



SENATOR GILBERT S.C. KEITH-AGARAN

hawai'i state senate district 5

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wailuku • waihe'e • kahului

A MESSAGE FROM GIL

Aloha Kākou,

The 2019 legislative session just passed the midway point. Of the approximately 1,500 Senate bills introduced, over 500 measures passed through all their assigned committees and crossed over to the House, while over 500 House bills were sent to the Senate. These remaining bills have survived the gauntlet of public hearings and testimony from community advocates, private-sector stakeholders and government agencies. The legislative process of hearings and amendments will now be repeated by each chamber.

In this issue you will find highlights of Senate measures that the House will now consider, including issues related to affordable housing for teachers, tax credits for low-income renters, vote by mail and election recounts, and early college and workforce preparedness for high school graduates.

As part of my duties as Vice Chair of the Ways and Means Committee, my attention will be consumed with fashioning a balanced state budget, including funding proposed state Capital Improvement Projects and Grants-in-Aid for community non-profits.

As always, I welcome your comments about how our work at the Capitol affects your life on the Valley Isle. Mahalo for your continued attention to keeping Maui one of the best places to live, work, and raise our families.

Sincerely,

IN THIS ISSUE:

- A Message from Gil
- Photos of Senate Events
- Notable Senate Bills Crossing from the Senate to the House

PHOTOS



Visiting Maui Food Innovation Center's booth at this year's Agriculture Awareness Day.



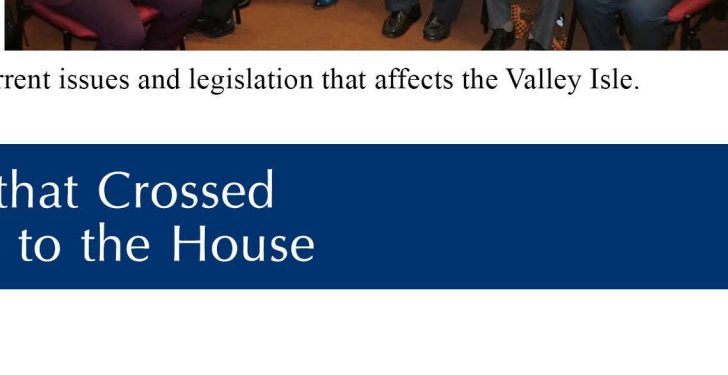
Celebrating Chinese Lunar New Year at the Capitol with Wailuku Representative Troy Hashimoto.



Congratulating a member of Ka'ala Cultural Learning Center when the organization was recognized on the Senate floor.



Ka Ipu Kukui Fellows came to the Capitol to talk story about current issues and legislation that affects the Valley Isle.



Notable Bills that Crossed from the Senate to the House

EDUCATION	AGRICULTURE
<p>SB12 SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER HOUSING Authorizes the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation to develop and implement a housing voucher program for full-time teachers employed at a hard-to-fill public school, including a public charter school.</p> <p>SB387 SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER RENTAL HOUSING Authorizes the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation to assist the Department of Education in developing teacher housing projects.</p> <p>SB373 SD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION Requires the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, and the University of Hawaii, to develop and implement a K-12 curriculum-to-career-pipeline initiative to ensure that the State's public school students are adequately trained and prepared to enter the State's workforce upon graduation from high school.</p> <p>SB226 SD2 RELATING TO SUICIDE PREVENTION Appropriates funds for youth suicide early intervention, prevention, and education initiatives in Kauai, Hawaii, and Maui counties.</p> <p>SB392 SD2 RELATING TO SPECIAL EDUCATION Appropriates funds to the Department of Education to provide up to \$1,690 to each special education classroom teacher for instructional materials and equipment.</p> <p>SB980 RELATING TO EDUCATION Defines a private school to be an education institution that teaches kindergarten through grade twelve and that is licensed or accredited by the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools or the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.</p> <p>SB1307 SD2 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF COMBINING THE RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ON THE ISLANDS OF KAUAI, MAUI, MOLOKAI, LANAI, AND HAWAII ISLAND Appropriates funds for the Department of Education to determine the feasibility of combining the resources and organization of the Department of Accounting and General Services with the Department of Education on the islands of Kauai, Maui, Molokai, Lanai, and Hawaii island.</p>	<p>SB114 SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER HOUSING Establishes the teacher home assistance program to provide housing vouchers to full-time teachers employed by the Department of Education, including teachers at public charter schools, who teach at a hard-to-fill school and whose household income does not exceed 80% of the area median income.</p> <p>SB371 SD2 RELATING TO SCHOOLS Establishes a Workforce Readiness Program within the Department of Education to allow students to graduate from an extended high school enrollment with an industry-recognized associate's degree to complement the student's high school diploma.</p> <p>SB376 RELATING TO EDUCATION Allows students to enroll in career and technical education programs in schools outside the Department of Education service area in which the student resides.</p> <p>SB383 SD2 RELATING TO YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION Requires the Board of Education to establish a mandatory youth suicide awareness and prevention training program and model risk referral protocol for all public schools, including charter schools.</p> <p>SB856 SD1 RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION Requires the Auditor to perform a financial and management audit of the Department of Education, Superintendent, Board of Education, and complex areas every three years.</p> <p>SB592 SD1 RELATING TO THE SALARY OF THE STATE LIBRARIAN Limits the state librarian's salary to 90% of the superintendent of education's salary.</p> <p>SB586 SD1 RELATING TO SCHOOL IMPACT FEES Repeals the school impact fee exemptions for nonresidential development and housing subject to the transient accommodations tax when seeking development in a designated school impact district requiring county subdivision approval, county building permit, or condominium property regime approval of the project.</p> <p>SB1158 SD2 RELATING TO SCHOOL SUPPLIES Establishes a general excise tax holiday for consumers and businesses for school supplies sold during the weekend beginning with the last Friday in July; provided that businesses pass the savings on to consumers.</p>

HOUSING	ELECTIONS, COURTS, CRIME PREVENTION, AND THE JUDICIARY
<p>SB1 SD2 RELATING TO HOUSING Establishes the ALOHA homes program under the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation to facilitate the development of low-cost homes for sale to Hawaii residents on state-owned and county-owned land near rail stations of the Honolulu rail transit system, to be known as the urban redevelopment district.</p> <p>SB855 SD1 RELATING TO THE LOW-INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT Specifies that certain provisions of the Internal Revenue Code related to at-risk rules and deductions and to passive activity loss do not apply with respect to claims for the state low-income housing tax credit.</p>	<p>SB375 SD2 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE Requires the Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the Office of the Governor, to develop a strategic plan to double local food production and increase food exports by 2030.</p> <p>SB519 SD2 RELATING TO FOOD SAFETY Requires the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to partner with the Hawaii agriculture community to establish a food safety certification training program to provide assistance to small- and medium-sized farms in obtaining a United States Department of Agriculture Good Agricultural Practices certification or an equivalent certification.</p> <p>SB837 SD2 RELATING TO FARMS Creates an exclusion from income tax for the lesser of 51% of gross annual income or \$50,000 of gross annual income earned by a farmer from farming activities.</p>

TAXATION	TAXATION
<p>SB162 SD2 RELATING TO TAXATION To meet the constitutional obligations, extends surcharge to all rental car users. Deposits the surcharge tax revenues into the state highway fund for federal road capacity projects in the county that generated the surcharge tax.</p> <p>SB530 SD2 RELATING TO THE GENERAL EXCISE TAX Exempts from the general excise tax gross receipts from the sale of mobility enhancing equipment, hearing aids, prosthetic devices, and prescription drugs sold pursuant to a doctor's prescription.</p> <p>SB1516 SD1 RELATING TO TAXATION Establishes reduced taxpayer penalties for nonpayments and underpayments that are due to reasonable cause.</p>	<p>SB198 SD2 RELATING TO THE TRANSIENT ACCOMMODATIONS TAX Authorizes counties to levy a county surcharge on transient accommodations tax in their respective counties pursuant to certain conditions.</p> <p>SB301 SD1 RELATING TO TAXATION OF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUSTS Disallows dividends paid deduction for real estate investment trusts for taxable income purposes. Applies to taxable years beginning after 12/31/2019.</p> <p>SB1428 SD1 RELATING TO THE COUNTY SURCHARGE ON STATE TAX Authorizes any county with a population equal to or less than 500,000 that adopts a county surcharge on state tax ordinance to use the surcharges received from the State for infrastructure and public safety.</p>

HOUSING	ELECTIONS, COURTS, CRIME PREVENTION, AND THE JUDICIARY
<p>SB579 SD1 RELATING TO TAX CREDITS Increases the allowable income tax credit for low-income household renters to an unspecified amount. Increases the allowable amount of the refundable food excise tax credit to an unspecified amount.</p> <p>SB885 SD1 RELATING TO THE LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLD RENTERS CREDIT Adjusts the low-income household renters credit by increasing the maximum value of the credit amount to \$150 per qualified exemption for households, and adjusting the income threshold amounts based on filing status.</p>	<p>SB412 SD2 RELATING TO VOTING Requires that any person who is eligible to vote, or for inclusion in a new or renewed motor vehicle driver's license, provisional license, and application permit, or a new, renewal, or duplicate identification card be automatically registered to vote if that person is not already registered to vote unless the applicant affirmatively declines to be registered to vote.</p>

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MAKE YOURSELF HEARD!

Participating in the legislative process is easier than ever for neighbor island residents who are unable to visit us at the Capitol. The state legislature's website at www.capitol.hawaii.gov is the place to start. There you can search for measures that are being considered this session based on keywords, the name of a House or Senate member who introduced a measure, or by subject matter committee. When you register for an account using your e-mail address, you can create a clear personalized tracking list for accessing daily updated information to find out when a measure may be scheduled for hearing, and you can electronically submit public testimony for consideration by the committee conducting the hearing. If you have general questions concerning the legislative process and how a bill becomes law, please also see the website for the Public Access Room at www.Irbhawaii.org/par/ or call them toll-free from Maui at 984-2400. You can reach our office toll-free through that number as well, or you can contact or e-mail us as provided below. Mahalo for participating in our democratic process!

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