

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM Representative Troy N. Hashimoto

July/August 2021

Aloha! In early July, the State Legislature convened in a special session to over-ride and amend bills vetoed by Governor David Ige. In total, 26 bills were vetoed, of which both the House and Senate agreed to override six bills and made amendments to three. The remaining bills vetoed will not become law this year.



Much of the back and forth between the Governor and the Legislature was over balancing the State budget. Although the State has received a tremendous amount of federal funds to help cover budgetary shortfalls, much of the guidance on spending regulations were announced after the Legislature adjourned. Fortunately, the State's economy has been on an upward trajectory, and simple budget reallocations during the special session balanced the budget for the next fiscal year. It is my hope that a strong economic recovery continues while COVID-19 becomes less of a health concern.

Much of my focus has also been on ensuring Act 57 is fully implemented, which is an "off ramp" for landlords and tenants once the State's Eviction Moratorium ends on August 6. Rep. Nadine Nakamura of Kauai and I introduced this measure, and it was signed into law (*see photo above*). The bill creates a pathway for free mandatory mediation before an eviction notice can be filed with the courts. This will allow for a transition period as landlords and tenants get back to normal order.

Although the 2021 session has ended, work has already begun for next legislative session and I welcome any ideas. My office continues to be here to assist you, so please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Mahalo,



With (L-R) Rep. Yamashita, Director Lori Tshukako of the County Dept. of Housing and Human Concerns, Sen. Lynn DeCoite, Sen. Keith-Agaran, and Grant Chun of Hale Mahaolu, visiting the completed Maui Huliau housing project which is the old University of Hawai'i at Maui College dorms. The project was coordinated by the County

of Maui with \$5 million from the State Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund and has helped to house over 50 people with management by Hale Mahaolu.

State COVID-19 information update

Travel Update

Governor David Ige announced as of July 8, all fully vaccinated domestic travelers with proof, can bypass testing and quarantine requirements. When the State's total population hits a 70 percent vaccination rate, all travel related COVID restrictions will be relaxed.

To track the State's progress, visit: <https://hawaiiicovid19.com/>

State Eviction Moratorium

The State Eviction Moratorium will end on August 6, 2021 and has been in place since April 17, 2020. Act 57 was signed into law by the Governor and allows renters more time to seek rental assistance and work out agreements to avoid eviction. The Act also sets up the opportunity for free mediation, which must be completed before any court action. The courts can only consider summary possession cases for those owing four months of back rent or more for the first 30 days, with those owing less phasing in every 60 days.

Landlord and tenant resources

Financial assistance

- **Maui County Emergency Rental Assistance Program** provides help with current, future, or past rent and utility bills for households impacted by COVID and have an income of 80 percent of the area median income. For qualified households, the program pays up to \$2,500 for past rent and utility bills going back to March 13, 2020 and up to \$2,500 per month. For current and future bills payments, up to \$2,000 for rent and up to \$500 for utilities for each month. To apply go to mauicounty.gov/MauiRentHelp or contact their help line at: (808) 873-4673.
- **Emergency Broadband Benefit** assists eligible households with internet bills and in some cases, buy laptops, desktops, and tablet computers. Go to www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit or call (833) 511-0311 for an application.

Mediation Services

- **Maui Mediation Services:** www.mauimediation.org/landlordtenant/ or call (808) 244-5744

Advice for landlords/tenants

- **Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs's Landlord-Tenant Code Information Center:** cca.hawaii.gov/ocp/landlord_tenant/ or call their toll-free hotline at (808) 984-2400, ext. 62634
- **Legal Aid Society of Hawai'i:** www.legalaidhawaii.org/i-cant-pay-my-rent-mortgage.html or call their toll-free number at (800) 499-4302.

Congratulations Class of 2021!

A note from Rep. Hashimoto: *I wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate and celebrate the Class of 2021 for their resiliency in adapting to this unpredictable year! The entire community celebrates them and their many accomplishments and achievements. Wishing them the best of luck in all of their future endeavors.*



Maria Magdalaine Anjeleigh Rabino Dela Cruz
St. Anthony High School

Maria Magdalaine Anjeleigh Rabino Dela Cruz or simply Anjeleigh, was one of the most active students at St. Anthony High School. She participated in cross country, track and field, symphonic band, color guard, yearbook club, National Honor Society, and Science Olympiad – you name it, Anjeleigh probably did it! Being so active, it was quite an adjustment as COVID shortened her junior year and modified her senior year.

"It was difficult adjusting to new protocols and at times it was frustrating to know that we would not experience being "normal" for some time," she said.

Dela Cruz quickly adapted by talking and playing with friends online and this extra time gave her time to take up old hobbies such as reading and drawing. She remains grateful of being able to attend an in-person graduation ceremony and experience project graduation (post-graduation party) with her classmates.

In the fall, Dela Cruz has big plans of becoming a Fighting Irish, attending the University of Notre Dame in Indiana where she plans on studying biochemistry on a pre-med track. After her undergraduate education, she hopes to attend medical school and pursue her dream of becoming a neurosurgeon.

"It sounds cliché, but I can't wait to attend class in big lecture halls, discover campus with friends, and especially scream my heart out at a football game...Go Irish!" said Dela Cruz.



Dela Cruz received a scholarship at the Maui Filipino Chamber of Commerce's Gintong Pamana Leadership and Scholarship Awards.



Liam Caldwell
H.P. Baldwin High School

H.P. Baldwin High School graduate Liam Caldwell will be attending Arizona State University in the fall where he will explore his many interests. He has oscillated back and forth between biomedical research, environmental science, and economics but is planning on using his college experience to figure out what he truly enjoys.

An active student, Caldwell was on the tennis team, HOSA Club, and served as a student council class representative and treasurer. Although he is looking forward to his future, he did feel like he missed out on his high school experience. "Our class didn't have a prom or project grad celebration, so it feels like we've missed out on a lot," he said.

Learning virtually was also very difficult with struggles paying attention in classes. He remains grateful however, that they were able to celebrate an in-person graduation. "Thankfully, our school's graduation committee worked really hard to give us an in-person graduation, so we did get to finish with a bit of a bang!"

Caldwell feels very lucky that his family was able to stay healthy during the pandemic but gives a great piece of advice on the importance of reaching out to others. "I started talking to a lot of new people during the pandemic because I missed daily conversation at school, and I found that most people felt the same. I made new friends and found support this way."

As for having a positive future, Caldwell encourages everyone to get vaccinated, "it's the only way for everything to really return to "normal," even if it's a ways off," he said.



Attending the 2021 the Binhi at Ani Seed and Harvest Dinner celebrating scholarship recipients and installing a new board of directors.



Mayor Michael Victorino and Michael Wong, a graduate of Maui High and a resident of Wailuku. He received a Binhi at Ani Scholarship and plans to attend Rice University to study electrical engineering.



With Abbygail Cineana Viloría who graduated from H.P. Baldwin High School and received the In Memory of Rev. Walter T. Baloaloo/Binhi at Ani Scholarship. She plans to attend the University of Hawai'i at Manoa to study Secondary Education.

Capital Improvement Projects

Governor David Ige announced the release of funding for the following projects appropriated by the Legislature in a joint effort by Rep. Hashimoto and Senator Keith-Agaran. Most CIP projects are paid for with borrowed bond funds and must be a large scale renovation, repair, or new construction.

- **\$7 million** for design and construction of a new physical education and athletic facility at *H.P. Baldwin High School*. Currently, students use County facilities for athletics and physical education classes.
- **\$1.2 million** for construction to relocate the on-grade chiller for Modules A, B, C and D at *Maui Community Correctional Center* to make room for a new a building module.



All public students to receive free meals

All students enrolled in Hawai'i's 257 public schools will receive free breakfast and lunch meals for the entirety of the 2021-22 school year, thanks to a nationwide waiver from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.



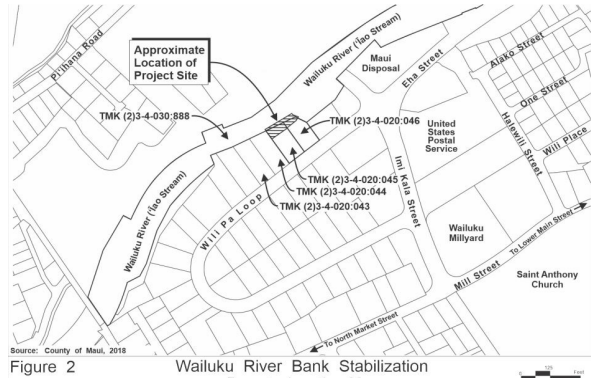
The waiver aims to minimize the possible spread of COVID-19 at schools across the country by eliminating meal payment transactions.

Parents and guardians who have not yet purchased meal credits for the upcoming school year via the EZMealApp mobile app or through their school do not need to take any action. Those who have already purchased meal credits in advance may choose to leave funds in the account for the following school year or contact their child's school to request a refund.

To learn more, go to www.hawaiipublicschools.org

Wailuku River bank stabilization

The County of Maui, Department of Public Works (DPW) presented their draft environmental assessment for the Wailuku River Bank Stabilization project in July to the State Department of Health. DPW is proposing to restore an eroded embankment of the Wailuku River in the vicinity of the Wailuku Millyard light industrial subdivision and provide slope protection improvements for flood protection purposes. The existing earthen embankment of the Wailuku River, located on County property, has eroded beyond the bank to affect two adjacent commercial properties causing exposure of the buildings foundation and may result in loss of property and flooding within this area.



Proposed work involves excavation, regrading, and reinforcement of the river bank slope using grouted rip-rap (GRP) consisting of cobbles and boulders with concrete infill. Ideally work will take place in the low-rainfall months of May to October. Currently, the project is estimated to cost about \$1.3 million.

If you would like to review the Draft Environmental Assessment, please go to http://oeqc2.doh.hawaii.gov/Doc_Library/2021-07-08-MA-DEA-Wailuku-River-Bank-Stabilization-Project.pdf

Hawai'i Commission on Water Resource Management decision on Nā Wai 'Ehā

The Hawai'i Commission on Water Resources Management (CWRM) on June 28, 2021 announced, after more than two decades of conflict, they have released a lengthy Decision and Order (D&O) on the use water in Nā Wai 'Ehā, which encompasses the "four great waters" of Maui: Waihe'e, Waiehu, Wailuku, and Waikapū.

20-plus years of legal proceedings are now settled in a formal D&O, which for the first time recognizes appurtenant rights to west Maui waters, including setting aside sufficient supply for traditional taro farming and other traditional and customary practices. The D&O is a result of a lengthy and complicated Contested Case Hearing that synthesizes voluminous evidence in what was a multi-faceted proceeding. The D&O documents the legal record, analysis, and more than 1,000 determinations that resulted in 116 recognized appurtenant rights and 176 permits.

Aggregate water allocations for Nā Wai 'Ehā include:

- More than one-half of available stream flows allocated to protect instream habitat and related benefits.
- Approximately 14 percent of the water for kalo production.
- About 1/3 of the water for beneficial off stream uses, such as municipal water supply and diversified agriculture.
- Permitting over 23-million-gallons a day for other uses.

To view the commission's final decision and order, visit: <https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/cwrn/newsevents/cch/cch-ma15-01>

In response to Hawai'i Commission on Water Resource Management historic decision, Maui County Mayor Michael Victorino announced his decision to reserve the balance of available water recently allocated to the County's Department of Water to develop affordable rental units and attainable workforce homes for residents in Central and South Maui.

The Mayor's decision is expected to incentivize developers to build more units sooner by offering greater certainty to those seeking to build affordable rentals and attainable workforce housing. The commission endorsed the County of Maui's existing use permit for 1.784 million gallons of water per day, plus ratified a new use permit for 1.416 million gallons per day.



2021 Special Session

During a special session held in early July, the Legislature amended bills vetoed by the Governor. Two bills related to the State budget, HB 54 and HB 1299, will now ensure all requirements are met of using federal stimulus fund. SB 589 was also amended and relates to the University of Hawai'i. The changes will ensure UH can continue certain programs, including the UH Cancer Center.

Both the House and Senate also voted to override six bills vetoed by the Governor:

- HB 53: Relating to State Bonds – *authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds.*
- HB 862: Relating to State Government – *authorizes the counties to establish a transient accommodations tax and approves a budget for the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.*
- SB 263: Relating to Economic Development – *transfers the Hawai'i Made program to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.*
- SB 404: Relating to Electioneering Communications – *amends requirements for campaign electioneering disclosures.*
- SB 811: Relating To The Department of Education - *requires the Department of Education to publish a weekly report on schools that have reported positive COVID-19 cases.*
- SB 1387: Relating To Microchip Identification - *requires dog and cat owners to microchip their pets.*

At Waihe'e Elementary School with (L-R) Michael Bissell of Arisumi Brothers, Principal Paula Inouye, Sen. Keiuh-Agaran, & Vice Principal Kalani Au, examining the recently demolished administration building and the construction work on a replacement. Re-roofing is on going along with planning for drainage improvements and the covering of their play courts.



Attending 'Āo staff awards where they honored Vice Principal Richard Young (left) on his retirement and congratulating him on 33 years with the DOE. Physical education teacher Sean Ramos (right) was also recognized as the 'Āo Teacher of the Year.





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Maui Bus changes

The Maui County Bus rates have changed as of *July 1, 2021*. These fare changes are part of the recommendations provided by the Maui Bus Rates & Fee Study which completed a review of the existing rates and fees, or fare structure, on fixed-route, commuter, and paratransit service.

Rates:

- ▶ \$25 fixed route reduced monthly bus pass available for purchase by Maui Bus riders who are seniors (55 and older), paratransit eligible and persons with certified disability fixed route cards, Medicare cardholders and students with valid ID 24 years old and younger.
- ▶ Certified disabilities fixed route applicants are required to register with Maui Economic Opportunity Inc. to qualify for this rate. Please contact MEO at (808) 249-2900 for application and information.
- ▶ Other fares for fixed routes and commuter services will remain unchanged. All monthly and daily passes will no longer available for ADA Paratransit Service. The \$2 one-way fare option will remain.
- ▶ A 12-Ride (one-way trip) ticket book will be available for purchase for \$20. The ticket book is valid from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022.
- ▶ Children 5 years and under travel free and must be accompanied by a paying passenger for fixed routes only.

The final Maui Bus Rates & Fee Study is available at www.gettingonboardmauibus.com

Also as of *July 1*, Maui Bus Commuter Service will resume for the Wailuku-Kapalua route #3 and #4. Please note that all times for the reinstated routes will go back to Pre-COVID routing and time schedule.

For more information, please contact the Maui County Department of Transportation at (808) 270-7511 or send an email to public.transit@mauicounty.gov.

Road repavement updates

County of Maui Public Works Director Rowena Dagdag-Andaya and Council Chair Alice Lee provided an update on scheduled repavement in the Wailuku area.

- **Mill Street** - Construction is anticipated start in the *fall of this year*. The project was delayed because of archaeological concerns.
- **Imi Kala and Wili Pa Loop** - A thin layer of resurfacing will be applied to extend the life of the road before a reconstruction of the road which will take place once design is completed.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Federal Fiscal Year 2022-2025 projects under review:

- **Kanaloa Avenue Federal Fiscal Year 2024**. Resurfacing, rehabilitation of the pavement, reconstruction of existing curb ramps and sidewalks to be ADA compliant, and the addition of sidewalks where there are gaps in the sidewalk network.
- **Lower Main Street Federal Fiscal Year 2024**. Complete streets improvements are being considered to encourage multi-modal transportation and improve safety.

To see future federal projects or Maui MPO information, please go to <https://mauimpo.org/>



**Maui Metropolitan
Planning Organization**