



REPRESENTATIVE SHARON E. HAR

# District 40 Update

Royal Kunia - Makakilo - Kapolei - Kalaeloa

AUGUST 2011

## HAWAII STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Hawaii State Capitol

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### Dear Friends:

I hope you and your families have had an enjoyable summer, and are preparing for another school year.

I was very pleased that Governor Abercrombie signed my bill HB1505 into law as Act 231, giving the state another option in creating revenue and addressing the backlog of needed repair and maintenance on various state buildings.

I was also glad to see many area residents in attendance on June 30 at the Transportation Town Hall meeting I sponsored with other area lawmakers. Transportation officials from the state and the city and county gave presentations and answered questions about current and future roadway projects in our area.

Finally, many of you may have heard the news that the Kapolei Post Station is being reviewed for potential closure, along with more than 3,600 other stations across the country. Please see page 2 of the newsletter for more information on how you can weigh in on the decision-making process.

As always, please contact me at rephar@capitol.hawaii.gov or 586-8500 with any questions, concerns or suggestions.

Aloha,

Sharon Har  
Representative, District 40  
Kapolei, Makakilo,  
Royal Kunia, Kalaeloa

### New Law Enables Public/Private Partnerships to Renovate State Buildings

On July 12, 2011, Governor Abercrombie signed a new law that will make it easier to renovate and repair state buildings. I introduced HB1505, which was signed into law as Act 231, to create a state facility renovation partnership program which provides the State with the ability to enter into public-private partnerships while allowing the State to retain the land under the building and charge lease rent via a ground lease on the property. These types of public-private partnerships are working in other states and will assist the State of Hawaii in moving forward with repairs to some of our ailing building infrastructure. Act 231 provides the state with another tool to keep our state facilities safe, clean, and a source of pride for the people of Hawaii.

The state facility renovation partnership program will be administered by the Department of Accounting and General Services, which may enter into agreements with a private investor for the sale of a facility suited for the program. The private investor would renovate, maintain or construct the facility, and then lease the facility to the state. The state maintains ownership of the land beneath the facility, and will have the option to purchase the facility back from the private investor. I believe Act 231 represents an important method for our state to create revenue and to renovate state buildings without being stalled by many of the typical bureaucratic hurdles, allowing us to address the state's significant backlog of deferred facility maintenance and to undertake new construction projects. I am pleased that I could work with the administration and my colleagues in the legislature to pass this innovative legislation. For further information on Act 231/HB1505, visit [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov) and search for "HB1505."



Rep. Har meets with employees of the new Down to Earth store in Kapolei, including Kapolei store manager Robin Wisch (center).

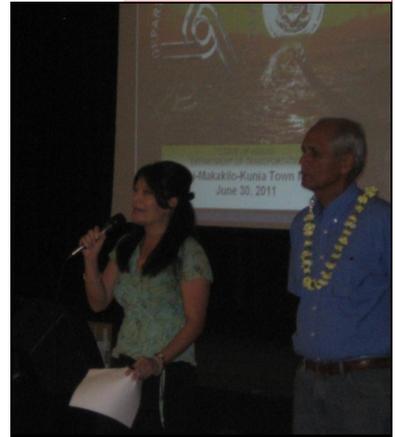
### Down to Earth Opens New Flagship Store in Kapolei

I was very pleased to join many community members in celebrating the grand opening of Down to Earth in Kapolei earlier this month. The vegetarian grocery store, located in the Kapolei Commons Shopping Center near Ross and Target, opened to the public on July 2, 2011. At 10,000 square feet, the location is Down to Earth's largest store and its new flag-

ship. Employing about 50 people, the new store carries a variety of natural and organic produce, dairy and groceries, vitamins and supplements, green household items and body care products, in addition to a vegetarian deli with hot entrees, sandwiches, salads, smoothies and desserts. Founded in 1977, Down to Earth is Hawaii's largest local natural foods chain, and is a welcome addition to West Oahu's ever-growing retail selection.

**Area Residents Attend Informative Transportation Town Hall Meeting**

On June 30, 2011, I joined with fellow area elected officials to sponsor a transportation town hall meeting with the state’s Department of Transportation (DOT) and the City and County’s Department of Transportation Services (DTS). As my office often receives inquiries and concerns regarding traffic and transportation issues in our area, I wanted to provide constituents with the opportunity to speak with and hear directly from the transportation officials spearheading various projects. I was pleased to see approximately 75 area residents take time from their schedules to attend the meeting, held at Kapolei High School. In addition to the informative presentations from DOT and DTS, attendees had the opportunity to ask questions directly regarding construction scheduling, project design and traffic control, among other transportation topics.



*Rep. Har opens the transportation town hall meeting on behalf of her fellow elected officials also sponsoring the event, including Sen. Mike Gabbard.*

Among other updates, DOT shared that Phase 1 of the Kapolei Interchange Complex, including the on- and off-ramps at Makakilo Drive and Wakea Street, is slated for completion in September 2011. During construction and the associated closing of Farrington Highway between Kapolei town and Wet ‘n’ Wild, DOT and Kapolei Property Development are providing a police officer to direct traffic during peak hours at the intersection of Farrington Highway and Kalaeloa Boulevard. DTS reported that it plans to begin construction in March 2012 to extend Kapolei Parkway between Kamokila Boulevard and Kama’aha Avenue.

For more information on these and many more current and upcoming roadway projects that the State and City and County are planning to undertake in the coming years, I encourage you to visit the “Documents and Links” section of my Web site (<http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2011/members/house/memberpage.aspx?member=har>), where you can download copies of the presentations by DOT and DTS. I would like to thank DOT Director Glenn Okimoto, DOT Deputy Director Jadine Urasaki, DTS Director Wayne Yoshioka and all of their staff for making the time to come to Kapolei to meet directly with area residents, as well as thank the many interested citizens who came to learn more about what is planned for our area roadways in the coming months and years.

**Disaster Preparedness Resources**

As we are well into hurricane season, several government agencies and non-profit organizations have convened disaster preparedness workshops for area residents. I will continue to share information on these workshops via my newsletter and e-mail (e-mail [rephar@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:rephar@capitol.hawaii.gov) if you would like to be added to my community e-mail list). Here are a few online resources that offer information about how to prepare for a disaster, and how to stay updated in the event of an emergency:

- Homeowners Handbook: [http://seagrant.soest.hawaii.edu/sites/seagrant.soest.hawaii.edu/files/publications/web\\_homeownershandbook\\_0.pdf](http://seagrant.soest.hawaii.edu/sites/seagrant.soest.hawaii.edu/files/publications/web_homeownershandbook_0.pdf)
- Hawaii State Civil Defense: <http://www.scd.hawaii.gov/index.html>
- City and County of Honolulu Department of Emergency Management: <http://www.oahudem.org>

**Kapolei Post Station on Potential Closure List**

On July 26, 2011, the United States Postal Service (USPS) announced a list of 3,653 local offices, branches and stations across the nation being reviewed for possible closures, including the Kapolei Station at 1001 Kamokila Boulevard, as part of USPS efforts to make its retail operations more efficient in light of changing consumer habits. Despite the presence of a “contract postal unit” in Kapolei and the Kalaeloa post station, the closure of the main Kapolei station would be a huge loss for our growing community.

The public will have **60 days to comment**, by mailing letters to the **USPS District Office, 3600 Aolele St., Honolulu, HI 96820**. Depending on the feedback received, postal officials may also opt to host a public meeting on the potential closure. It is very important that USPS hears from the public about how this closure would negatively impact our “Second City,” so I encourage you and your neighbors to share your thoughts with USPS via letter. I also invite any small businesses that may be interested in partnering with USPS to offer services in the Kapolei area to call my office at 586-8500, as I will continue to work with USPS and other elected officials to find potential solutions that encourage convenient, cost-effective access to postal services for area residents and businesses.