

Senator Michelle Kidani
Thirtieth Hawai'i State Legislature

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Aloha Friends and Neighbors,

The 2020 session began with excitement and vigor as we work to serve our communities. We are eager to see the impact of these efforts through the introduction of new bills like the school construction agency and increasing teacher pay, both of which I am committed to as I know it will improve the working conditions for our teachers as well as the learning environments of our children. I continue to enjoy supporting the achievements of our schools in the third quarter of their year and am continually impressed by the advances made by our young people.

We have also mourned as a collective over the recent tragedies in our community which have deepened our sense of gratitude for our loved ones and our home as heart-ache often does. But it has also deepened my commitment and resolve to serve our island families and to improve the working and living conditions for all.

A HUI HOU OFFICER TIFFANY ENRIQUEZ



The Legislature bid a hui hou to HPD Officers Tiffany Enriquez and Officer Kaulike Kalama this month who were killed in the line of duty. It was a solemn reminder of the risks and sacrifices that our men and women in the police force take on every day on the job. We share our heartfelt aloha to their families and offer our deepest mahalo to them for their incredible service to our community.

TEACH FOR AMERICA LEGISLATORS TALK STORY SESSION



For the past few years I have hosted the Teach for America Legislators Talk Story session. I find it is a wonderful chance for current and former Teach for America teachers to come together and share their insights with legislators.

I am thrilled as always to have the opportunity to sit down and talk with teachers and am thankful to my colleagues in the House and Senate who took time out of their busy schedules to also attend.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY 'IWALANI WALSH TSEU

I was so honored to present my dear friend 'Iwalani Tseu with a certificate to recognize her tremendous achievements and contributions to the community in honor of her 70th birthday. This proud Mililani resident is a beloved kumu hula, fashion icon, premiere entertainer of over 50 years as well as the founder of the 'Iwalani Foundation dedicated to breast cancer awareness. It was a joy to celebrate her special day and to acknowledge her for all that she has accomplished and given to the community.



MEETING CHRISTINE PELOSI



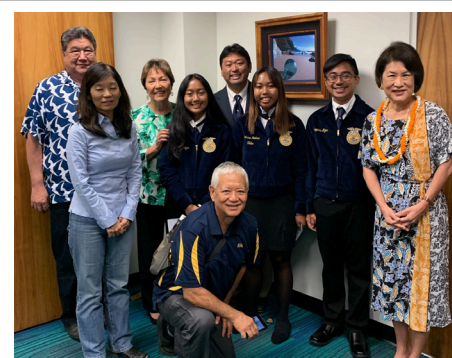
I had the unique opportunity to meet with Christine Pelosi during her recent visit to Hawai'i to promote a new book written about her mother, *The Nancy Pelosi Way: Advice on Success, Leadership and Politics from America's Most Powerful Woman*. Christine is an attorney, advocate and the daughter of current Speaker of the United States House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, who was in Hawai'i for her book tour as she shared stories about her inspiring mom.

KEIKI O KA 'ĀINA IN THE ROTUNDA

On February 13th, I had the opportunity to connect with our keiki for a special storytime session in the rotunda. It is always a joy to see children enjoying the gift of reading. I was especially proud to share one of my favorite childrens book, "The Cat in the Hat" by Dr. Seuss. It holds a special place in my heart as a story I have read countless times in my own family to both my children and grandchildren. And, of course, I had to dress in character and wore the famous hat from the book just for the kids!



AG DAY AT THE CAPITOL



We were so fortunate to welcome students from Waipahu Intermediate students to the Capitol for a visit during Ag Day. This weeklong tradition invites FFA members to host activities to raise awareness about agricultural education and explain the important role FFA plays in developing future agricultural leaders. The students participated in a discussion with on the Farm to State initiative to increase local food production in the state. It is always encouraging to see our local students learn and be inspired by the work of important organizations like FFA. (L-R: Senate President, Department of Agriculture Chairperson Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser, Hazel Paguirigan, Riahana Tulba Ken Kozuma, Cheydon Agos, First Lady Dawn Ige and Ken Kajihara.)

SECONDARY STUDENT CONFERENCE

I was eager to meet with students from Mililani High School, Dole Middle School (my alma mater) and Maui High School during the Secondary Student Conference. It was a wonderful opportunity to invite students to the Capitol and welcome them to my office, where they were able to ask questions about my journey to becoming a senator, inquisitive questions about education as well as student involvement. We captured a few photos with the students from Mililani High School during their visit--mahalo to all who came and shared with us that day!



SB3103: SCHOOL FACILITIES AGENCY

This month, the Senate Education Committee passed out SB3103, RELATING TO A SCHOOL FACILITIES AGENCY. This is an important step towards ensuring that our keiki have the best possible learning environments that our State has to offer. In creating this school facilities agency, the Legislature aims to empower it with the ability to expedite construction of new schools, make major renovations on existing school buildings, and redevelop our school lands to provide our Department of Education with an alternative revenue stream. I am thankful for all the testimony we received from State Departments, Labor Unions, the philanthropic community, and private-sector partners. Thank you also to our colleagues in the House as well as the Governor for making this part of the 2020 Legislative Package.

SB2488

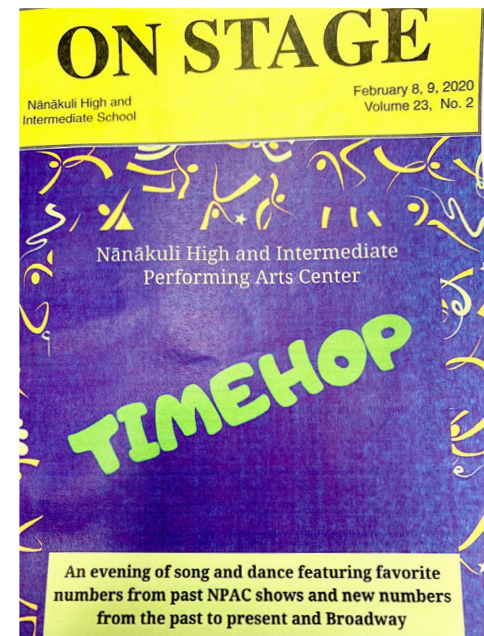
I have long been an advocate for increasing teacher pay. I fully understand that no matter what else we do to incentivize becoming a teacher, that if we do not pay them like the professionals that they are, we will never be able to retain the best and brightest for our Keiki. While I was disappointed that the Department of Education, along with the Board, authorized pay differentials and advocated for additional teacher compression pay without including the Legislature, I remain steadfastly committed to paying teachers more. Unfortunately, because the Legislature was not previously consulted we were unable to workout what kind of funding mechanisms would be needed to pay for these increases in this current fiscal year.

NPAC TIME HOP

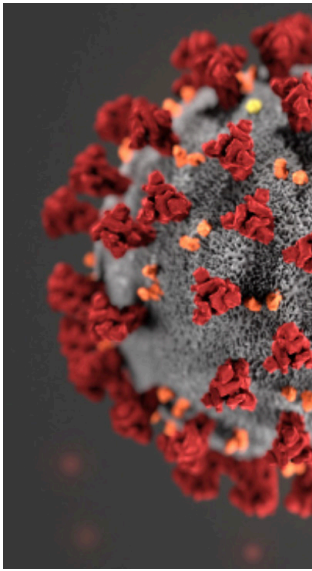


Mililani Times photo of Chloe Kitsu by Faustine Miura

I had a very entertaining Saturday night earlier this month at the Nanakuli High and Intermediate School Performing Arts Center for their amazing "Timehop" show, which featured Broadway and NPAC favorites from some of Hawai'i's brightest young performers! A special mahalo and congratulations to [the Mililani Times editor-in-chief] Mililani High School senior Chloe Kitsu for her dedication to the students & NPAC and as she finished her last performance after 14 years with this talented group, directed by her father, Robin Kitsu.



COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS



The Department of Health is committed to sharing information about COVID-19 (previously known as the Coronavirus) as it becomes available. In order to avoid misinformation or unconfirmed, inaccurate statements, information about COVID-19 has been limited and released as new knowledge is gained to protect the public. Here are some of their recommended preventative measures to prevent the spread of respiratory illness:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue
- Stay at home and away from others when you are ill
- Avoid close contact with people who are ill
- Get your flu shot
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using household cleaning products
- Wear a mask if you are ill to prevent the spread of illness (though a mask is not effective to wear when you are well and want to protect yourself from someone who is ill.)

NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION'S 2019 AGRISCIENCE FAIR HONOREES

Congratulations to Waipahu High School's Mariah Quibol and Sean Valencia who were presented certificates for their award-winning research projects in the National Future Farmers of America Convention's 2019 Agriscience Fair. These amazing freshman leaders participated in the fair alongside 8 of their peers and won first place honors in the Environmental Services and Natural Resource Systems Division for their project, "From Waste to Wonders," which focused on bokashi, a type of anaerobic composting which relies on inoculated bran to ferment kitchen waste into organic matter. Congratulations to Mariah, Sean and the other Waipahu High School students for representing Hawai'i with pride!



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ADA accommodations available call or email lrns@hsba.org. Forward a request for special accommodation at least two business days before event or activity.

Support and safety is always top of mind for our community and we are happy to share opportunities from the Hawaii State Bar Association and the American Red Cross to do so.

Get the legal support you need from legal hotline and lawyer referral and ensure your loved one's safety by registering for a free smoke alarm test and installations this spring.



Smoke Alarms Save Lives

The American Red Cross of Hawaii will be offering **FREE** smoke alarm installations and tests of existing smoke alarms on Oahu to seniors and families with keiki on the following Saturdays

April 18, 25 & May 2, 2020

To register for an appointment, please call 808-739-8111 or visit Preparesavehawaii@redcross.org

Our volunteers want to help keep you, your family and your community safe. Remember to test your smoke alarms monthly and practice your escape plan.