



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

FROM THE OFFICE OF REPRESENTATIVE JO JORDAN
HOUSE DISTRICT 44 · WAIANAE, MAKAHA, MAKUA, MAILI · JANUARY 2014

(808) 586-8460 · REPJORDAN@CAPITOL.HAWAII.GOV · WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/REPJORDAN

ALOHA NEIGHBORS,

The 2014 legislative session is underway and was preceded by State Budget briefings highlighted inside this newsletter.



Following Opening Day, the Governor delivered his fourth State of the State address on January 21. Areas highlighted included efforts to expand early childhood education; tax relief and support for seniors; an increase in the minimum wage; and collaborative efforts to address homelessness, climate change, and invasive species.

Last year, I introduced a bill to raise the minimum wage and look forward to considering the numerous proposals offered on the issue this session. To address the ongoing issue of homelessness, the Governor urged legislators to join him in support of the action plan submitted by the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH). It has been my honor to serve as an alternate member of the State House of Representatives on HICH, which has identified Housing First programs as the priority. The goal of the Housing First programs is to house and care for the chronically homeless and those who suffer from a disability. I look forward to working on these and other issues impacting our community this legislative session. It is also a great honor for me to participate in community events like the blessing of the Hawaii Community Action Program (HCAP) facility that opened in Waianae and the site visit to the Kamehameha Community Learning Center at Maili, both of which are highlighted in this newsletter.

It is a privilege to continue to serve you. Feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance.

MAHALO,

JO JORDAN,
DISTRICT 44 REPRESENTATIVE



Opening Day at the Legislature

The 2014 Legislative Session opened on January 15. This year marked the 55th anniversary of statehood and to commemorate this occasion, former House and Senate members who served in the legislature since statehood were honored and acknowledged. Additionally, the newest House member, Richard Creagan of the 5th House District from Hawaii Island was sworn in. The floor session concluded with remarks from the Speaker of the House.

I am truly grateful for the best wishes offered by many of you, especially those who journeyed to the Capitol, including members of Kauhale Lahilahi (The Makaha Clubhouse), Lu Favorito of the Makaha Hawaiian Civic Club, and staff and volunteers of Olelo Waianae.



The State's Financial Plan

The House Finance Committee began conducting Budget Briefings starting with Kalbert Young, Director of Budget and Finance, who presented the State's Financial Plan. Mr. Young testified that the State's financial footing has improved during the past three fiscal years that has generated an unprecedented preliminary general fund ending balance of \$844 million for FY 13. Nevertheless, Mr. Young testified that we must be mindful that the State was recently managing a -\$200 million revenue shortfall and negative general fund balances. Mr. Young also noted that federal resources and funding are uncertain. Along with the likelihood of some continued sequestration effects, there remains some question as to the effect of Congressional budget action.

Although there are many priority needs that must be addressed, fiscal stability is essential. The Administration plans to focus on restoring critical State services and is

committed to further building the financial strength of the State. As such, the Administration has set a targeted objective to build State reserves to 10% of general fund revenues. Accordingly, the Emergency and Budget Reserve Fund will receive \$50 million in FY 14. The Hawaii Hurricane Relief Fund has received \$50 million in FY 14, which is in addition to the \$55.5 million in general excise tax revenues also transferred this fiscal year to the hurricane reserve trust fund. Through separate legislation, the Administration will also be proposing the transfer of \$50 million to each fund in FY 15. The estimated balance of the reserves after these transfers will be over \$372 million, or 5.6% of projected general fund revenues in FY 15. The Administration's commitment to forward fund the State's Other Post Employment Benefits unfunded liability begins this fiscal year with a landmark payment of \$100 million and, in FY 15, a payment of \$117.4 million.

The Office of the Governor's Budget Request

The House Finance Committee heard from the Office of the Governor on January 6, which testified that the top two priorities are the budget requests for the early learning and healthcare transformation initiatives.

The Early Learning request consists of three parts: 1) \$4,470,208 for a DOE-Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) partnership to operate programs within the DOE structure, 2) \$1 million for contracts with Family-Child Interaction Learning programs, and 3) \$218,000 for additional staff. The EOEL was established by Act 178 in 2012 and is charged with developing a comprehensive and integrated statewide early childhood system. GG Weisenfeld was appointed Director on July 2013. The EOEL is partnering with other state agencies as well as a number of community organizations across the state, to develop resources to increase awareness about the change in the kindergarten entry age. Starting August 2014, a child must be five years old on or before July 31 of the school year to enter kindergarten. This change aligns Hawaii with the vast majority



of states. The change is also part of the plan to establish a cohesive, comprehensive, and sustainable preschool system for all four-year-olds.

Healthcare Transformation is requesting \$752,870 in general funds and \$319,300 in federal funds, primarily for staff to assist the Office in carrying out its mission to improve quality in our health care system. The Office of the Governor also requested an additional \$525,000 for liaisons based in Hawaii and Washington, D.C. to protect, enhance and advance military presence in Hawaii.

COMMUNITY UPDATES

State Loan Repayment Program Helps Provide Doctors and Nurses in Hawaii's Most Underserved Areas Including Waianae

Eleven health care providers, doctors and advanced practice nurses, have been selected to receive up to \$40,000 to repay their student loans in exchange for working in a Health Profession Shortage area in Hawaii for two years. They include family nurse practitioners in Waianae, Lanai, Molokai, and West Hawaii Island, an obstetrician on Maui, pediatricians in Waianae and Kalihi and a psychiatrist at Halawa prison. The loan repayment program was launched last year to address a severe shortage of physicians and other health workers in the state. The Legislature authorized UH Manoa schools of medicine and nursing to establish the loan repayment program. Funding so far has come from the Affordable Care Act money and donations from HMSA, the Queen's Medical Center and Aloha Care. In 2012, five health care workers received loan repayment awards. The 11 awards in 2013 total \$394,474.

Dr. Jasmine Waipa, a loan repayment award recipient and pediatrician at the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (WCCHC) is a graduate of Kamehameha Schools,

Harvard University and Stanford School of Medicine. Her interests are in health disparities, adolescent medicine, obesity and preventable chronic disease in children.

Jennifer Morita, also a loan repayment award recipient and Family Nurse Practitioner at WCCHC, is a graduate of Kaimuki High School and attended the UH Manoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene. During her training at the Institute for Human Services, Kokua Kalihi Valley and on the Waikiki Care A Van, she honed skills and a passion to help the underserved, particularly Native Hawaiians, Micronesians, and women currently in domestic violence settings.

Hokulani Porter, the third loan repayment award recipient and a Family Nurse Practitioner at WCCHC is part-Hawaiian and grew up seeing many of the health issues that Native Hawaiians experience in her own family, which motivated her to enter nursing.

Finally, Lisa Garrett-Guadnola comes to the WCCHC following the work she did in Maili with Catholic Charities of Hawaii.

Kamehameha Community Learning Center Under Construction

Construction is underway on the new Kamehameha Community Learning Center (KCLC) at Maili and I am grateful for the opportunity to visit the site with staff from Kamehameha Schools on January 10. The new KCLC will provide spaces for students and families to learn and grow and will serve as a venue for community programs to model innovative, collaborative and impactful services. Located between Kaukama Street and St. John's Road, the KCLC at Maili was made possible through a collaborative effort between Kamehameha Schools and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL). The KCLC at Maili will be the flagship learning center for Kamehameha Schools. The first project is an early learning complex which will increase the number of preschool seats on the Waianae Coast, provide learning opportunities and resources to families with young children, and create a hub where early childhood organizations can work in close proximity to better serve Waianae Coast keiki and families. First programs are targeted to be delivered on-site in the 2014-15 school year. To learn more about the KCLC at Maili, visit the learning center page at http://www.ksbe.edu/kapua/site/clc_maili.



Leeward Community Action Center Opens Its Doors

I was honored to have had the opportunity to attend the opening and blessing of the Honolulu Community Action Program (HCAP) facility that opened in Waianae on January 10. The ceremony began with an 'oli performed by the Royal Order of Kamehameha I and blessing by Reverend Bob Nakata. Executive Director Robert N.E. Piper welcomed the community to the building, expressing, "This is the community's house. This house belongs to all of you." The event concluded with brief presentations from elected officials and students from Makaha Elementary School, who spoke publicly about their successful canned food drive. Following the presentations, food was served and staff gave tours of the facility.

It was inspiring to see community members from all walks of life coming together to one space to celebrate the opening of the Waianae community action center. Together, we will be able to help those along the Waianae coast who are struggling right now and create substantive change from the ground up.



“ This is the community's house. This house belongs to **all of you.** ”

Connect with Rep. Jordan



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Contact Information

repjordan@capitol.hawaii.gov
repjordan@gmail.com
(808) 586-8460

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