



Representative Richard H. K. Onishi

Mid-
Session
Newsletter
2020

I want to first and foremost thank all of my constituents from District 3 for your continued support. I appreciate all that have participated in the legislative process and communicated your concerns with my office. Your encouragement has helped me to better serve our community.

Once again, I was selected to serve as Chair of the Tourism and International Affairs committee (TIA) and this will be my fourth year in doing so. In addition to TIA, I also serve as a member on the Agriculture (AGR) and Consumer Protection & Commerce (CPC) committees. To assist me through the busy session I am supported by my long time office manager, Tracy (Chang) Weidie, along with my Committee Clerk and Legislative Aide, Tim Coughlin and Isaac Goya.

Serving as the State House of Representatives Tourism Chair we have the tough task of balancing our state's main economic driver and the situations due to the spread of the Covid-19 (Coronavirus). House Bill 1629 HD1 appropriates funding for issues to help detect, contain, mitigate, and respond to concerns of the Coronavirus. I kindly ask all my constituents to follow general CDC protocol to prevent the spreading of germs.

- ⇒ Wash your hands often with soap and water for a least 20 seconds.
- ⇒ Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- ⇒ Stay home when you are sick and seek medical care.
- ⇒ Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash
- ⇒ Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- ⇒ Clean and disinfect frequently touch objects and surfaces.

District 3
Waiakea Uka
Panaewa
Kea'au
Upper Puna
Kurtistown
Mt. View
Glenwood
Volcano
Pahala
Honu'apo



Rep. with all the various Visitor Bureaus from each island on Tourism Day at the Capitol.



Rep. and fellow Senators with the Student Councils from across the Big Island



Rep. Onishi introduced HB 1947 to allocate funds for the ceremonies, activities and commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of World War II in Hawaii.



Working with the Cattlemen's Association members from Hawaii Island to help them address issues with the land leases for their ranches.



Rep. Onishi talking with the Waiakea High Student Council about debate tactics for their mock debate at the Capitol. Every year young leaders from the Big Island tour the Capitol and talk with their local legislators.



The annual Agriculture Day at the Capitol had over 60 vendors from different avenues of Agriculture. They ranged from numerous local famers, local associations, different state departments and many small local businesses. It's one of my favorite days at the Capitol where I get to mingle with everyone in the local agriculture industry.

Kea'au Regional Public Library—Working with the Hawaii Library System to develop a regional public library in Kea'au to replace the public libraries that are on the campuses of Kea'au Middle School and Mt. View School. These public libraries pose campus security issues at both schools. The new regional library will be able to better serve the people from Volcano to lower Puna.



Representative Onishi with the Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association

Important Legislation Introduced by Rep. Onishi

HB 2532 (Invasive Species)

Appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for its efforts to mitigate and control two-line spittlebug infestations in the State.

HB 2577 (Ranch Leases)

Clarifies that agriculture activities in non-agriculture park lands may include the care and production of pasture lands. Requires the transfer of certain lands from the DLNR to the DOA. Requires reports to the Legislature on compliance with the land transfers.

HB 2578 (Banyan Drive)

Authorizes the designation of areas or regions of public lands classified as commercial, industrial, resort and hotel, and the establishment and implementation of guidelines for the redevelopment of the areas and regions. Designates the public lands on the Waiakea Peninsula on the island of Hawai'i as the Waiakea Peninsula Redevelopment District.

HB 2534 (Prosecutors Office)

Making an appropriation to the office of the prosecuting attorney for the County of Hawaii. Appropriates funds for the career criminal prosecution unit of the office of the prosecuting attorney of the county of Hawaii.

Waiakea Uka Community Center Funding:

For many years Rep. Onishi has been advocating to get funding to improve the Waiakea Uka Gymnasium and parking lot. His most recent Capital Improvement Project request for this legislative session would cover costs, at a 3:1 ratio of State funding to County funding, for a new parking lot and plans, designs and construction of a new community center, and the relocation of the lower ballfield with a new parking lot. All these improvements will help to create a safe surrounding environment for those who enjoy the use of the gymnasium and park.



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2020 Legislative Session: Postponed

The Legislature plans to recess indefinitely beginning March 17th, 2020 with concerns that public gatherings could spread the Covid-19 virus. The resolution (SCR 242) introduced by the Speaker of the House Scott Saiki and the Senate President Ronald Kouchi allows for legislators to decide when it is safe to begin the session again. The resolution cites the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's restriction of public gatherings of 50 or more people and at President Trump's press conference urging to limit gatherings to no more than 10 people. Saiki and Kouchi also announced that Governor Ige has enough reserve funds for all emergencies Covid-19 related. Being the Tourism Committee Chair, I have been appointed to the Covid-19 Economic and Financial Preparedness Committee that will continue to meet, discuss, and address all issues with this global pandemic. To all my loyal constituents and residents of the Big Island please be safe and do your best to practice social distancing.

