



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

*Senator Laura H. Thielen*

**Senate District 25: Kailua, Waimanalo, and Hawaii Kai**

## **Pali Highway Update from HIDOT**

**Thursday, March 28, 2019**

On Monday, Feb. 18, 2019, heavy rains caused multiple landslides in two separate areas along Pali Highway. Within a 24-hour period, rockfalls on Pali Highway between the Kailua-side and Honolulu-side tunnels damaged the Old Pali Road above the highway; and a mudslide just outside of the Kailua-side tunnel blocked the Kailua/Kaneohe bound lanes.

The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) closed the highway in both directions until an assessment of the stability of the slopes could be completed. The stability of the slope above the section of Old Pali Road impacted by the initial rockfall and the Old Pali Road structure itself were focused on in the assessment.

Crews cut away the damaged section of Old Pali Road on Feb. 19 allowing for the limited opening of Pali Highway using the following schedule:

AM Honolulu-bound contraflow between 5-9 a.m.

PM access to Kailua/Kaneohe bound lanes between 3-7 p.m.

This access schedule continues Monday through Friday, excluding weekends and holidays to maximize the time available for emergency slope stabilization. As soon as the work schedule allows modification of the access times, HDOT will announce it. The regular access times are currently posted on HDOT's Facebook and Twitter pages (as the page cover/profile images).

As the emergency work continues on Pali Highway, HDOT must still address the maintenance needs on the remaining Koolau routes, the H-3 Freeway and the Likelike Highway. As much as possible, HDOT is avoiding scheduling major closures on these routes during the day. In certain cases, closures of these routes are unavoidable. When this is the case, HDOT will stop work and make Pali Highway available. Announcement of the off-schedule access to Pali Highway is made through the HDOT news release distribution, posting to <http://hidot.hawaii.gov>, and HDOT's social media accounts.

Preliminary rockfall mitigation design for Pali Highway was announced on March 7. The rockfall mitigation concept combines construction of an attenuator system between Old Pali Road and the highway to serve as a catchment for material falling from the slope above with construction of a new tunnel structure before the existing Honolulu-bound tunnel entrance to protect motorists and the highway should material make it past the catchment. HDOT anticipates design and construction of the rockfall mitigations in this area to be completed in August at an estimated cost of between \$15-20 million.

HDOT requested Federal Highway Administration Emergency Relief (ER) program funds for the Pali Highway Landslide Mitigation Project. The ER program assists states with repair and/or reconstruction costs from extraordinary damage due to natural disasters on a cost share, reimbursement basis.

For more information, visit HIDOT's website at <http://hidot.hawaii.gov/>.