

Working for You...
AND THE STATE OF HAWAII

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz

HAWAII STATE SENATE - DISTRICT 22
Mililani Mauka • Wahiawā • Whitmore Village • Waip'ō Acres • Wheeler • Poamoho



September 2015

Majority Whip

Vice Chair: Committee on Ways and Means

Member: Committees on Education; Government Operations; Water, Land and Agriculture.



You can view Senator Dela Cruz's senate website at www.capitol.hawaii.gov.



Subscribe to our E-Newsletter by emailing delacruz2@capitol.hawaii.gov.

Dane Wicker, Legislative Aide
(808) 586-7108
d.wicker@capitol.hawaii.gov

David Cho, Legislative Aide
(808) 586-6697
d.cho@capitol.hawaii.gov

Dot Fujinaga, Office Manager
(808) 586-6090
d.fujinaga@capitol.hawaii.gov

Hawaii State Senate
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania St., Rm. 202
Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-586-6090
F: 808-586-6091

Email:
sendelacruz@capitol.hawaii.gov

Live, Learn, Work, Play

Nationwide rural communities are facing a common situation, population loss of our graduates and a dwindling labor market. Add to it Hawaii's high cost of living, and you have the cycle of youth saying aloha to the Aloha State in search of other opportunities. But what are we doing here at a local level to ensure that our youth will have the skillset to find a career close to home in their community or a career that provides them a salary to stay in Hawaii close to family?

Recently, I've been working with a group of various stakeholders through weekly meetings to address these issues head on. This working group consists of representatives from the K-12 system, higher education institutions, and industry. We created Live, Learn, Work, Play which is a regional strategy for workforce readiness and economic development.

Through my site visits and discussions with businesses in Central Oahu, or businesses considering relocating to Central Oahu, one issue is consistent –there is a lack of skilled workers to fill the vacant positions. One example is with the National Security Agency.

The National Security Agency (NSA) has a facility in Whitmore Village. This facility employs both active and civilian personnel. Instead of hiring outside of Hawaii, NSA has made a commitment to hire local, however, our youth are graduating without the proper skills to work in the cybersecurity field, be it computer science or foreign language or both.

What are we doing to fix this?

Our public education system has redesigned its curriculum with pathways focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math also known as STEM. One component to STEM lesson building is to connect the lesson to a real world problem and this is where Live, Learn, Work, Play fits in.

We can agree that there is a gap between what skillset is needed for today's jobs and what skillset is being taught in our schools. In no way am I discrediting our schools or saying what they are doing is wrong, we just have to align curriculum with career. Currently the group is focused at the high school level and then will be phased for the remaining K-8 levels.

Keep the Future Here, Reverse the Brain Drain

While simple in concept, career pathways require the ongoing leadership and involvement of employers, educators, and community leaders. I am hopeful that Live, Learn, Work, Play will open new opportunities for teachers to integrate industry information into their activities and raise its priority. For students, the result we be a greater exposure to careers beginning at an earlier age.

....More on page 2

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES



Joining Shannon Scott, Jamie Kahalewai, Jayson Correa and my colleagues at the AYSO Opening Day Ceremonies.

It was an honor to give the keynote speech at the Mililani High School National Honor Society Ceremony inducting its new members.



Presentation to the Wahiawa Hawaiian Civic Club about the Whitmore Project. I also discussed breadfruit as a future crop for agriculture and the potential of value-added products.



Last month we coordinated with the HAS to hold an informational workshop at Leilehua High School to discuss NSA's Work Study Program with junior students. Presentation was by Capt. Cliff Bean, Commander of National Security Agency/Central Security Service Hawaii. This program offers a paid internship for high school seniors interested in various careers with the NSA including cybersecurity to learn and work in the cybersecurity field. We hope to expand this to high schools to provide the opportunity to students deciding on careers after high school that this is something they may want to pursue.



I did a presentation to the Hawaii Fresh Water Council on two proposals for Central Oahu: Wastewater Reclaim and Pumped-storage Hydroelectricity. The Wahiawa Wastewater Treatment Plant discharges 2 million gallons of treated wastewater per day into Lake Wilson. I'm working with the Agribusiness Development Corporation, Dept. of Environmental Services, and Board of Water Supply to design a system to capture the outfall and redirects it to farmers in Central Oahu. Reusing and recycling this resource will save millions of gallons of potable water. Also, Lake Wilson and the dam located near Schofield are untapped renewable energy resources. I am working with the Agribusiness Development Corporation and Dole Food Company in identifying an appropriate area for the state to acquire to develop a pumped-storage hydroelectricity facility.