



# SENATOR MICHELLE KIDANI



## 2017 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

*Serving Senate District 18 ~ Mililani Town, Waipio Gentry, Waikele, Royal Kunia and Village Park*

Aloha, friends and neighbors,

This special edition of my Senate newsletter is a good summary of our legislative session that adjourned in early May. This was a “budget session,” during which we formulated a spending plan for the two-year period that begins on July first.

As Chair of the Senate’s Committee on Education, my focus is always on ways to improve our public education system – from pre-school through college. The budget we approved includes \$90 million to address needed repairs, maintenance and expansion of our school facilities statewide. It provides support for early learning programs such as **Pre-School Open Doors**, and allocates \$2.8 million to expand the **Keiki Healthy and Ready to Learn** health assessment and monitoring program to promote the health of our students and reduce their missed days.

We also provided \$1 million for expansion of the state’s **Early College** initiative that has proved to be so successful at Waipahu High School. The additional allocation will help establish Early College opportunities in additional public high schools statewide. The budget also includes \$1.8 million for **Hawaii Promise**, a program for students at UH community colleges who need extra help meeting their tuition expenses.

I worked hard this year to support our teachers, and I am pleased that they agreed to a new contract that goes into effect next month. Other issues remain, of course, such as Hawaii’s chronic teacher shortage. Solutions require innovative thinking. Working with the DOE, UH Manoa College of Education, and other stakeholders, we identified hundreds of substitute teachers and education assistants who already work regularly in schools where it’s hard to assign and keep teachers.

In an innovative attempt to fill vacancies, I secured \$400,000 in the budget for a new **Teacher Stipend** program. The program would create a stipend for current education professionals in our hard-to-staff schools to earn their teacher certifications and become full time teachers. At my request, UH Manoa and UH West Oahu are discussing a curriculum specifically targeting substitutes and EAs to get them fully certified through evening and weekend courses in a timely and efficient manner.

Hundreds of school classrooms are still too hot to provide a positive and comfortable environment for teaching and learning. To add to the limited funding already allocated to meet this challenge, I worked with the House on HB 957 to come up with innovative solutions. The bill allows the DOE to borrow currently unused funds from another state energy program to finance heat abatement measures and necessary equipment to lower temperatures in campus facilities.

The complex issue of support for the city’s rail project consumed much of the debate in the final days of our session. Our Senate bill made a reasonable proposal to extend the General Excise Tax one-half percent surcharge that Oahu residents currently pay. The House counter-proposal would have substantially raised the hotel room tax on all islands to pay for rail, and added some other non-transit-related provisions that confused the issue. In the end, there was no clear meeting of the minds, and as this newsletter is being prepared, discussions continue about whether it would be productive to convene a special session to resolve the matter.

Finally, here are some construction projects in the budget that affect families in Senate District 18:

- ◇ **Mililani High School - \$2 million** for planning for a Performing Arts Center; **\$350,000** to plan for enclosing a courtyard and extending an existing building
- ◇ **Mililani Middle School - \$11.5 million** for a new 15-classroom building. This is a major step toward moving MMS off the multi-track school schedule back to the standard school year calendar.
- ◇ **Kanoelani Elementary School - \$800,000** for an additional portable classroom building
- ◇ **Waikele Elementary School – \$1.4 million** for construction of a six-classroom building; **\$850,000** for upgrades to the electrical system and furnishings
- ◇ **Waipahu High School - \$15 million** for a new classroom building
- ◇ **Waipahu Intermediate School - \$600,000** for playcourts

I hope that you and your families are able to enjoy some leisure time during the summer, and I wish you good health and a warm Aloha in the months ahead.

# 2017 Legislative Session in Review

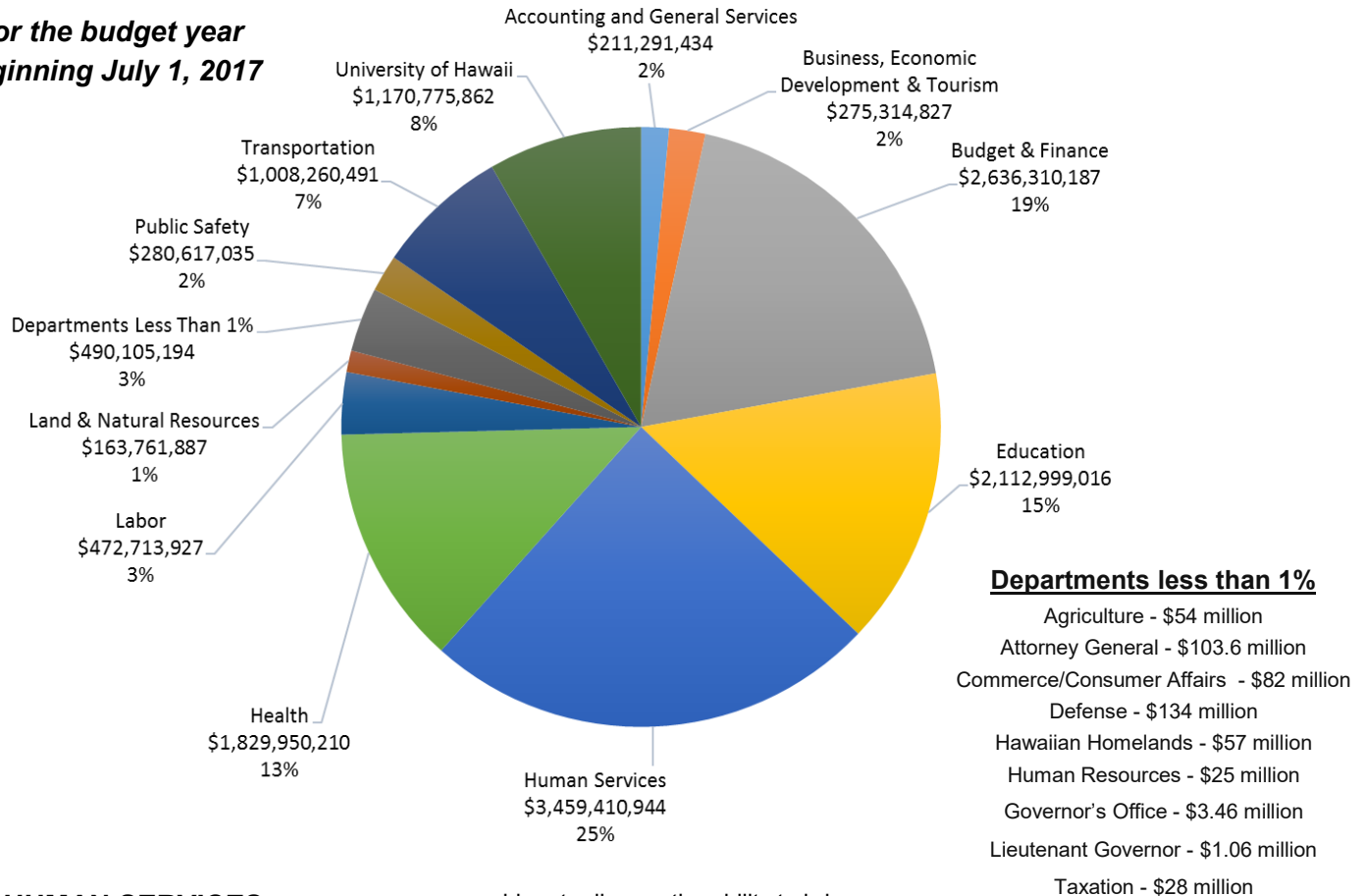
Lawmakers passed 270 bills that address the wide range of needs and concerns of Hawaii residents during this first regular session of the 29<sup>th</sup> Legislature. They ensure that the state is fiscally prepared and sustainable, and cover issues from education and homelessness, to housing and health care.

Below is a summary of some of the bills that have been sent to Governor David Ige who has the option of signing them into law, vetoing them, or allowing them to become law without his signature.

To view the full text of bills, go to the Legislature's website: <http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/>

**STATE BUDGET - HB 100, CD1**, appropriates \$14.1 billion in total operating funds for fiscal year 2018 and \$14.3 billion for fiscal year 2019. The budget includes \$3 billion for capital improvement projects statewide for the 2017-2019 fiscal biennium. Included in the budget is \$10 million for an EIS and master planning for a new Aloha Stadium, \$1 million for the 2017-2019 fiscal biennium to address Rat Lungworm disease, and \$3.7 million for the 2017-2019 fiscal biennium for Hawaii Promise, to help qualified students with in-state tuition at community colleges.

## For the budget year beginning July 1, 2017



## HUMAN SERVICES

**Emergency shelters - HB 1098 CD1** permits, rather than requires, emergency shelters to have a partitioned space for each homeless family or individual that provides separation from other families or individuals in the shelter. It delays by one year those compliance requirements for contracts between the Department of Human Services and emergency or transitional shelter provider agencies to allow DHS time to meet with shelter

providers to discuss the ability to bring shelter space into compliance with the new emergency requirements.

**Community Court outreach - SB 718 CD 1** establishes a community court outreach project in Honolulu to resolve cases involving non-violent, non-felony offenses where a plea agreement has been reached. An appropriation of nearly \$900,000 in general funds for each fiscal year of the biennium has been included in the budget for this initiative.

## HOUSING

**Rental assistance, affordable housing - HB 100 CD 1** (the state budget), includes **\$25 million** to go to the Rental Housing Revolving Fund and **\$25 million** to the Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund. These are much-needed funds for the planning and construction of affordable rentals across our state.

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## EDUCATION

**Heat abatement** - HB 957 CD1 authorizes the Department of Education to borrow money interest-free from the Hawaii Green Infrastructure Loan Program for heat abatement measures in public schools. It requires the DOE to pay back the loans from money saved by energy efficiency measures.

**School lunches** - SB 423 CD 1 makes it illegal to deny a student a meal for failure to pay within the first 21 days of the semester of a school year while the student's application for free or reduced lunch is being processed, or during the seven days after the student's meal account balance is zero or negative.

**Teacher education stipends** - my bill SB 1188 was not passed by the legislature but **\$400,000** for a pilot teacher certification program was included in the budget. This money will be used as a stipend for current education professionals who are already working in our hard-to-staff schools to help them become fully certified teachers.

## COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH

**Child care provider liability** - HB 674 CD 1 requires all child care providers to obtain and maintain liability insurance as a condition of licensure, registration or temporary permission, and to disclose certain insurance-related information to parents or guardians.

**Healthy Aging Partnerships** - HB 615 CD 1 appropriates funds for the Healthy Aging Partnership Program to further the program's critical role in improving the health and well-being of Hawaii's *kupuna*.

**Family leave** - HB 213 CD 1 permits an employee to use family leave in order to care for a sibling with a serious health condition. It specifies notice and certification requirements for when family leave is taken to care for an employee's child, spouse, reciprocal beneficiary, sibling, or parent.

**Kupuna Caregivers** - HB 607 CD 1 authorizes the Executive Office on Aging to establish the Kupuna Caregivers Program to assist community members in obtaining care for elders while remaining in the workforce.

**Medical marijuana** - HB 1488 CD 1 adds rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, epilepsy and multiple sclerosis to the list of conditions that qualify for medical marijuana prescriptions. It also increases the number of marijuana plants a qualifying patient can possess from 7 to 10, and permits the Department of Health to increase the number of plants that can be grown at production centers from 3,000 to 5,000. The bill allows qualified patients to access laboratory testing for their medical marijuana. It also requires retention of video security recordings of production centers and dispensaries for not less than fifty days.

**Opioid therapy disclosures** - SB 505 CD 1 requires prescribing healthcare providers to adopt and maintain policies for informed consent to opioid therapy in circumstances that they carry elevated risk of dependency. It establishes limits for concurrent opioid and benzodiazepine prescriptions.

**Contraceptives from pharmacists** - SB 513 CD 1 authorizes pharmacists to prescribe and dispense self-administered hormonal contraceptive supplies to patients regardless of a previous prescription, subject to specified education and procedural requirements. The bill enables pharmacists to receive health insurance reimbursements for such prescriptions.

**Inpatient psychiatric treatment** - HB 554 CD 1 authorizes and establishes criteria for administrative orders to provide inpatient psychiatric treatment to an involuntarily committed patient over the patient's objection. It requires the Department of Health and the Department of Public Safety to make recommendations for an administrative process applicable to persons subject to DPS jurisdiction.

## PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

**Alcohol monitoring devices** - HB 306 CD 1 authorizes the fitting of a continuous alcohol monitoring device on persons charged for operating a vehicle under the influence of an intoxicant or habitually operating a vehicle under the influence of an intoxicant if the person is a repeat intoxicated driver, or is currently awaiting a pending criminal investigation or prosecution for one or more prior charges of driving under the influence or habitually operating a vehicle under the influence of an intoxicant. It establishes a process for certain persons to receive financial relief for the cost of the monitoring devices.

**Alternatives to incarceration** - HB1246 CD 1 authorizes electronic monitoring and surveillance of offenders in programs that offer alternatives to incarceration.

**Monument to Filipino World War II Veterans** - HB 942 CD 1 authorizes the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to commission an artist to design and build a monument to honor and commemorate Filipino veterans of World War II.

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**Senator Michelle Kidani**  
**Vice President of the Senate**

**Chair**, Committee on Education

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## AGRICULTURE

**Parakeet control** - HB 655 CD 1 provides funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources to assist the National Wildlife Research Center to research and develop a control plan to reduce negative impacts of the rose-ringed parakeet.

**Greenhouse gases** - SB 559 CD 1 requires the State to expand strategies and actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions statewide in alignment with the principles and goals adopted in the Paris Agreement.

**Tiny homes** - HB 2 CD 1 authorizes tiny homes of fewer than 500 square feet for farm workers in agricultural districts in a county with a population of more than 180,000 but less than 250,000, if certain conditions are met. It authorizes county councils to adopt ordinances for oversight of tiny homes, as defined in the bill.

**Farmers' markets** - HB 1475 CD 1 permits farmers' markets and food hubs on lands in agricultural districts.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM, AND TECHNOLOGY

**Public-private partnerships** - HB 627 CD 1 authorizes the creation of a State Public-Private Partnership Coordinator position within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism to manage public-private partnerships entered into by the State and associated contracts, proposals, and negotiations. This would not apply to public-private partnerships entered into by Hawaii Public Housing Authority.

**Film industry production tax credit** - HB 423 CD 1 extends the film industry income tax credit to January 1, 2026. It requires the Department of Business,

Economic Development, and Tourism to submit an annual report to the Legislature regarding the activities and expenditures of the tax credit. It also requires DBEDT, with the Department of Taxation, to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature on the number of jobs created in the State and the fiscal impact of every film production that receives the tax credit.

## WAYS AND MEANS

**Earned income tax credit** - HB 209 CD 1 establishes a state earned income tax credit for low-income working people worth up to 20 percent of the *federal* earned income tax credit. It restores higher income tax rates for high income brackets that were repealed in 2015, and makes permanent certain amendments made to the refundable food/excise tax credit in 2015. The new rates would apply for taxable years beginning on Jan. 1, 2018.

## 2017 Photo Gallery



*New leadership responsibilities: My colleagues selected me to be Vice President of the Senate.*

*Hawaii's public school teachers held a huge rally for support in February. HSTA designated me "Lawmaker our Keiki Deserve."*



*The Senate honored legendary UH Wahine volleyball coach Dave Shoji and his wife Mary for more than four decades of joyful service to UH Manoa women's athletics.*



*Mililani and Waipahu High graduates continue to impress. Together they earned scholarship prizes and grants totaling \$43.9 million to continue their studies and career training. Each school's Class of 2017 also claimed a U.S. Presidential Scholar finalist in their ranks ~ Trojan Tyler Labonte at Mililani and Marauder grad Jommel Macaraeg at Waipahu.*

**Congratulations!**

