

SENATOR DONNA MERCADO KIM



PROUDLY SERVING
DISTRICT 14

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PORTIONS OF HALAWA & 'AIEA

APRIL 2022 COMMUNITY REPORT

Aloha neighbors,

With less than a month left in this year's legislative session, we are heading into the most grueling part of the legislative process. Now that bills have passed through both chambers, the Senate and the House must collaborate with one another during conference to flesh out any discrepancies there are on any measures. As Chair of the Higher Education Committee, I was tasked with HB 2024 Relating to Mauna Kea as astronomy is not only an important State issue, but a global issue as well. I have reached out to UH, the observatories, the working group, and other stakeholders to develop a management structure that would be workable, while balancing the diverse interests in conservation, protection, and regulatory uses of Mauna Kea. It is vital that astronomy research continues, while taking into consideration the wellbeing of the aina and any Hawaiian cultural practices that should be respected.

Simultaneously, I have also been holding public hearings on Senate resolutions and confirmations of appointments to Boards and Commissions.

Two of the more controversial bills in the Education Committee was HB 2125 and HB 1697. HB 1697 required the addition of LGBTQ+ sexual education into the Department of Education's curriculum. This measure received a lot of opposition from parents as it is their right to decide whether their children are exposed to such sensitive information, so the Education Committee did not take up this bill. HB 2125 would make harassment of any Department of Education employee a misdemeanor. At the public hearing for this measure, parents, especially parents of children with disabilities, believed that this bill would prevent them from voicing any discontent with DOE practices. The Education Committee agreed and this bill was deferred.

In addition to the legislature, I remain engaged in the community from participating in HSTA's lobby day to donating toiletries and household products for the Hawaii Women's Legislative Caucus Easter basket drive as well as addressing constituent concerns.

Sincerely,

Capitol Remains Open to the Public

- Vaccine/COVID-19 test no longer mandatory. Masks are required in the Senate Chambers and conference rooms.
- Must show picture ID
- Open 7am-5pm, Monday-Friday





Bills of Interest

HEADED INTO CONFERENCE

MINIMUM WAGE AND TAX REFUND

- HB 2510 HD 2 SD 1-RELATING TO INCOME.

Increases the State's minimum wage incrementally to \$12.00 per hour beginning October 1, 2022; \$15.00 per hour beginning January 1, 2024; and \$18.00 per hour beginning January 1, 2026. Reduces the tip credit to 35 cents per hour beginning October 1, 2022, and zero cents per hour beginning January 1, 2026.

- SB 514 SD 1 HD 1-RELATING TO THE GENERAL FUND.

Provides a tax credit and tax refund to the taxpayers of the State and makes deposits to the emergency and budget reserve fund and other post-employment benefits trust fund pursuant to article VII, section 6, of the Hawaii Constitution. Appropriates funds.



MAUNA KEA

- HB 2024 HD 1 SD 2-RELATING TO MAUNA KEA.

Establishes the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority as a joint authority with the University of Hawaii. Defines the astronomy research lands under the jurisdiction of the University of Hawaii. States that astronomy is a State policy...

FERAL CHICKENS

- SB 2195 SD 2 HD 1-RELATING TO FOWL.

Requires the Department of Agriculture to collaborate with the Department of Land and Natural Resources to establish a pilot program to manage the population of feral chickens in the State.



CATALYTIC CONVERTERS

- SB 2279 SD 2 HD 1-RELATING TO CATALYTIC CONVERTERS.

Regulates the purchase of catalytic converters by used motor vehicle parts dealers and palladium, platinum, and rhodium by scrap dealers and recyclers. Subjects persons who violate related provisions to a class C felony. Establishes the felony offense of theft of catalytic converter. Requires each county police department to maintain certain reported information and initiate education programs to prevent catalytic converter thefts.

STATE BUDGET

- HB 1600-RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

Adjusts and requests appropriations for fiscal biennium 2021-2023 funding requirements for operations and capital improvement projects of executive branch agencies and programs.

VAPING

- HB 1570 HD 1 SD 1-RELATING TO THE YOUTH VAPING EPIDEMIC.

Bans the sale of flavored tobacco products and mislabeled e-liquid products. Establishes fines.



DID NOT PASS

DOE EMPLOYEE HARASSMENT

- HB 2125 HD 2-RELATING TO OFFICIAL SCHOOL BUSINESS.

Requires DOE and BOE to take certain steps to better address harassment of its employees. Creates the offense of harassment of an educational worker for disrupting or interfering with the administration or functions of any school, school administration office, or school board. *3/23/22-EDU deferred*

SEX EDUCATION

- HB 1697 HD 1-RELATING TO SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION

Requires DOE to provide comprehensive training for teachers and educational officers on sexual health topics that include positive and accurate representations of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, other sexual orientations and gender identities, persons of color, and disability communities to destigmatize and promote sexual health. *.Did not meet certain legislative deadlines, did not pass*

ELECTRIC GUNS/TASERS

- HB 1732 HD 1 -RELATING TO ELECTRIC GUNS.

Prohibits individuals from carrying an electric gun in or near certain sensitive locations with exceptions. *3/24/22-JDC failed to pass*

Hawaii Women's Legislative Caucus Easter Basket Drive

In partnership with local non-profit organizations, the Women's Legislative Caucus hosted their annual Easter basket drive. Baskets were filled with household and personal hygiene items.



Legislative Timetable:

APR 22 – DEADLINE FOR FINAL FORM OF BILLS PROPOSING CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS – A proposed amendment's final form must be provided to the Governor after passing final reading in each chamber. Once adopted by the Legislature, the proposed amendment is submitted to the voters, in the form of a 'yes or no' question on the ballot, for ultimate decision.

APR 25– SECOND CROSSOVER FOR CONCURRENT RESOLUTIONS – Deadline for adopting amended concurrent resolutions in the non-originating chamber in order to "cross back" to the originating chamber. (Measures must be filed by Friday, April 22.)

APR 28 – FINAL DECKING OF NON-FISCAL BILLS – Deadline for submitting non-fiscal bills for final reading by both chambers.

APR 29 – FINAL DECKING OF FISCAL BILLS – Deadline for submitting fiscal bills for final reading by both chambers.

MAY 5 – ADJOURNMENT SINE DIE – Adjournment sine die occurs on the last day of a Regular Session and indicates a suspension of the business of the legislature indefinitely. Next, the Legislature will certify the bills whose form both chambers have agreed to and will transmit or "enroll" those bills to the Governor

In-person Graduations

The DOE announced that in-person graduation ceremonies will be brought back this year in accordance with certain safety guidelines. Masks must be worn in indoor venues. Proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test within 48 hours is required to participate. Hand sanitization stations should be readily available and high traffic areas should be disinfected.

Scheduled Ceremonies:

- Aiea High School, May 19, Aloha Stadium
- Moanalua High School, May 20, Stan Sheriff Center
- Farrington High School, May 21, Stan Sheriff Center

*Policies regarding the amount of people that may attend determined by each school individually.



Connect!

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