



Representative Lynn DeCoite

Hawaii House District 13: East Maui (Paia, Haiku, Keanae, Nahiku, Hana, Kipahulu, Kaupo), Moloka'i, Lana'i, Kaho'olawe and Molokini

Aloha,

These past few months have been a whirlwind. Now that the 2015 Legislative session has come to a close we can take some time and look back on what went on.

There were tough issues—issues that were carried over from previous sessions and issues that defied quick and ready-made solutions. Nevertheless, my new colleagues and I in the 2015 Legislature passed bills that addressed some of the most entrenched issues, including legislation that:

- Extends the rail tax surcharge for another five years,
- Funds the Turtle Bay land purchase,
- **Allows Maui public hospitals to pursue a public-private partnership,**
- Creates a statewide system of medical marijuana dispensaries, and
- Approves a fiscally sound and responsible state budget.

Among the toughest was the decision to extend the **rail tax surcharge (HB134)** for another five years. At risk was not only the loss of million in state funds already spent or committed to rail but also millions more in federal funds secured by the promise that the state would build a rail system to address the gridlock faced by the island's commuters every day. It was a decision that linked the extension approval to strong demands from state lawmakers to City and HART officials for greater transparency and accountability.

While last year the 2014 Legislature passed an agreement to purchase **Turtle Bay lands (SB284)** to keep them in conservation for posterity, the specifics of the agreement was found to be flawed and needed to be fixed to complete the deal. The 2015 Legislature found that it had to literally start from scratch, but in the process re-fashioned a better deal for the people of Hawaii. As part of the Turtle Bay agreement:

- The state's share for protecting 79 percent of open space on North Shore via a conservation easement prohibiting development in perpetuity was reduced from \$40 million to \$35 million;
- The easement will include 55 acres fronting Kawela Bay which the state will now own in fee rather than leasehold; and
- The new agreement provides opportunity for an agreement on an additional easement to add another 29 acres (end of 2017).

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The Hawaii State House of Representatives joining hands and singing "Hawaii Aloha" in the House Chambers on Sine Die (May 7, 2015)



Vice Speaker John Mizuno, Representative Lynn DeCoite and Speaker Joseph Souki on Sine Die. Sine Die is the Closing Day of the Legislature.

With the passage of **HB1075, Maui Public Hospitals** will be able to pursue a private-partnership in a good faith and in a sound manner. Good solutions are always collaborative and identified, not by one person's signature, but by many fingerprints. Together with the Governor, the Legislature came up with a fair resolution for all concerned, including hospital employees that provides a realistic solution to the chronic fiscal shortfall faced by Maui's public hospitals.

The 2015 Legislature's **Medical Marijuana Dispensaries Bill (HB321)** will create a safe and reliable system of dispensaries throughout the state and a rigorous, merit-based method of selecting licensees. Patients will be able to access medical marijuana from regulated dispensaries with the peace of mind that their medication will be safe, consistent and exactly what their doctor prescribe. The bill is a measured and humane response to the needs of those patients who depend on the analgesic benefits of medical marijuana to make it through each day.

THE BUDGET

The 2015 Legislature also crafted a responsible budget (HB500) for the biennium that addresses the state's long-term obligations while taking care of its immediate social services needs and capital improvement requirements. The budget is not just about expenses and revenues. Together with our long-term strategic financial plan, a thoughtful budget will also help fuel, direct and shape a healthy and sustainable economy. Specifically, the budget:

- Appropriates nearly \$6.58 billion in general funds for FY2015-2016 and \$6.83 billion in general funds for FY2016-2017;
- Builds a "better budget" in four ways, by: (1) limiting expenditures in the budget, (2) fueling economic growth through selective tax credits, (3) investing in people who need help the most, and (4) reducing the state's unfunded liabilities and building up its Rainy Day funds;
- Provides for budget reform initiatives including:
- Requiring information on debt service on any CIP (SB105),
- Creating pilot program to compile efficiency measures for possible inclusion in future budget documents (SB104),
- Repealing and transferring the unencumbered balances of various non-general funds and accounts (HB707),
- Commits over \$28 million in grant-in-aid for nonprofit organizations who reach out to the community with invaluable services;
- Provides \$40 million for Rental Housing Trust Fund;
- Dedicates over \$2.45 billion for a wide range of capital improvement projects for our infrastructure, which will continue to support state services and economic growth on all islands; and
- Addresses the state's unfunded liabilities in a responsible and prudent manner.

LANDMARK LEGISLATION & MILESTONES

- **EDUCATION**—The 2015 Legislature appropriated \$6,000,000 for the Preschool Open Doors Program (SB64). The program promotes school readiness by providing child-care subsidies for the year prior to kindergarten for low to moderate income families.
- **KUPUNA** - For Hawaii's Kupuna, \$3,000,000 was allocated to the Kupuna Care Program (SB964), which provide Hawaii's seniors with access to affordable and quality home and community based services, including hot meals, transportation, case management, and personal care assistance.
- **SUPPORTING FAMILIES**—To support working families in Hawaii, the Legislature increased the tax credit on food, raising the gross income ceiling to \$30,000 for individuals and \$50,000 for households, and removing the residency requirement to qualify for a tax credit (SB555)
- **FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY** Finally, as part of its long term fiscal responsibility, the Legislature continued the recent practice of storing away more in the Rainy Day Fund, setting aside \$10 million (SB1312). Building the state's reserve will not only help the state weather future declines in revenue and potential cuts to government services, but it will also make it cheaper to borrow to build public infrastructure.

All in all, 2015 Legislative session was a successful one in my book. There is still a lot to be done. I know I need to keep monitoring the legislation and programs that passed while I also plan for the 2016 Legislative Session. Please continue to send me your thoughts, ideas so we can work together to have successful 2016 Legislative session for District 13.

Many Mahalos,

Lynn

Capital Improvement Project (CIP) and Grant-In-Aid (GIA) Funds for District 13

Title	Description	\$ Allocation	CIP/GIA
Hana Airport, Maui	Construction for a new aircraft rescue and firefighting station and other related improvements at Hana Airport	\$33.579 million	CIP
Hana Health	Plans and Construction of new health facilities.	\$500,000	GIA
Hana Highway Improvements, Huelo to Hana, Maui	Construction for improving, upgrading and/or repairing roadways, bridges, walls, drainage structures, guardrails and other facilities on Route 360 hana highway	\$4 million	CIP
Hana Highway Improvements, Maui	Design and construction to mitigate rockfalls and potential landslides along the slopes of Route 360 on Hana Highway	\$4.6 million	CIP
Hana Highway Improvements, vicinity of milepost 28.1, Maui	Roadway widening and realignment on Hana Highway in the vicinity of mile post 28.1	\$895,000	CIP
Heritage Hall, Inc., Maui	Construction for Heritage Hall Inc. facilities in Paia, Maui.	\$300,000	GIA
Hui Malama Learning Center, Maui	Effective workforce development transition program for at-risk-youth.	150,00	GIA
Kalamaula Homesteaders Association, Molokai	Plans, Design and Construction for redevelopment of the Kiowea Park Facilities. (Moloka'i)	\$500,000	GIA
Kamehameha V Highway, Makakupaia Stream Bridge Replacement, Molokai	Construction for the replacement of Makakupaia Stream bridge to include bridge railings and other improvements. This project is deemed necessary to qualify for federal aid financing and/or reimbursement.	\$3.5 million	CIP
Lanai Airport, Airport Road and Parking Lot Improvements, Lanai	Construction for airport road and parking lot improvements and other related improvements.	\$1.5 million	CIP
Lanai Community Hospital, Lanai	Plumbing and facility improvements at Lanai Community Hospital	\$1,000,000	GIA
Molokai Airport, Runway 17-35 Improvements, Molokai	Design and construction for airfield improvements including pavement reconstruction, drainage, striping, lighting, signage and other related improvements.	\$3.2 million	CIP
Molokai High School, Molokai	Renovation of the gym/emergency shelter at Molokai High School	\$3.5 million	CIP
Molokai Irrigation System Improvements, Molokai	Design and construction for improvements to the Molokai Irrigation System	\$1.2 million	CIP
Paia Bypass, Maui	Plans for alternative traffic improvements in the vicinity of Paia town. This project is deemed necessary to qualify for federal aid financing and/or reimbursement.	\$300,000	CIP

District 13 Survey

With so many topics and issues coming up at the State Legislature, identifying the topics that are of the most concern to our district will help me serve you. In my April 2015 Newsletter I asked everyone to take a moment to fill out a short survey and return it to my office so I can better understand the needs and concerns that need to be addressed in our communities.

If you haven't gotten a chance to fill out the survey there is still time to send it in. If you need a copy of the survey please visit my website (<http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/memberpage.aspx?member=decoite&year=2015>)

and see **April 2015 Newsletter**– the survey is on page 3,

OR feel free to call my office and request to have one emailed/mailed to you.



Office of Representative Lynn DeCoite

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Sign Up for District 13 E-mail Updates

I am pleased to share with all of you our “District 13 E-mail Updates.” My office will provide you with email updates highlighting public events in District 13 (East Maui, Moloka’i and Lana’i), news and opportunities that may be of interest to you, along with notices of public hearings that are taking place at the State Capitol that directly affect District 13.

It is my hope that by providing you with these updates, you will be able to participate in the legislative process and share information and updates on District 13 with your community members. We will continue these updates during the interim so you can stay involved and be ready for the 2016 Legislative Session.

If you would like to be added to the “District 13 E-mail Update” list please call the office at (808) 586-6790 or send your email to decoite2@capitol.hawaii.gov with “District 13 E-mail List” in the subject line.

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