

# Senator Michelle Kidani

Twenty-ninth Hawaii State Legislature

*(D) Senate District 18 – Serving Mililani Town, Waipio Gentry, Waikele, Village Park, Royal Kunia*



**Senate Vice President**

*Chair:* Committee on Education

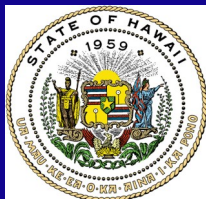
*Member:* Committee on Ways and Means

*Member:* Committee on Higher Education

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Aloha friends and neighbors:

**The Senate will convene a two-day special session July 9-10 to consider nominees to District and Family Court judge positions on Oahu and Hawaii Island. We also continue to monitor the ongoing volcanic eruption on Hawaii Island to determine if legislative action is required to authorize additional emergency relief funding.**

Since my last report to the Board, the school year has ended and my busy conference schedule between legislative sessions has begun. Two pages in this month's newsletter acknowledge our graduates and their accomplishments in both elementary and high schools. Our youngsters and their families will remember these milestone moments forever, and it's important that we acknowledge their accomplishments. We salute them and the dedicated teachers, mentors, coaches and others who have supported and guided their hard work.

I have committed some time this summer to attend professional conferences to which I am invited as Senate Vice President and Chair of the Senate Committee on Education. I am currently in Washington, D.C., to attend the 2018 National Forum on Education Policy, sponsored by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). I am the lead Hawaii Commissioner for our state's delegation attending this prestigious policy forum that brings education leaders together to learn, share and collaborate on current best practices and policy issues. ECS deliberations are especially critical right now as the national administration in Washington debates policy changes that may impact federal support for our public schools.

I was also a member of the delegation organized by the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii to the annual **Hawaii on the Hill** visit with members of Congress. At right, Waianae-raised **Isaac Hoopii** greeted us on our tour of the Pentagon. Isaac is the K-9 officer who rushed into the burning Pentagon Building when it was attacked on September 11, 2001. He saved the lives of 15 people and meeting this genuine hero was very special for me.



Me ke Aloha Pumehana,

## Make your voice heard!

It's an election year in Hawaii, and the Legislature has moved to improve voter turnout by authorizing online voter registration, voting by mail or at walk-in polling locations ahead of election day, and – for the first time this year – enabling all qualified voters to register at polling places *same-day* on election day.

**Because of same-day voter registration, the Office of Elections is encouraging people to sign up by July 12 for the August primary and October 9 for the November general election.** Doing so minimizes any last-minute rush business and assures that you are on the registered voter lists posted at polling places.

Everything you need to know about this year's elections – including an opportunity to sign up as a paid poll worker – is available at the Office of Elections website: <http://elections.hawaii.gov>.

*Please vote – it's our privileged right and responsibility to participate.*



**Primary Election Day  
Saturday, August 11**

**General Election Day  
Tuesday, November 6**



### Notes from the Capitol

Most bills we passed during the legislative session are now law. At left, I joined Department of Education **Superintendent Christina Kishimoto** and **Senator Donna Mercado Kim** for final approval of a major investment in **computer science education** for Hawaii public schools – initiated by my colleague **Senator Donovan Dela Cruz**. Also, the **Hawaii Promise** program that helps Hawaii resident UH students cover their tuition costs has now been made permanent and received additional funding support.

As required by law, the Governor has submitted a list of bills - a total of 11 measures - that he may veto. The deadline for final executive action on legislation is July 10.



Shortly after our legislative session adjourned, I traveled to Washington, D.C., with fellow members of the **Mililani Town Association Board of Directors** (pictured at left at the U.S. Capitol) to attend meetings of the Community Associations Institute (CAI). Later, I was among several legislators in the State of Hawaii delegation at **Hawaii on the Hill** events in Washington sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii. The program is designed to familiarize federal lawmakers and agencies with Hawaii’s unique needs and our state’s capabilities to contribute to the dialog on national issues. **Senate President Ron Kouchi** and I visited with **U.S. Senator Mazie Hirono** (above right) and other Hawaii Congressional lawmakers to discuss our state’s interests in federal government policies and priorities.

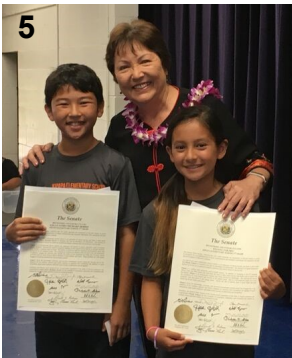
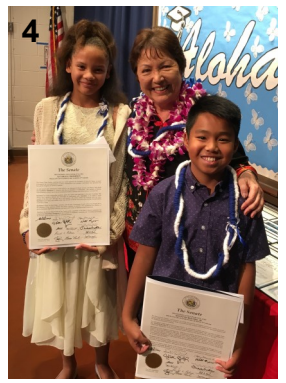
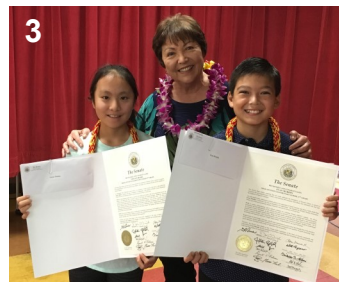


Here’s an artist’s rendering of the exciting new **UH West Oahu Academy for Creative Media Center** that will dramatically change the campus skyline. A contract for \$33 million has been awarded to Kiewit Building Group for the project. I worked closely with the University to guide the funding request and allocation through the legislative process to provide the best opportunities available to TV, feature film and digital media students at UHWO. Creative media students from this campus and UH Manoa played a big part in producing the new Hawaiian-language version of Disney’s *Moana*.

Design work for the Center is expected to be completed by the end of the year, and students should be ready to start their work here in the fall semester of 2020.

**We said a final Aloha to the late U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka during solemn ceremonies at the State Capitol last month. A few days later, I attended the annual Memorial Day services at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl – the Senator’s final place of rest.**





### Super Students

Again this year, I asked schools in my district to identify two outstanding students from each campus so that I could recognize them with congratulatory certificates from the Senate and a gift card. Honors to: **1. Kaleiopuu – Brooke Piena and Treyton Anbe; 2. Kanoelani – Joulia Sadio and Jenna Funtanilla (with Scott Fuji of my staff); 3. Waena— Leesa Takara and Evan Murphy; 4. Uka - Kaydence Thompson and Kenneth Bocobo, Jr.; 5. Kipapa – Logan James Michiaki Morris and Eliana Takara.** Also, in photo 6, we recognized Kipapa Elementary Principal Corrine Yogi for having received the 2018 Tokioka Award for Excellence in School Leadership.

*We appreciate your hard work!*



Waikele Elementary School marked the end of the school year with a graduation ceremony for sixth graders (at left) who now take the next steps in their education journey. They leave Waikele with pride and confidence, knowing that the school has provided a solid foundation for future success. Just a few days before the graduation program, I was at the campus to make the announcement (a surprise for the assembly!) that Waikele has been fully-accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. *Mahalo to everyone who works so hard on behalf of our keiki!*



I was honored to be at **Kaleiopuu Elementary** with students and families for May Day. At left, the Royal Court led the celebration of Hawaii's cultures.

At **Kanoelani Elementary's** Teacher Appreciation Day, **Principal Stacie Kunihisa** (at right) organized us

volunteers to serve breakfast to our hard-working teachers. *Mahalo for the invitations to join your campus celebrations!*



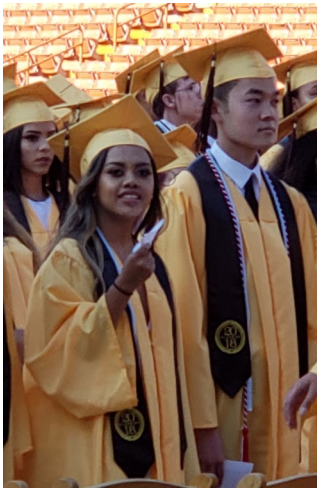
### Libraries Rock!



The Hawaii State Public Library System has kicked off its **2018 Summer Reading Program**, along with a variety of leisure time learning activities. Children, teens and adults can earn rewards for enjoying summer reading and participating in the programs - **all for free.** It's not too late to show up or sign up for movie nights, summer crafts workshops, pre-schooler story times, musical fun and talent shows – check at the **Waipahu Public Library** on Mokuola Street or the **Mililani Public Library** on Makaimoimo Street.

*You'll be glad you did!*

*(Mahalo to the Friends of the Library of Hawaii for selecting me as their 2018 State Legislator of the Year!)*



## Graduation Days!

Mililani High School's Class of 2018 confidently looks forward to the future. Below, some of the 43 Class Valedictorians. Congratulations to **Tiana Scott** (at left), daughter of our friend Shannon, and at right, that's my granddaughter **Kylie Kaulia** front and center!



At left, outstanding scholars from Mililani families received scholarships from the **Rotary Club of Mililani Sunrise** – most of them from Mililani High. We honored (front row) **Alexis Flores** and **Aerial Stenek** (Rotary District 5000 Scholar), along with (back row) **Breann Nakagawa, Kaylee Johnson, Andrew Burgos, and Taz Tavares**. **Caylee Honda** was not able to be present. *Congratulations!*



A dozen **Waipahu High School** graduates (above) earned their **Community College AA degrees** through Early College studies. Twenty-six students qualified to be class valedictorians, and collectively the 550 grads earned more than \$26.5 million in grants and scholarships - truly astounding!

At left, a favorite in the Class of 2018, **Justine Jumalon**, who interned in my office during her senior year spring break.

*Good luck to all!*

## Excitement, relief, anticipation . . .

. . . all present at the **UH West Oahu** Spring commencement ceremonies where more than 300 students received diplomas and certificates to mark their successes.

UH West Oahu experienced a 54 percent increase in enrollment over a five-year period, and was officially declared the fastest growing four-year college campus in the nation.

*Great work, everyone!*

