



*Aloha e Friends,*

The Legislature announced on March 16 that we postponed our legislative session because of the coronavirus. We have no way of knowing if and when we'll come back into session. On March 19, Senator Clarence Nishihara was diagnosed with coronavirus. Since that time, my staff and I have been working remotely from home. I urge you to do all you can to help your family and friends take the necessary precautions to stay healthy and safe during this very difficult time for our state, country, and world. As always, please contact me at [sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov) or 808-586-6830 or if I can help you or your family in any way. You can also follow me on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#).

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- ◆ Judiciary
- ◆ Labor, Culture & the Arts

**DISTRICT 20**

- ◆ Kapolei, Makakilo and portions of Ewa, Kalaeloa and Waipahu

## \*\*\*CORONAVIRUS UPDATES AND HELPFUL TIPS\*\*\*

During the last few weeks, more and more Hawai'i residents have been diagnosed with this serious illness. On March 22, I joined with my Senate and House colleagues in sending a letter to Governor Ige urging him to take every preventive action to prevent COVID-19 from escalating into a full-blown public health crisis. Here are some of the major announcements from our government officials that you should be up to speed on:

- ◆ The overall incident commander for the COVID-19 response and mitigation is Major General Kenneth S. Hara of the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency.
- ◆ The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) announced on March 23 the availability of two phone numbers to help process unemployment claims while working on fixing the current online claims filing process. The phone numbers will be available during normal business hours of 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The following phone numbers are for resetting passwords and making appointments for over-the-phone applications: Password reset: (808) 762-5751; Phone appointments: (808) 762-5752
- ◆ Public schools will be closed at least until April 30.
- ◆ Governor Ige issued an emergency proclamation on March 23 that requires all residents and visitors of our state to stay home/work from home, except for essential activities, such as obtaining medicine or medical services, buying groceries, or participating in outdoor activities. This order took effect on March 25, 2020 at 12:01 am and will remain in place until 11:59 pm on April 30.
- ◆ Gov. Ige also announced on March 23 that the state is extending tax deadlines for the Hawai'i 2019 individual and corporate income tax filing and payments. The deadline is extended from April 20 to July 20.
- ◆ Governor Ige issued an emergency proclamation on March 21 ordering all individuals, both residents and visitors, arriving or returning to our state to a mandatory 14-day self-quarantine. The mandate went into effect on 12:01 am on March 26.
- ◆ Governor Ige announced on March 20 that Hawai'i small businesses suffering financial losses from the impact of COVID-19 can file for low-interest working capital loans of up to \$2 million from the Small Business Administration (SBA).
- ◆ Mayor Caldwell issued an emergency order on March 20 ordering all bars/nightclubs to close, all restaurants to close, except for drive-thru, pick-up or delivery service, and all public gathering and events within the City be held in accordance with current CDC guidance for social gatherings. The order will be in effect until April 30.



# COVID-19

## Who Should Be Tested?

According to the state Department of Health, individuals who are not experiencing symptoms do not need to be tested. DOH strongly urges public health and healthcare professionals to prioritize testing among three specific groups:

- ◆ Health care workers and first responders with COVID-19 symptoms.
- ◆ Older Americans who have symptoms of COVID-19, especially those living in congregate settings.
- ◆ Individuals who may have other illnesses that would be treated differently if they were infected with COVID-19 and therefore physician judgment is especially important for this population.
- ◆ Other people with mild illness should help protect our most vulnerable and conserve our precious supplies by practicing social distancing measures, monitoring their illness, and calling their healthcare provider if their symptoms worsen or persist.



## CDC Guidelines on COVID-19 Cleaning Supplies

The CDC says the best-known products for killing the coronavirus are:

- ◆ Diluted bleach
- ◆ Rubbing alcohol solutions with at least 70 percent alcohol

- ◆ EPA-registered household disinfectants like Lysol and Clorox products.
- ◆ The CDC recommends wearing gloves when you disinfect and setting those gloves aside to be used only for COVID-19 cleaning.
- ◆ The high-trafficked surfaces should be the first things you disinfect: doorknobs, light switches, remotes, handles, desks, toilets and sinks.
- ◆ If you're using a bleach solution, use 1/3 cup of bleach per gallon of water.
- ◆ If you're making a smaller batch, go with 4 teaspoons of bleach for a quart of water.

## Food-A-Go-Go Launches to Support Local Restaurants

In March, the Hawai'i Agricultural Foundation, a non-profit charitable organization created to promote agriculture and farming, launched the Food-A-Go-Go campaign to support all Hawai'i restaurants that are open for takeout and during this pandemic. The new initiative asks customers to consider delivery or curbside pickup as an alternative means



of providing meals for their families in order to help our local restaurants that have had to close in-room dining. Customers can go to [FoodAGoGo.org](https://www.foodagogo.org) to find the latest up-to-date information on all restaurants that remain open with delivery, takeout or curbside pickup options.

All Hawai'i restaurants, from mom-and-pop to fine dining, are welcome to participate and can submit an online form with information on their services. The Foundation will use television and radio PSAs aimed at encouraging the public to consider takeout.

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## 2020 U.S. CENSUS HAPPENING NOW

The census is a count of every person who lives in the U.S. and its territories, and is mandated by the U.S. Constitution. It happens every 10 years and we're currently in that process for the 2020 U.S. Census. Your responses inform where over \$675 billion is distributed each year to communities nationwide for clinics, schools, roads, and more. Your responses are used to redraw legislative districts and determine the number of seats the various states have in the U.S. House of Representatives. Every household will have the option of responding online, by phone, or by mail. Here are some important dates (some of which have already passed):

- ◆ **March 12-20** An invitation to respond online to the 2020 Census. (Some households will also receive paper questionnaires.)
- ◆ **March 16-24** A reminder letter.
- ◆ **March 26-April 3** A reminder postcard.
- ◆ **April 8-16** A reminder letter and paper questionnaire.
- ◆ **April 20-27** A final reminder postcard before census workers follow up in person.

For more info, visit [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov).



## CONSTRUCTION FUNDING FOR DISTRICT 20

I was pleased to be notified by the Governor that he released funding for the following construction projects from January to March of this year for Senate District 20:

- ◆ **Fort Barrette Road Improvements, Roosevelt Avenue to Farrington Highway** - \$6,105,000 (to finance construction for Fort Barrette Road improvements from Roosevelt Avenue to Farrington Highway)
- ◆ **Hangar 110 Renovation – Phase 5** - \$90,000 (to finance construction costs for Hangar 110 Renovations, Phase 5, at Kalaeloa Airport)
- ◆ **Hawai`i State Veterans Home** - \$4,840,850 (to provide additional funding for the construction of the Hawai`i State Veterans Home in Kapolei)
- ◆ **Waipahu Intermediate School, Additional Multi-Purpose Playcourt Improvements** - \$600,000 (to finance design and construction to expand the existing playcourts)
- ◆ **Waiahole Water Systems Improvements** - \$1,600,000 (to finance construction for additional improvements to the Waiahole Water System in Kunia)

# VICTORY GARDENS

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## ictory (Lanakila) Gardens: A Way to Thrive During a Crisis

I wrote the following op-ed that was published in [Honolulu Civil Beat](https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/victory-lanakila-gardens-a-way-to-thrive-during-a-crisis/) on March 25.

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/03/victory-lanakila-gardens-a-way-to-thrive-during-a-crisis/>

In times of crisis, we as a country put aside our differences, and work together. We did it during WWI and WWII, and as the coronavirus continues to rampage its way across the U.S., it's time we roll up our sleeves



and do it again. During both World Wars, because of drastic food shortages here and abroad, Americans were encouraged to start Victory Gardens in their back yards to grow fruits and vegetables. For those without backyards, window boxes were suggested, or for high-rise city apartment dwellers, rooftops suddenly

were transformed into lavish gardens, that everyone in the building contributed their time and energy into maintaining and then joyfully joined together in reaping the bountiful harvests.

At its peak during WWII, the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture estimates that there were about 20 million Victory Gardens across the U.S. By 1944, Victory Gardens were responsible for growing approximately 40% of all the fruits/veggies in the country, which came out to an estimated 8 million tons of produce during the war. The federal government got involved by printing free recipe books that were distributed widely. Agricultural companies participated by offering tips on how to make home gardens flourish. Many other organizations, churches, and businesses pitched in to help the cause.

The fact is, Victory Gardens not only fed our soldiers fighting overseas, and ourselves here at home, but

they also boosted our national morale tremendously during a time of incredible danger and stress. So, America, let's do this again. What a wonderful experience it would be for families across the country to plant and harvest our own food. Think of the incredible lessons and values to be learned by our children—many who are burning out on their video games, annoying their parents, twiddling their thumbs, or simply freaking out due to boredom.

In Hawai'i, we import 85-90% of our food, at a cost of about \$3 billion annually. Our shipping companies assure us that during the current crisis, there will be no interruptions in service, and, of course, that's good to know. But what if? What if conditions change on the mainland and elsewhere, and our food supplies dry up?

Why not have our Hawai'i Farmers Union United, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Department of Agriculture, UH College of Tropical Ag and Human Resources, and other related government agencies, as well as churches/temples/mosques and other non-profit groups do a "kakou thing" and assist families in starting their 2020 Hawai'i Lanakila Home Gardens?

People can plant fruit trees, herbs, and veggies in their yards or try out vertical gardening.

Commercial and condominium/apartment building rooftops can be used for the same. Why not be proactive, and do all we can to become self-sufficient? Why not set the example for the rest of the world to follow, working together with aloha as a community helping to feed our families and each other?

Yes, Hawai'i, we can do this.

Let's start NOW and get growing!

