

Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Hawai'i State Senator



Hawaii State Senate

District 22

Serving Mililani Mauka, Wahiawa, Whitmore Village, Waipi'o Acres, Wheeler, part of Poamoho—and the State of Hawai'i

October 2014

UPDATE ON LITTLE FIRE ANTS

Chair, Committee on Economic Development, Government Operations and Housing

Vice Chair, Committee on Transportation and International Affairs

Member, Committees on Ways and Means; Agriculture; Water and Land

You can view Senator Dela Cruz's senate website at www.capitol.hawaii.gov. If you would like to receive our monthly newsletters and quarterly updates via email, we suggest that you email us your request via the Senate website.

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We had a follow up meeting on October 13 on the Little Fire Ants (LFA) matter to update us on the efforts to eradicate LFA in the Mililani Mauka area that had been infested. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture, along with the Hawaii Ant Lab and Oahu Invasive Species Committee, started treatments on August 6-7 and September 17-19 to infested areas. Treatments have shown positive results with areas to have reduced or no Little Fire Ants. A total of eight treatments will be done with completion slated for May 2015.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources has developed an instructional video for homeowners who are encouraged to test for Little Fire Ants in their yards and around their homes. You can watch the video (How to Test for Little Fire Ant) by going to <http://vimeo.com/97558997>.

Little Fire Ants are 1/16 inch long, orange-red in color, are slow-moving and nest in moist, shady areas, in trees, under tree bark, under rocks, within logs and leaf litter. If you think you might have Little Fire Ants on your property or in your home, please call the Hawaii Department of Agriculture statewide **Pest Hotline** at **643-PEST (7378)**. Do NOT disturb the ants or attempt to control or treat the area. This may make the nests difficult to find and possibly spread them further.

As the treatments are showing positive results, residents should continue on a regular basis in checking their properties and homes. Quarantine and test any new plants, cut flowers, plant materials such as soil and mulch. People in all areas of the island need to be on the watch as we never know where LFA may next be found.

FIRST RESPONDERS TECHNOLOGY COMPLEX

We continue to work on making Central Oahu the new home for emergency responders which includes Sheriffs, Police, Fire and Paramedics. Planned for a site at the Mililani Tech Park, it would make sense to have this built in the middle of the island, out of the inundation zone, close to military bases and an airfield. This complex would allow first responders the opportunity to centralize operations, expand and/or upgrade their facilities, or establish a headquarters location.

In addition, the Office of Information Management and Technology has discussed the need to upgrade its data center facilities. The current conditions of our data centers are not fulfilling the capacity, reliability, and security needs of the various departments. A new data center will provide the security needed to prevent breaches that may expose confidential information on our citizens.

Thus far the State has appropriated more than \$11 million toward this effort. The facility would be built on 150 acres of land acquired from Castle & Cooke.

PROJECT AWARDS...

Helemano Elementary School: \$165,304 for miscellaneous repairs and maintenance.

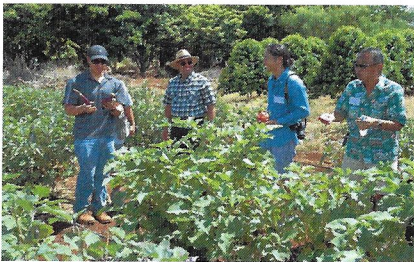
Iliahi Elementary School: \$1,581,500 for covering for playcourt.

Wahiawa Middle School: \$434,888 for miscellaneous repairs and maintenance.

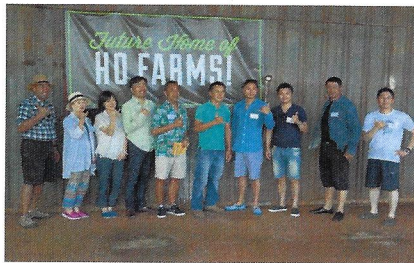
Work to begin soon on these projects, if it hasn't already started.

AGRICULTURE

Recently, we had visitors from the Tokachi Region of Hokkaido, Japan, which is a small farming area known for their signature red azuki beans. The area is experiencing economic hardship due to failing businesses. Leaders are attempting to revitalize the area by branding their agricultural products. Since their efforts to revitalize the area is similar to what we are doing in Central Oahu to bring about the re-emergence of agriculture, they were interested in learning what we were doing. We are also in the process of establishing a region-to-region relationship between Tokachi and Wahiawa.



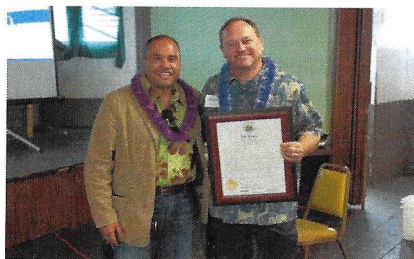
Senator takes visitors from Tokachi on a tour of Whitmore Project areas including the CTAHR Poamoho Agricultural Research Station.



The group visits the future home of Ho Farms on recently acquired lands by the state.



The group tries the dragon fruit at Poamoho.



Senator presents Senate certificate to Pastor Steve Gray for Wahiawa Baptist Church's 80th anniversary.



Senator speaks to the Leilehua High School Japanese class that presented leis to the Tokachi visitors.



Senator was invited to give his presentation on his Whitmore Project to the Wahiawa United Methodist Church.