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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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MOVING AHEAD

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Interior work for Phase II of Hale Ho'ola Hāmākua is well underway and is on schedule for completion next year. Once completed, the facility will add 28 beds to the long-term care inventory and provide additional jobs in the community.

Dear Friends,

The Hawaii Council on Revenues met on December 17, 2009 and projected an additional \$40 million shortfall in the state budget raising the total to more than \$1.1 billion over the biennium.

Since the end of the 2009 legislative session, the administration has closed Kulani Prison, eliminated agricultural inspectors, agreed to teacher furloughs, and proposed a cut in early childhood pre-school subsidies to low-income families threatening the viability of child care in rural districts like ours.

The 2010 session will be a challenge as we work toward a balanced budget while weighing critical core services of state government and deciding upon cuts to additional state services and programs. The Legislature will also have to consider various additional revenue enhancement measures in order to preserve vital state services such as education and health care.

I look forward to any thoughts and concerns that you have regarding these priorities. Aloha,

Mark Nakashima

2010 Budget Solution

During the 2009 legislative session, the Legislature needed to find \$2.1 billion in projected budget deficit based on the March, 2009 projections of the Council on Revenues.

Half of the monies used to fill the deficit came from cuts and lapses in the General Fund budget totaling \$1.157 billion. The remaining saving was achieved through the realization of a \$300 million carry over, increased enforcement of tax collections, revenue enhancements, and federal stimulus money. By the end of the session the Legislature adopted a budget which included \$2.3 billion in budget solutions in anticipation of future downward adjustments by the Council on Revenues.

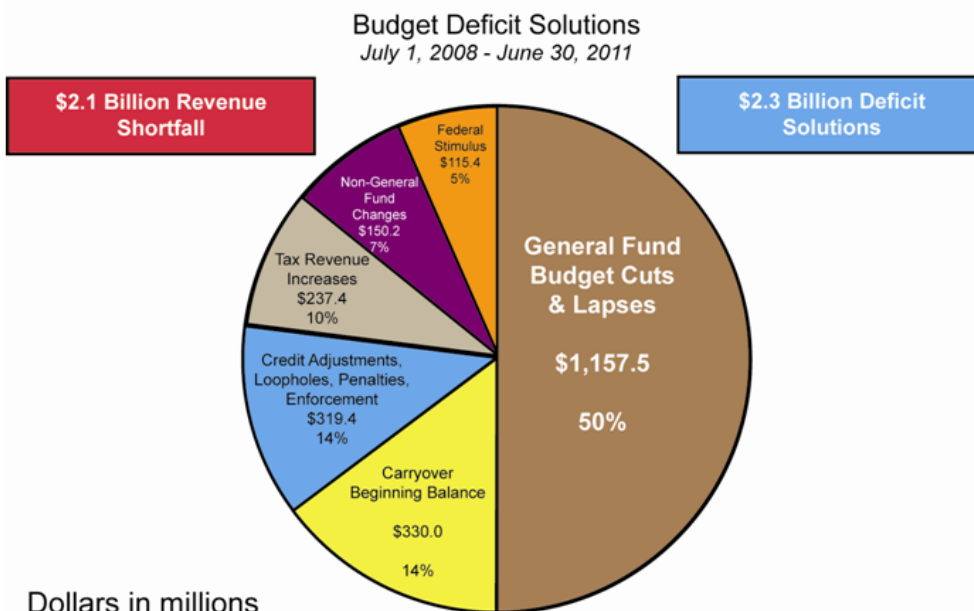
This year, the legislature will have to make up an additional \$1.1 billion to balance the budget for the years 2009-2011.

Bills for Intro

During the interim, I have been meeting with various constituents and colleagues in an effort to formulate bills that will promote better government and communities. The following are some of the bills which I will be introducing in the coming legislative session:

Governmental

Reauthorization— The goal of this legislation would be to set up a process for the periodic review of governmental departments and services. Currently, the state unitizes the previous budget as the basis upon which to build the next budget. Therefore, programs and services previously approved are not subject to scrutiny until we are in a budget crisis and forced to make cuts as are now facing. These decisions should be done in a thoughtful and studied manner to insure the



Introduction

proper application of valuable state resources.

Instructional Days— I will be introducing a constitutional amendment that would re-

schools. A constitutional mandate will serve as a baseline for future educational decisions impacting the delivery of quality public education.

elected from every three House Districts would create a Board more accountable to the electorate. An alternative would be to allow for the appointment of the Board of Education by the Governor. The University of Hawaii's Board of Regents is appointed in this manner. While the Board of Education will continue to retain autonomy, as the Board of Regents does, I believe this will establish a more direct line of authority and responsibility between the State's Chief Executive and the Department of Education System.



quire a minimum of 190 instructional days per school year. I believe that the Governor has done a great disservice to our students by agreeing to teacher furlough days and has allowed for the erosion of our educational standards. Time in the classroom is crucial in ensuring the quality of education in our public

Educational Governance—I will be proposing a constitutional amendment to change the current selection process of the Board of Education members. One proposal would redistrict the current Board of Education to align with the state house districts. One Board of Education member

Environment— There are several bills which I will be proposing to save our resources and reduce our impact on the environment. I will be proposing a surcharge on plastic grocery bags to encourage the use of

See "Bills" on Next Page

Bills

reusable bags. I will also be introducing legislation that would save unnecessary expenditures by allowing for more efficiency in the State's requirement for county solid waste management plans.

For questions or concerns please contact me at 974-4000 extension 66680 or via email at repnakashima@captiol.hawaii.gov. I can also be reached in Honoka'a at 775-9170.

Kapulena Ag Park



Chip Luscomb (center foreground) provides the group with information regarding the "lay of the land" in Kapulena. As harvesting supervisor, Chip worked these fields while they were in sugar production.

Honoka'a, Hawaii -- An agricultural park in Kapulena is a major initiative being proposed by Big Island Mayor Billy Kenoi as a way of putting idle county land back into productive agricultural use. Together with the Mayor and Senator Takamine, I have participated in meetings with agricultural stakeholders, community leaders and government agencies toward planning to make this initiative a reality. Field crops, orchards, pasture land and a community garden are among the proposed uses being considered for incorporation in the 1,700 acre parcel.



Participants survey the Hāmākua Ditch which runs makai of the county parcel. A working group on water resources will be exploring ways to utilize this resource .