



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER FROM THE OFFICE OF REPRESENTATIVE JO JORDAN

HOUSE DISTRICT 44 · WAIANAЕ, MAKАHA, MAKUА, MAILI · MARCH-APRIL 2015
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ALOHA NEIGHBORS,

The 2015 Legislative Session is past its midway point and scheduled to adjourn on May 7. The Legislature is continuing to review bills and resolutions and I have highlighted inside this newsletter a few bills still under consideration on issues ranging from consumer protection, economic development, education, fiscal transparency, Hawaiian affairs, housing, human services, and supporting working families.



In addition to the bills highlighted, I have also introduced the following resolutions: HCR203/HR139 – Requesting the Auditor to conduct a review on the effect of the transfer from Medicaid to plans on the Hawaii Health Connector for non-eligible Medicaid Compact of Free Association Residents; HCR204/HR140 – Requesting the Chief Procurement Officer to conduct a comprehensive study of each of the individual procurement jurisdictions; HCR205/HR141 – Requesting the Department of Health to examine existing and alleged violations in the solid waste recycling industry and fairly and equally enforce applicable laws and regulations for all companies; HCR206/HR142 – Requesting the Department of Taxation to annually publish a tax expenditure report; and HCR207/HR143 – Requesting an Audit of all State Departments and Agencies utilizing State funds for outside counsel.

I am also so proud to share the great strides being made at Waianae High School as highlighted on the right.

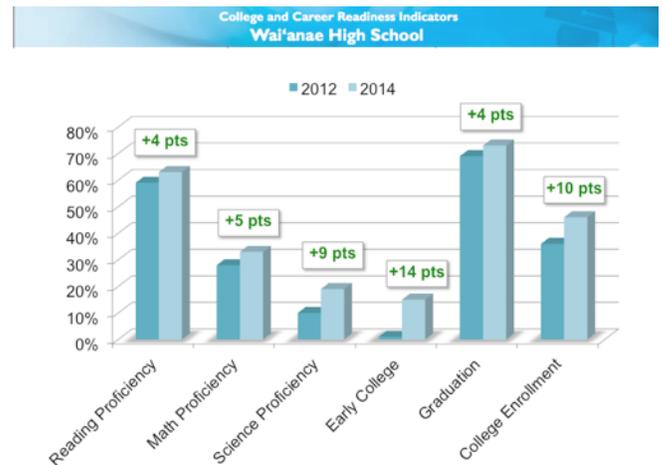
I look forward to continuing to work together on these and other issues. It is a privilege to continue to serve you. Feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance.

MAHALO,

JO JORDAN,
DISTRICT 44 REPRESENTATIVE

Waianae High School Shows Significant Improvement

Looking at two-year trend data, the latest College and Career Readiness Indicators shows upward trajectories for Waianae High across nearly all indicators and two big ones: Students enrolled in Early College (earning credits while in high school) jumped 14 points, and college enrollment jumped 10 points.



A number of factors are at work in this turnaround, including:

- ▶ increased resources from initiatives originating from both the State and educational partners including Kamehameha Schools and the University of Hawaii System;
- ▶ block schedules that give students flexibility to enroll in Running Start and the school's new Early College dual-enrollment program;
- ▶ an emphasis on supporting students transitioning from intermediate through Ninth Grade Success Academy, a learning community that delivers intentional support for students at this crucial age;
- ▶ outreach with Waianae Intermediate to ensure that AVID training is taking root with incoming classes;
- ▶ the continued strength, popularity and networking of the Searider Productions program, which consistently sends nearly all of its team members to college; and
- ▶ the hard work of staff and faculty who make every effort to ensure that each student succeeds.

Early College is also having a big impact. The effort recently received a \$1.2 million investment from partners to fund tuition and other expenses and to provide technical assistance to selected high schools so they may offer high school-based early college courses in collaboration with the University of Hawaii System.

2015 MID-SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

I have included a few of the bills that passed out of the Hawaii House of Representatives up to First Crossover, or the midpoint of the 2015 Regular Session. Since the legislative session is still in progress, the status of the measures in this report will continue to evolve, but I encourage you to weigh in on these issues as the bills move over to the Senate.

SUPPORTING WORKING FAMILIES

Income Inequality (HB886 HD1): Reduce income inequality and the tax burden on working families living at or below the poverty line by increasing the income tax credit amounts for the refundable food/excise tax credit and the low-income household renters tax credit and rebalancing this increase by extending the elevated tax brackets for high-income earners for an additional five years.

Tax Relief (HB1091 HD1): Increases the standard deduction and allowable personal exemption amounts for all filing statuses and increases the number of exemptions that may be claimed by taxpayers who are 65 years of age or older and meet certain income requirements.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Small Business Innovation (HB1069 HD1): Expands Hawaii small business innovation research program to provide a match for prototyping and commercialization awardees to



On occasion, Rep. Jordan has offered the invocation on the House Floor.

diversify Hawaii's economy, secure the investment of federal dollars, and provide a framework for people to create their own high tech companies as part of the State's plan to establish an innovation economy in Hawaii.

Manufacturing Promotion (HB1454 HD2): Encourage economic development in the State through the promotion of manufacturing by establishing a temporary nonrefundable income tax credit for taxpayers who incur certain equipment and training expenses in the manufacture of products in Hawaii.



Rep. Jordan congratulated the winners of the Hawaii Venture Capital Association's 2015 Deal of the Year and Entrepreneur of the Year Awards.

EDUCATION

Dual Credit Programs (HB95 HD1): Increase the likelihood that Hawaii high school students will successfully attend and graduate from college by allowing broader student participation in dual credit programs in which students can earn both high school and college credit simultaneously.

Bullying (HB819 HD2): Protect youth in Hawaii from bullying.

Public Charter Schools (HB1251 HD1): Provide charter schools with the opportunity to secure the use of state facilities deemed vacant and appropriate for use and a framework for providing facilities funding and support for public charter school facilities.

2015 MID-SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Hawaii Keiki: Healthy and Ready to Learn (HB1440 HD1):

Appropriate funds to the Hawaii Keiki: Health and Ready to Learn program to build and enhance school-based health services.



Rep. Jordan with youth speaking up on Kick Butts Day.

FISCAL TRANSPARENCY

Non-General Funds (HB707): Repeals and transfers the unencumbered balances of various non-general funds and accounts as recommended by the auditor.

Procurement (HB1292 HD2): Increase transparency and accountability in state contracts by establishing a task force to examine the issue of past performance and establish the factors that should be considered when evaluating a contractor's past performance for the purposes of awarding a contract.

HOUSING

Housing (HB906 HD1): Ensures that certain eligible housing projects will remain affordable for certain minimum periods to be certified for exemption from general excise taxes.

Low-Income Housing (HB1295 HD1): Increase the low-income housing tax credit to developers of affordable housing to one hundred percent of the qualified basis for each building located in Hawaii.

Affordable Housing (HB1354 HD1): Appropriate funds to various housing agencies to improve the quality of existing public and affordable housing stock and increase the supply of affordable and public housing units in the State.

HUMAN SERVICES

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (HB1347 HD1):

Appropriate funds to increase staff, improve systems, and contract for services relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Interim Assistance Reimbursement Special Fund (HB1432 HD2):

Provide stability to state-funded assistance programs by establishing the special fund to preserve from one fiscal year to the next any interim assistance reimbursements received from the federal government for general assistance recipients who are awarded retroactive supplemental security income benefits.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Free Trial Offers (HB1219 HD1): Requires persons charging a consumer's card or account for automatic renewal or continuous service offers to first obtain acknowledgement and require for free trial offers that include automatic renewal or continuous service offers, disclosure of method of cancellation.

Real Property Tax Exemption (HB1293 HD1): Clarifies that the real property tax exemption for property owned as a primary home covers persons who own, but cannot occupy in, the primary home due to a serious medical condition; provided that they do not rent or lease out that property.



Rep. Jordan at a House Finance Committee hearing.

2015 MID-SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Traditional Hawaiian Farming (HB205 HD1):

Includes traditional Hawaiian farming and small-scale farming to the objectives and policies for the economy.

Hawaiian Rights Training Course (HB207 HD2):

Requires the Office of Hawaiian Affairs train and educate the members of appropriate councils, boards, and commissions about native Hawaiian and Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, natural resource protection and access rights, and the public trust.

Hawaiian Fishponds (HB393 HD2): Streamline the permitting process for the restoration, repair, maintenance, and operation of traditional Hawaiian fishponds. ◀

Rep. Jordan pictured with homestead beneficiaries who attended the House Finance and Senate Ways and Means Committees briefing on the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands budget.



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