

A MESSAGE FROM GIL

Aloha Kākou,

It is indeed an honor to continue to serve the people of Central Maui in the Hawai'i State Senate. You can be assured that, along with Senator J. Kalani English and Senator Rosalyn Baker and our six colleagues from Maui in the House of Representatives, I will work to address your community concerns.

January marks the opening of the second year of the current legislative biennium. In addition to many measures that have carried over from last session, hundreds of new bills have been introduced addressing every area of government. I continue to serve on the committees on Ways and Means, Higher Education, and Water and Land, where I will closely review measures on taxation and state financing policies, the University of Hawaii System and its programs, and public lands and water systems. Every year presents new challenges and opportunities.

This session I have introduced a number of bills to encourage discussion on coastal property transactions, road and crosswalk safety, extension of the deadline for counties to pass an ordinance to adopt a GET surcharge, public meetings of the Board of Education, and child support enforcement reform, among many other topics of concern.

As always, I welcome input from the people of Central Maui on any of the issues being discussed this year. Your views are important to me and I hope that the input I receive can be reflected in meaningful and timely ways as legislation moves forward.

Mahalo in advance for taking the time to contact my office at the State Capitol. Our ability to represent you depends on hearing from you as the session continues.

Sincerely,



Secondary Student Conference delegates from Maui High School, Baldwin High School, and Maui Waena Intermediate School stopped by my office to discuss democracy in action, pending bills, and the legislative process during their weekend at the State Capitol.

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PHOTOS



Discussing Senate bills for referral to their respective standing committees with Senator J. Kalani English and Senator Dru Mamo Kanuaha and staff.



Greeting the Polynesian Football Hall of Fame Honorees Jesse Sapulu and Ma'a Tanuvasa on the Senate floor.

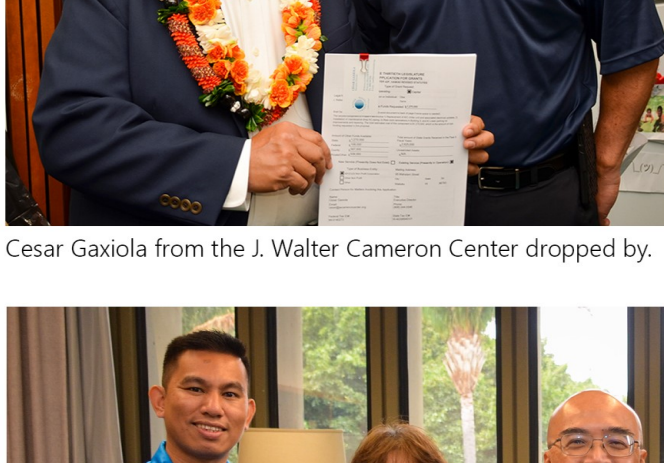


Filming an episode of Maui Mana'o, a show on 'Olelo where Senators Rosalyn Baker, J. Kalani English, and I talk about the issues affecting Maui and how the State Senate is addressing those issues.

OPENING DAY 2020



Opening Day on the Senate Floor with the Maui Delegation, Senator Rosalyn Baker and Senator J. Kalani English and myself.



Cesar Gaxiola from the J. Walter Cameron Center dropped by.



Rod Antone from the Maui Hotel and Lodging Association.



ILWU Local 142 Maui Division members and retirees.



Maui Department of Water Supply Director Jeff Pearson.



Hawaii Tourism Authority CFO Keith Regan and Communications and Public Relations Director Marisa Yamane.



ILWU Local 142 Maui Division Director Bobby Andrión and some of his members.



Seabury Hall Hawaiian Culture Students



University of Hawai'i Public Health Student Advocates originally from Maui.



ILWU Local 142 Maui Division retirees and members.

STATE OF THE STATE



Governor David Ige addressed the joint legislature during the State of the State address on January 21. Former Governors, department directors, county officials, military officers, and community members joined State Senators and Representatives on the House floor.

Governor Ige delivered his annual State of the State address on January 21 to a joint session of the legislature.

In his speech, the Governor emphasized the importance of cooperation between the state legislature and his administration in helping Hawai'i's working families face the future with more confidence, particularly with respect to the high cost of living. To that end, the Governor described a package of bills that have already been discussed and agreed upon in principle among the leadership of the Senate, House of Representatives, and his administration. These measures propose an increase in the minimum wage coupled with targeted tax relief meant to benefit working families with children.

The package includes a proposal to provide all three- and four-year-old children in Hawai'i the opportunity to attend childcare or preschool programs, using existing facilities when possible, and through new associations with private-sector and non-profit groups.

The Governor also addressed our state's homelessness crisis by noting that, on average, over 600 people each month have moved into permanent housing since 2016. He also recognized the need for future private and public sector support.

As Hawai'i continues to transition from large monocrop plantations to more diversified farming, the Governor noted the important role of technology in new agricultural enterprises, and in particular mentioned the efforts of Mahi Pono in central Maui and Sensei Farms on Lana'i. He also noted that these and other efforts must adhere to the state's goals for sustainability.

Finally, the Governor noted that moving forward with both sustainability and development goals, while maintaining respect for the land, is a mutual undertaking in an era when climate change and local cultural sensitivities present urgent challenges. He again emphasized the need for cooperation among the branches of government and with members of Hawai'i's communities, and his belief that working together is "what Hawai'i has always been about."

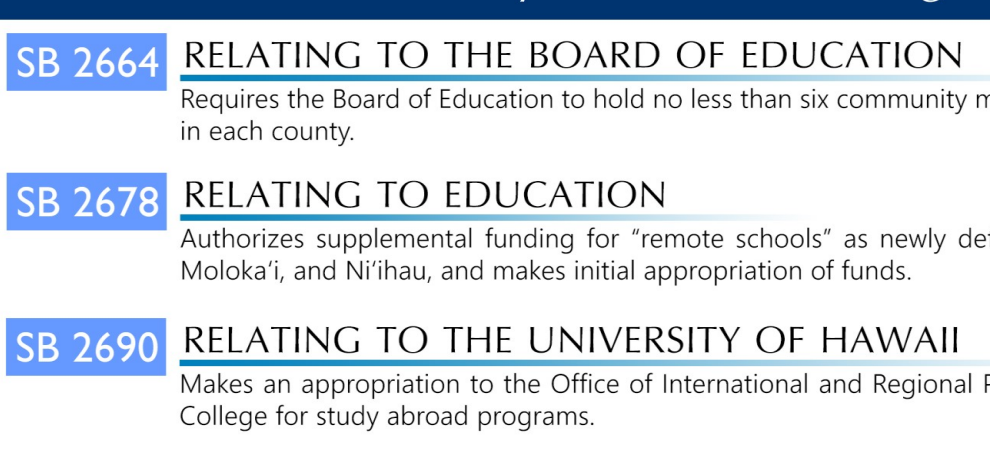
MYANMAR ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION



The Anti-Corruption Commission of Myanmar met with Senators J. Kalani English, Karl Rhoads, Brian Taniguchi, Stanley Chang, Les Ihara and myself to discuss government transparency, money in politics, and accountability in public institutions.

The 12-member Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) was created in November 2017 under the leadership of Chair U Aung Kyi and has traveled to various state and county governments to learn about how the different jurisdictions prevent and mitigate the spread of corruption.

The ACC also seeks to increase awareness of the problem with a nationwide multimedia campaign designed to educate the people of Myanmar on the importance of corruption prevention.



Notable Bills Introduced by Senator Keith-Agaran

- SB 2664** **RELATING TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**
Requires the Board of Education to hold no less than six community meetings a year, with at least one meeting held in each county.
- SB 2678** **RELATING TO EDUCATION**
Authorizes supplemental funding for "remote schools" as newly defined, including combined schools on Lana'i, Molokai, and Ni'ihau, and makes initial appropriation of funds.
- SB 2690** **RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII**
Makes an appropriation to the Office of International and Hawaiian Partnerships of the University of Hawai'i Maui College for study abroad programs.
- SB 2673** **RELATING TO INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS**
Establishes a Student Athlete Bill of Rights, allowing for postsecondary student athletes in intercollegiate athletics to receive compensation for the use of their name, image, or likeness.
- SB 2663** **RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT LAW**
Limits applicability of old environmental assessments and environmental impact statements by requiring a supplemental environmental assessment or supplemental environmental impact statement after the passage of 15 years from the date of the acceptance if no action has been implemented.
- SB 2670** **RELATING TO REAL PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS**
Requires a "vulnerable coastal property purchaser statement" to be executed by the purchaser or transferee with the sale or transfer of coastal real estate within a sea level rise exposure area, acknowledging certain risks and obligations.
- SB 2671** **RELATING TO REAL PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS**
Requires mandatory seller disclosures in real estate transactions beginning in January 2021 include identification of residential real properties lying within the officially designated "sea level rise exposure area," provided that county maps designate the areas by tax map key.
- SB 2683** **RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE**
Appropriates funds for the climate change mitigation and adaptation commission and coordinator.
- SB 2696** **RELATING TO GREEN FEES**
Requires the Office of Planning to conduct a feasibility study on environmentally-oriented tourism-derived "green fees."
- SB 2828** **RELATING TO WATER**
Specifies that fire safety use is a beneficial use of water. Requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources to work with the county governments, Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, and owners to use reservoir water for fire safety.
- SB 2829** **RELATING TO IMMIGRATION**
Makes an appropriation to the Judiciary to contract with nonprofit organizations to provide legal assistance and legal counsel to immigrants.
- SB 3141** **RELATING TO LEGAL SERVICES FOR LOW-INCOME IMMIGRANTS**
Appropriates funds to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Office of Community Services to contract with non-profit service providers for legal counsel to assist and represent low-income immigrants in immigration proceedings and immigrant status issues.
- SB 2694** **RELATING TO THE LOW-INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT**
Encourages development of affordable housing units by making changes to tax credit allocation. Exempts state-level investors from federal at-risk and passive-activity-loss rules.
- SB 2826** **RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION ACT**
Provides that Department of Hawaiian Homelands may not cancel a lease solely based on a loan default or delinquency, unless all loan loss mitigation procedures have been exhausted, based on a loan servicing manual to be developed and implemented by DHHL.
- SB 2680** **RELATING TO HISTORIC PRESERVATION**
Authorizes the counties to employ qualified archaeologists to perform necessary reviews under the historic preservation statute, HRS 6E.
- SB 2674** **RELATING TO THE TRANSIENT ACCOMMODATIONS TAX**
Authorizes counties to enact ordinances to levy a county surcharge on transient accommodations tax, beginning in 2022 and ending in 2036, subject to public hearings and certain conditions.
- SB 2676** **RELATING TO ELECTIONS**
Clarifies inconsistencies in existing statutes to improve the administration of elections by mail.
- SB 3139** **RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET**
Amends the appropriations and capital improvement projects authorized for fiscal biennium 2019-2021 made by Act 40, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019. Amends the operating and capital improvement grants authorized by Act 39, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019.

MAKE YOURSELF HEARD!

Participating in the legislative process is easier than ever for neighbor island residents who are unable to visit us at the Capitol. The state legislature's website at www.capitol.hawaii.gov is the place to start. There you can search for measures that are being considered this session based on keywords, the name of a House or Senate member who introduced a measure, or by subject matter committee. When you register for an account using your e-mail address, you can create a clear personalized tracking list for accessing daily updated information to find out when a measure may be scheduled for hearing, and you can electronically submit public testimony for consideration by the committee conducting the hearing. If you have general questions concerning the legislative process and how a bill becomes law, please also see the website for the Public Access Room at www.lrbhawaii.org/par/ or call them toll-free from Maui at 984-2400. You can reach our office toll-free through that number as well, or you can contact our office by e-mail as provided below. Mahalo for participating in our democratic process!

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