



State Representative

# Andrew Takuya Garrett

District 22 (Mānoa/Tantalus/McCully-Mō'ili'ili)

## Spring 2024 Newsletter

### Dear Friends and Neighbors —

It is with a very heavy heart that we present this newsletter following the tragedy that occurred recently in Mānoa Valley. While we will never make sense of why it happened, our deep condolences go out to those who knew the victims, especially the 3 precious children whose lives ended too soon.

Here at the Legislature, we passed the halfway point with First Crossover behind us (where House bills “cross over” to the Senate and vice versa). About 800 bills are alive at this point.

Five bills that I introduced made it to this major milestone, including HB2664, which redirects nearly \$400 million previously set aside for the New Aloha Stadium Entertainment District to assist with the Maui recovery. Everything must be on the table as we balance our state budget with support for wildfire survivors expected to cost over \$1 billion in this fiscal year alone. I take my fiduciary duty to look out for the best interests of taxpayers seriously, even if it results in a target on my back.

Our next district newsletter will be issued after we adjourn on May 3rd, so please continue to contact us with your thoughts on any of the bills before us. No matter how busy I am, I will always personally reply to your questions and inquiries.

With aloha,



(Above) Rep. Garrett with Dr. Genshitsu Sen, 15th Generation Grand Tea Master from Japan, after a presentation commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Jaku'an Tea House on the UH campus.

(Below) Rep. Garrett hosts 8th graders from Mid-Pacific Institute and answers their questions about the legislative process.



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# Notable Bills Still Alive at the 2024 Legislature

Here are highlights of some bills of interest as of mid-March (when this newsletter went to print). For a complete listing, please visit the Hawaii Legislature's website at [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov).

## **HB2664 HD1 Relating to Sports Facilities**

**Description:** Lapses appropriations of \$350 million in bond funds previously authorized for a new stadium in Hālawā. Moves \$49.5 million in special fund moneys earmarked for the new stadium in Hālawā to the general fund. Authorizes bonds for a permanent stadium on the University of Hawai'i at Manoa campus.

**My position:** **SUPPORT**

**Rationale:** The devastation brought on by the Maui wildfire compels us to make hard decisions regarding the state budget. Taxpayer support for the survivors is expected to cost nearly \$1 billion this year, and funding for all "nice to have" projects like the New Aloha Stadium Entertainment District (NASED) must be reevaluated. It is not sound fiscal policy to proceed with the NASED project simply because we have already spent \$25 million on planning alone.

In addition to the hundreds of millions we'll save by pausing the project, now is an opportune time to reassess what is the highest and best use of this 100 acre site that comes with a fully built rail station. If we are serious about building affordable and work-force housing for our residents, the NASED site holds the potential to bring several thousand units to the market in one fell swoop. This bill is the last chance to have this important discussion.



*Rep. Garrett being interviewed by Hawaii News Now to discuss his support of HB2664 HD1.*

## **SB3335 SD1 Relating to Cannabis**

**Description:** Beginning January 1, 2026, legalizes the personal adult use of cannabis. Establishes taxes for cannabis sales.

**My position:** **OPPOSE**

**Rationale:** The protection of public health and safety must be at the forefront of every decision we make at the legislature. I have strong concerns about the potential impact and unintended costs of this bill, particularly for Hawai'i's youth. Research suggests that cannabis impairs brain development in teens and adults under age 25, and is linked to lower educational attainment, increased anxiety, depression and mental health issues.

## **SB2381 SD2 Relating to Public Financing for Candidates for Elective Office**

**Description:** Establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for candidates seeking election to state and county public offices to begin with the 2028 general election year.

**My position:** **SUPPORT**

**Rationale:** Fundraising is the part of being a legislator I dislike the most. Passage of SB2381 would help break the link between special interest money and politics. However, there are some who are uncomfortable with their taxpayer dollars going to candidates they do not agree with. It is thought such a system could cost up to \$30 million per election cycle.

## **HB1630 HD1 Relating to Urban Development**

**Description:** Permits county zoning ordinances to allow 2 or more additional dwelling units per lot.

**My position:** **OPPOSE**

**Rationale:** Established communities within urban Honolulu do not have sufficient infrastructure in place to support up to 3 homes on each residential lot. While we agree on the need for more housing, this bill will likely irreparably change the character of our community.



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# Happenings in District 22

## Star Advertiser

SAINT FRANCIS SCHOOL SITE



JAMM AGUIWO / JAGUIWO@STARADVERTISER.COM

Saint Francis School closed its doors in 2019, and developer Avalon Group has bought the property for \$23.35 million, according to brokerage firm CBRE. Above, buildings on the campus of the former school are seen Friday in Manoa.

## New housing development planned at former campus

Screenshot from Honolulu Star-Advertiser, February 5, 2024

## Saint Francis Acquired by Avalon Development

In early February, Avalon Development closed on the sale of the former St. Francis school campus for nearly \$24 million. Under current zoning laws, Avalon could build about sixty residences (each with a minimum lot size of 7,500 sq. feet), but the developer has not confirmed its plans for this site.

In a subsequent interview with KHON2 News, I encouraged the developer to immediately engage with the community to share their plans for this 11-acre site. The neighbors along Pāmoa Road and Hipawai Place are rightfully concerned about traffic and other impacts. I was informed Avalon reached out to the Mānoa Neighborhood Board to request time on a future agenda for a presentation, but nothing has been confirmed as of March.

To stay updated, please sign up for hearing notices of the Mānoa Neighborhood Board No. 7 at [www.honolulu.gov/nco](http://www.honolulu.gov/nco).

## Kamehameha Schools to Renovate Waiānuenue

Kamehameha Schools, owner of the parcels around the old Varsity Theater at the corner of University Avenue and South King Street, have announced plans to renovate their low-rise retail complex across from Puck's Alley.

Tenants will begin moving out in May 2024 and construction will begin in July 2024 and take 12 months. The Grand Opening of Waiānuenue at Kapa'akea is anticipated to occur in the spring of 2026.

Please contact [info@shopwaiianuenue.com](mailto:info@shopwaiianuenue.com) or visit [www.ksbe.edu/cred](http://www.ksbe.edu/cred) to learn more about their plans for this part of Mō'ili'ili.

Images courtesy of Kamehameha Schools, subject to change



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*Rep. Garrett sharing a light moment with Rep. Nishimoto during a recent session of the House of Representatives*



## Mark Your Calendar! Upcoming Community Events

### GET YOUR FREE TREE!

Once again, Mālama Mānoa and The Outdoor Circle – Mānoa Chapter will be hosting its biennial 1000 Tree Giveaway.

Be sure to arrive early for the best selection!

**April 21st, 2024 from 8am to 12pm**  
**Atherton House at College Hill**  
**2234 Kamehameha Avenue**



### Join Mānoa's Kūpuna Coconut Network!

Every second counts in a disaster. Come learn how to join this network to stay connected with your neighbors. Free walkie-talkies and training will be provided to those who participate.

**April 24th, 2024 from 9:30am to 11:30am**  
**Mānoa 7th Day Adventist Church**  
**2655 Mānoa Road**

Register for this free event at  
<https://events.aarp.org/manoa4-24> or  
call toll free at 1-877-926-8300