



# SENATOR MICHELLE KIDANI

## 2022 END OF SESSION NEWSLETTER

Senate District 18: Serving Mililani Town, Waipio Gentry, Waikele, Village Park & Royal Kunia



### SENATE VICE PRESIDENT

Chair:  
Committee on Education

Vice Chair:  
Committee on Higher Education

Member:  
Committee on Ways and Means

Hawaii State Capitol  
Room 228  
(808) 586-7100

senkidani@capitol.hawaii.gov

Head to my Official Capitol Web Page under Legislators at [capitol.hawaii.gov](http://capitol.hawaii.gov) for a complete archive of my monthly newsletters

Aloha Friends and Neighbors,

As this legislative session comes to a close, I wanted to take a moment to mahalo you for allowing me to represent you in the Senate. As the Senate Vice-President and Chair of the Education Committee, I am honored to continue representing District 18. This year, the Legislature was able to pass bills to benefit our students and teachers as well as our working families.

I had several opportunities to join colleagues, students and faculty at several important events, including the completion of Mililani Middle School’s new classroom building, the dedication of the McNerny Foundation Research Observatory at Waipahu High School, as well as several high school graduations and the Aloha Assemblies of several district elementary schools. Graduation season is always an affirming time to reflect on the importance of our work in the Senate Education Committee to support our keiki throughout their educational journey. I look forward to this time of year and these exciting steps for our students and their parents. I would also like to take a moment to congratulate Keith Hayashi on being named the next Superintendent for the Department of Education. I have had the privilege of working with Keith since 2009 as the Principal of Waipahu High School, and am confident that he will bring the same transformative results for all DOE schools as he did for the students at Waipahu.

In closing, I’d like to wish our students and educators a wonderful end to their school year. My deepest aloha and congratulations to the incredible graduating class of 2022! It was heartwarming to celebrate, in person, the Mililani, Waipahu and Pearl City High School graduates as we cheered on our seniors on this momentous occasion. After navigating the challenges of the last few years, it was especially inspiring to see friends, family and community members gather to celebrate these graduates. I wish you all the very best in this exciting next chapter! Here are a few snapshots from the 2022 Legislative session:



### 50 YEARS OF TITLE IX

*With these thirty-seven words, and despite significant resistance, Maui-born Patsy Takemoto Mink changed America:*

**“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”**



L-R: Senator Acasio, Senator Fevella and I with ‘Ilima Intermediate School students and teacher Sarah “Mili” Milianta-Laffin after the passage of the Menstrual Equity Bill; Senator Baker and I; Senator Wakai and I preparing for an Energy, Economic Development and Tourism conference hearing; and Senator Keith-Agaran, Senator Kanuha and I during a Ways and Means conference hearing.

## A HUI HOU SENATOR BAKER, SENATOR TANIGUCHI & SENATOR NISHIHARA

After decades of dedicated public service, we said a fond aloha and a hui hou to **Senator Rosalyn Baker, Senator Brian Taniguchi and Senator Clarence Nishihara** in honor of their last regular session. I have had the pleasure of serving alongside these hardworking legislators throughout my career and have deep respect and gratitude to each of them for their commitment to the people of Hawai'i. We have accomplished so much together over our many years in the Senate and I will miss them dearly. Mahalo nui loa and best wishes to you all in this wonderful next chapter!



The women of the Hawai'i State Senate wore red on Sine Die in honor of Senator Baker's retirement at the close of the 2022 session.



## CONGRATULATIONS SUPERINTENDENT KEITH HAYASHI!

My heartfelt aloha and congratulations to the Hawai'i Department of Education's new superintendent, **Keith Hayashi!** I have had the pleasure of working with Keith since 2009 as the former Principal of Waipahu High School and have continued to do so in his role as Interim Superintendent of the DOE. Keith's innovative vision and steadfast commitment to education are sure to serve him well in this role. I look forward to continuing to work together to serve our keiki and local families.

## WAIPAHU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AARON TOMINAGA

I joined the Waipahu Elementary School community to surprise **Principal Aaron Tominaga** with a special celebration to recognize him as the Hawai'i Elementary and Middle School Administrators Association (HEMSAA)'s 2022 National Distinguished Principal (NDP) for the state of Hawai'i. **Principal Tominaga's** dedication to his students has transformed their student body of nearly half English language learners (ELA) and nearly all students eligible for free or reduced-price meals by developing a comprehensive system to accelerate support for ELA and math students. This resulted in a substantial reduction of "at-risk" students in both subjects in the past two years. **Principal Tominaga** is noted as a visionary leader who is a catalyst for change--an educator who is truly deserving of such praise and recognition! Congratulations!



## MILILANI MIDDLE SCHOOL BUILDING DEDICATION

Congratulations to **Principal Elynne Chung**, faculty, staff and students of Mililani Middle School on the exciting completion of their new classroom building! Senator Dela Cruz and I attended the dedication ceremony to present a Senate Certificate in honor of their campus evolution. Though Mililani Middle School was the first multi-track school in the state, it will transition to a single-track curriculum this upcoming school year with the addition of the new building. The 15-classroom building will host Media, Technology, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), Family Consumer Science, English Language Learners and Career Exploration classes for grade 7 and 8 students. Though the Blazers are a young school, they are the largest middle school in the state of Hawai‘i, and this transition will now align with the established DOE school calendar, gaining an additional eleven more days of school. As the grandparent of a proud Blazer, I am all the more proud to see their continued growth and success. I was happy to commemorate the occasion with my fellow legislators in the photo below, as well as a capture with Senator Dela Cruz, **Principal Chung**, myself, Superintendent Hayashi and my grandson, Jayreed Kidani.



## SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE



One of the poignant moments of the 2022 session took place on March 4th, when I delivered the following remarks in support of Ukraine: “In the face of Russia’s unbridled and totally unwarranted aggression, my colleagues and I stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. The heartbreaking images of displaced Ukrainians, seeking nothing more than the opportunities available as a democracy, will forever tarnish the legacy of Russia’s current leadership in the eyes of people around the globe. In Hawai‘i, the aloha spirit has guided us during the most challenging times.” In that same spirit of aloha, it was my honor to share a few words at the Capitol joined by legislators and staff wearing blue and yellow to show our collective support for the people of Ukraine. Mahalo nui to all who joined us, including beloved members of our local Ukrainian community, some of whom are also Mililani residents.

## KIDANI AWARDS

At the close of each school year, I look forward to acknowledging outstanding District 18 elementary and middle school students as the recipients of 2022 Kidani awards! Students are selected by the teachers and staff of their respective schools and I have the pleasure of joining them for their Aloha Assemblies to present these hardworking students with Senate Certificates. This year, some of the schools welcomed assemblies back to in-person ceremonies. Mahalo nui to all of the District 18 school principals and teachers for helping us to celebrate these deserving students as they venture off into the next phase of their educational journey into middle school, high school and beyond! Here are a few wonderful captures from my visit to some of the various district schools:



## END OF SESSION STAFF LUNCHEON

This was our first year back to an in-person session since the Capitol closed to the public at the start of the pandemic in 2020. Ensuring the legislative session runs smoothly is no easy task, and requires the support of many individuals. I'd like to mahalo my office staff as well as the Senate communications team for all of their hard work and diligence. We had a chance to gather over lunch at the end of session for a celebratory meal, and I was so grateful to have that time with our teams. Here's a quick capture from our wonderful lunch with my office staff and comms team (L-R): Communications Specialist Chelsea Brinegar, Office Manager Danicia Honda, Legislative Aide Jade Snow, Communications Specialist Angelo Ruiz, myself, Legislative Aide Kate Ozawa, Communications Director Jacob Aki and Communications Intern Thompson Wong. (Missing Committee Clerk Scott Fuji)



### SUZANNE VARES-LUM EAST WEST CENTER PRESIDENT

I had the chance to visit the East West Center to meet with its new President, retired U.S. Army Major General, **Suzanne Vares-Lum**. We brainstormed about ways in which we can work together to best support our keiki in the years to come, and this meeting also provided me an opportunity to present her with a Senate certificate to welcome her in her new position. It is worth noting that **Suzanne** is the first woman, the first Hawai'i resident, and the first Native Hawaiian to hold this prestigious position. Her exceptional resume of impressive credentials makes her not only expertly suited for the job, but also an incredible inspiration to women. Congratulations **Suzanne**, I look forward to working together to continue making important strides for our community!

## MCINERNY FOUNDATION RESEARCH OBSERVATORY DEDICATION AT WHS

Waipahu High School is home to the Hawai'i Department of Education's first research-grade, 17 inch telescope with a 12.5ft dome! I was eager to celebrate the dedication of The McNerny Foundation Research Observatory on the grounds of Waipahu High School alongside fellow legislators, Superintendent Hayashi and the Waipahu High School community. Not only is the telescope a milestone for the campus, but it is also designed to be operated remotely. This will allow students to collaborate on joint research projects in collaboration with other research teams throughout the State, country and around the globe. In addition, this program will also offer an astronomy course to give students the opportunity to hone their research skills in collaboration with other students and scientists across the world. A testament to the interest in the program and success of its student participants, Waipahu High School has already had three teams of students publish their findings in the peer-reviewed Journal of Double Star Observations. The sky is truly the limit for these curious, hardworking students and I can't wait to see what they discover!



# NOTABLE BILLS OF 2022

---

## **SB2184: RELATING TO DIGITAL LEARNING**

Provides \$7M to the DOE for digital learning options for students in the upcoming 2022-2023 school year. This bill and funding is important to ensure that the DOE has resources to provide students with virtual learning options as needed.

## **SB2821: RELATING TO MENSTRUAL EQUITY**

This bill is a long overdue step forward to addressing an inequity in our educational system. The fact that students have been forced to miss school due to being unable to afford basic hygienic products, or worse, using inappropriate and dangerous materials like newspaper or leaves to manage their menstruation, was appalling. Thanks to the tireless efforts of advocates such as Sarah “Mili” Milianta-Laffin and her students from ‘Ilima Intermediate School, the Ma‘i Movement Sisters, Nikki Ann-Yee, Jamie Kapana, and Brandy-Lee Yee, and many other advocates, this will never be an issue our students face again. This bill will ensure that no student faces these difficult decisions ever again and builds on the \$2M appropriation in the DOE budget to cover the cost of menstrual products which will be provided free of charge for all DOE students statewide.

## **SB2819: RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

The Senate has worked for many years to try to address the long-standing issue of teacher compensation in our State. When negotiating contracts, teachers have been restricted to a maximum of 7 classifications to determine their pay rates. This statute has been in place for years, and will be removed to allow teachers to negotiate future contracts that properly reflect the professionalism of teaching based on professional development and certifications. This is a tremendous step forward to address the recruitment and retention of highly-qualified teachers.

## **HB2000: RELATING TO EDUCATION**

Over the last two years, the Legislature has set ambitious goals to provide early learning opportunities to all of Hawai‘i’s keiki. While the pandemic has slowed progress in this area, the Legislature has re-doubled its efforts to expand the availability of pre-kindergarten in our State with an appropriation of \$200M. This funding will focus on the expansion of facilities and sites for pre-kindergarten classrooms across our State.

## **SB2893: RELATING TO A SCHOOL SUPPLY SUBSIDY PILOT PROGRAM**

If we want our keiki to learn, we must ensure that they have the basic necessities needed to learn. In many of our rural Title 1 schools, even the most basic of school supplies are difficult to obtain or afford. And while our teachers have often stepped up to fill this need, we must begin to look at shifting that burden away from those most in need. To that end, the Legislature has appropriated over \$800K for a pilot program to pay for school supplies for students of our rural Title 1 schools.

## **HB2511: RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**

A landmark bill supporting the native Hawaiian community, this bill allocates \$600M to Department of Hawaiian Homelands to provide housing, rent, and mortgages for Native Hawaiians applying for Hawaiian Homeland housing.

## **SB3048: RELATING TO STATE FUNDS**

Local families have experienced tremendous economic challenges over the past few years, much of which has related to the costs of basic necessities like housing. This bill is appropriating \$300M to the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) for low and moderate income housing development.

## **SB514: RELATING TO THE GENERAL FUND**

This bill provides a well-needed tax rebate to local families. For those with income less than \$100K, a \$300 rebate will be provided. For those with income greater than \$100K, they will receive a \$100 State tax rebate. The varying amounts of these rebates are based upon the individual taxpayer and their associated dependent(s).

## **HB2510: RELATING TO INCOME**

This bill will establish the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) as both permanent and refundable. This means that working families who qualify for this tax credit will be able to receive any excess beyond their tax liability as a tax refund. In addition to that, HB2510 also addresses the minimum wage increase, which will happen incrementally over the course of the next 6 years. The minimum wage will be raised every 2 years, beginning this year as it increases to \$12/hour in October 2022, \$14/hour in 2024, \$16/hour in 2026 and to \$18/hour in 2028.

## CAPITOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

- **Kaleiopu‘u Elementary School:** \$2.139M for the plans, design and construction to maintain and improve facilities and infrastructure, including hazardous materials remediation; project may include repair, replacement, or new construction of roof/re-roof; project may include whole school renovation; ground and site improvements; equipment and appurtenances.
- **Kanoelani Elementary School:** \$1.4M for the design and construction for a new portable; ground and site improvements; equipment and appurtenances.
- **Kipapa Elementary School:** \$3M for the design and construction of a covered playcourt; other related improvements; ground and site improvements; equipment and appurtenances.
- **Mililani High School:** \$3.5M for the design and construction for administration building expansion; ground and site improvements; equipment and appurtenances.
- **Mililani High School CTE Facility:** \$9.3M for the plans, design construction and equipment for Career and Technical Education Facility for Mililani High School; ground and site improvements; equipment and appurtenances.
- **Mililani Uka Elementary School:** \$1M for the design and construction of ADA improvements for public accommodations; ground and site improvements; equipment and appurtenances.
- **Mililani Waena Elementary School Cafeteria Expansion:** \$7M for the plans, designs, and construction of the Mililani Waena cafeteria expansion, renovation of existing serving kitchen into administration space and other school improvements; ground and site improvements; equipment and appurtenances.
- **Waikele Elementary School:** \$970K for the design and construction for lighting improvement campus wide; ground and site improvements; equipment and appurtenances.
- **Waipahu High School:** \$26M for the construction of Waipahu High School’s Integrated Academy Facility; including renovations and relocation for the Academic Health Center; and other related improvements; ground and site improvements; equipment and appurtenances.
- **Waipahu Aloha Clubhouse/ Waipi‘o Point Access Road Multimodal and Safety Improvements:** \$2.1M in funding for the design and construction of the Waipi‘o Point Access Road Multimodal and Safety Improvements.

## EDUCATION BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS:

- \$114M for the restoration of the DOE budget that were cut due to COVID-19 economic shortfalls
- \$49M in additional funding allocated to cover existing shortfalls in areas like utilities expenses and school meal expenses. With rising costs of energy, improved efficiencies have slowed increases but not entirely stopped them. While the USDA waivers to provide free meals is a benefit to students, the meal revenue from selling full priced meals has resulted in shortfalls to the school food service budget.
- \$125M for various repair and maintenance projects to address the long-standing backlog of work to our schools statewide. This money was appropriated as a lump-sum to allow the DOE, in accordance to BOE policy, equitably address school needs.
- \$600K in funding to the Grow Our Own program. This represents a doubling of the current line-item, bringing the new total for the program to \$1.2M. This will double the amount of teachers who will be eligible for the stipend to a total of 60.

## STATE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS:

After the many challenges we’ve faced in recent years due to the pandemic, we are thrilled to see the economic boost we have made. Thanks to a robust rebound in our economy, the Legislature passed bills that will benefit generations of working families for years to come. Here is are some key highlights from the State budget:

### **Department of Budget and Finance**

- \$33.33M to leverage federal funds to expand broadband deployment
- \$335M to restore prefunding of post-employment benefits and address the State’s unfunded liabilities

### **Department of the Attorney General**

- Adding 13 new deputy AG positions to focus on human trafficking abatement, public safety and criminal justice
- \$6.75M to modernize Child Support Enforcement Services division KEIKI database

### **Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism**

- \$1.5M for the Manufacturing Assistance Program award to increase local production of goods
- \$488K and 7 new positions in the Hawaii State Energy Office to support renewable energy projects across the State

### **Department of Human Services**

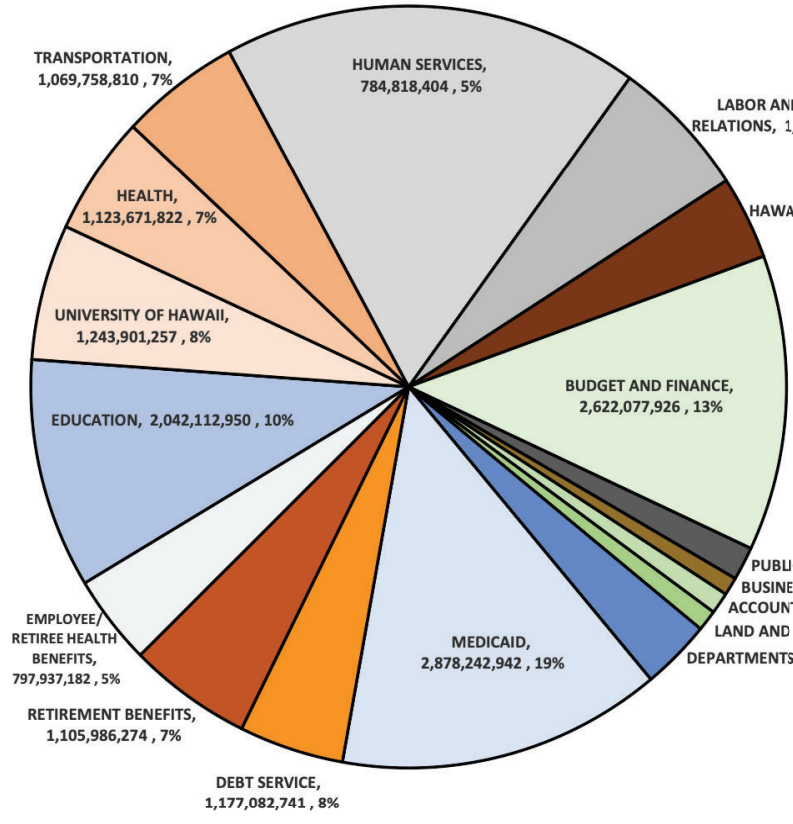
- \$4M to increase the program allotment of Temporary Assistance for Other Needy Families (TAONF)
- \$6.9M to assist eligible low-income families with child care payments
- \$25.9M to restore adult dental benefits under MedQUEST
- \$5.8M to expand post-partum coverage from 2 to 12 months for MedQUEST patients and increase preventative treatment and screening services

### **Department of Agriculture**

- \$425K to address damage to coffee crops and ranching from invasive species such as the coffee berry beetle, spittle bug, etc.
- \$658,480 for aquaculture development in the State

# 2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION IN REVIEW

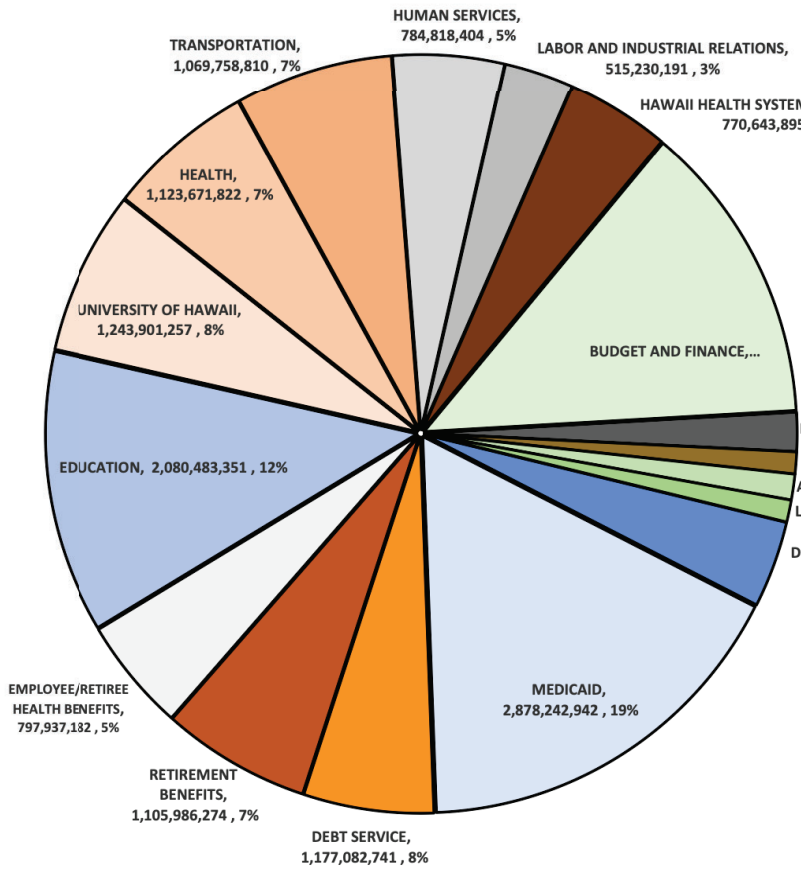
The Legislature's total budget for the fiscal year 2022 for all means of financing is \$15,719,399,902. Charted below are the budget breakdowns for all categories during the 2022-2023 years:



## Fiscal Year 2022 All Means of Financing

**\$15,719,399,902**

Less Than 1%	FY2022 TOTALS
AGRICULTURE	52,389,942.00
ATTORNEY GENERAL	102,285,053.00
COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS	93,821,564.00
DEFENSE	103,470,791.00
CHARTER SCHOOLS	106,950,406.00
PUBLIC LIBRARIES	44,474,441.00
HAWAIIAN HOMELANDS	53,635,438.00
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT	26,032,612.00
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR	3,550,536.00
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR	955,793.00
SUBSIDIES	2,900,000.00
TAXATION	31,871,076.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>622,337,652.00</b>



## Fiscal Year 2023 All Means of Financing

**\$16,979,432,863**

Less Than 1%	FY2023 TOTALS
AGRICULTURE	49,185,548.00
ATTORNEY GENERAL	102,293,109.00
COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS	90,997,564.00
DEFENSE	103,470,791.00
CHARTER SCHOOLS	131,902,739.00
PUBLIC LIBRARIES	47,508,960.00
HAWAIIAN HOMELANDS	53,635,438.00
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT	26,085,187.00
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR	3,550,536.00
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR	955,793.00
TAXATION	28,629,744.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>638,215,409.00</b>

## SENATOR MICHELLE KIDANI

Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 S. Beretania St. Rm 228  
Honolulu, HI 96813

---

# CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2022

My heartfelt congratulations to all of the class of 2022 graduates! You have navigated immense challenges throughout the past few years and have demonstrated resilience, innovation and perseverance. It has been inspiring to watch you all overcome the changes of your high school years with determination and grace. You are a class of leaders, entrepreneurs and creatives who are sure to make an impact on the world as you journey on to the next exciting chapter of your lives. I was so proud and grateful to be there, in-person, to celebrate your achievements along with your family, friends and the local community last month for your graduation ceremonies. I wish you all the very best as you venture on to reach your dreams. Congratulations to the Mililani High School, Waipahu High School and Pearl City High School classes of 2022!

