



*Aloha e Friends,*

Hope you and your 'ohana are well! The Legislature went back into session on June 22 and will conclude on July 10. During this time, we're taking up issues related to COVID-19, collective bargaining agreements, Board & Commission nominations, budgetary matters, and bills in the different committees that have no fiscal impact. It's definitely the most surreal time I've experienced in my 17 years as an elected official. My prayers and thoughts are with you and your 'ohana as this COVID-19 crisis continues to unfold. As always, please contact me at 808-586-6830 or [sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov) if I can help you or your family in any way. You can also follow me on [Twitter](#) @senmikegabbard, [Instagram](#) @sengabbard, or Facebook at [facebook.com/senmikegabbard](https://facebook.com/senmikegabbard)

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**Listen-Story  
Meeting**

I'll be hosting a virtual Listen Story meeting on July 18 at 9am via Zoom. I'll send out the Zoom link to my constituent email list soon. If you want to be added to the invite list, let me know.



**Changes to 14-Day Travel Quarantine Coming  
August 1**

You most likely heard in the news that the state has plans to provide an alternative to its current 14-day mandatory quarantine for transpacific travelers who arrive after Aug. 1. These plans are currently in development and the process and requirements are to be determined over the next few weeks. However, it's likely travelers will be given the opportunity to get tested for COVID-19 prior to their arrival, and show proof of a negative test result, to avoid the 14-day quarantine. Please check [safetravels.hawaii.gov](https://safetravels.hawaii.gov), [hawaiicovid19.com](https://hawaiicovid19.com) or [hawaiiourismauthority.org/news/alerts/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/](https://hawaiiourismauthority.org/news/alerts/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/) regularly as new information will be posted there as soon as it's available.

**Urging Department of Public Safety to Reconsider  
Cancellation of Women's Worker Furlough Program**

I signed on to a letter from members of the Senate on June 25 to Governor Ige and Department of Public Safety (PSD) Director Nolan Espinda, urging them to continue operation of correctional work furlough and halfway house programs for women inmates on O'ahu, contracted through the YWCA of O'ahu. The letter states that PSD notified the YWCA on May 29, that the work furlough program at the Women's Community Correctional Center in Kailua, and halfway house program at the YWCA's Fernhurst branch in Makiki, would both be terminated by June 30, 2020. "The closure of

(the work furlough) program, operated solely by YWCA of O'ahu since July 2015, means the only such resource available to women will no longer be available.... According to the PSD's annual report, it costs an average of \$198 per day for the State to house an inmate. PSD paid YWCA of O'ahu \$120 per day for each resident in the program. The imminent implementation of the decision to terminate the program presents immediate difficulties to put together a substitute program with the right staff, curriculum, and facilities." We strongly urge immediate restoration of support by the PSD of the work furlough program and subsequently for the halfway house program.



# LEGISLATIVE NEWS

## Shark Protection

One bill that I'm hopeful we'll be able to get passed during our June 22 – July 10 legislative session is SB 2717. I introduced this bill in 2020 to protect our sacred mano, from unnecessary and intentional exploitation or killing. The bill would ban someone from knowingly capturing, possessing, abusing, or entangling any shark, whether alive or dead, or killing any shark in state waters. Sharks are apex predators whose presence and populations are critical to the health of our entire ocean ecosystem. The International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species, using data thru 2019, reported that up to 57% of surviving species of sharks are considered threatened and have been assessed as vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered. The state Department of Land and Natural Resources reports that 12 of the 41 shark species in Hawai'i waters fall under one of those three threatened categories, 11 are listed as vulnerable and 1 as endangered. It's important to note that this bill will NOT inhibit ongoing research on sharks or apply to any person, who in the lawful course of fishing, accidentally catches then releases a shark. That is exactly what ethical fishers do now. As a reminder, in 2010 we passed the nation's first, and still strongest, shark fin and fin product ban, which became a global model for shark conservation. With SB 2717 we have the chance to take the next necessary step in exemplary marine protection. I'll keep you posted.



A tiger shark swims near a diver in Honokohau Harbor in 2016. (JEFFREY MILISEN/Courtesy photo)

COVID-19 lockdown, I've been collaborating with FFA students and Waipahu Intermediate Advisor, Ken Kozuma, on how their 300 student strong organization can help get our struggling ag sector back on track. Right now, the FFA students are proposing that Waipahu High host a food hub on their campus and recently gave a Powerpoint presentation to Waipahu High Principal Keith Hayashi. The students are also working with a grant writer to obtain funding for this potential project and are being mentored by a food hub expert. A food hub, as defined by the USDA, is "a centrally located facility with a business management structure facilitating the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and/or marketing of locally/regionally produced food products." The students will be reaching out to Waipahu Neighborhood Board Chair Rito Saniatan about making a presentation on this proposed project to the Board.

## Waipahu Future Farmers of America

I included an article in my [June newsletter](#) about the Waipahu Intermediate Future Farmers of America Program being recognized on the [National Future Farmers of America](#) website in May. Senators Kidani and I honored Waipahu Intermediate FFA students, Sean Michael Valencia Monte and Mariah Pricella Quibol, in the Senate on [January 30](#) for winning 1st place in the Environmental and Natural Resource Systems category at the 2019 National Agriscience Fair for their project on Bokashi Composting. During the



FFA students from Waipahu Intermediate School on Agricultural Awareness Day February 5, 2020. (Pictured L-R: Hazel Paguirigan, Yukari Kobayashi, Riahana Tulba, Cheydon Agos, Jheanna Carlos, Kayla Nguyen, Jarvia Agbayani).

# SENATE NEWS

## Passing of Senator Breene Harimoto



It's with great sadness that I share with you that my respected colleague Senator Breen Harimoto of Pearl City passed away on June 18 at the age of 66 after a long fight with pancreatic cancer.

Breene will be remembered first and foremost for his deep faith in God. He was a very kind man and handled himself with incredible dignity in both good health and through the 5 years of his illness. Breene served as the Vice Chair of the Transportation Committee, and was a member of the Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs Committee, and the Ways and Means Committee in the Senate. He was the Senate's representative on the O'ahu Metropolitan Planning Organization Planning Board and was its Chair.

He was also the Senate's alternate representative on the Hawai'i Interagency Council for Transit-Oriented Development and Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness. Prior to his election to the Senate, Breene served on the Honolulu City Council for four years. He was chair of the Committee on Transportation where he championed rail, transit-oriented development, complete streets, smart growth, and health and safety issues. He was a member of the Board of Education for eight years and served two terms as its chairman. He was a former information technology professional and was a long-time community volunteer.

He was co-founder and served as Executive Director of the Pearl City Foundation/Momilani Community Center. Breene was a life-long resident of his district.

Senator Harimoto and his wife Cheryl were graduates of Waipahu High School and the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Breene is survived by three adult children and three grandchildren. Memorial services are pending. To view a brief video of my eulogy, click here: [Eulogy on YouTube](#).

## Senate Requests Governor to Delay Implementation of State Employee Increase

On June 26, I voted in support of SB 785 when it passed the Senate by a 21-3 vote. This bill makes an appropriation of \$150 million of agreed-upon collective bargaining agreements for state workers in the Hawai'i Government Employees Association (HGEA) and University of Hawai'i Professional Assembly (UHPA) unions. These workers include nurses, professional and scientific employees, state law enforcement officers, state and county ocean safety and water safety officers, and UH faculty. Given that employment in our state was 23.8% in April and the Council on Revenues has projected a \$2.3 billion budget shortfall in this fiscal biennium, this vote was extremely difficult. I voted for SB 785 because the collective bargaining agreement had already been approved and it was the right thing to do to honor those agreements. However, taking into consideration our economic situation, I signed on to a letter from the Senate to the Governor on June 26 requesting that the Governor delay the implementation of the salary increases; otherwise, the raises will go into effect on July 1, 2020.



Senator Breene Harimoto (May 6, 1954—June 18, 2020) was remembered by his colleagues on the Senate Floor June 22, 2020.

# CARES ACT SPENDING

The Legislature passed SB 126 on June 26, 2020, to authorize the spending of \$648 million in federal CARES Act funding to address the COVID-19 pandemic. The UH Economic Research Organization estimates that this plan will generate \$1 billion for the state's GDP and support 6,500 jobs. Here's a breakdown of how the money is being spent:

## **\$230 million – Department of Labor and Industrial Relations State Unemployment Insurance Weekly Benefit to Replace Federal Enhanced Benefits**

This program will start on August 1 and end on December 31, 2020. It will assist 117,000 beneficiaries by providing them with \$100 per week in enhanced state unemployment benefits. Only current unemployment recipients are eligible, but not PUA recipients.

## **\$100 million – Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation Rental Assistance**

This program will provide rental assistance for 50% of rent or \$500 per month. This will help 34,000 + beneficiaries. The rent relief payment period is for 5 months (August – December 2020)

## **\$15 million – Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation**

This program will provide manufacturing grants to create a supply chain of cleaning supplies & personal protection equipment (PPE). The cap will be \$500,000 per applicant.

## **\$100 million – Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency PPE Purchasing**

This funding will assist child care & elderly care facilities, hospitals, small businesses, schools, and non-profits with PPE purchasing.

## **\$90 million – Department of Transportation Thermal Screening Purchases & Security Protocols**

This funding will include a web-based traveler verification app, traveler verification rooms, swap & testing facility, and a service contract for testing.

## **\$36 million – Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism: Hawaii Works**

This program will put people back to work and diversify the economy and will include the UH College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources and UH Community Colleges providing training and retraining opportunities for the unemployed.

## **\$15 million – Department of Human Services – Child Care**

This is a subsidy to help child care facilities to implement safety protocols.

## **\$5 million - Executive Office on Aging: Food Assistance**

This is a partnership with the Hawai'i Community Foundation to provide food assistance for seniors.

## **\$2 million – Next Step to the Future**

This program will provide career counseling and an online learning class free of charge for every public school senior.

## **\$3 million – Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism: Relief and Promotion Programs**

This funding will support the fishing industry.

## **\$40 million – Governor: Discretionary**

This funding can be used by the Governor for unanticipated state needs.

