a big responsibility moving forward to improve the physical learning structures for our students and I look forward to working with them. I'd like to express my mahalo to all of the community partners and stakeholders who helped us in the formation and passage of this bill. Mahalo to Hawai'i Community Foundation, Hawai'i Institute for Public Affairs, Kamehameha Schools, He'e Coalition, HawaiiKidsCAN, and many more. We are appreciative of these non-profits who are dedicated to serving our haumana.

HB2543: RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING

The time is right to take bold action to increase the opportunities for our students to have access to early learning opportunities. This bill is part of the joint-legislative package which promotes the expansion of childcare options to ensure working families have affordable care options as well as increases public preschool options. I am eager to work with both public and private partners towards our goal of achieving 100% early learning access for local families. We could not have made this important step without the support of many in our early learning community. A special mahalo to Kamehameha Schools, He'e Coalition, HawaiiKidsCAN, Hawai'i Community Foundation, and many others for helping us create and support the passing of HB2543.

HB1523: RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION BUDGET

One of the biggest issues our students have faced during the 4th quarter of distance learning was the inequitable access to devices. Adapting to this new normal made it clear that online learning will continue to remain a part of our education system for the foreseeable future. While our resources are limited, I am glad that we were able to carve out \$6.4M in CARES Act funding to cover the device needs for students who attend schools where the free and reduced price lunch population is 50% or above. I am very appreciative that my colleague and fellow Mililani Senator, Ways and Means Chair Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, was able to assist us with securing this critical funding for our students.

SB2260: RELATING TO CIVIL IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Our State ID system is an important way for our residents to have a form of government issued photo ID. I introduced this bill after a constituent contacted me last year and informed me that our State Law does not allow residents under the age of 16 to obtain a State ID. Nationally, other States allow any resident, regardless of age, to obtain a State ID. This is especially important today to ensure that our keiki have the ability to get a State ID.

HB917: RELATING TO CAPITOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

As my fellow Mililani residents will have noticed, there has been on-going construction at Mililani High School for an accessibility ramp. The land that this ramp is being constructed on is owned by the Mililani Town Association, and for years have been willing to turn over this land to the Department of Education. However, the Department has been slow to initiate the proceedings. As such, I inserted language into this bill to initiate the friendly condemnation process to have the land turned over to the State. Both the Department of Education and Mililani Town Association were in favor of this process and supported the bill. Unfortunately, the House pulled the bill on the floor on the last day of session without giving a clear reason for doing so. I will continue my efforts to find a resolution moving forward. This ramp would allow our students, staff, and visitors with accessibility challenges a safe access to our campus. While the State budget situation will not leave us with the fiscal freedom to spend on some of the new programs I have previously highlighted, there are still bright spots to be found. In addition to the millions of Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) that myself and the other Mililani Legislators have secured last year, we have three additional projects approved for this coming fiscal year. They include:

-Mililani Tech Park: \$2.77M for additional funding to acquire an adjacent parcel for a First Responder Auditorium and a shared Community Arts and Theatre Center for Mililani High School and Leilehua High School. Mililani has a wealth of community resources including recreation centers and open spaces but has always lacked a formal space for community productions such as our wonderful Central Theatre Arts Academy. I look forward to the release of these funds so that we can acquire the land and move forward with design and construction.

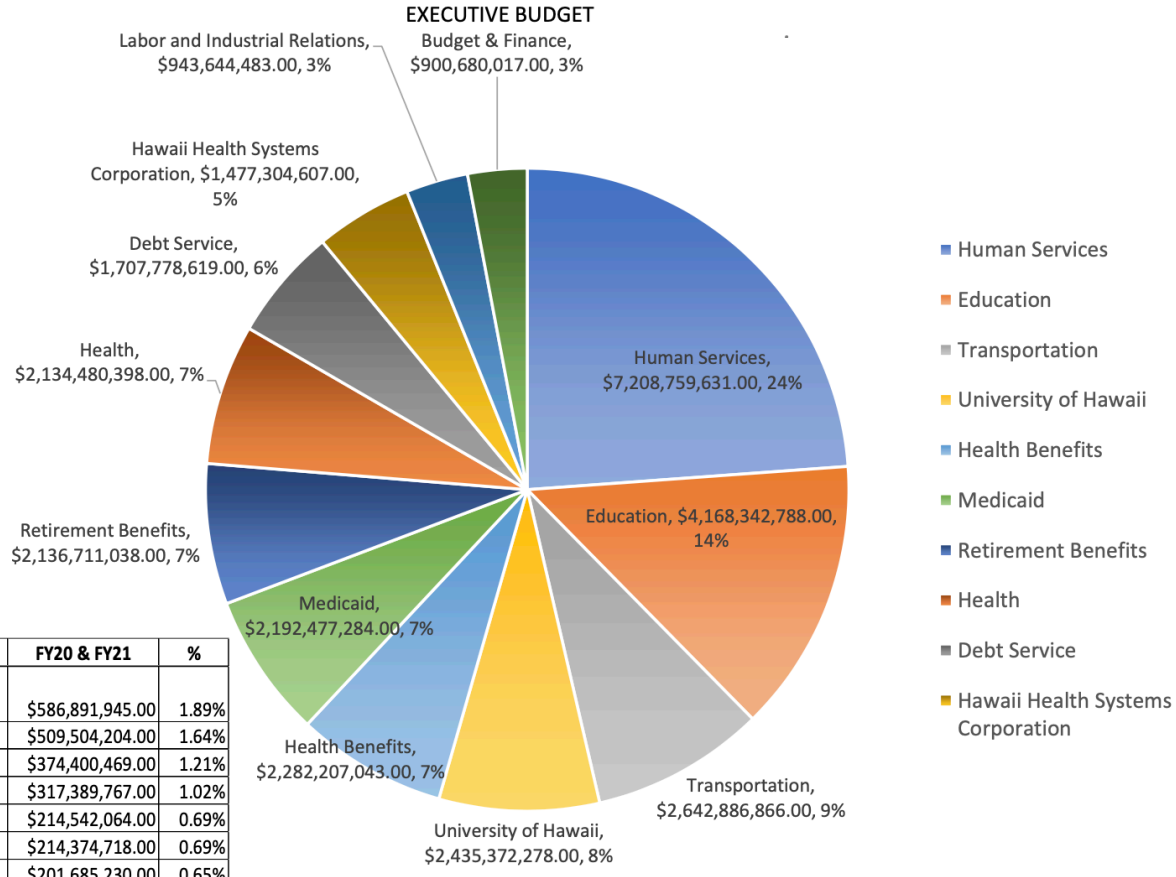
-Mililani Uka Elementary: \$1.15M for the plan, design, and construction for portable bathrooms on campus.

-Mililani Waena: \$200K for planning of a campus-wide redesign and plan for 21st Century Learning Spaces. As part of my 2019 summer conversations with each school, one of the issues that came up was that Mililani Waena has reached current capacity for building space. With a continually growing student body, we need to take a good hard look at the modernization of the campus to accommodate students.

2020 LEGISLATIVE SESSION IN REVIEW

The Legislature’s total budget for the fiscal year 2021 for all means of financing is \$31,013,099,651. Charted below are the budget breakdowns for all categories during the 2020-2021 years:

SB126 CD1



Departments <2%	FY20 & FY21	%
Business, Economic Development & Tourism	\$586,891,945.00	1.89%
Public Safety	\$509,504,204.00	1.64%
Accounting & General Services	\$374,400,469.00	1.21%
Land and Natural Resources	\$317,389,767.00	1.02%
Defense	\$214,542,064.00	0.69%
Charter Schools	\$214,374,718.00	0.69%
Attorney General	\$201,685,230.00	0.65%
Commerce and Consumer Affairs	\$179,380,656.00	0.58%
Agriculture	\$103,623,285.00	0.33%
Hawaiian Home Lands	\$94,825,444.00	0.31%
Tax	\$62,977,335.00	0.20%
Human Resources Development	\$50,146,327.00	0.16%
Office of the Governor	\$7,777,806.00	0.03%
Subsidies	\$1,884,000.00	0.01%
Office of the Lt. Governor	\$1,846,102.00	0.01%

SENATOR MICHELLE KIDANI

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LEGISLATIVE CARES ACT BUDGET

To support the state of Hawai'i through the COVID-19 crisis, the federal CARES Act has provided departmental funding to help us through this challenging time. For the complete federal CARES Act funding budget, check out the WAM/FIN Cares Act Presentation available on the Capitol website: www.capitol.hawaii.gov. Here are some of the budget breakdowns by department:

CHILDCARE: \$15M (Department of Human Services)

- 63% (approximately 64,172) of keiki under 6yrs in Hawai'i had all available parents working and could have benefitted from accessing childcare.
- Provide a subsidy to assist facilities transition to new health and safety protocols after pandemic--i.e. reduced capacity; increase in revenue needed to maintain
- Provide additional staffing to maintain stable groups of students and teachers (per DHS guidelines), and additional staff for cleaning/sanitizing classrooms and high touch areas, serving meals or other safety requirements
- Supplement meal programs so providers can continue to serve subsidized healthy meals to students
- Assist childcare providers with cleaning and sanitation, purchasing classroom supplies (every child has their own set of paint, playdough, etc), room dividers and other activities necessary to maintain or resume operations

*** STATE UNEMPLOYMENT WEEKLY BENEFIT: \$23M (Department of Labor and Industrial Relations)**

- Benefit intended to replace federal \$600/wk enhanced benefit which ended July 31st
- Provide state enhanced weekly benefit of \$100/wk for an estimated 117,000 beneficiaries
- Intended for UI recipients only--PUA recipients ineligible for benefit

*** RENTAL ASSISTANCE: \$100M (Hawaii Housing Finance Development Corporation)**

- Income Target Level: 100% AMI with discretion
- Relief Amount: 50% of rent or \$500 per month (whichever is less) to benefit an estimated 34,000+ households
- Homeownership counseling for mortgage payments

** This item was vetoed by Governor Ige and is subject to legislative override*