

2024 END OF SESSION - LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

REPRESENTATIVE JUSTIN H. WOODSON

HAWAII STATE HOUSE DISTRICT 9

KAHULUI, PU'UNĒNĒ, PORTION OF WAILUKU

MAY 2024

As we come to the end of the legislative session, I am honored to have served as an advocate for bills and initiatives that will have a direct impact on our community and education system.

2024 EDUCATION WEEK AT THE CAPITOL

Education week is a tradition which celebrates students, teachers, faculty, and staff for their outstanding contributions to Hawai'i schools and the community at large. The distinguished individuals and schools we recognize go above and beyond dedicating their creativity, skill, and time to inspire and invoke change. This year we recognized complex area teachers of the year, national Blue Ribbon schools, and those who displayed excellence in leadership. Student awards included recognition for the U.S. Senate Youth Program participants, presidential scholars, and LifeSmarts competition winners.



Students on the House floor with their district representatives during 2024 Education Week



Representative Woodson learns about student projects at the Department of Education's Public School Student Showcase

MAUI HIGH SCHOOL



Construction is nearly complete on the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Center at Maui High School (pictured above). Finishing touches are being made on the building with the intent to open in fall of 2024.

Also, the Maui High School Foundation was pledged a \$10 million endowment from a MHS alumni. This is potentially the largest single monetary donation in Department of Education history. Funds will be used for investments in band, athletics, STEM, Career and Technical Educational pathways, arts, foreign language, and special education. The endowment will also be utilized for college and vocational training scholarships for MHS graduates in pursuit of higher education.

LAHAINA RECOVERY

\$17 million from Suicide Abuse and Mental Health Administration was awarded to the Hawai'i State Department of Health to aid in emergency behavioral health support for wildfire survivors. The emergency funding will help provide mental health intervention for families, community organizations and schools; deliver culturally-informed substance use services; and help build Hawai'i's behavioral health workforce.

After the fires on Maui, the House of Representatives established Lahaina Wildfire Interim Working Groups. Please utilize this QR code to explore their full reports.



KEY LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

EDUCATION



HB1837 HD1 SD1 Relating to School Safety

This initiative would have required the Department of Education (DOE) to create emergency access and evacuation communication plans for public schools. Ultimately this bill was not needed, as **the House of Representatives Committee on Education is collaborating with the DOE and Department of Transportation to create evacuation routes, emergency action plans, and communication plans in needed areas.** Other priorities from this working group include alternate learning options for displaced students and monitoring harm and health risks. The DOE will be looking at these recommendations as well.

This letter is from the DOE to the Board of Education regarding the DOE's action in response to the recommendations from the Houses of Representatives Lahaina Wildfire Schools Working Group



SB2070 SD1 HD1 CD1 Relating to Purchasing

This measure assists the Department of Education to purchase career and technical education (CTE) supplies for Hawai'i students more efficiently. Examples of CTE equipment includes anatomy tables, flight simulators, and welding simulators. These types of equipment allow for learning simulations that can be too expensive for students to perform in a regular classroom setting. CTE purchases will better equip our students with technical knowledge and experience upon graduation as strong public school systems have strong CTE pathways. This measure has been transmitted to the governor for final consideration.



HB2074 HD2 SD1 CD1 Relating to Kaiapuni Education

This measure appropriates funds to the Department of Education Office of Hawaiian Education for the establishment of three Kaiapuni education curriculum specialist positions and ten Kaiapuni classroom teacher positions. **The funding will be applied to positions and operations to strengthen Kaiapuni education.** This measure has been transmitted to the governor for final consideration.



SB2475 SD2 HD2 CD1 Relating to Education

To better ensure keiki safety, this bill establishes a Harm to Students Registry for educational institutions serving pre-k through 12th grade. The registry will be accessible to any educational institution within the State and consist of employees found to have inflicted harm to a student. Each institution will share information relating to any ongoing or concluded investigation of infliction of harm to a student requested by another institution. This measure has been transmitted to the governor for final consideration.

HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



HB1827 HD2 SD1 CD1 Relating to Healthcare Workforce Development

This measure appropriates funds to the Department of Business, Economic Development, & Tourism and DOE to support the public high school healthcare workforce certificate program and glidepath program for community certified nurse's aides enrolled in community college. Funding will be used to renovate and equip classrooms for training the next generation of healthcare providers, which is much needed. This measure has been transmitted to the governor for final consideration.

CIVIL AIR PATROL



HB2241 HD1 SD2 Relating to Civil Air Patrol

For more than seventy-five years, the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) has assisted emergency management agencies as a non-profit organization. CAP response efforts include search and rescue, damage assessments, aerial photography, and supply transport. This initiative sought to appropriate funds to continue these support initiatives. **Legislation was ultimately not necessary, as \$194,000 of funding was allocated in the budget for reoccurring financial support of emergency services and cadet training.**

KUPUNA CARE



HB2224 HD2 SD1 CD1 Relating to Long Term Care

This measure requires the Executive Office on Aging, in coordination with the State Health Planning and Development Agency, to **create a comprehensive long-term care (LTC) plan to accomplish certain policy goals.** This will ensure the availability of both institutional and community-based services. Also establishes one LTC planner position to oversee implementation. This measure has been transmitted to the governor for final consideration.






LAHAINA RECOVERY



SB582 SD2 HD1 CD1 Relating to State Budget

This measure appropriates funding from the state budget to be utilized towards continued Maui wildfire disaster response efforts. Allocations include \$500,000,000 for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) housing, \$123,680,797 for FEMA ineligible transitional housing and rental assistance, \$194,774,499 for potential FEMA ineligible state expenses made by state agencies, and \$65,000,000 for a victim relief fund. This bill has been signed into law by the Governor.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND GRANTS IN AID PROJECTS

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	FY24	FY25	Grants-in-Aid	Amount
 MAUI HIGH SCHOOL	All-weather athletic field and athletic facilities; ground and site improvement	\$2,500,000		Hale Makua Health Services	\$950,000
 KAHULUI AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT	Construction for improvements to terminals, systems, and facilities at the airport	\$37,770,000	\$32,060,000	Maui Humane Society	\$500,000
 PUUNENE AVE IMPROVEMENTS	Widening of Puunene Ave from Kamehameha Ave to Kuihelani Hwy to four lanes	\$5,000,000		Maui Economic Development Board	\$100,000
 KAHULUI HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS	Projects will provide safer, more efficient use of existing operational areas	\$9,992,000	\$30,992,000	Maui AIDS Foundation	\$50,000
 KAHULUI HARBOR BOAT RAMP	Plans, design, and construction for restrooms at the Kahului Harbor boat ramp		\$1,000,000		



Senators and Representatives working on final amendments to bills during a conference meeting

CONSTITUENT SURVEY RESULTS



Representative Woodson alongside 2024 Hawai'i Milken Award winner, Jade Pham



WeGrow Hawai'i's education and advocacy day at the Hawai'i State Capitol



Advocacy education session and Q&A with neighbor island students and teachers

You Responded, We Listened!

What does Kahului, Pu'unēnē, and Wailuku need more of?

- 1 School improvements
- 2 Affordable housing
- 3 Decreased taxes

The most concerning topics in District 9 are:

- 1 Housing
- 2 Homelessness services
- 3 Local farms & business

As chair of the House Committee on Education, school improvements for both students and educators are always a priority. This year, we've worked diligently to fund capital improvement projects to many Maui schools and supported the temporary build of King Kamehameha III Elementary School for Lahaina students.

Numerous substantial **affordable housing** projects have been proposed to increase units in Central Maui. Ho'onani Village in Pu'unene would consist of roughly 1,600 units across 165 acres. The current design also includes outdoor recreation areas and commercial spaces to be utilized for local small businesses.

Also under construction is the Waikapu Country Town development. The land plan includes allocations for commercial use, parks, and agricultural lands. Additionally, ~215 **affordable housing** units are to be built for Maui residents.

An estimated 324 units are under construction on a 14.4 acre piece of property. The Kaulana Mahina Apartments will border Kahalani and Maui Lani and range from studio to three-bedroom apartments. Resident amenities, all included in rent, consist of a gym, yoga studio, pool, playground, and dog park.

HB2404 HD1 SD1 CD1 represents the **largest tax cut in the history of Hawai'i** and will double the standard deduction that state tax payers can claim when preparing taxes next year. The bill also changes the amount paid based upon tax categories like married couples filing together, heads of households, and unmarried individuals with an anticipated savings of \$5 billion by 2023. Different tax rates are set for each group, with lower rates for those with lower income. This bill has been transmitted to the governor for final consideration.

Aloha friends and neighbors,

As we reach the conclusion of the 2024 legislative session, I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation for your ongoing support and engagement. Together, we have navigated through the challenges and triumphs of governance, always with the best interests of our community at heart.

From advocating for policies that promote economic prosperity to enhancing access to quality education, we've worked tirelessly together to uplift our community. I'm pleased to report significant strides have been made to secure funding for capital improvement projects aimed at improving infrastructure and enhancing quality of life on Maui and across the state.

Your input has been instrumental in guiding legislative priorities, and I'm grateful for the feedback provided through the constituent survey included in my previous newsletter. Your voice matters, and I remain committed to listening and addressing feedback surrounding our community members.

As we conclude this session, let us continue our partnership in building a stronger, more prosperous District 9. Mahalo for your unwavering support and dedication to our shared vision.

Mahalo nui loa,



Committees:  **CHAIR**
Education


MEMBER
Energy and
Environment


MEMBER
Agriculture


MEMBER
Higher Education
& Technology

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