



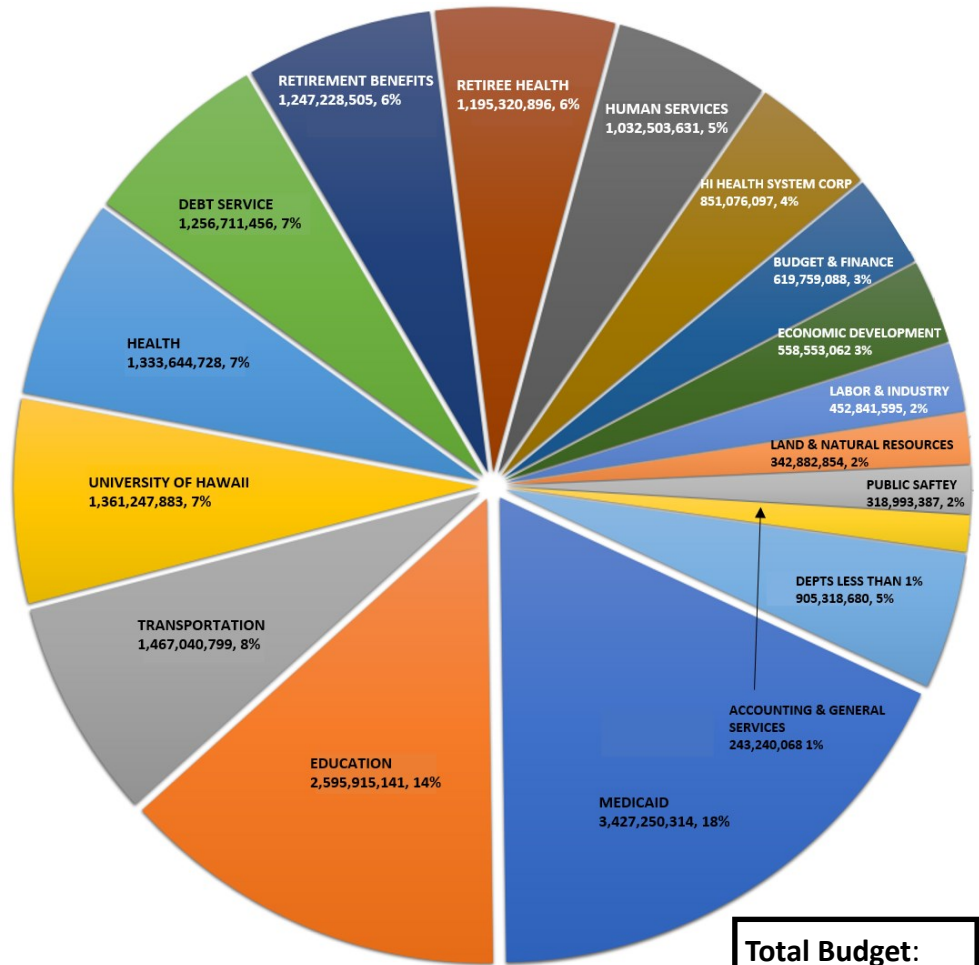
# Your 2024 Community Report

From Representative Jackson D. Sayama

District 21: St. Louis Heights, Pālolo Valley, Maunalani Heights, Wilhelmina Rise, Kaimuki

## FY 2025 Hawai'i State Budget

Despite substantial costs related to the Maui wildfires and COVID hazard pay, this budget expands programs in mental health care, education, and land management while providing historic tax relief to low and middle income families.



**Total Budget:**  
**\$19,209,528,184**

### Highlights

- \$447,159,926 for ongoing wildfire relief, recovery, and prevention
- \$365,000,000 for COVID era hazard pay for qualified public employees
- \$362,000,000 for costs related food, housing, and assistance for Maui
- \$ 25,000,000 into Rental Housing Revolving fund
- \$ 21,000,000 for Summer Learning hubs
- \$ 19,780,660 for the biosecurity program to fight invasive species
- \$ 18,266,346 for Department of Education bus contracts
- \$ 18,000,000 for Department of Education food services
- \$ 18,000,000 for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division
- \$ 10,000,000 for fire and emergency response equipment



Aloha Friends and Neighbors,

I hope you and your family are in good health and spirit. With the backdrop of the devastating Maui wildfires, this Session delivered critical relief to Maui, while also addressing key issues of cost of living, traffic safety, sustainable energy, and invasive species. The Legislature also passed substantial tax relief through adjustments to the income tax brackets and standard deduction—valued at \$5 billion over 6 years. We also created tax exemptions for Medical and Dental services, which will reduce the cost of necessary services to benefit patients.

Over the interim, I will be going door to door to listen to your concerns and ideas to understand how I can better serve you. I will also continue my work in exploring teacher housing and condominium reform. I look forward to hearing from you and thank you for the privilege of serving you and your 'ohana in the House of Representatives.

Thank you,

Representative Jackson D. Sayama  
District 21

# 2024 Hawai'i State Legislative Session: Bills

## DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

### **(SB2143) RELATING TO INVESTMENTS IN WILDFIRE PREVENTION**

Wildfires pose a significant threat to Hawai'i's communities, with potential consequences ranging from habitat destruction to water quality degradation. This bill aims to bolster funding for the state's wildfire management branch, enabling support for nonprofit organizations specializing in wildfire preparedness and mitigation, thereby safeguarding the unique biodiversity of Hawai'i's landscapes.

### **(SB2284) RELATING TO A WILDFIRE FORECAST SYSTEM FOR HAWAI'I**

Recognizing the increasing threat of wildfires in Hawai'i, this bill proposes a proactive approach. It mandates the University of Hawai'i to establish a two-year program aimed at developing a wildfire forecast system using artificial intelligence. This system will play a crucial role in enhancing public safety and preparedness by providing accurate forecasts of statewide wildfire risks.

### **(SB582) RELATING TO WILDFIRE RESPONSE AND RECOVERY**

Appropriates \$297 million to costs related to assisting displaced Maui resident with housing, food, and other items. Appropriates \$65 million to the One 'Ohana Fund to compensate victims of the Maui wildfires, who waive the right to sue for damages related to physical injury or death caused by the wildfires. The One 'Ohana Fund, established under the Governor, is a alternative means for families impacted by the wildfire to seek financial compensation without having to exhaust their time and money in lawsuits.

### **(HB2742) RELATING TO A WILDFIRE EVICTION MORATORIUM**

Amends the Landlord Tenant Code to strengthen mediation procedures for eviction of a tenant. Modeled off of COVID era emergency proclamation, this bill ensures renters having difficulty paying rent are not at risk of becoming homeless and have a right to mediation procedures.

### **(SB2085) RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL**

Hawai'i is the only state without a fire marshal's office. A fire marshal will provide an integral role in coordinating fire prevention between local agencies. By creating a permanent division of the state fire marshal within the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, we hope to ensure public safety from catastrophic events.



*Rep. Sayama with members of Maui advocacy group Lahaina Strong.*

## TAX RELIEF

### **(SB1035) RELATING TO GET EXEMPTION**

Creates a General Excise Tax exemption of health care goods and services provided by medical and dental practitioners to patients who receive Medicaid, Medicare, or TRICARE benefits. This bill will ease the fiscal burden on doctors and dentists while also ensuring health care access to the lowest income families and Kūpuna.

### **(HB2404) RELATING TO INCOME TAX & STANDARD DEDUCTION**

In addition to doubling the standard deduction this bill also adjusts the income tax brackets, providing tax payers with an estimated \$5 billion tax break over 6 years. These adjustments will ensure that increases to minimum wage will enable workers to keep their new earnings. An average Hawai'i family of four with a household income of \$88,000 will see their taxes owed fall from \$5,086 to \$1,473—increasing their income increase by \$3,613 by 2031.

## HEALTH & EDUCATION

### **(SB2476) RELATING TO SCHOOL DENTAL HYGIENISTS**

To support oral health in our students, this bill authorizes licensed dental hygienists to perform dental care in a DOE school-based oral health program. By taking proactive steps to strengthen school-based oral health programs, we can help ensure all keiki are healthy and ready to learn.

### **(SB2257) RELATING TO TEACHER QUALIFICATION**

To address teacher shortage, this bill authorizes the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board to add certain qualified individuals with a high school diploma and other attributes of education, coursework, industry experience, and content expertise to the list of individuals who can teach career and technical education courses.

### **(SB2475) RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

The bill establishes a Harm to Students Registry for all early learning programs, schools, and K-12 educational institutions within the State. The registry will contain information on school employees, contractors, or volunteers for whom a final finding has been issued as a result of an investigation, indicating that the individual has inflicted harm on a student. The Department of Education, charter schools, private schools, and early learning entities are prohibited from considering for employment any person listed on the Harm to Students Registry.



*Rep. Sayama rallying with keiki advocates against vaping products.*

### **(SB2305) RELATING TO MISSING PERSONS**

Introducing measures to safeguard older adults and individuals with cognitive or developmental challenges who may go missing, by establishing a 'Silver Alert' system, similar to the Amber Alert used for missing children. Law enforcement can promptly issue this alert when a vulnerable person disappears, aiding in their swift location. Additionally, this bill incorporates provisions to uphold the privacy and dignity of the missing individual.



*Rep. Sayama with visiting students from Kaimuki Christian Academy.*

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### **(SB2133) RELATING TO HOUSING**

This bill addresses the need for infrastructure development in affordable housing and regional state projects in Hawai'i. By allowing the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation to utilize bonds for construction purposes, including roads and sewer systems, it ensures vital community improvements. Moreover, by exempting these bonds from most taxes, this bill encourages investment in essential infrastructure projects, fostering community development and supporting affordable housing initiatives.

### **(HB1832) RELATING TO HIRING**

This bill allows state departments to conduct their own applicant qualification reviews for vacant positions, rather than relying solely on the Department of Human Resources Development. By streamlining the hiring process, it aims to reduce delays and ensure qualified candidates are not lost to other opportunities while awaiting a response.

### **(HB2298) RELATING TO COFFEE LABELING**

The objective of this bill is to protect consumers by verifying that coffee labeled with specific geographic origins such as "Kona" or "Kaua'i" actually contains a substantial proportion of coffee sourced from those regions. It establishes incremental criteria for the minimum percentage of coffee from the declared origin and includes exemptions for retailers who do not package coffee, shielding them from liability if the labeling fails to meet these standards.



*Rep. Sayama with representatives from American Cancer Society on Cancer Action Day.*

**(HB2619) RELATING TO BIOSECURITY**  
Appropriates \$19,780,660 to the Department of Agriculture to lead and coordinate the State's invasive pest control and eradication biosecurity efforts; identify best practices for the treatment of certain pests; post certain information on its website; and document certain GIS database information. Appropriates another \$50,000 to counties for feral chicken control programs.

## **HOUSING**

### **(HB1838) RELATING TO ZONING**

With recent legal concerns arising, there's a need to rethink how short-term rentals are managed. This bill aims to empower counties to decide where these rentals can operate, while also ensuring fair taxes from shelters and similar accommodations. The ultimate goal is to better regulate these lodgings and support local communities.

### **(SB2726) RELATING TO CONDOMINIUMS**

Condos can sometimes be a headache for residents, with disputes over management, documents, and more. This bill aims to tackle these issues by looking at how other states handle them. It proposes studying solutions like having a dedicated person to resolve disputes and ensuring condo managers are properly licensed.

### **(SB2919) RELATING TO PROPERTY**

This bill aims to tackle the challenges around short-term rentals and zoning rules in our neighborhoods. By giving counties more control over how land and buildings are used, it helps protect the character of our communities while respecting local decision-making. It also ensures that certain temporary housing options are included in tax laws, which could help fund important local projects and services.

### **(SB2836) RELATING TO MAUI'S PERMANENT HOUSING RECOVERY**

This bill establishes a comprehensive framework within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) to coordinate Maui's permanent housing recovery efforts. It designates the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation to lead the Interagency Council for Maui Housing Recovery, ensuring efficient collaboration among state and county agencies to address housing needs on the island, with a particular focus on disaster recovery from



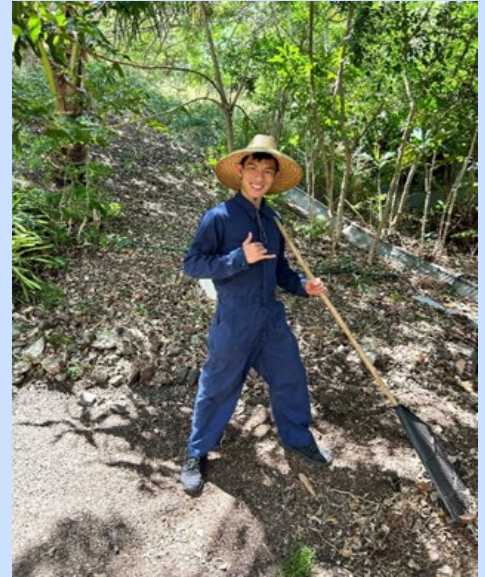
*Rep. Sayama during Floor Session speaking against HB1630, a bill that would increase housing density in our district.*

# Our Community Coming Together

## Azama Park Clean Up & Albizia

Our recent community park cleanup was a resounding success! With everyone pitching in, we cleared trail pathways, removed invasive species, and by noon we had thirty-one filled bags of biomaterial. It was heartening to see neighbors and community members come together for the betterment of our shared outdoor spaces.

During a recent visit to the back of Pālolo Valley, I observed the aftermath of fallen Albizia trees. It was eye-opening to witness the potential danger these trees pose to our community, as the branches can become dangerously heavy and cause significant damage. We need to take proactive measures to address this ongoing issue and prioritize the safety of our neighborhoods.



## Kaimukī High School Capitol Visit

Engaging with Kaimuki High School's student government, I had the chance to share insights into the legislative process and offer firsthand experiences of being a representative. It was rewarding to see students connect with civic engagement and gain a deeper understanding of the responsibilities of elected officials. These interactions underscored the importance of investing in civic education to empower the next generation of informed and engaged citizens.

## Supporting Kūpuna

Smiles and celebration filled the air as I had the pleasure of attending an event hosted by Pālolo Chinese Home. Our Kūpuna deserve the best, which is why I'm committed to improving their lives. With the recent Silver Alert bill passed, and ongoing efforts for increased care and housing, we're making strides. Supporting organizations like Pālolo Chinese Home is key to ensuring our Kūpuna are cherished and well cared for.



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## \$2.9 MILLION CIP FUNDS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

I'm proud to announce our ongoing commitment to fighting for our schools and advocating for our community. By dedicating nearly three million dollars in public funds to improve school facilities, we're ensuring that our children have safe and productive learning environments where they can thrive. Together, let's continue to prioritize education and invest in the future of our community.

### KE KULA KAIAPUNI 'O ĀNUENUE

- **\$1,300,000** for repair and maintenance for Building A & D reroof.

### JARRETT MIDDLE SCHOOL

- **\$650,000** for planning, design, and construction for leveling and regressing the two large fields on campus.
- **\$350,000** for repair and maintenance for campus reroof of covered walkways.

### ALI'OLANI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- **\$600,000** for repair and maintenance of Building B Restroom Renovation.



*Rep. Sayama being interviewed by Kaimukī High School student Arriana Simpao for 'Ōlelo TV.*



*Rep. Sayama at Jarrett Middle School for the Lion King performance by the Afterschool All-Stars Program.*