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Town & Upcountry Update

2013 LEGISLATIVE INTERIM
FROM REPRESENTATIVE KYLE YAMASHITA

Makawao · Kula · Pukalani · Keokea · Ulupalakua · Spreckelsville · Kahului

Happy Holidays!

As the year and the legislative interim come to an end, I am hard at work preparing for the 2014 session. Throughout this interim, I have been working with my colleagues to formulate legislation to help Hawaii continue on the road to economic recovery. I have also been representing and furthering Hawaii's interests nationally on various policy committees.

I would like to take this time to wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season. May you have a healthy and prosperous new year filled with exciting opportunities, and may you be successful in all that you resolve to achieve.

Thank you for the continued honor to serve our community. If I or my staff may be of any assistance to you, please feel free to contact me toll free at 984-2400 ext. 66330 or email at rep Yamashita@capitol.hawaii.gov. As always, your input is greatly appreciated.

Mahalo,

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE VISITS MAUI

The legislature is responsible for reviewing the state budget and appropriating funds to government and non-government organizations. To perform this role effectively, the House Finance committee visits organizations to get a better understanding of each organization's needs and of the progress they are making with funds they have already received.



Kahului Airport

From October 22nd to October 25th, the House Finance committee members visited Maui. Over the course of three days they went to Kahului Airport, Maui High School, Maui Farm Bureau, Ma'alaea Harbor, Maui College, University of Hawaii Institute for Astronomy Advance Research Center, Maui Economic Development Board, and other organizations. At the Maui Film Studio, members were able to see the Maui Lani facility and learn about upcoming projects that will help to promote Hawaii and provide hundreds of jobs for local residents. While visiting the Maui Ocean Center, members witnessed the success of the partnership between state agencies and the Maui Ocean Center in protecting and growing coral while work is being completed at small boat harbors throughout Maui County.



Representative Yamashita and colleagues during the special session



House Judiciary and Finance Committee Hearing



Maui Economic Development Board

SPECIAL SESSION

As many of you know, the legislature convened for a special session during the interim. While it is not unusual to hold a special session, this session was unique in that there was an unprecedented amount of public participation. From October 28 to November 12 the Senate and the House of Representatives met to discuss several bills and resolutions which went through the same process as bills introduced during the regular legislative session.

Most notable among the bills introduced was SB1, Relating to Equal Rights, also known as the "Same Sex Marriage Bill". The bill solicited a remarkable amount of public participation, resulting in over fifty hours of verbal testimony before the House Judiciary and Finance committees. As a member of the House Finance committee, Representative Yamashita was able to review the submitted written testimony and to listen to the fifty-plus hours of verbal testimony. After much discussion, SB1 passed both bodies of the legislature with amendments to address opponents' concerns.

KINDERGARTEN ENTRY AGE CHANGED

Starting August 2014, a child must be five years old on or before July 31 of the school year to enter kindergarten. The newly established Executive Office on Early Learning has partnered with other state agencies, as well as a number of community organizations across the state, to make sure that the transition is as smooth as possible for children and their families to better prepare them for kindergarten. If your family is affected by this age change, please visit earlylearning.hawaii.gov for more information.

KULA ELEMENTARY TO CELEBRATE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Kula Elementary will be celebrating their 50th anniversary in 2014 and will be hosting a luau on the evening of September 6th. If you would like to volunteer to help with planning and/or fundraising, please email Stacie Fernandez at stacie_fernandez@notes.k12.hi.us.

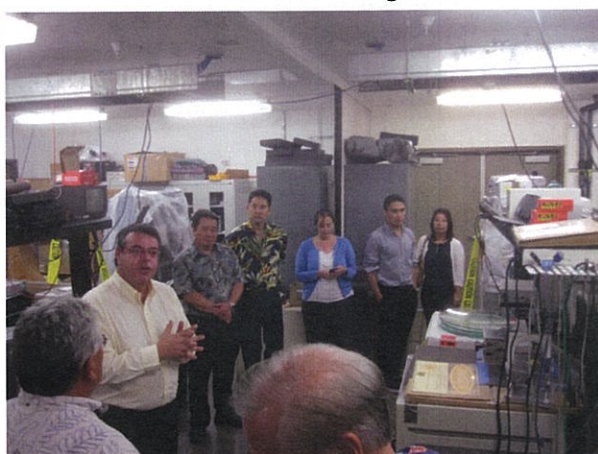
House Finance Committee Site Visits



Maui College



Maui Ocean Center



UH Astronomy Advanced Research Center



Pulehunui Site



Maui Film Studio



Honolulu Harbor

Funds Released for Community Projects

Makawao Veterans Cemetery	\$150,000	Planning for site expansion
Old Haleakala Highway Sidewalk	\$1,000,000	New sidewalk from Kula Highway to Pukalani Street
Maui Economic Opportunity	\$500,000	Construction of a transportation center





STATE WEBSITE REDESIGNED



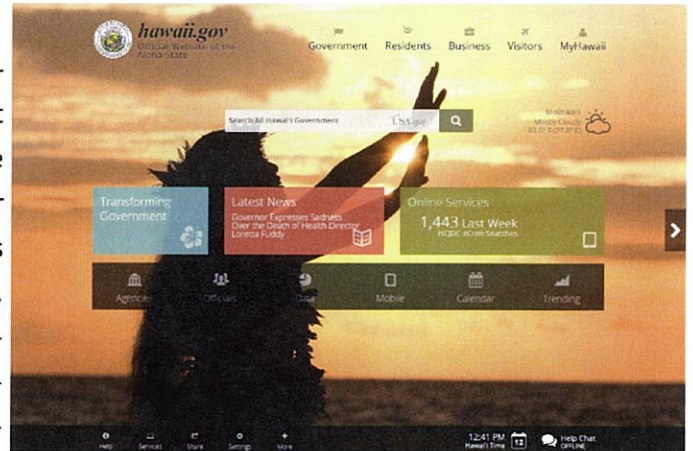
The State of Hawaii website, hawaii.gov, is new and improved. It is designed for mobile access with a touch-first responsive web design. Built for touch, speech, and with accessibility for all uses, the new design showcases the best in Web design thinking.

My.Hawaii.Gov is an online management platform for interacting with the State—anytime, anywhere, on any device. It will make many state systems accessible to the public via the internet (e.g. pay taxes, register vehicles, pay fines, apply for permits, reserve campsites, etc.), making it easier for citizens to interact with the State—their way. The platform is a single, “user-friendly-and-intelligent” web portal with a service catalog of all available on-line government information and services (both open and secure) that can be accessed with appropriate security credentials. The goal for this portal is to create a customized citizen experience that will lead to a tremendous increase in civic engagement and government interaction.

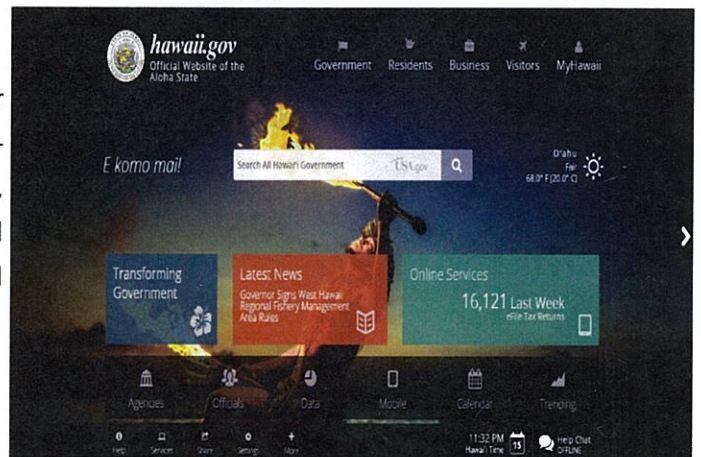
The new web portal was recognized as a top 10 finalist for the 2013 Best of the Web and Digital Government Achievement Awards. The Best of the Web awards recognize city, county, and state governments for outstanding portals and websites based on innovation, functionality, productivity and performance.

Here are some highlights of the portal’s new features:

- Easier access to government data and information allows greater transparency
 - Access the latest government news
 - View the State calendar for events
 - See up-to-date stats on website services usage
- 101 services available online which can be searched for by trend, alphabetical, agency, or category;
- 59 available mobile apps that can be downloaded on your mobile devices; and
- Chat with support personnel for technical issues relating to the website.



The background of the hawaii.gov homepage changes for day and night ambiance



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To promote green living, we are working in our office to go paperless! Please send your name and email address to repyamashita@capitol.hawaii.gov so we can send you electronic versions of our newsletters.

