



REPRESENTATIVE

Troy N. Hashimoto

News & Updates

MESSAGE FROM TROY

With Spring just around the corner, we can begin to notice pre-pandemic life coming back. I attended the opening of **Nisei Veterans Memorial Center's Stanley Izumigawa Resource center**, **Kaisahan Club of Maui's** event and **Yanagida Fitness' 6th anniversary** - it was so great to see many friends once again!

I want to congratulate Maui's **Rep. Kyle Yamashita** for recently being appointed to serve as the Vice Chair of the House Finance Committee. *Maui no ka oi!*



As public servants, we hold office because of the trust our communities give us - to represent your best interest. This is why I detest the grievous acts of bribery that recently surfaced at the Capitol. I hold steadfast in the promise this office brings and want to use this platform to remind you how much I value the responsibility I was given. **I will always work for you with honor and full transparency.**

March is also Women's History Month! I want to honor and celebrate amazing women, especially my mom and my Grandma who will turn 103 years old in April! She has been resilient during this pandemic and her strength inspires me.

During the past two years we endured many hardships, and we proved that perseverance pays off. But many still need help. Now that we are halfway at the Legislature, work continues as we tackle bills that will help various sectors in the community recover.

My office always is available for your comments and ideas.

Mahalo,

Contact Troy



linktr.ee/reptroyhashimoto

LEGISLATURE AT HALFWAY POINT: BILLS THAT ARE GAINING MOMENTUM

Usually only about 25 percent of the bills introduced typically survive the First Crossover deadline. The Senate bills that have crossed over will be heard by the House committees to discuss and review of the Senate stance. In addition to the bills I mentioned in the Q&A segment, here are some measures we are closely monitoring. Keep in mind that hearings are on-going and amendments can still happen, which is why testifying is always important.



HB1822 - Extends the renewal period from two years to four years for drivers licensees who are seventy-two years of age or older but younger than eighty years of age.



HB1833/SB2359 - Requires the University of Hawaii to establish a K-12 expanded teaching cohort programs in each county for students who are pursuing undergraduate degrees in education.



HB1839 - Makes camper vans a type of accommodation, the rental of which is subject to the transient accommodations tax.



HB2512 - Expands regulatory exemptions for ohana zones pilot program contracts for supportive housing projects. Extends the sunset date for the ohana zones pilot program to 6/30/2026. As of November 30, 2021, the Ohana Zones Pilot Program has aided 5,510 homeless individuals statewide, including 1,368 individuals placed into permanent housing.



HB1860 - Requires licensed used motor vehicle parts dealers to keep certain records of catalytic converter purchases and shipments. Establishes the felony offense of theft of catalytic converter. Theft of catalytic converters has become a big issue in the community.



HB1806 - Requires cesspools in the State to be upgraded or converted to a wastewater system approved by the Director of Health before 1/1/2050. The original requirement only permits two types of allowed systems.

To learn more about the latest versions of the bills, testimony submitted and more, go to capitol.hawaii.gov.



March 25, 2022 Indoor mask mandate expires

Safe Travels Hawai'i rules discontinued

Governor David Ige announced he will not continue many of the COVID-19 mandates after March 25 but added that he will reinstate it if cases surge. State Department of Health also stressed that masks won't be going away entirely - they are likely to still be required in public schools, prisons and jails, city buses, and airports. Private businesses are also within their rights to require masks.





HOUSING NEWS AND UPDATES

Increase in school capacity and infrastructure updates considered for Waikapū housing project

We all know about the extreme lack of affordable housing on Maui, right? Here are some future projects to review.



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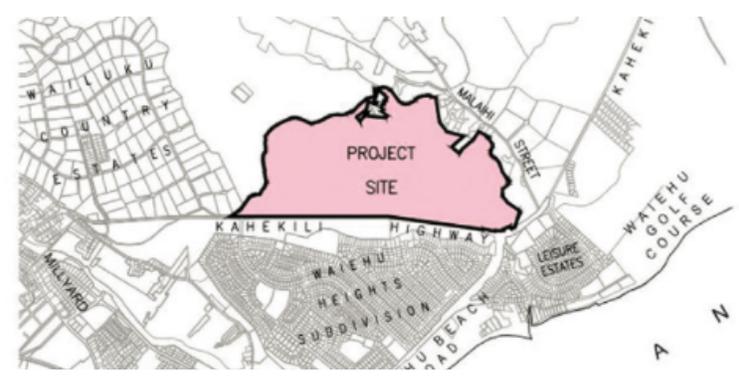
Under consideration: Waiehu housing project

Moving through the planning review process is a 752-unit, 100-percent affordable housing project proposed in Waiehu.

The **Waiehu Residential Community** is located mauka of Waiehu Terrace and along Kahekili Highway. Out of the proposed 752 dwelling units, 184 will be multifamily units and 568 will be single-family units. If approved, the 100% affordable housing project is slated to begin construction in 2024 and be completed in 2032.

After a final environmental assessment is completed for the proposed development, it will next go to the state Land Use Commission for a district boundary amendment moving it from agricultural to urban.

To learn more about this project, the draft Environmental Assessment can be reviewed at bit.ly/WaiehuEA.



I am happy to support state legislation that can help to address infrastructure updates in Waikapū, as well as increasing school capacity for elementary and intermediate levels, for Central Maui.

The **Waikapū Country Town** is the County's largest planned residential housing development in decades. The project calls for 1,146 market-priced units and 287 residential workforce housing units, with the potential for 146 ohana units.

The Maui County Council is considering a public-private partnership agreement between the County of Maui and the developers. The agreement would add up to 213 additional residential workforce housing units in exchange for the developer's required contribution toward a new Central Maui wastewater treatment plant and other traffic improvements, including the extension of Wai'ale Road.

Last session's Budget bill via Act 88 (2021), the State appropriated \$3.5 million in revenue bonds and \$31.5 million in federal funds for the Wai'ale Road Extension, and \$20 million in FY 2022-2023 for the Central Maui Waste Water Treatment Plant to help move this regional development forward and pave the way for the public-private partnership.

As a member of the Housing and Transportation committees in the House, I look forward to working on solutions to help advance projects that will support our community.



Q: I am a nurse and we are understaffed. Some colleagues are thinking about moving to the mainland for a more competitive pay, but I wonder what we are doing to keep our healthcare workforce here on Maui?

A: If we do not make our programs competitive, we will lose talent elsewhere. Bill **HB 2437** is currently going through hearings to offer tax incentives to healthcare workers in addition to support to create competitive nursing and medical programs.

- **HB1550** - Establishes the Hawai'i medical education special fund to be administered by the John A. Burns school of medicine for graduate medical education and training programs.
- **HB2220** - Appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i to increase the State's capacity to train new nurses and project future nursing workforce needs.

One of our biggest takeaways from the pandemic should be the disproportionate toll it had on our healthcare frontline workers. We must act on this now to ensure our medical facilities can function properly.



Q: Gas prices are ridiculous. Some grocery items are priced more than it used to be. It's so hard to get ahead with rocketing cost of living. Do you think the minimum wage will finally increase?

A: I hope so. I think it's time to incrementally increase the minimum wage. It may not solve all the problems at once, but the extra money for working families will go a long way.

The current minimum wage is \$10.10 per hour. Below are bills that are currently being considered.

- **HB2510** - Increasing the minimum wage rate to \$13.00 beginning on January 1, 2023, and incrementally increasing \$1 per year up to \$18.00 per hour beginning January 1, 2028, and increasing the tip credit over the same period. Makes the state Earned Income Tax Credit refundable and permanent.
- **SB2018** - Increases the minimum wage incrementally to \$12 per hour beginning 10/1/2022, \$15 per hour beginning 1/1/2024, and \$18 per hour beginning 1/1/26.

We do not know what the final form will look like at this point, but I urge you to submit testimony to let the Legislature know of your opinion on this matter.



LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Fighting Sickness with Fitness

Located behind the former Sack-N-Save in Wailuku's industrial area is **Yanagida Fitness**, ran by one of the most positive guys I know - **Justin Yanagida**. His mantra "Fighting sickness with fitness," also the title of his book, has attracted many to his program of fun workout sessions.

They recently celebrated six years in business - a feat a most small business know is a milestone after surviving the pandemic. Justin, along with his supportive family and team pivoted, got creative and made it work!

Congratulations, Justin and to your team. Your community is proud to have you - here's to many more years of success!



IN THE COMMUNITY



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Thanks to **Honolulu Civil Beat** for inviting myself and Hawai'i State **Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran** to have a lively Civil Cafe on Maui County issues that we will be tackling this Legislative session - from housing to agriculture to managing tourism. I appreciate the great questions from moderators **Nathan Eagle** and **Blaze Lovell**. The full episode is here: fb.watch/bCPH-6726s



Congratulations to each of the award winners at the **Maui Filipino Community Council's** Rizal Day celebration. Wailuku's own **Lawrence Pascua** was awarded Outstanding Member, **Nicole Yuzon** received the outstanding Youth Award, and **Zaldy Ugalino** received the Outstanding Citizen Award. Thanks to outgoing President **Emi Cortez** for her leadership of the Council!



Do you like my barang?
Here I'm with colleague Rep. Daniel Holt during a pictorial of the members of the Filipino Caucus at the Legislature. I'm proud to be in this group alongside leaders who advocate for the interests of the Filipino community!



Also for the first time since the lockdown, the **Kaisahan Club of Maui** met for the first time in-person. Thank you **Lu Symonds** and friends for having me. It was so great to see everyone again! I look forward to attending more events this year.

New resource facility at Nisei Veterans Center now open

The newly constructed Stanley Izumigawa Resource Center at the Nisei Veterans Memorial Center in Wailuku had a blessing and grand opening on Feb. 19. The new SIRC will allow the center to double its space for visitors, workshops, and research requests. The State of Hawaii, through a Grant in Aid, was a proud supporter to help make this a reality.

The event coincided with the NVMC's newest exhibit titled "Internment: Maui's Stories." According to the NVMC, the center welcomes more than 3,000 visitors annually, and receives more than 300 requests for research. The center also manages one of Hawai'i's few intergenerational centers which includes Kansha Preschool and Maui Adult Day Care Center. The NVMC provides local and global partnerships and exchanges through schools statewide and higher education institutions in Hawai'i and Japan.



The new facility is a multi-purpose room where NVMC can also hold events and workshops.



With the leaders behind NVMC: Research Archivist Melanie Agrabante, Executive Director Deidre Tegarden and Board Member Kyoko Kimura.



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On March 4, I signed a House Resolution that condemns Russia's attack on Ukraine.



I #StandWithUkraine.

Why are sunflowers associated with Ukraine?

Sunflowers are Ukraine's national flower. Throughout its history, the flower has been used as a symbol of peace. In June 1996, to celebrate Ukraine giving up nuclear weapons, U.S., Russian and Ukrainian defense ministers planted sunflowers in a ceremony at southern Ukraine's Pervomaysk missile base.



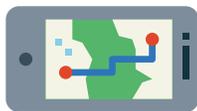
In case you missed it...

Latest news and events around Maui County



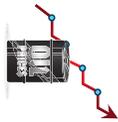
In-person Graduation: Guidelines for Class of 2022 commencements released

The Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE) released guidelines to allow for in-person school commencement and transition ceremonies. Dates and other details will be announced in April. Scan my QR code for a link to the guidelines.



Track your county permit and pending projects with the County Project Status Viewer

Check the status of your commercial or residential project that's pending with the County of Maui Planning Department. Go to mauicounty.gov/planning.



Oil prices will push electric bills higher in coming months

Hawaiian Electric is forecasting that residential bills for Maui County are estimated at about 20% due to the recent conflict in Ukraine and Russian sanctions. They are urging all to consider solar or take steps to conserve. Visit hawaiianenergy.com for tips.



OHA expands emergency financial assistance program

Emergency financial assistance for car repairs and funeral expenses is now available to Native Hawaiians through the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Apply online at oha.org/emergencyaid or call (808) 587-7656.



Maui County Small Business Grant \$5,000 grant - apply today!

If your business on Maui County has a commercial location and has suffered a 10% or more decline in revenue from 2019 to 2020, consider applying for this grant administered by the Maui County Office of Economic Development.

In collaboration with the Credit Unions of Maui, the **Maui County Small Business Grant** is part of the American Rescue Plan to assist small businesses. This program is not an expense reimbursement program, rather upon qualification, the business will receive a grant for \$5,000.

For information on how to apply, visit mauiinstitute.org/maui-county-small-business-grant.

