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# Representative Mark M. Nakashima Legislative Report

**Mark M. Nakashima**

House District One · Rural South Hilo · North Hilo · Hāmākua · Kohala

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Vice Chair  
Higher Education

Member  
Committee on Education  
Committee on Labor  
Committee on Transportation  
Committee on Public Safety

## ***Education is Priority ONE...***



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**For students from Paaui School, getting back to the classroom is crucial to ensure an adequate public education. The students were at the Capitol to testify in favor of eliminating furlough days before the Senate Education Committee. Here, they take time off from lobbying for a picture with Senator Takamine, Mayor Kenoi and myself. Pictured from left to right are: Dean Alip (advisor), Preston Brenneman, Dayson Alip, Sione Epenesa, Daisha Acorda, Johnathan Ancheta, Elle Carvalho, Nathan Tabucbuc and Chancis Fernandez.**



*Dear Friends,*

*The As we enter the final phase of the 2010 Legislative Session, there are still many unanswered questions in developing a balanced budget that meets the many needs of our residents.*

*The Legislature has struggled this session to maintain as much as possible on significantly less. I am hopeful that the economy will improve and many of the cuts we were forced to make can be restored quickly. While we are all feeling the impact of this recession, I have worked tirelessly to ensure that the Hamakua Coast continues to receive funding to see improvements in our aging schools, roads and community service facilities.*

*Aloha,*

*Mark Nakashima*

# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

While we are all feeling the impact of this recession, there are a number of bright spots that we can all turn to as signs that we are working to stimulate our economy and create jobs for the people of the First House District. In these tough economic times, these capital improvement projects offer the opportunity to improve our aging infrastructure, renovate classrooms, upgrade our roads and provide new opportunities for our community.

**Haaheo Elementary School** – Whole School Renovations have been completed. The Whole School Renovation Program is a complete make-over of school facilities that includes updating and modernizing classroom facilities and replacing electrical, plumbing, painting and hardware to give the rooms a "new" feel to them. The cost of the project, awarded to Isemoto Construction, was \$897,000.



Kindergarten Teacher Veronica Williams poses with new white boards installed during "Whole School Renovations" at Haaheo.

**Papaikou Safety Improvements** – An extension of the \$800,000 appropriation for traffic safety improvements is included in the 2010 State Budget. This will ensure that improvements at Silverton Camp Road (Pinky's in Papaikou) will move forward. In March, officials from the Department of Transportation met with the Traffic Safety Group, which initiated this project, and the Rural South Hilo Community Association to lay out plans for the improvements and receive feedback. Designs are being finalized and the award of the contract is expected before the end of the year.



The old Kealakaha Bridge stands silently after years of service as two way traffic flows over the newly opened Kealakaha Bridge.

**Kealakaha Bridge** – After almost four months in delays due to the need for redesign and rainy weather, finishing touches are being completed on the \$38 million Kealakaha Bridge Project. This will greatly improve the level of safety for the many commuters travelling the Hawaii Belt Highway between Honoka'a and Hilo. The new bridge replaces a narrow, curved bridge, which brought opposing traffic into very precarious passing. The 645-foot long bridge is designed and built to withstand all anticipated loads, as well as earth-

quakes. The bridge's location on the seismically active Big Island made it an ideal candidate to be the first bridge structure in the State of Hawaii to monitor seismic activity and provide data to researchers.

**Kawailii Bridge** – A \$4.4 million contract has been awarded to Hawaii Dredging to begin construction of the Kawailii Bridge near Paaulo. The bridge was damaged in the October 2006 earthquake, and a detour over a temporary structure has been in place for several months. Construction delays resulted from disputes between the State Office of Historic Preservation and the Department of Transportation that were mediated by myself

and Senator Dwight Takamine during the 2009 Legislative Session, clearing the way for the awarding of the contract.

**Hale Ho‘ola** – Work is almost complete on the new \$9.2 million long term care wing at the Hale Ho‘ola Urgent Care facility that will add 27 long term care beds to the Big Island inventory and will result in the addition of 15 permanent positions, including Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) and custodial staff. The facility is planning to offer community walk-throughs of the new wing prior to the admission of patients, which is planned for July.



**27 New long term care beds will be added to the inventory with the completion of the new long term care wing.**

**North Hawaii Education and Resource Center (NHERC)** - Phase 2B is well under way with walls going up on the ground floor of Phase II and excavation being completed for additional parking on the makai side of the facility. The project was budgeted at \$2.9 million. Due to the low bids, plans are now underway to include a pavilion that will supplement the project.

**Hale Hau‘oli** – The Senior Housing Facility, which is over 40 years old, is scheduled for a face-lift. The \$1.7 million project has been awarded to Isemoto Contracting and is scheduled to begin in June. The renovations will include re-roofing and plumbing, fixtures, cabinetry and floor improvements.

**Honoka‘a Elementary School** – A \$1.204 million Whole School Renovation program is scheduled for this coming summer. Classrooms will be modernized and updated, with white boards replacing chalkboards, upgrading doors and windows and replacing electrical and plumbing fixtures to make the buildings seem "brand new." The contract was awarded to Alan Shintani , Inc. and construction is scheduled to begin in May.

**Kohala Library** – Construction on the new Kohala Library is complete and contracts are being executed for the furnishings and interiors. The \$6.9 million facility features many green-friendly designs, including photovoltaic panels and windmills that will work to off-set the facility's carbon footprint. The LEED Certified design is a first for a state project on the Big Island. A grand opening is tentatively scheduled for July 4, 2010.



**Workers put finishing touches on the construction of the new Kohala Library.**

**Ainakea Senior Residences** – Located in North Kohala, the cost of this project was \$8.2 million, with over 40 percent of the cost coming from federal funds. It consists of 30 affordable units, which will remain affordable for sixty-one years. A dedication ceremony was held on April 23, 2010.

Representative Mark Nakashima  
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## FIRST Robotics

The Kohala High School Cowboys and the Honoka'a High School Dragons recently participated in the *FIRST* Robotics Tournament at the Stan Sheriff Center on the campus of the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Following the first round of competition, the Kohala team came in fourth and was able to select teams for its



alliance in the final round. The Honoka'a Team was picked up by the third placed team and became a member of the second alliance.

They were judged on excellence in design of their robots, demonstrated team spirit, gracious professionalism and maturity and ability to overcome obstacles.

Congratulations to both teams for working hard and stepping up to the challenge and for their desire to innovate and excel!

Pictured above with Mark are **Kohala High School Cowboys**: (left to right) Fern White (Program Coordinator/Teacher); Jesse Lovitt (Mentor/Teacher); Ola Dela Cruz (Fabrications/Logistics); Michael Nelson (Driver/Mechanical); Joseph Vignatto (Programmer); and Eric Dela Cruz (Mentor Engineer).

Pictured right are **Honoka'a High School Dragons**: (left to right) Cody Baptista; Michael Yoshida (Teacher); Gabriel Ramirez; Yvette Nitura; Amanda Agdeppa; Mindy Silva; Russell Kackley (Joint Astronomy Centre); and Kim Tabac.

