

Senator Michelle Kidani

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



Aloha friends and neighbors,

You may remember that earlier this year, there was a good deal of discussion about possible devastating cuts in Army troop strength at Schofield Barracks and Fort Shafter. Losses at the levels that were being considered - perhaps as many as 19,800 troops and 30,000 family members - would also have meant deep cuts in the civilian work force at these bases as well, dealing a significant blow to the State's economy. The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii Military Affairs Council launched a petition drive to "Keep Hawaii's Heroes," and several thousands of Hawaii residents declared their concern about the proposed reductions. Since we represent districts adjacent to Schofield, both **Senator Donovan Dela Cruz** and I

were very active in soliciting signatures.

The Army finally announced its intentions earlier this month, and I'm pleased to report that while we will be losing some troops, the numbers are substantially lower than had been feared. At Schofield, just over 1,200 soldiers will depart, and 229 fewer troops will serve at Fort Shafter.

The Pentagon has once again acknowledged the importance of Hawaii as a strategic location for troops in the Pacific, and the people of have reaffirmed their support for the military's presence here. Mahalo to those of you who signed petitions along with those who expressed their support in other ways. And, of course, mahalo to the thousands of military personnel in all services who live in our neighborhoods, whose families attend our schools and churches and participate in the life of our communities. Your service to our country inspires us all.

The State Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration have scheduled a public meeting to share information about major upgrades and rehabilitation work to be carried out on the Kipapa Gulch (Roosevelt) Bridge. *The meeting is set for Wednesday, July 29, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at Mililani Uka Elementary.* The project will bring the aging and heavily-used bridge up to current standards for traffic loads and earthquake stability. It is separate from the other work that the State is planning over the next few years that will significantly improve and expand traffic capacity along Kamehameha Highway across Kipapa Gulch. **Public input is encouraged and welcomed and I urge you to attend to learn about this important project.** If you are unable to be there personally, you may contact the project manager for copies of the meeting materials and an opportunity to comment. Email michael.will@dot.gov or call him at (720) 963-3647.

Me ke Aloha Pumehana,

KEEP HAWAII'S HEROES

SAVE OUR BASES, OUR COMMUNITIES DEPEND ON IT

FORT SHAFTER ★ SCHOFIELD BARRACKS

Relief at last . . .



A State-funded improvement project is now bringing some relief from traffic congestion for drivers exiting Waikele on Lumiaina St. and proceeding onto Kamehameha Highway. An additional left turn lane onto Kam Highway was completed at the end of June – right on schedule, with new traffic signals and modifications to the median.

The Kam Highway resurfacing and improvement project is still underway and night time full lane closures between Ka Uka Boulevard to Lanikuhana Street are in effect again beginning this week. Work crews are applying the final pavement layer, installing permanent striping and completing guardrail replacement and drainage improvements.

Notes from the Capitol and our Communities



Major General Arthur “Joe” Logan was appointed the state’s Adjutant General earlier this year. As head of the State Department of Defense, he oversees the training and readiness of 5,500 soldiers and airmen of the Hawaii National Guard and serves as Director of State Civil Defense and the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency. He’s also the Homeland Security Advisor to the Governor. At left, **Governor David Ige** presided at the June 30 ceremony at Washington Place during which General Logan received his second star. Taking part in the “pinning” ceremony is the General’s wife, **Gaylene**. The Logans, by the way, are proud parents of UH Regents Scholar, Jarek Garcia, and we are proud to know them as our Mililani neighbors. *Congratulations!*

Loans available to purchase rooftop solar PV systems

The Legislature in 2014 established a program to help residents install renewable energy producing equipment at their homes with low-interest loans from the state. The Hawaii Energy Office has announced that **loan applications are now being accepted** from residents seeking to finance solar photovoltaic systems under the state’s Green Energy Market Securitization (GEMS) program. GEMS is aimed at consumers who want to install PV systems, but cannot afford the high upfront costs or do not qualify for traditional financing. The loan program is designed to enable more consumers to realize energy cost savings and participate in Hawaii’s clean energy transformation. This is an opportunity to save money on electric bills from Day 1 of PV system installation, with no money down. Twenty-year fixed-rate loans are available for the purchase of a PV system installed at a single-family residence within the service areas of the Hawaiian Electric Companies.

For more information and to apply for a GEMS loan, check online at gems.hawaii.gov/.



Lanail Manio

Congratulations are in order . . .

The Senate joins the Mililani Neighborhood Board in congratulating **Mililani High School senior Lanail Manio** for having been selected to participate in the Congress of the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists in Massachusetts last month. Lanail says it was an “amazing once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.” She plans to share her experiences with other students to inspire them to strive for success.

I would also like to extend congratulations and best wishes to Lanail’s classmate **Taylor-Anne Kim**, just wrapping up a 3-week cultural exchange and study tour in Japan. She was the only Hawaii student invited to participate by the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program . . . to **Bryan McAniff** of Mililani Middle School for recognition for a short story he wrote about Hawaii’s ecosystems in a contest sponsored by the state and a coalition of writers and environmental groups . . . and to **Rex Manu and Kanoe Morihara of Mililani High School** and **Sabrina Hollins and Justin Edralin of Waipahu High School** for being named student athletes of the year by OC16 and the OIA. *All of you enrich our communities ~ mahalo!*

A new school year ~ and a new public school! Teachers and administrators at most public schools in Hawaii are reporting to their campuses this week, and students will be back in the classroom next week. I was invited to tour the state’s newest public school with members of the Board of Education this week. **Ho’okele Elementary**, across from Kapolei High School, was built and furnished in just 15 months. It’s the first time DOE has used the “design-build” concept that requires up-front funding with the contractor responsible start-to-finish for design through construction – with considerable savings in money and time.



Ho’okele Elementary

The Board held its regular business meeting at Ho’okele this week, welcoming **Principal Lauren Dunn** and special guest **Hawaii’s First Lady Dawn Ige** who is herself a public school vice principal.

We are so proud that this year’s student member of the Board of Education is **Brennan Lee, Mililani Class of 2016**. Brennan is on the student council, in the Concert Band, and is an accomplished student athlete. Congratulations, Brennan, and best wishes for a successful senior year!

