

Prevailing Winds



Volume 4—Issue 4
May/June 2012

Representative Isaac W. Choy

District 24 - Manoa, University, Moili'ili

Now that legislative session is over, my report will be out shortly. Since *sine die*, everyone in the square building on Beretania Street is switching to re-election mode. All seventy-six seats are up for grabs as this is a reapportionment year. Speaking of reapportionment, I did not know that re-drawing district boundaries were so complicated. The Reapportionment Commission made an initial attempt which was shot down by the courts. The second attempt was also challenged but the federal panel affirmed the boundaries as final. There is a popular saying that portrays my feeling on this matter, it goes like this, *"It is what it is"*.



Occasionally I feel too much time is spent by politicians on getting elected or re-elected. I like to think that the most important aspect of being a part of any organization is what you bring to the table. In my way of thinking, life experiences and work experiences are very important. The job of being an elected official is very complex today. The days of being a single platform candidate is over. There are way too many issues, and to be able to agree with everyone is impossible. During the past four years I have seen people come out on both sides with concerns. For instance, there are those that like our educational system and others that do not; some want open space and others want development. In other words, everything has a proponent and an opponent.

It can get quite interesting when an issue has close to half in support and half in opposition. Listening to both sides is key as there are good arguments for each cause. So how do I decide on whether to support or oppose a bill? First and foremost (and this is something most people fail to do) is to **read the bill**. Bills at times evolve from the very clear and simple concept to the most convo-

luted and confusing. This often happens as people try to incorporate different ideas into a single bill. A simple amendment from a "shall" to a "may" can change the entire intent of the bill.

A lot of time is spent reading different versions of a measure so I can figure out what direction it is taking. Sometimes I can support a bill in the beginning and vote against it when it changes through the process.



So how do I decide if I should support or oppose a bill?

There are many factors:

- ▶ Does this bill have a direct affect on our district?
- ▶ What is the impact of the bill on all of the residents of the State?
- ▶ Is this a building block for future legislation?
- ▶ What total effect would the bill have in the future?
- ▶ What is the sunset date on the bill? (A sunset date determines when a particular law will end, which also provides time for the Legislature to consider extensions, should this law be a good one.)



We do not want to miss out on a good idea, and allowing for a trial period is not a bad thing.

Do not forget the politics; I would be remiss if I did not factor that in. Testimony is a very important tool in deciding on a bill. Great testimony explains the bill then proceeds to explain the probable outcomes of the measure.

-Continued-

MY CONTACT INFORMATION

Hawaii State Capitol, 415 S. Beretania Street, Room 404, Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: 808-586-8475 Fax: 808-586-8479 Email: repchoy@capitol.hawaii.gov

Emotional testimony has value but too much may detract from the spirit of the bill. Just saying that you hate a bill is not reason enough for me to vote against a measure. The bottom line is everyone who wants to effectuate policy should start by reading the bill and the testimony. Keeping in mind that all bills will have both support and opposition.

Finally, I have taken my annual vacation to Las Vegas and have again tried to conquer the craps table. I have been trying to do this for thirty plus years and have yet to win. I am almost convinced that it is not possible. The reason I am mentioning this is legalized gambling in Hawaii has always been a hot topic. As long as my personal research shows that one cannot win, why should I support gambling in Hawaii, but then again, I am only one...

Until next time...

Makalo,



**NEW Manoa Public Library
Grand Opening
Saturday, June 9, 2012, 10:00 a.m.**



L-R: State Librarian Richard Burns, Senator Brian Taniguchi, Representative Isaac Choy, Library Manager Christel Collins



***The Days Before
Sine Die***

To receive an electronic copy of *Prevailing Winds*, Email: c.hagihara@capitol.hawaii.gov

View My Newsletters, Bill Status & Documents, Legislative Information, House/Senate, Photos, Links:
<http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/memberpage.aspx?member=choy>