

# Senator Michelle Kidani

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



Aloha friends and neighbors,

The Legislative session adjourned early this month, and I would like to let residents of our district know about how the issues we voted on affect you and your families. Some of the higher profile issues during the session included approval of the first increase in the state's minimum wage since 2007. The minimum will rise to \$10.10 per hour by January 2018, boosting the income of Hawaii's lowest paid workers to give them more money to spend and invest, increasing economic activity and growth, while helping them to care for their families.

In the final days of the session, the Legislature adopted Senator David Ige's plan to finance a land purchase that will preserve more than 600 acres of precious shoreline property on Oahu's north shore, assuring public access to beaches and preventing further development in those areas.

The Legislature also took significant steps toward increasing support for our rising *kupuna* population, dealing with the spread of invasive species and a commitment to address the threats of climate change. We passed an important education bill, establishing mandatory kindergarten for all 5-year-olds, that is now law. We have pledged to build firm foundations for our early learning system to assure future success for our *keiki*.

My responsibility as Vice Chair of the Committee on Ways and Means is to formulate the State's construction program. The budget we approved this year provides nearly \$900 million to continue the process begun over the last few years in renovating, repairing and maintaining existing state-owned facilities.

We made a major commitment to our public schools for these kinds of projects in the amount of \$700 million, with another \$90 million allocated to the University of Hawaii. We also authorized \$1.9 billion to the State Department of Transportation for highways, harbors and airports.

*You'll find a summary of projects for schools, highways and other items that are specific to District 18 on page two of this newsletter.*

This was my sixth Legislative session, and in many ways the most challenging as the issues we face grow more complex and the demands on the state budget - funded by taxpayer dollars - continue to increase. Of course, my permanent staff and I continue to be available at the Capitol to serve your needs, and I will be at many community meetings and neighborhood events through the year. Mahalo for your continued involvement and support.

Me ke Aloha pumehana,

*Michelle*



*Hail  
to the  
Champions!*



A very proud and happy Mililani Principal Fred Murphy and I posed with Head Coach Rose Antonio and the championship trophy following the Trojans victory in the state tournament. It was an especially sweet moment for me, since I had 'coached the coaches' – Rose and her twin sister Assistant Coach Joyce Antonio Kong – when I was a coach and Vice President of the Mililani-Waipio Bobby Sox Softball League.



Mililani High School Varsity Girls Softball ~ 2014 State Champs!

# At the Capitol: Projects Funded for Senate District 18

## Improving our schools

◆ Several millions of dollars have been allocated in the state budget for repairs, maintenance and improvements at virtually all of Hawaii's public school facilities. Here are some projects for schools in Senate District 18:

- **\$1,800,000 – Kaleiopuu Elementary School**, for planning and design work for a new classroom building and related equipment
- **\$750,000 – Mililani High School**, for design, construction and equipment to replace remaining wooden bleachers with aluminum seating at the MHS athletic complex
- **\$1,500,000 – Royal Kunia Elementary School**, funding for planning, design and initial construction of a new elementary school
- **\$400,000 – Waikele Elementary School**, for planning and design for expansion of the school library and improvements to include digital media capability
- **\$1,200,000 – Waipahu High School**, for planning and design of a new classroom building
- **\$2,000,000 – Waipahu High School**, for upgrades to the campus electrical system

## Grant-in-Aid

- **\$550,000** - for upgrades to air conditioning at the **Filipino Community Center** in Waipahu

## Roads and Highways

◆ Work continues to improve and maintain our major highways to assure the safety of drivers and their vehicles:

- **\$4,000,000 – Kamehameha Highway**, for construction of rockfall and slope protection measures near Kipapa Bridge
- **\$4,000,000 – Kamehameha Highway**, for construction and equipment for resurfacing and installation of lighting from Lumiauu Street to Lanikuhana Street [*We are still waiting for DOT to begin paving work using funds from 2011.*]

## UH Campuses

◆ Improvements and expansion are underway at “our” University of Hawaii campuses to better serve Central and West Oahu families:

- **\$8,000,000 – Leeward Community College** – for design, construction and equipment for renovations of the LCC Theatre
- **\$28,000,000 – UH West Oahu** – for construction of the new allied health and administration building

## Agriculture

- **\$550,000** for a pilot program to test growing aquaponics produce at **Mari's Gardens** in Mililani
- **\$6,750,000** for improvements to the **Waiahole water system** to assist Kunia and Central Oahu farmers



*At the end of this year's Legislative session we said fond farewell to one of our longest serving members – Senator David Ige – who has been a member of the Legislature for more than half his life. Senator Ige was appointed to a vacant seat in the State House when he was just 28 years old, and after nine years as a Representative, he was elected to the Senate.*

*I presented a congratulatory message signed by all of his colleagues, noting that his tenure “has been marked by thoughtful, intelligent, insightful and forward-thinking policy proposals that have always sought to build solid foundations for a better Hawaii. His well-recognized ability to understand the big picture implications of decisions for which we are responsible as elected officials has contributed to his effectiveness as a leader among us.”*

*Away from the Capitol, Senator Ige is a successful electrical engineer and project manager with a 34-year career devoted to information technology, telecommunications, networks and responsible public communication policy. His wife Dawn, and his children Lauren, Amy and Matthew, have totally supported both his professional and public service careers.*

*My colleagues and I are grateful for his service and wish him the best in the years ahead.*

*The eight women members of the Senate are part of the Women's Legislative Caucus that includes the sixteen women members in the State House of Representatives.*

*The caucus introduced important bills and resolutions relating to human trafficking and sexual assault. Three of the bills were sent to the Governor and are awaiting his approval.*

*I am proud to serve with (from left) Senators Suzanne Chun Oakland, Malama Solomon, Rosalyn Baker, Laura Thielen, our Senate President Donna Mercado Kim, Jill Tokuda and Maile Shimabukuro.*



# We Salute Our Students and School Leaders . . .



WHS students (above) Cesar Catchin, Jimwel Aguinaldo, Ariel Dela Pena and John Guerrerro at Hale Hilinai. Not pictured: team members Renz Sagabaen and Cia Monique Dela Cruz.

## State Judiciary Honors Waipahu High School Students

Six students from Waipahu High School recently completed a community service project at the State Judiciary's Hale Hilinai – a center providing community-based services and programs for juveniles in the courts' detention program. The students from the Cisco Academy of Information Technology at WHS installed a new security system at the facility.



The students and mentors along with Judiciary personnel (photo at left) were honored in a brief ceremony at the Hawaii Supreme Court that included a presentation by Hawaii Supreme Court Justice Mark Recktenwald (far left). That's WHS teacher and advisor **Cindy Takara** next to the Chief Justice. Chief Justice Recktenwald thanked the student team for their time, service and hard work.

## Mililani and Waipahu School Administrators Recognized for Leadership and Innovation

We are so proud that two Hawaii public school administrators in my Senate district have been singled out for distinction by their peers.

**Waipahu High School Principal Keith Hayashi** and **Mililani Middle School Principal Elyne Chung** have been honored as Principals of the Year for 2015 for their respective grade levels by the Hawaii Association of Secondary School Administrators.

Keith Hayashi has developed college and career readiness programs that are models for the rest of the state.

Elyne Chung has led her school's development of innovative after-school programs and study skills that have improved math and reading scores above state averages.

Both principals previously received the Tokioka Award for Excellence in School Leadership.



Congratulations to **Keith Hayashi and Waipahu High School** 2015 Hawaii Principal of the Year



Congratulations to **Elyne Chung and Mililani Middle School** Principal of the Year

With me and the principals at this month's recognition lunch are Representatives Roy Takumi and Ryan Yamane.



*Congratulations to both; we are grateful for what they do to nurture our keiki.*



**Commencement Day at UH West Oahu** brought families and friends to the Lower Courtyard to honor more than 160 graduates who received their degrees and certificates.



This way to the future ...



**U.S. Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa** delivered the main address. Also, the **UHOWO Band** performed for the first time at commencement since it was formed in January.

## In Our Communities . . .



Anyone who has driven along Farrington or Kamehameha Highways knows *rail is for real* and that construction is moving along rapidly. I visited **Waipahu High School** earlier this month to assess the impact of the rail route adjacent to the WHS athletic fields. *With me from left, WHS Principal Keith Hayashi, Karley Halsted, HART project manager for the West Oahu—Farrington Highway segment, and WHS Athletic Director Stacie Nii.*



**Waikele Elementary School** is a busy campus, bustling with involved students, parents and staff! The annual **Go Green Recycling Event** (above left), sponsored by the PTSO, brought dozens of volunteers to the school for a fun and productive day of environmental awareness. Above right, Waikele first graders shared multicultural perspectives in song at a delightful and enchanting performance of *Cinderella's Special Gift*.



**Hawaii's Challenger Center** offers middle school students the opportunity to create space exploration scenarios for hands-on science education.

I visited the Center while 6th graders from **Mililani Middle School** were at the controls under the watchful eye of instructor **Claire Okazaki** of Mililani (at left). For more than 20 years, the Center has taught concepts in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) skills to many thousands of island youngsters.



*Congratulations  
are in order!*



**Two Mililani residents** have been singled out recently for their outstanding professional accomplishments. At left, **Ed Oshiro**, first and only principal at Ewa Makai Elementary School, was selected to receive the Masayuki Tokioka Award for Excellence in School Leadership. At right, **Bob Barrett**, President of Coastal Windows, named Small Business Person of the Year on Oahu by the U.S. Small Business Association. Bob is also President of the Mililani Town Association Board.



I always welcome visiting school groups for opportunities to explain our work at the Capitol. The Legislative session had already adjourned, but these **Kaleiopuu Elementary** fifth grade students met with me in the Senate Chamber during their tour of the Honolulu Civic Center.