

# 2020 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

# JUSTIN H. WOODSON

## HAWAII STATE HOUSE DISTRICT 9

KAHULUI, PU'UNĒNĒ, OLD SAND HILLS, MAUI LANI



## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

### DISTRICT 9 CIP

The construction for Maui High School's new band room is underway. The plans also consist of adding a new weight lifting room and a wrestling/ judo room on campus. The air conditioning project has been completed.



Kahului Elementary School's new music room is part of the effort to offer S.T.E.A.M. (science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics) to students. A new computer room and dance room are also now completed.



## **HB2095** Relating to capital improvement projects for the benefit of the ninth representative district.

Appropriates \$150,000,000 for fiscal year 2020-2021 for the construction of a new intermediate school in the ninth representative district.

This proposed bill will assist in meeting the demands of Central Maui's quickly-growing population.

Representative Woodson with students from Maui Waena Intermediate School as they visit the Hawaii State Capitol for the Secondary Student Conference.



Representative Woodson signing Majority Caucus bills with Representative McKelvey, Representative Yamashita, and Representative Hashimoto.

# JOINT COST OF LIVING BILL PACKAGE



In a historic show of unity, Governor David Ige, the Hawai'i State Legislature, local businesses and community leaders created a comprehensive set of bills to address the cost of living and build a Hawai'i where everyone has the ability to make a living and thrive.

Representative Woodson speaking about HB2543 at the unveiling of the joint economic bill package.

ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) individuals and families live in all of our communities. They are family members, neighbors, and co-workers. **One in every two households in Hawai'i are ALICE, struggling to make ends meet.** ALICE individuals and families do not have a safety net for emergencies, and their incomes fall short of basic necessities. Although they work, they cannot afford the cost of living.

The bills moving through the legislature address the top three cost drivers workers and families face: wages and tax burdens, affordable housing, and access to affordable early childcare or preschool.



**HB2541** Relating to Helping Working Families: will provide **over \$70 million in annual tax relief** by making the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) refundable and permanent. This bill also increases the annual food/excise credit to \$150 multiplied by the number of qualified exemptions to which the taxpayer is entitled. Increases minimum wage rate to \$11.00 per hour beginning on 1/1/2021, \$12.00 per hour beginning on 1/1/2022, \$12.50 per hour beginning on 1/1/2023, and \$13.00 per hour beginning on 1/1/2024.



**SB3104** Relating to Affordable Housing: addresses our need for 50,000 housing units by 2050. This measure creates an efficient path to get families into homes now through the authorization of **\$275 million in GO Bonds** for infrastructure and the development of affordable housing.

*\*Although great efforts have been made to address affordable housing, it has been insufficient. However, the legislature has consulted with experts on what changes need to be made. Through these efforts, we believe we can build more affordable housing at a much quicker pace to address Maui's needs.*



**HB2543** Relating to Access to Learning: sets forth the ambitious, yet necessary, goal of providing all 3-, 4-, and early 5-year-olds access to early childcare and learning opportunities by 2030.

*\*We are currently looking at locations in Kahului and communicating with the state librarian to convert space into classrooms at the public library in Kahului as one location. The goal is to provide early learning classrooms for all 3-, 4-, and early 5-year-olds within a 10-year period or less.*



**SB3103** Relating to a School Construction Authority: expedites **building and designing of 21<sup>st</sup> century schools** for our keiki and community by leveraging underutilized school lands.

The challenges we face are great, but we must use the opportunity to lift our communities, ensuring that future generations not only survive but thrive here in Hawai'i are real. If you are interested in tracking the progress of these bills, please visit the Capitol website at [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov). I hope you will join me in supporting these measures.

# KEY ISSUES

## CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



Although there are currently no confirmed cases of COVID-19 Coronavirus in Hawai'i as of February 28th, it is still extremely important to be prepared. State agencies, such as the Department of Defense, the Department

of Transportation, and the Department of Health, are working together to establish protocols to prevent, detect, and isolate individuals with the COVID virus.

*\*The Legislature is appropriating over \$10 million to facilitate these preparedness efforts as well as to help mitigate the economic impact the virus might have on our economy.*

## HOMELESSNESS



### HB2117 HD1

Relating to homelessness.

Establishes a 3-year homeless employment grant program providing homeless individuals with work opportunities and connecting them with service providers. Requires the DHS to submit a report on the progress of the grant program and a report on the progress of homelessness programs.

## KA HALE A KE OLA

### Homeless Resource Center.

Ka Hale A Ke Ola provides comprehensive assistance to the homeless and hungry on Maui through numerous services including emergency food, housing, counseling, primary medical care and child care. Last year, Ka Hale A Ke Ola made significant strides in starting to build additional projects at the center to increase capacity which will allow for more individuals to be assisted.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



### HB1892 HD1

Relating to a food hub pilot program.

Requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a five-year food hub pilot program to increase access to local food. Provides for the award of grant funding by qualified applicants wishing to establish or expand a food hub. Requires reports to the legislature.

## HEALTHCARE



### HB2200 HD1.

Relating to the state budget.

As a part of the budget, there is funding to establish a residency program for physicians over time on Maui.

*\*This is a very important initiative that will create a pathway to bring more doctors to Maui.*

## KUPUNA CAUCUS



### HB1866 HD1

Relating to the healthy aging partnership program.

Appropriates funds for the healthy aging partnership program to further the program's role in improving the health and well-being of Hawai'i's kupuna.

### HB1874

Relating to criminal offenses against seniors.

Imposes harsher penalties for individuals that engage in predatory behavior towards seniors.

## EDUCATION



### HB2250 HD1

Relating to the University of Hawai'i Promise Program Plus.

Establishes the University of Hawai'i promise program plus to provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of qualified students enrolled in bachelor's degree programs in teaching, health care, social work, or engineering at the University of Hawai'i who commit to work for at least three years in Hawai'i. Appropriates funds to establish, implement, and manage the program.

### HB2697 HD1

Relating to education.

Establishes a no time to lose commission to examine how the State's public schools can be internationally competitive.



# Aloha,



Mahalo for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your representative. I am optimistic about the 2020 legislative session and am looking forward to seeing what we can achieve together to enrich our community.

As Chair of the Lower and Higher Education Committee, I have been working closely and diligently with several entities on expanding early learning centers, education reform, and financial assistance for college students.

There are many key issues affecting our islands, which are elaborated in our newsletter. I strongly encourage you to follow the matters you are interested in. Please do not hesitate to reach out to my office should you need anything in the future. We are always happy to assist!



**Mahalo Nui Loa,**

JUSTIN H. WOODSON

## CONTACT



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## COMMITTEES

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