



REPRESENTATIVE HENRY AQUINO

WAIPAHU COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

District 38



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March 2014

Aloha Neighbors,

March marks midway for this legislative session. Several bills I helped introduce are crossing over to the Senate. This newsletter highlights some of the bills relating to the needs of our seniors, public safety, taxes, language access and climate change.

Waipahu High School (WHS) students continue to advance and excel in academics. I am proud to highlight WHS students and teachers who participated in the 29th Annual Leeward District Science & Engineering Fair.

I definitely prioritize safety, which is why I want to share the Children's Justice Court system that was developed to help abused children through the

interview process. Let's continue to work together to provide the safety and comfort our children deserve.

As Majority Policy Leader, I worked with all House Democratic members and Senate leaders to develop and introduce bills to address the needs of our kupuna (seniors) and the impacts of climate change.

As I continue to promote legislation to address public safety, the needs of our seniors, and other community or statewide issues, please feel free to send me an email at repaquino@capitol.hawaii.gov, or call me at 586-6520. Your feedback and comments are much appreciated.

Sincerely,

29TH ANNUAL LEEWARD DISTRICT SCIENCE & ENGINEERING FAIR WAIPAHU HIGH SCHOOL'S SCIENCE & ENGINEERING STUDENTS



29TH Annual Leeward District Science & Engineering Fair

WHS Principal Keith Hayashi and Rep. Aquino were honored to present Certificates of Achievement and individual and team awards to all the students who participated in Science & Engineering Fair. (See picture on Page 1)

Pictured at right are Rep. Aquino, WHS students Charlyn Manuyag, Irene Kuikahi, Jasmin Valera, Andrea Jurado and WHS Principal Keith Hayashi.



Michael Reese, Leeward Community College Chemistry Professor, Rep. Aquino along with Senators Kidani and Espero, Michael Sana, WHS teacher and Principal Hayashi pictured with the four outstanding scholars.

CHILDREN'S JUSTICE CENTER

As chairman of the House Committee on Public Safety, Rep. Aquino has always had a place in his heart for the wellness and safety of our children. When harm comes to them, like child abuse, we need to help them in the process to recovery. Fortunately, we have government services like the Children's Justice Center (CJC) that coordinates forensic interviews of reported children who are abused or witnesses to crimes.



CJC, located in Nuuanu, Oahu offers a warm, homelike setting to comfort and support these children in the interview process. There are three interview rooms designed for different aged children with a viewing room to reduce the number of people with the child. A confidential interview is also recorded to minimize the need to re-interview the child.

2014 BILL HIGHLIGHTS

We are midway through the 2014 legislative session and many of the bills introduced by the House and Senate have been heard by their respective subject matter and finance committees. The following highlights a few of the bills Rep. Aquino either introduced, co-introduced or co-sponsored as well as bills of interest. These bills will now "crossover" to the Senate for review and consideration by the Senate members.



RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES - HOUSE BILL (HB) 1693 (HOUSE DRAFT) HD1 requires the State to pay interest on late payments to an operator of an adult day care facility, community care foster family home, or adult residential care home.

RELATING TO HEALTH CARE - HB1695 HD1 amends the state supplemental payment amounts for specified types of adult residential care homes and provides for annual adjustment. Changes the public assistance allowance to an unspecified percentage of the current federal poverty level.

RELATING TO TAXATION - HB1719 HD1 reduces the tax liability for low-income taxpayers by creating a tax credit that will eliminate a taxpayer's income tax liability if their federal adjusted gross income falls below federal poverty guidelines. This bill seeks to help lower income earners build financial strength and keep hard earned dollars in their pockets.



RELATING TO AGING – HB2053 HD1 - The purpose of this bill is to address falls and fall-related injuries by elderly persons by establishing a Fall Prevention and Early Detection Coordinator position within the Department of Health Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch to coordinate the provision of public and private fall prevention and early detection services.

RELATING TO COLLEGE-CREDIT EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMS – HB2206 - The purpose of this measure is to enhance the ability of students to earn college credits by requiring the University of Hawaii and community colleges' college-credit equivalency program to award credits for college-level learning gained from work or other life experiences.



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Capital Improvement Project (CIP) funding was released to the Department of Education (DOE) to improve public schools across the state, while adding local jobs and enhance economic conditions. Honowai Elementary and Waipahu High school projects that Rep. Aquino requested were approved and will receive the CIP funding.

\$880,000 – Honowai Elementary New Classroom Building – Design funds for a building with eight classrooms, restrooms, a faculty workroom and custodial closets.

\$755,000 – Waipahu High Track & Field Facility Improvements – Project will start the design phase of a new synthetic track and field surface at the school. An old cinder track and grass field presently exists, and this project will allow for a competition track venue in the Leeward District, which presently has none.

\$200,000 – Waipahu High Campus Retaining Wall, – Design and construction funds for a retaining wall behind Buildings C to Q.

2014 JOINT MAJORITY PACKAGE

At the end of the 2013 legislative session, Rep. Aquino was appointed Majority Policy Leader with the task of developing policy for the House majority caucus. Rep. Aquino, along with the House Democratic members and Senate leadership, worked diligently to assess areas of concern with statewide impact and how best to address those areas.

Through their efforts, both the House and Senate leaders announced a joint majority package of priorities for the 2014 legislative session. The 2014 Joint Majority Package addresses two major areas of statewide concern: Seniors and the Environment.

SUPPORTING SENIORS

Providing support for Hawaii's rapidly growing elderly population is a priority for state lawmakers.



In the last 30 years, the number of seniors over 60 in Hawaii grew by nearly 140 percent and seniors over 85 increased by more than 430 percent. Moreover, studies project that Hawaii's seniors over 60 will make up nearly a third of the State's total

population by 2035. Therefore, proposed bills address financial abuse of our kupuna (seniors), support healthy aging programs and increase public awareness of long-term care.

RELATING TO AGING – HB1713 is a two-part bill that funds healthy aging programs and services, and provides resources for the implementation of a public education and awareness campaign on long-term care. Most successful senior programs recognize and build upon integrated health and social services.

RELATING TO THE INVESTOR EDUCATION – HB1715 HD1 provides funding for outreach initiatives of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) to prevent financial abuse of seniors.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

The majority package also includes bills to address the effects of climate change and invasive species on our islands.



In an article in the *StarAdvertiser*, 1/17/14, *views&voices* editorial page, Rep. Aquino stated, "We often think of these islands as permanent and unchanging, but our environment is fragile and constantly changing, and increasingly threatened by outside forces. We need to be aware of these threats and develop a concerted effort to protect our people, environment, agriculture and economy from them."

RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE – HB1714 HD1 provides the resources and timeline to ensure Hawaii adapts to protect the public from the effects of climate change.

RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES – HB1716 provides funding for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council to help eradicate threats from invasive species on all the islands

HANAWAI CIRCLE SEWER RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

In March 2014, construction work will begin on the City & County of Honolulu's Hanawai Circle Sewer Reconstruction project to up-grade the sewer lines.



The project will include replacing and rehabilitating approximately 1,100 feet of sewer piping. The project is anticipated to be completed by March 2015.

Work will be done from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, 7:30 p.m. to 4:00 a.m., Sunday through Thursday. Please use caution when traveling around the work areas.