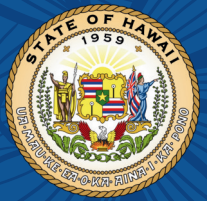


COMMUNITY REPORT

SENATE DISTRICT 18 | JULY 2024

Serving Mililani Town, Waipi'o Gentry, Crestview, Waikele, portion of Waipahu, Village Park, Royal Kunia



Aloha Friends and Neighbors,

It has been a busy interim so far, filled with events and activities that highlight our State's dedication to serving the people of Hawai'i. Earlier this month, I had the honor of celebrating the enactment of several key bills focused on keiki, kūpuna, and education. As the Senate Vice President and Chair of the Senate Education Committee, I am proud to reaffirm the Hawai'i State Senate's commitment to the well-being of our community.

One significant measure, Act 156 (SB2475 CD1), establishes Hawai'i's first Harm to Student Registry. I introduced this important legislation to enhance the safety of our keiki. This registry will create a comprehensive database to track incidents, ensuring our schools are more secure and preventing predatory school personnel from moving undetected between schools. As a grandmother of public school children, I understand firsthand the importance of these measures and share the concerns of many parents regarding the safety of their keiki. Every day, we entrust our schools with the most precious members of our families, expecting that they will be cared for and protected. Mahalo to Governor Josh Green, Lieutenant Governor Sylvia Luke, Department of Education Superintendent Hayashi, Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools Executive Director Dr. Philip Bossert, educators, associations, and everyone who supported this initiative for the protection and welfare of Hawai'i's children. More information about other bills focused on keiki, kūpuna, and education is detailed in the newsletter.

The Senate is responsible for confirming individuals appointed by the Governor to serve as directors and deputy directors to executive agency departments, members of state boards and commissions, and judges for judicial appointments in a process known as "advise and consent." The Senate convened for special session to fulfill this legislative duty, recently confirming four judges to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit on O'ahu, including Mililani's own Steven Nichols.

Additionally, I am thrilled to announce that \$550,000 in capital improvement project funds has been released for the design and construction for classroom expansion and restroom facilities for special education students at Kanoelani Elementary School. As we move further into the interim, I am excited to continue working on initiatives that will enhance our educational system and improve the well-being of all members of our community.

Mahalo,

Michelle



Above, several measures were signed into law to enhance the protection and care of keiki and kūpuna by Gov. Green surrounded by legislators, state officials, and community members.



Michelle
KIDANI

**Senate Vice
President**

Chair
Committee on
Education

Vice Chair
Committee on
Higher Education

Member
Committee on
Ways and Means

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Enhancing the Protection and Care of Keiki and Kūpuna Bill Signing

Following the recent bill signing ceremony, the State continues to prioritize the protection of our keiki, kūpuna, and the quality of education. Governor Green has signed sixteen bills into law to reinforce this commitment. In addition to SB 2475 which established a “Harm to Students” registry, the following additional bills have also been signed into law:

- [Act 157](#) (HB 2400) requires teachers who resign or retire during an investigation into allegations of serious misconduct (sexual assault, harassment, or physical abuse) to forfeit their teaching licenses. This forfeiture must be reported to the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, which closes the loophole that allows teachers accused of serious misconduct to continue teaching elsewhere if they resign or retire in lieu of being disciplined.
- [Act 155](#) (HB 2430) establishes a Summer EBT program for our keiki to ensure access to nutritious meals during the summer months. The Department of Education will work with the Department of Human Services to share necessary data and comply with federal regulations. The bill appropriates \$53,500 for the Department of Education and \$2,050,000 for the Department of Human Services for FY 2024-2025, contingent on matching federal funds.
- [Act 159](#) (HB 2224) requires the Executive Office on Aging and State Health Planning and Development Agency to create a comprehensive long-term care plan to ensure a continuum of care services for our growing kūpuna population in Hawai‘i.
- [Act 158](#) (SB 2305) utilizes the emergency alert systems to establish a “Silver Alert” program to protect vulnerable seniors and individuals with cognitive impairments or developmental disabilities who go missing. Conditions to activate alerts include age, cognitive impairment or developmental disability, and a credible threat to the individual’s health and safety.



Above (L-R): Addressing special guests and stakeholders during the bill signing ceremony; Department of Education Superintendent Keith Hayashi, Lt. Gov. Luke, Punahou School Board of Trustee Connie Lau, myself, Rep. Marten, Gov. Green, Hawai‘i Association of Independent Schools Executive Director Dr. Philip Bossert, and Punahou President Michael Latham; Gov. Green signing bills into law related to enhancing the safety and protection of keiki and kūpuna.

Senate Confirmation of Mililani’s Steven Nichols to Circuit Court of the First Circuit (O‘ahu)

Governor Green appointed Steven Nichols to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit (O‘ahu). Judge Nichols resides in Mililani with his wife Sharon, who is a teacher at Honowai Elementary, and their children. He was a per diem judge for the Family Court of the First Circuit and operates the Law Office of Steven R. Nichols where he focuses on criminal defense cases. Prior to that, he served as Deputy Public Defender for 20 years and was a law clerk for First Circuit Judge Dexter Del Rosario. Congratulations Circuit Judge Nichols, and all the newly confirmed circuit judges of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit!



Above left: myself with newly confirmed Circuit Judge Nichols; right: Judge Nichols and his family.



Japanese Women’s Society Foundation 70th Anniversary

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Japanese Women’s Society Foundation (JWSF). As a proud member, I was honored to attend the General Membership Meeting at O‘ahu Country Club, where I presented a Senate certificate recognizing JWSF’s significant contributions to our community. Founded in 1954, JWSF has dedicated itself to promoting culture, education, and quality services, impacting many lives through its projects and donations. Notably, JWSF established a care home for elderly women and donated over \$1,000,000 to Kuakini Medical Center. During the COVID pandemic, our organization demonstrated resilience by hosting innovative virtual events that ensured continued member engagement. Congratulations to JWSF on 70 years of dedication and impact, and best wishes for many more years of success!



Above, JWSF President Carole Hayashino and I.

New, Free Preschool Coming to Honowai Elementary School

I’m excited to announce that a new, public preschool classroom is coming to Honowai Elementary School in August 2024! This new preschool is **FREE** and will seat up to 20 keiki between ages three and four beginning this 2024-2025 school year. Increasing early learning and child care opportunities is critically important for our state not only to set our keiki up to succeed but to also support local families. I’m so grateful for Lieutenant Governor Sylvia Luke’s Ready Keiki preschool expansion initiative to open this classroom for Senate District 18. Families wishing to enroll their keiki can apply and learn more through the state’s Executive Office on Early Learning at earlylearning.ehawaii.gov.

