

Mid-Session Report



State Representative Gregg Takayama • District 34 • Pearl City • Waimalu • Pacific Palisades



REPRESENTATIVE
GREGG TAKAYAMA

Aloha Neighbors!

The 2014 legislative session is at the mid-point where bills are crossing from the House to the Senate and vice versa.

As you know, the Legislature convened last fall for a special session on same-sex marriage. This was a hotly debated issue, with an unprecedented amount of public testimony and floor debate. No matter your views on the issue, I want to thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and opinions with me. Emotions ran high on all sides and it is important for us to come together after an issue that so divided our community. We will face the future together with the spirit of aloha that we have always shared.

My staff and I are always trying to improve our office's communication to better serve you, so please don't hesitate to give us your feedback. Please keep on doing so!

Session is keeping me very busy, but I am always there for our Pearl City community. Please feel free to call, e-mail or find me on Facebook or sign up for our weekly e-mail updates to keep in touch. It is a privilege to serve you.

Warmest aloha,

Gregg Takayama

Kudos to the 29th Annual Leeward District High School Science & Engineering Fair Award Winners

Pearl City High School students competed successfully in the 29th Annual Leeward District Science and Engineering Fair, held at Leeward Community College, February 20–21, 2014.

Congratulations to the following budding scientists and engineers from Pearl City High:

Michele Fujita (9th) &
Darcy Tokunaga (9th)
Mr. Anthony Ferro

Hydroponics vs. Aquaponics
District Grand Award Winners
Honorable Mention-Team

&
Best of Category Award Winners:
Plant Sciences

Kalyn Bowen (11th)
Mrs. Judith Morton
Chloroplast Sequencing: Native Plant Evolution
SCIENCE AGENCY AWARD WINNER:
Society for In Vitro Biology

Approved Funding for Pearl City Schools

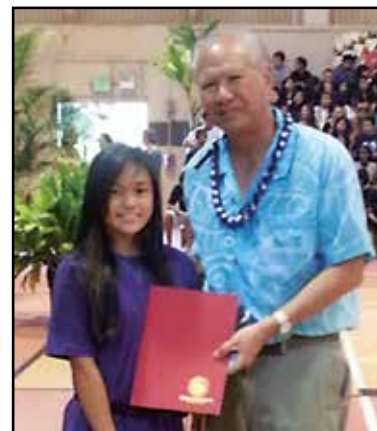
Governor Abercrombie has released funds for these projects:

\$550,000 — Pearl City High track & field facility improvements — This starts the design phase of a new track & field surface. When completed, this project will allow for a competition track venue in the Leeward District, which presently has none

\$120,000 — Pearl City Highlands Elementary Building G expansion — This funds an additional administration space in Building G, which currently is 60% smaller than comparably sized elementary schools.



Congratulations to Pacific Palisades resident Nicholas Barry, a teacher at Iroquois Elementary School, for earning certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, pictured with son, Blaise.



Highlands Intermediate student Mia deLara receives an award for Outstanding Citizenship from Rep. Takayama.

Crossing Over: Important Bills

A fallen albizia tree in Hilo.
Photo courtesy Puna / Ka'u
Senator Russell Ruderman



The 2014 legislative session is at the mid-point where bills are crossing from the House to the Senate and vice versa. We have been busy working on many important issues. Here are a few of them:

A Responsible Budget: a recovering economy has resulted in a surplus, but we must continue to be cautious. I strongly advocate first paying off pension debt, and refilling our Hurricane Relief and Rainy Day funds. In addition, we are looking at raising the minimum wage and lowering existing taxes to provide relief to struggling working families.

Elder Care: I have continued my work from last session in advocating for senior citizens' concerns. This session, for the first time since 2008, House and Senate leaders agreed on a joint majority package of priorities that includes senior issues as a top statewide priority with commitment of the majority of both chambers. We are acting on legislation (HB 1713) to support community-based healthy aging programs, increase funding for Kupuna Care programs that enable elders to age in their homes, and conduct a public awareness campaign on the need for long-term care. Also, HB 1715 provides \$50,000 in funding for outreach initiatives of the State Office of Consumer Protection to prevent financial abuse of seniors.

HB 2056: Alzheimer's Disease. I introduced this bill and it has passed the House, to assist the elderly by providing funds for an Alzheimer's Disease and related dementia services coordinator, to develop a state plan that coordinates public and private programs. The impact of Alzheimer's is already being felt in Hawai'i, with about 27,000 diagnosed with the disease and an estimated 64,000 caregivers. Most victims survive an average of 4 to 8 years after being diagnosed, but some can live as long as 20 years. Caregivers are under high stress and need help coping with the physical and emotional impact of caregiving.

HB 2053: Falls Prevention. Accidental falls is the second-leading cause of death among seniors and results in many victims being bed-ridden for the remainder of their lives. I introduced – and the House passed – this measure to establish Falls Prevention and Early Detection Coordinator at the Department of Health to focus on services that can prevent falls from occurring.

HB 2054: Relating to the Uniform Power of Attorney Act. I introduced this measure and it has passed the House, to require that anyone given the power of attorney is mandated to act in the best interests of his or her client. This is intended to prevent cases in which seniors have been deceived and defrauded by persons they entrusted to act on their behalf. Such laws have been enacted by 13 other states.

Rep. Takayama's Bill to Mitigate Dangers of Fragile Trees Advances

A Pacific Palisades resident called my office in January to alert me to a potentially dangerous situation – a very tall tree in her neighbor's yard was threatening to topple onto her house and others. Unfortunately, her neighbor has been uncooperative and refused requests to remove or even trim her tree. A State Civil Defense inspector verified that the tree is hazardous but informed her they have no money to remove it.

My office researched the situation and found there are dozens of similar hazardous trees throughout the State. They're often albizia trees, an invasive species that grows as much as 20 feet per year, whose fragile branches easily break, and which can cost \$20,000 each to remove when fully grown. A 2009 State law gave Civil Defense the authority to remove them and charge the property owner for the cost but never provided money to carry out the law.

The House has approved a bill I introduced, HB 2521, to appropriate funds to Civil Defense for tree removal and we included \$1 million in the proposed State budget for the program. If the Senate also approves this measure, we will be able to remove about a dozen hazardous trees annually for the next three years – including the one in Pacific Palisades that prompted our legislation.



Representative Takayama showing support for our kupuna and collecting donations for the Hawai'i Foodbank.

Site Visits

Throughout the year, the House Finance Committee visited several programs and projects supported by the Legislature. The site visits give us a firsthand opportunity to see how departments are spending our tax dollars. This guides the Finance Committee in making important legislative budget decisions. As a member of the Finance Committee, I have participated in all of the site visits, and will apply this information during the session.



Administrators from the University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu demonstrating the technologies and capabilities of the new campus.



Touring the Halawa Correctional Facility to better understand the issue of overcrowding in prisons in Hawai'i.



The Finance Committee touring Pali Momi Medical Center, part of Hawai'i Pacific Health, the largest health care provider in the state of Hawai'i.

'Aiea / Pearl City Community **TOWN MEETING**

Meet Mayor Kirk Caldwell

Thursday, March 20, 2014

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Pearl Ridge Elementary School Cafeteria
(98-940 Moanalua Road, 'Aiea)



Kupuna Power is a brand-new weekly program about issues pertinent to our seniors and their caregivers.

The show is produced in partnership with the Kupuna Caucus, the State of Hawai'i Executive Office on Aging, and AARP Hawai'i.

Tune in to watch:

'Olelo channel 53

Mondays & Thursdays

8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.





Representative Gregg Takayama

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If you would like to be added to our e-mail list, please e-mail reptakayama@capitol.hawaii.gov and we will gladly add you.



Celebrating opening day of the Pearl City Little League season with team members and U.S. Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa.



Rep. Takayama joins Reps. Calvin Say & Linda Ichiyama sign waving at the Capitol to show their support for our military.

A unique opportunity for the public to view works of art by local artists placed in the offices of legislators, executive offices, and Public Access Room. Our office will be open for this event! Please stop in and enjoy the artwork on display in room 324.



6th Annual
Art AT THE Capitol

In conjunction with the Hawai'i State Art Museum's First Friday festivities

Friday, April 4, 2014
4:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Cost: Free