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## ***Around the Legislature***

The Legislature is off to an exciting start. There is a whole sea of ideas that we are pondering in the more than a thousand bills introduced. Many have shared their thoughts about the bills—in person, on the telephone, via email. Here are some of the bills that I've introduced and their current referral.

### **SB 61—Emergency Vehicle; Move Over—***Judiciary*

Requires drivers to move over when passing a stationary emergency vehicle on a highway. Requires driver to slow to a reasonable, prudent speed that is safe under the circumstances when an emergency road situation exists ahead of the driver. Makes it a misdemeanor for a violation not involving death or bodily injury. Requires prosecution for death or bodily injury.



### **SB 2247—Call Location Information; Emergencies—***Consumer Protection*

Requires cell phone companies to give call location information to public safety agencies responding to emergencies. Provides immunity from liability for those companies, their representatives, and public safety answering points for providing call information in good faith.

### **SB 2409—Emergency Medical Services—***Ways & Means*

\$1.5 million funding for fiscal year 2012-2013 for emergency medical services in west Oahu.

### **SB 2261—Weed & Seed—***Ways & Means*

Creates and funds the Weed & Seed program in Department of Labor & Industrial Relations.

### **SB 2254—Internet Dating Services; Safety Awareness Notification—***Heard jointly on 2/8 in Economic Development / Consumer Protection; decision-making on 2/13.*

Requires internet dating services to provide safety awareness notification to their Hawaii members. Authorizes the Attorney General to bring an action against violators.

### **SB 2253—HOPE Parole Pilot Project—***Ways & Means*

Establishes and funds a two year parole pilot program for no more than 20 inmates to be under high-intensity parole supervision.

### **SB 2243—Resisting Arrest; Law Enforcement Officer's Safety—***Judiciary*

Makes it a first degree felony to resist arrest and depriving a law enforcement officer of his/her firearm.

## Bills (Continued from front)

**SB 2402—Light Pollution; Outdoor Lighting; Starlight Reserve**—Hearing on 2/9 in Energy & Environment / Economic Development Beginning 7/1/13, requires all new and replacement outdoor light fixtures to be fully shielded with certain exemptions.

**SB 2677—State ID Cards, Veteran Designation**—Public Safety / Judiciary Establishes designation on state ID cards for verified veterans.

**SB 2400—China-Hawaii Economic Strategic Plan Working Group**—Hearing on 2/15 in Transportation / Economic Development / Tourism Creates working group to draft economic strategic plan for Hawaii to benefit economically from the emergence of China as a global leader.

**SB 2398—Tattoo Artists**—Hearing on 2/15 in Public Safety / Health Authorizes Department of Health to contract with professional for licensing test administration to out-of-state tattoo artists for tattoo conventions.

**SB 2678—Honouliuli** Hearing on 2/14 in Economic Development and Water, Land Appropriates funds for Honouliuli internment campsite.

## Participate in the Process

Thanks to the magic of technology, sharing your thoughts on bills making their way through the Legislature is as easy as a click of a button. For many years now, you could fax your testimony to the committee chair's office. You can give your input on bills online at [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov). The legislative website is informative. With a simple click, you can

- See the membership of each House and Senate committee;
- See all bills and resolutions introduced in the current biennium;
- See what hearings are scheduled and what bills are being heard;
- Check the broadcast schedule for hearings and daily sessions; or
- See what bills will be voted on by the House or Senate that day.

After you've found a bill you're interested in, see if it is being heard. If a hearing on the bill is scheduled, click "Submit Testimony". In the "Enter a measure" box, type in the bill number. The page will identify the hearing. Fill in the information and upload a file of your testimony. Click the "Submit" button and you're all set. Keep in mind our deadlines - you must submit your testimony no later than 24 hours before the hearing.

Bills are often referred to more than one committee, which are identified by abbreviation. If the committees are separated by a comma, this means the bill must be approved by three consecutive committees in separate hearings before it can go to a final vote in the introduction chamber. After a committee passes a bill, it goes to the next committee. That committee's chairman then decides whether or not to give the bill a hearing. A bill must be approved by each committee in order for it to be voted on by the whole House of Representatives. So, if you want to see the bill passed (or not), it's advisable to submit testimony to all three hearings. Testimony does not get conveyed from one hearing to the next. You can use the same testimony for subsequent hearings if the bill is not changed much. If it is amended, you may have to update your testimony.

If the referral has committees separated by a slash, then both committees hear the bill together at the same time. In that case, you only submit the testimony once for both committees at that one hearing. Testimony is submitted to the first committee, which is called the "lead" committee.

After a bill passes all of its committee referrals, it goes to the entire House or Senate for a vote, which is called a "floor vote". If it is approved by the majority of the legislators then it crosses over to the other side, where the hearing process is repeated. If you're still interested in the bill, then you can submit testimony in that chamber's committee hearings as well.

The **Public Access Room (PAR)** on the fourth floor of the State Capitol is a free service to help people participate in the legislative process. It was the first in the nation, and is nationally recognized for innovation in citizen involvement. Its knowledgeable staff can assist you with navigating the complex process and the Legislature's deadlines. They can answer your questions and help you locate your legislator's office, show you how to offer testimony or track a bill as it moves through its hearings and votes in each chamber, and teach you how to use the Legislature's website.

The PAR is also a mini-office, with work space and free wireless for you to charge and use your laptop. You can research issues, meet with others, do paperwork, or do research. A copier is available to print testimony or correspondence to legislators. You can watch broadcasts of hearings and House or Senate floor sessions. Reference materials, a phone, TTY, and fax machine are available.