

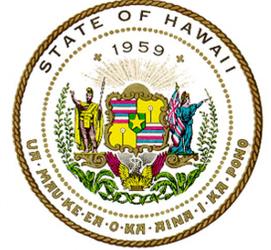
SENATOR BRICKWOOD GALUTERIA

April
2011

April 4, 2011



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Balancing the State Budget

As we near the end of the 2011 legislative session, the Senate Ways and Means Committee is busily working to draft a balanced budget. On March 29th, the state Council on Revenues lowered its forecast for this fiscal year to a 1.6% decline in revenues instead of the .5% growth that they had predicted earlier. This amounts to about \$200 million less that the state will collect in revenue in this fiscal year, amounting to a \$1.3 billion deficit over the biennium.

Yesterday, the Governor announced that the State and the counties have concluded a tentative contract agreement with the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA). If ratified by HGEA members, the agreement will save the state about \$65 million for fiscal year 2012 and \$59 million for fiscal year 2013.

Lawmakers are considering a number of measures to help balance the state budget, including appropriations from the Hawaii Hurricane Relief Fund to the General Fund, suspensions of the General Excise Tax for certain business activities, making further cuts to state departments and agencies, as well as an increase in the General Excise Tax.

While keeping the projections of the Council of Revenues in mind, lawmakers must continue to explore means of reducing government expenditures but remain cognizant of budget reductions and the implications on the larger community.

Article VII, § 5

“ General fund expenditures for any fiscal year shall not exceed the State's current general fund revenues and unencumbered cash balances. ”



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WAIKIKI



KAKA'AKO/ALA MOANA



DOWNTOWN



CHINATOWN



PALAMA



**WHAT A DIVERSE
COMMUNITY!**

Update: Hawaiian Affairs Committee

On April 7th, the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act of 2011 "NHGRA" (S. 675) that was introduced by United States Senator Daniel Akaka was passed by the United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs today.

S. 675 was based on an amended bill which passed the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on December 17, 2009. H.R. 1250, a companion bill to S. 675 was introduced by United States Representatives Colleen Hanabusa and Mazie Hirono in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The NHGRA would begin a process to re-form a Native Hawaiian government that could negotiate with the state and federal government on behalf of Hawaii's indigenous people. Any agreements would require implementing legislation by the state or federal government; no jurisdiction would be changed without approval.

Similarly, Senate Bill 1520, introduced by myself and Senators Hee, Kahele, and Ryan, would provide Native Hawaiians a similar recognition as the NHGRA but on a state level. Working collaboratively with the Native Hawaiian Caucus of the Legislature and key stakeholders, the measure passed the House Finance Committee and will soon go to entire House for further consideration.



Senator Galuteria and colleagues met with Senator Akaka days before the reintroduction of NHGRA

For Your Information

Bill Status and Documents

You may sign up for Hearing Notices via e-mail, review legislative packages, conduct research on bills, and submit testimony at www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2011

Hawaii Senate Majority

To follow along with what the Senate Majority Caucus is doing this session, please log onto www.hawaiisenatemajority.com



hawai'i public access room

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- large-print reading materials
- Complete copy of the Hawaii Revised Statutes and annual updates, including Session Laws
- Dictionaries in various languages and almanacs
- Computers and office supplies to prepare testimony for Legislative hearings
- Information sheets on various topics