

# Senator Michelle Kidani

Twenty-ninth Hawaii State Legislature

*(D) Senate District 18 – Serving Mililani Town, Waipio Gentry, Waikele, Village Park, Royal Kunia*



**Senate Vice President**

*Chair:* Committee on Education

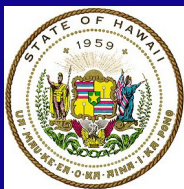
*Vice Chair:* Committee on Higher Education

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Aloha friends and neighbors,

A major highway improvement project that could last about two and a half years will get underway early this year, impacting traffic along a heavily-travelled portion of Kamehameha Highway between Mililani and Waipio Gentry/Waikele.

The State Department of Transportation notes that the recently completed Kamehameha Highway resurfacing project between Ka Uka Boulevard to Waihau Street in Mililani did *not* include work on the **Roosevelt (Kipapa Gulch) Bridge** while environmental requirements were addressed.

Those requirements have now been satisfied, and work on the bridge is ready to go. When work on the bridge has been completed, it will be safer and stronger, and the roadway will include shoulders that will allow safe passage for pedestrians and bicyclists.

**Scope of work:** Currently, vehicles weighing more than 16 tons are not allowed to drive across the Kipapa Bridge without a permit. While the existing structure is safe, it doesn't meet current load and earthquake standards. The rehabilitation project will strengthen bridge girders and widen and resurface the entire length to accommodate two 11-foot wide lanes with 7-foot wide shoulders on each side.

Bridge railings will be replaced, a new water line will replace an abandoned sewer line, and street lighting and communications conduits will also be installed.

A contract for this work in the amount of \$15 million has been awarded to Hawaiian Dredging. It's expected that a "notice to proceed" will be issued in early February, with project completion anticipated in fall 2019, subject to the contractor's detailed schedule to be determined in the next few weeks.

**Traffic restrictions:** Night, weekday and weekend work are planned to minimize the impact of this project on daily travel. Some full closures of the bridge may be necessary during construction, and detour routes will be established. Lane Closure notices will be announced periodically; we'll be sure to notify the public when major disruptions to traffic flow are expected.

This rehabilitation project is one that I have been working to obtain funding for over the many years I have been in the Senate. No matter the delays and traffic detours we'll encounter, I'm excited that this work is finally off the drawing board and about to begin.

Me ke Aloha Pumehana,



**2017 - Year of the Rooster**

Here's what one source says about the **Year of the Rooster** in the Asian lunar calendar tradition :

The year that begins on January 28 will be a "powerful" one, with no middle of the road when it comes to moving forward. Stick to practical and well-proven paths to ensure success, rather than risky ventures.

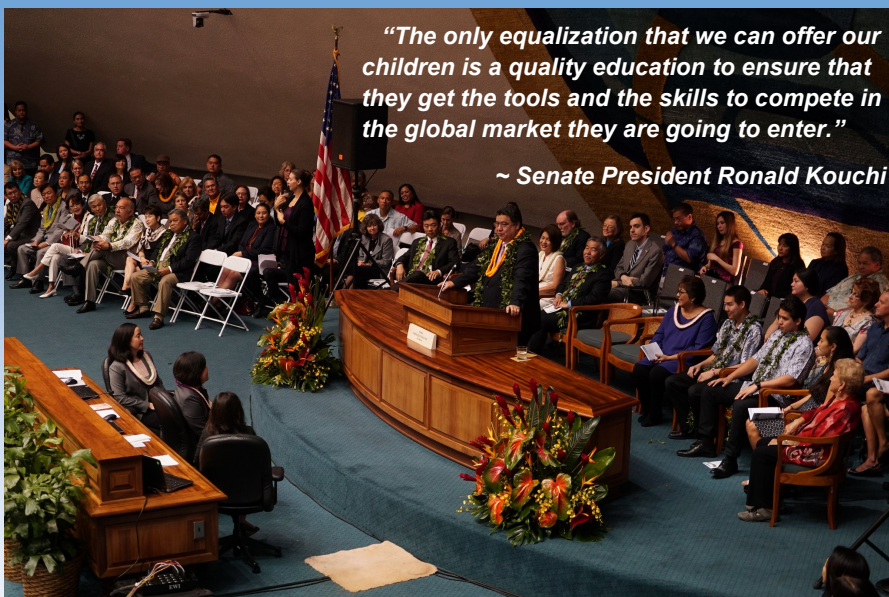
If we're to follow this guidance, we lawmakers should get down to business and be decisive as we move forward. That's a good way to go in many aspects of our lives.

My wish for the new year is that any challenges that may come your way will be easily, happily and quickly resolved. **Kung Hee Fat Choy!**

## Opening Day - 29th Hawaii State Legislature

I was heartened by the Senate President's focus on the importance of education during his remarks (quoted at right) at our opening day session earlier this month. A work group on which I serve has spent countless hours over the last several months to assess new federal legislation that gives the states more authority and responsibility for student and school success.

Our task during the coming legislative session will be to ensure that our campuses have adequate resources to meet *their* goals and *our* common expectations within this new framework. As Chair of the Senate Committee on Education, I pledge my best efforts to maintain our focus on education as the best investment we can make in Hawaii's future.



*"The only equalization that we can offer our children is a quality education to ensure that they get the tools and the skills to compete in the global market they are going to enter."*

*~ Senate President Ronald Kouchi*



Invited guests joined me on the Senate floor. To my left, my sister **Leilani Sakai** and OHA Trustee **Hulu Lindsey**; second row, Mililani residents **Carol** and **Ray Gibo**, **Mitzie Higa** from HSTA and former news anchor **Linda Coble**; third row, **Charlotte Nekota** of Mililani, **Danna Holck**, General Manager at Turtle Bay Resort, and former HPD Chief **Lee Donohue** and his wife, **Lucy**.



The media team from **Waipahu Intermediate (WIS-Kids)** and **Pearl City Highlands Elementary (PCHE)** came by for an interview. From left, **Karen Ching-Hew** and **Kira Yoda (PCHE)**, **Jade Ramirez (WIS)**, **Kyrie Choo (PCHE)** and **Neal Rivera**, 'Olelo Manager for the Waipahu Media Center.



A visiting delegation from **Waipahu High School** was led by Complex Area Superintendent **Rodney Luke** & WHS Principal **Keith Hayashi**, to my left. WHS could well serve as a model for state public high schools as discussions get underway about the administration's proposal to expand early college enrollment opportunities.



Student government leaders from **Mililani High School** (above) always make a point to call at my office on opening day. Above from left, Student Body President **Travis Afuso**, **Hoyong Lee**, Service and Outreach Chair, **Jessica Delos Reyes**, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer **Kaylee Johnson**, **Airi Morita**, Senior Class Senate President, **Meghan Usam**, Recording Secretary and **Savannah Mollohan**, Homecoming Chair.



At left, my 2017 Legislative staff, **Patrick Alviar**, **Jim Manke**, **Joan Manke**, **Gerri Kaneshiro**, **Scott Fuji** and **Marie Richardson** ~ always ready to serve!

### ***The “Y” took over the State Senate Chamber!***

The YMCA’s Youth & Government program moved into the State Senate Chamber in early December as a part of a program to educate middle and high school students from across the state in the democratic process and ethical reporting.

Assuming the roles of state lawmakers and youth journalists, they drafted, debated and voted on bills they had created – and then sent them off to their designated Youth Governor for his review and approval.

A large contingent of students from **Mililani Middle and Mililani High** – under the program organized by the Mililani YMCA – played key roles in the day’s activities at the Capitol and a follow-up week at “Y” facilities at Camp Erdman.



*Left to right in the photo above right, front row: Case McKinley, a Waialua High senior, along with Mililani High and Middle School students Sakura Harris, Krysta Reese and Chloe Kelly. Back row, Katerina Portella, Joie Agoo, Lori Takushi, David Lopes, Daylan Okouchi, and Alejandra Anderson.*

### ***Mililani High student and history teacher selected for National History Day project***



Mililani High junior **Travis Afuso** and his history teacher **Amy Boehning** have been selected as one of only fourteen teams nationwide to participate in a National History Day research project that will take them to Washington, D.C., and to historic Normandy, France.

The program comes with a long title: *Normandy: Sacrifice for Freedom Albert H. Small Student and Teacher Institute*. It is designed to teach new generations of students about the sacrifices and challenges the nation faced during World War II.

Each team selects a “silent hero” from their hometown who is memorialized at the Normandy American Cemetery where those who died in the 1944 D-Day landing at Normandy are laid to rest. Soldiers from Hawaii are interred there.

The team spends a year researching the hero’s life and military service, including travel to Washington, D.C., and the National Archives in June. The final leg of their journey is to Normandy for visits to the cemetery and landing beach.

***A personal note:*** Travis shadowed me for a day at the State Capitol a few short years ago when he was at Mililani Middle School. This school year, his junior year at MHS, he was selected Student Body President. Teacher Amy Boehning has been cited numerous times as an outstanding history teacher, and herself was selected for a National History Day travel fellowship a few years ago. We are so proud of this honor that adds a shine to the all-stars among teachers and students at MHS. We look forward to the results of their research and final report. ***Congratulations!***

***The Hawaii Chapter of the American Red Cross*** is reminding us about their life-saving home fire preparedness campaign. The Red Cross, Honolulu Fire Department and other partner organizations will arrange to install ***free smoke alarms*** in homes of Hawaii seniors and educate them in basic fire safety. If you’re a senior in a home without a smoke alarm, ***call the Red Cross at 739-8111*** to leave a message for a call-back to schedule installation.



The Department of Health and the Department of Education are again sponsoring the ***Stop Flu at School*** program to administer flu shots for students in Hawaii elementary and middle schools.

◇ In the 96797 zip code, teams will be at **Waipahu Intermediate** on February 2 and at **Waipahu Elementary** on February 9 to cover students who have turned in their parent-permission forms. **Kaleiopuu Elementary School** is on the list for inoculations on February 14.

◇ In the 96789 zip code, shots will be administered at **Mililani Uka Elementary** on February 3, and at **Mililani Waena** on February 10.

Incidents of flu are being reported on the mainland in higher numbers than in the recent past. The vaccination program is a great way to help stop its spread here in Hawaii before it becomes a problem.

## During the interim . . .



Our time between legislative sessions includes many official business community events. Here are photos from a few of them since our last newsletter report in November, 2016.

After numerous delays for one reason or another, the covered playcourt at **Mililani Middle School** officially opened-for-action earlier this month as school resumed after the holiday break.

As players hit the court for the first time, elected officials (*photo upper left*) congratulated **MMS Principal Elynn Chung**. From left, Honolulu City Council Chair **Ron Menor**, and to my left, Principal Chung, **State Representative Ryan Yamane** and my colleague, **Senator Donovan Dela**



At left, it was an honor to be invited to participate in the commemorative activities for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pearl Harbor. I was privileged to meet **Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe**, who, with President Obama, made a historic visit to the Arizona Memorial to honor American veterans.

At right, at a holiday reception and farewell for outgoing UH West Oahu Interim Chancellor **Doris Ching**, Dr. Ching turned the tables and presented an award to me – an *o'o* stick used at the groundbreaking for the new allied health classroom and lab building. Dr. Ching noted, "This is the first public opportunity to acknowledge you for all of your support for the campus." I was deeply touched. ***Mahalo, Dr. Ching!***

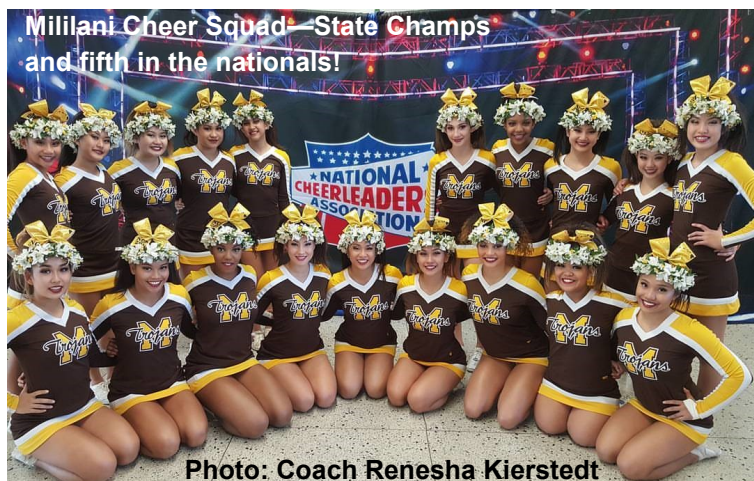


Waipahā Girls Varsity Soccer  
OIA Division Two Champions!



Mililani Girls Varsity Soccer  
OIA Division One Champions!

Soccer photos: Scoringlive.com



Mililani Cheer Squad—State Champs  
and fifth in the nationals!

Photo: Coach Renesha Kierstedt