

State Funds Sought to Build Improved Kona Courthouse

Officials of the Hawai‘i Judiciary say more state funding is needed to replace outdated and unsecure Big Island court facilities. More money is also needed to keep programs that aim to help young children whose parents are suspected of abuse and neglect. Last year, we awarded \$35 million to start the building of a new, central Kona Courthouse. During his annual State of Judiciary address, Hawai‘i Chief Justice Mark Recktenwald requested an additional \$55 million to finish the Kona courthouse. The Circuit Court on the Big Island, which uses three separate buildings, need to be renovated and enlarged to prevent the altercations from inmates due to the tight spaces. Security of the Kona Buildings also need to be improved to accommodate the 72,000 annual courts cases.

Senate President Donna Mercado Kim said, “We’ve already started it, so at some point we’re going to finish it. It’s going to come, it’s just how we do it and what’s the timing of it.” The Judiciary hopes the new Kona courthouse will open in 2019.

To listen to Chief Justice Recktenwald’s State of the Judiciary speech visit

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsF1gNAooUw>

More information can be found in an article written by Star Advertiser’s Marcel Honore:

<http://www.staradvertiser.com/s?action=login&f=y&id=290173391&id=290173391>

Lawyer Referral and Information Service

Members of the public who are seeking the services of an attorney may call, fax, or email the Hawai‘i State Bar Association (HSBA) Lawyer Referral Services. After assessing the issue(s) or concern(s) of the individual, the individual is given the name and contact information of two (2) attorneys who may be contacted. The attorneys on the Lawyer Referral Service panel are screened prior to placement on the panel for liability insurance, past or pending disciplinary action, and subject matter specialization. The number to reach assistance is:

**Hawai‘i Island
Email**

Toll Free (808) 930-0872
LRIS@hsba.org

Legal Line

Every Wednesday evening from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM attorneys are available via telephone to provide legal information. The volunteer licensed pro bono attorneys try to ascertain the issue(s) or concern(s) and refer the callers to the appropriate HSBA staff, legal service provider or agency which may be contacted for assistance. The Legal Line phone number for Big Island constituents may call 1-888-609-5463.

Get Involved

To submit testimony on bills related to judiciary issues, visit the House Committee on Judiciary’s website. The website will list the measures introduced as well as upcoming hearing dates. The Chairperson for the Judiciary Committee is Representative Karl Rhoads and Representative Joy San Buenaventura serving as the Vice Chair. The Chair for the Senate Committee on Judiciary & Labor is Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran with Senator Maile Shimabukuro as Vice Chair. Creating an account on the website will help you track bills as well as enable you to submit testimony. The website is located at the link below:

<http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/committeepage.aspx?comm=JUD&year=2015>

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