



# HAWAII STATE SENATOR RUSSELL RUDERMAN

PUNA | HAWAI'I ISLAND DISTRICT 2 | KA'U

*I would like to begin by wishing all you a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve District 2, and I would like to express my gratitude for the opportunity to serve such a dynamic and diverse district. The 2014 Legislative Session has so far been a very busy and interesting one.*

*In order to promote local food production I have worked to establish the Local Food Caucus. Other measures I have introduced focus on expanding emergency facilities, improving healthcare, improving and expanding education, agricultural sustainability, alternative energy, and raising the minimum wage.*

*Entering my second year as legislator, I have learned so much, and I remain steadfastly committed to open and inclusive representation and encourage everyone in our communities to become more involved in the legislative process.*

Aloha,

## SENATOR LAUNCHES NEW LOCAL FOOD CAUCUS!

This year, Senator Ruderman launched the Hawai'i State Legislature's Local Food Caucus with Representative Chris Lee and Representative Nicole Lowen, which brought public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders together in the Capitol to develop strategies for promoting local food production.

At the inaugural meeting, attendees gathered valuable input regarding issues of importance to the local food industry, which was utilized to select the bills included in the Local Food Caucus' 2014 legislative packet. These efforts culminated in the introduction of 15 bills, covering issues from cottage food operations, to invasive species management, to industrial hemp legalization, and more.

Many of these bills were introduced simultaneously in both the House and

Senate (as "companion bills") in order to expedite their passing.

The Local Food Caucus greatly benefitted from the contributions and insights from private and nonprofit organizations and enjoyed broad support within the Legislature. We would especially like to thank the 33 Senators and Representatives who joined the Local Food Caucus, and helped propose and introduce legislation on behalf of the Caucus. Supporters look forward to seeing how this package of legislation can positively impact and further the local food industry in Hawai'i!

If you are interested in reading or tracking the progress of the Local Food Caucus measures, they can be found on the Legislature's website, by looking under "Measures by Package" for "Local Food Caucus." Δ

## 2014 CORNERSTONE LEGISLATION

### SB2561 "Relating to Cottage Foods"

States across the nation have been empowering potential small business owners by relaxing restrictions on cottage food operations, and it is high time that Hawai'i follows suit. The current laws restricting home-based food businesses unfairly stem the flow of quality, locally-grown products from farmers, bakers, and chefs to the consumers who want to support them.

The bill, which Sen. Ruderman introduced as part of our Local Food Caucus Package, allows home-based food businesses to either sell directly to their customers (as a Class A cottage food operation), or disburse products through a third party retailer (as a Class B cottage food operation). This bill will foster positive economic growth and support the local food movement, as has happened in other states through similar legislation. Our constituents are highly encouraged to check out a recent article on [www.Forbes.com](http://www.Forbes.com), titled "California Legalized Selling Food Made At Home And Created Over

A Thousand Local Businesses." With Hawai'i's plentiful bounty of produce at hand, the possibilities for cottage food operations are endless; we must see to it that this bill is passed.

### Minimum Wage Increases

Sen. Ruderman fully supports an increase in the minimum wage. Even as an employer, I realize that the benefits of a higher minimum wage outweigh any negative effects. In our world, and especially in a state with such a costly standard of living as Hawai'i, it's incredibly difficult to make ends meet on minimum wage.

Many bills proposing a minimum wage increase were introduced this year, one of which was Sen. Ruderman's bill, SB2641. However, constituents are encouraged to support a parallel bill, SB2609. This bill provides gradual minimum wage increases and would allow for yearly increases based on the local consumer price index. Last but not least, it would repeal the tip credit, which has allowed employers in tip-producing industries to vastly underpay their workers for far too long.

### SB2645 "Relating to Industrial Hemp"

This bill will not only facilitate a legal hemp industry by establishing the necessary authority, procedures, and licensing, but it will also foster growth within this new industry by requiring the Department of Agriculture to promote industrial hemp research and market development. Hemp has many practical uses, including but not limited to nutritional and food products, building materials, clothing, and biofuel. The agricultural, economic, and environmental benefits of legalizing industrial hemp far outweigh any concerns regarding its correlation to a certain illicit substance.

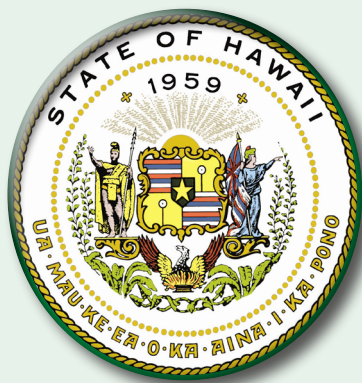
### SB2644 and SB3067 Funding Requests

For the underserved Puna community, Sen. Ruderman has requested funding for additional emergency medical services - SB2644, as well as an exploratory study to determine the feasibility of building a new regional community library, SB3067. As always, constituents are encouraged to contact Senator Ruderman's office with any other concerns or requests from constituents regarding District 2. Δ

SENATOR  
**RUSSELL RUDERMAN**  
HAWAII STATE SENATE  
2ND DISTRICT

*Member of the  
Senate Committees on*

EDUCATION  
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT  
WATER AND LAND  
WAYS AND MEANS



## HOW TO REACH US

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For updates and more information,  
or to receive this newsletter by email,  
please contact our office:  
[senruderman@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:senruderman@capitol.hawaii.gov)

For Hawaii State Legislature bill  
status and documents, go to:  
<http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov>



## TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

by Sarah Leone  
*Legislative Aide to Senator Ruderman*

Participating in government can be intimidating. Unless you happen to work with or in the government, many of us haven't thought about the legislative process since studying the US Constitution in high school. People hold the power, but some of us become overwhelmed, disappointed, and apathetic about actually participating because of our own personal or cultural reasons. Hopefully the following tips regarding the legislative process will inspire you to participate in our democracy!

- Visit the Public Access Room in the Hawaii State Capitol, Room 401. They can provide you with a wealth of information about the legislative process. Here they can support people who would like to introduce their own bills and teach how to track bills. You can also use this space (for legislative purposes only) to submit testimony, organize groups, and learn timesaving tips.

- Prewrite testimony on a heading so that you can submit them ON TIME. Register on the Hawaii State Legislature webpage and use the tools available to track the bills that matter most to you and submit testimony before the hearing. For a bill to be passed, it has to be heard at committee hearings. If your bill is not being heard, take the time to individually contact each member of the first committee it is assigned to and your representative.

- Whether you support or oppose a bill, contact your representative by email or phone. In the email subject, write if you are a constituent (if not, there is no need to add that information in the subject), the bill number, and whether you stand in support or opposition.

- Be respectful always. If you are really angry about an issue, go ahead and write a wildly angry email, let it all out...then trash it. The emails that are most effective are respectful from start to finish.

emails include links to studies, articles, or bills that have passed in other states that support your cause.

- Be creative about how you advocate. For example, if you would like to see the SB2561 Relating to Cottage Foods to be heard, bring your homemade baked goods to the health committee members as an example and tell them about the jobs you could create by being able to sell these goods from your home.

- Incorporate our youth! Nothing melts hearts faster than watching a child give testimony on a bill that will directly affect them. Our young adults have a powerful voice too and draw attention.

- Set priorities and keep your messaging consistent. If you become attached to too many bills you may lose your focus and your mind while trying to keep up with the tracking process.

- Most importantly, for your own health and well-being, keep your message positive. If you are constantly on the "anti" side of the argument without promoting, researching, and participating in viable solutions, you will burn out. There is definitely a time and a place for protest but be sure to also explore and share solutions and innovative ideas.

### LEGISLATIVE RESOURCES

Public Access Room  
<http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/login/register.aspx>

<http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/citizensguide.aspx>

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/instituteforjustice/2014/01/29/california-legalized-selling-food-made-at-home-and-created-over-a-thousand-local-businesses/>



## MEET SEN. RUDERMAN'S 2014 LEGISLATIVE STAFF



Legislative Ass't Michael Greenough, District Liaison Barb Cuttance, Legislative Aide Keturah Taylor, Legislative Aide Sarah Leone, and Office Manager Maigee Chang.

Office Manager Maigee Chang previously served as a Legislative Aide in the Hawai'i State Senate office representing the 1st District on the Big Island for four years before moving abroad for five years. Returning to Hawai'i this summer, she was thrilled to have the chance to work again for a Big Island Senator. She studied Political Science at the University of Hawai'i and has experience in communications, education, research and international development.

Legislative Assistant Michael Greenough has served in both the Hawai'i State Senate and the State House of Representatives going back to 2002 - most recently as Legislative Aide for Senator Ruderman during the 2013 Session. Michael brings with him an extensive and creative background in community relations, and photo-journalism, and communications. Michael has lived in Hawai'i and other Pacific Rim nations for over 30 years.

Legislative Aide Keturah Taylor recently relocated to Hawai'i from Oregon, after completing her B.S. in Political Science at Oregon State University. Keturah brings a unique combination of internship experiences from the Small Business Administration in Washington D.C., and the U.S. Embassy in Rome to her first "real" job here at the State Capitol. Future plans include traveling as much as possible before attending law school next fall.

Legislative Aide Sarah Leone has spent the last few years solely dedicated to improving accessibility and education on urban gardening. She is passionate about restoring and supporting local food systems and healthy soils. Sarah is happy to be serving as a legislative aide and loves to encourage civil action in the legislative process.

Originally from New Zealand, Barb Cuttance immigrated to Hawai'i in 2010. She is the co-owner of an organic farm in Kapoho and is deeply involved with the wider Puna area through her work with various community organizations. Barb welcomes the opportunity to further serve the district in her role as Community Liaison to Senator Ruderman. Δ

## PAHOA HIGH SENIOR WINS UHH CHANCELLOR'S AWARD AT THE HAWAI'I DISTRICT SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FAIR

Congratulations to Kieran Long, a senior at Pahoa High and Intermediate School, for winning the UHH Chancellor's Award at the Hawai'i District Science and Engineering Fair.

The award, which comes with a one-year tuition waiver to UH Hilo, was given for his outstanding project titled "GMO Hullabaloo." Kieran will go on to compete in the Hawai'i State Science and Engineering Fair in March/April 2014.



Complex Area Superintendant Mary Correa, UH Hilo Chancellor's Award winner Kieran Long, and Senator Ruderman at the 2014 Hawai'i District Science and Engineering Fair.

## SENATOR RUDERMAN'S TOP CIP REQUESTS FOR DISTRICT 2

As part of the review process, the Ways and Means Committee asks each Senator to submit up to three priority Capitol Improvement Projects for consideration.

In addition to previously requested projects, Sen. Ruderman has also submitted the following three requests that he feels would greatly benefit the 2nd District.

### Puna District Library

Plans	300,000
Land	0
Design	500,000
Construction	0
Equipment	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>800,000</b>

### Free Standing Emergency Room

Plans	95,500
Land	174,540
Design	500,000
Construction	2,000,000
Equipment	1,080,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,850,040</b>

### Certified Free-Standing Kitchen

Plans	0
Land	0
Design	0
Construction	884,623
Equipment	113,877
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>998,500</b>

You are cordially invited to a Town Hall meeting with

## SEN. RUSSELL RUDERMAN

PUNA | HAWAI'I ISLAND DISTRICT 2 | KA'U



Senator Ruderman will be providing an overview of 2014 legislation and how it will affect you and the community as well as gathering input from constituents on district matters. Information will be provided about participating directly in legislative actions. Light refreshments served.

The Pahala Plantation House  
Monday, Feb. 24th  
6PM - 7:30PM

The Keaau Girl Scout Center  
Tuesday, Feb. 25th  
6PM - 7:30PM



For more info call Senator Ruderman's Office @ 808-586-6890 or Email [senruderman@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:senruderman@capitol.hawaii.gov)

# Senator on the Move...

JANUARY 17 - MADD Event Kea'au



Senator Ruderman is joined by Councilman Greggor Ilagan and Hawai'i Police Officer Pule at the "Community Power Night" at Kea'au High School.

The evening's event, designed to prevent underage drinking and hopefully reduce impaired driving, was organized by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and a coalition of community providers including BISAC, Queen Liliuokalani Children's Center, Neighborhood Place of Puna, and other community partners.

Also present was guest speaker Louise Fincher from Hilo Medical Center's Trauma Center, who spoke about the trauma related issues of underage drinking. A "Live Pono" workshop was also facilitated by BISAC.

The Community Power Night events are designed as an opportunity for community organizations and leaders to network and provide resources for families to prevent underage drinking and drug use.

DECEMBER 13 - Lawmaker Read Aloud to Preschools



Senator Ruderman reads Dr. Seuss to the kids at PACT Head Start program in Hawaiian Beaches.



Sen. Ruderman is joined by Shanna De Lima-Suganama, PATCH East Hawai'i Coordinator, Mailin Moy, PACT Head Start Area Manager, and Wendy Correa, PACT Assistant Director.

Senator Ruderman read to a lively but attentive group of preschoolers at PACT Headstart program in Hawaiian Beaches. Senator Ruderman was participating in the "Lawmaker Read Aloud to Preschools" project organized by the Good Beginnings Alliance, the Rotary Club of Honolulu, and Read To Me International. Early education is an important issue, as Hawai'i is one of only 11 states without a state-funded preschool program.

NOVEMBER 27 - Maui Farmers Union



Senator Ruderman was invited to attend the Annual Meeting of the Maui Farmers' Union at Hale Akua Garden Farm. The meeting was a great opportunity for participants to share their concerns and viewpoints regarding agriculture and gather input and support for the newly formed Local Food Caucus. Δ

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SPOTLIGHT

### Jeffrey Meek

To encourage more community involvement, Jeffrey Meek (pictured in the hat) organized efforts to provide plumbing work at no cost to Na Wai Ola Charter School in Mountain View.

Jeffrey wants to send a strong message to other people in the community about the importance of being involved in the community. Especially so when your Senator calls you up and asks for your support and help.

Jeffrey said he was "...delighted to be asked and only too happy to support the Senator in his work."

A local plumber, Jeffrey and his team of workers completed the plumbing for several new school classrooms on Saturday, donating their time to achieve a great result. Jeff's company also supplied all the materials for the plumbing job, but the school is planning some fund-raisers to pay for them. He said he believes people value things more when they are invested in them, including their communities. Δ

