



"Take Action"

LAWE HANA

Kāneʻohe, Kahaluʻu through Kahuku, North Shore, Schofield, Kunia, Waipio Acres

YOU ARE
INVITED
TO PLANT
FOOD TREES
WITH US ON
STATE LAND

SATURDAY
DECEMBER 16, 2023
AT 10AM

KAHEKILI HIGHWAY & AHAOLELO ROAD
KAHALUʻU, OAHU

WEAR GLOVES AND IF POSSIBLE BRING A SHOVEL
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
808-586-7330 | SENAWA@CAPITOL.HAWAII.GOV
INSTAGRAM @BRENTONAWA

Over the past year, Government has given us every excuse to give up on planting food trees on state lands. We tried to make a law but lawmakers shut it down, so we identified locations in our community and decided **“we’re gonna do it anyway.”**

The Kahaluʻu Food Tree Planting Project has been approved by the State DOT and allows us to line the side of Kahekili Highway with a row of 70 Ulu and Mountain Apple (ʻOhīʻa ai) trees. These trees have the potential to produce more than 5,000 lbs. of food per year once mature, which will be free to the public. This project costs taxpayers \$0. It has been made possible through the donations of trees, equipment, time, and effort from residents.

Being blessed with a community that “answers the call” has allowed us to overcome seemingly impossible challenges. ...and we’re just getting started.

HAWAII STATE SENATE | DECEMBER 2023

Preventing foreigners from buying property

It can be done. Protecting local residents from being “priced out” of Hawaii should be required of all Hawaii lawmakers. When locals are forced to leave, their aloha leaves with them and what we continue to see in its place are culture clashes in even the most tight knit communities, on top of our out of reach housing prices.

This year we introduced the “About Time” bill, and started the conversation about preventing non-residents from buying homes. Next month we’ll introduce a pair of bills that would restrict foreign land ownership in Hawaii. Both bills have become law in other states.

To date, 24 states have passed laws restricting foreigners from owning agriculture lands. 11 of those states passed their laws in 2023. However, adding Hawaii to the list this year would mean having to convince our Attorney General who believes these types of bills are unconstitutional.

“The issue of restricting the sale of property to non Hawaii residents violates the United States constitution. I understand that other states may have passed similar kinds of bills, I don’t believe those are constitutional and I believe that they will be overturned at some point,” said Anne Lopez, Hawaii Attorney General.

In April, I voted against the confirmation of Governor Josh Green’s nomination of our current Attorney General, Anne Lopez.

Last month we questioned, and confirmed two of Hawaii’s newest Supreme Court Justices. They’d be instrumental in the event we pass a law that ends up being challenged. The Justices comments are restricted but here is what they had to say when asked about the constitutionality of preventing foreigners from buying property in Hawaii.

“I have three daughters of my own, I hope they move home and they can afford to come home because they are already talking about living in the mainland,” said Vladimir Devins, Hawaii Supreme Court Justice.

“I understand the concern, I live in the community, I see a lot of changes. There are definitely issues that have to be worked through,” said Lisa Ginoza, Hawaii Supreme Court Justice.

Finally, in July, the Governor elevated our state’s housing crisis to the level of an emergency proclamation. We will meet with the Governor to request a moratorium be added to restrict non-residents from purchasing property for a temporary period of time.



Waiāhole Farmers saved, residents and state reach agreements

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For the past 25 years, Waiāhole has remained a low cost, agricultural community where the leases of 91 families are managed by a state agency called the HHFDC.

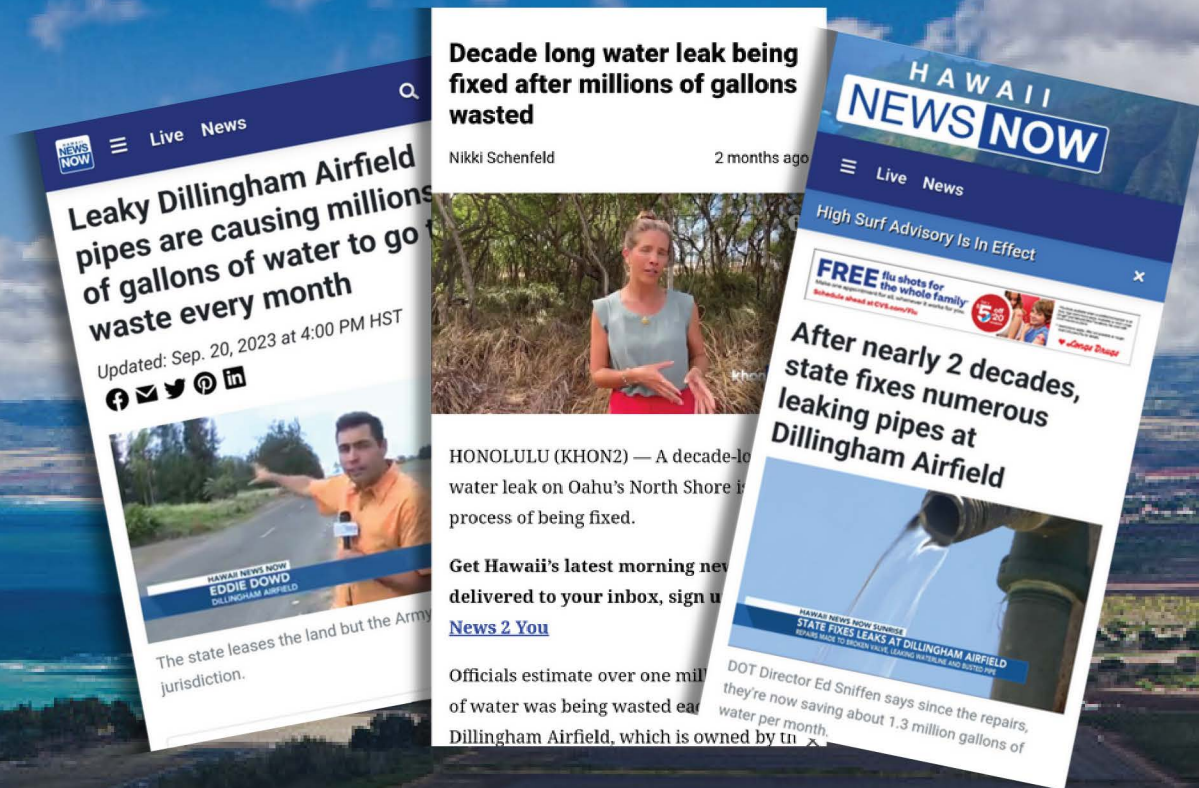
This year, residents faced looming rent negotiations for their upcoming 15 year lease period. After meeting with the HHFDC and finding out the state had been set on a take it or leave it offer which would've raised rents 560%, we went over to Waiāhole to share their story through the lense of kalo farmer Hanalei Bishop.

The story made its way via Instagram to the Governor who immediately sent his top housing official to our office to be briefed about the situation. At the time, the Governor hadn't known about the negotiations, and strategy which they said came from the previous administration. From that day forward, everything changed, leading to the first group of farmers signing their new deals four months later as seen in the photo here, and after months of further negotiations, most residents agreeing to their own lease rent terms with the state.

According to the HHFDC, as of November there were still 10 lessees that had yet to reach agreements, all are farmers. The HHFDC is preparing to proceed with arbitrations.

Coming up in January, the HHFDC is expected to make public a list of new lands in Waiāhole available for lease. Contact our office for more details.

Saving water in Mokulē'ia



A more than decade old problem on the North Shore has come to an end, and because of it, we're saving an estimated 1.3 million gallons of drinking water in Mokulē'ia each month.

Since 2012, the state had been losing water due to a leaking pipe at Kawaihapai Airfield. The state leases the airfield from the U.S. Army. In September we met with State Dept. of Transportation Director Ed Sniffen on site who told us this 11+ year problem could be fixed if the Army would do what it had never done before, and allow the state to repair the pipe. We shared the story that day. It reached the Army, helped lead to an agreement between it and the state, and because of that agreement, we've been saving water since October.

Meanwhile in Kaneohe, the Marine Corps Base Hawaii has the capability to start saving more than 11 million gallons of drinking water per month if the State Health Department signs off on allowing the military to use recycled water to water its golf course rather than drinking water. The State Health Department's stance is that recycled water could pose potential health issues for base residents near the course but MCBH reports its recycled water safe for use per Board of Water Supply testing. We are working with the Governor's office and MCBH towards saving this water.

Iam Tongi



Before he became the most authentic American Idol we've ever seen, we witnessed Iam Tongi unite a community and revive the aloha spirit. On May 16th, an estimated 14,000 people showed up to Turtle Bay to watch the former Kahuku resident perform at his Homecoming concert on his way to becoming Hawaii's first American Idol. The show's producer called us 10 days prior, asking us to organize a concert and parade with no money. The event would not have been possible without our community's sacrifice, and an unmatched level of effort from Tautua Reed. Mahalo to all who contributed to making Iam's first concert, one he will always remember.

Kahuku wins third consecutive State Championship

The Red Raiders defeated Mililani 21-19 at UH Manoa on November 24th, and finished the season with a 12-2 record, including a win over the then #2 ranked team in the country.



2023 Eddie Aikau Big Wave Invitational Champion

On January 22, 2023, for the first time in seven years, surfing's most prestigious event returned to the North Shore, and for the first time in the event's history, a City lifeguard would be crowned champion. Congratulations to Pupukea's own Luke Shepardson.



Building ponds to shield our shores

The state is turning to an unconventional practice in hopes of slowing down the erosion of our coastline and highway throughout Ko'olauloa.

The Department of Land and Natural resources is currently in support of allowing rock pond formations to be created by residents in approved areas in an effort to protect our shores.

The potential projects must be community driven and approved by the DLNR. There has already been interest from the Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club in Hau'ula. You can reach out to the non-profit or contact our office for more information.

Ka'a'awa Erosion Mitigation Project

The State Dept. of Transportation has scheduled repairs to a 500' stretch of Kamehameha Highway across from Ka'a'awa Elementary School. The project is expected to go out to bid in the Spring of 2024 and calls for a rock revetment along the stretch of coastline.



Waiāhole Bridge Replacement Project

The century old Waiāhole Bridge is scheduled to be replaced after being deemed structurally deficient. The Dept. of Transportation proposal calls for a new bridge to be built downstream. The intersection of Waiāhole Valley Road and Kamehameha Highway is also set to be redesigned. Public hearings are expected to begin in January 2024.

Little Fire Ants

Little Fire Ants are one of the most invasive species in the world, known for their burning bite that can blind pets, and make farming near impossible.



Untreated infestations on Oahu are allowing the ants to spread into communities they've never been seen in before including Waihe'e near Kahalu'u where earlier this year we went from having no confirmed infestations, to finding a 22 acre fully infested area. There has been and most likely will continue to be minimal support from the state when it comes to addressing this issue. It'll be up to all of us to stop this problem before Oahu ends up like Hawaii Island where in some places, kids no longer play in yards, and farms have shut down. Testing your area with peanut butter on a stick is one of the most helpful ways you can take part in the fight. All of what you need to know can be found online at www.oahuisc.org/little-fire-ant.



Ko'olauloa Community Resilience Hub

A state of the art Community Resilience Hub is in the works in Hau'ula. The hub would provide residents with year round essential services including medical, food security, recreation, and in times of disaster, a place to go for shelter and access to resources. This year, we were able to secure a short term lease from the DLNR for the five acre lot.



Senator Brenton Awa

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*Hui! Before you throw this in the rubbish,
please read at least the first page!*

Printing and mailing this newsletter to 16,000 homes in our district came at a cost of \$12,258.

We would've rather spent that money planting food.

Please call our office at 808-586-7330 to let us know where you stand.

