

Capitol connection

Office of Senator David Y. Ige – 16th District

Volume 4, Issue 6 April 19, 2005



Welcome to the sixth edition of Capitol Connection!

We are rapidly approaching the final few weeks of the Legislative Session, marked by **Conference Committees**. These conferences are convened 1) to resolve difference that may have arisen in the form of amendments while the measure made its way through the two chambers, and 2) to prepare a final draft of the bill.

Although public testimony or opinion is no longer accepted, I still believe it is important for our community to keep informed of events occurring here at the Capitol.

My staff and I are here to assist you if you have any questions or concerns!

Sincerely,

David Y. Ige
State Senator

BIG RESULTS FROM STUDENTS' PLEAS

PEARL RIDGE ELEMENTARY MEETS WITH GOVERNOR LINDA LINGLE

On April 7, 2005, student government leaders **Elena Munoz** and **Daena Mau**, along with **Principal Lauren Dunn** and teacher **Erin Furuya**, presented Governor Linda Lingle with hundreds of letters written and illustrated by their peers from Pearl Ridge Elementary School. Each letter asked the Governor to release the funds for expanding their school cafeteria. Funds for the expansion had been included in last year's state budget, but had not yet been released.

With close to 600 students, the existing cafeteria, which only accommodates 335, is woefully inadequate for its primary purpose. In order to abide by fire codes, students have to eat in three shifts, and no school-wide assemblies or activities can be conducted indoors.

“Even with only half of the student body in the cafeteria, the teachers and I are worried that students may get trapped inside during an emergency.”

-Principal Lauren Dunn

Expanding the school's cafeteria will also benefit the community since the facility is a designated Red Cross civil defense evacuation site and is also used by the area's legislators to host community town meetings.

At the meeting, the students used a computer generated slide presentation to plead their case and then presented the Governor with the letters written by their fellow students. Many of the letter writers also promised that they would take good care of their cafeteria.

After listening to the students, Governor Lingle announced that she had decided to release the funds but had waited until the meeting to make the official announcement. The experience of having the meeting and hearing the Governor tell them that their request was being granted gave the students a real sense of accomplishment.

I congratulate the students, teachers, parents and community for their diligence and perseverance in pushing for this much needed capital improvement at Pearl Ridge Elementary School!

Below: Hundreds of handwritten letters from the students of **Pearl Ridge Elementary**

Below-Right: Students **Elena Munoz** and **Daena Mau** with Principal **Lauren Dunn**



Conference Committee Highlights

Conferences mark a departure from the Legislative Process we have followed since Opening Day. As bills have made their way through the Senate and then the House, some have been amended by their referred committees. The difference between bill draft versions creates the need for a conference committee to form and discuss the disagreement. The conferees for these newly formed committees are appointed by the Senate President and Speaker of the House. Included below are a few of the conferences I am chairing.

SB 637 SD2, HD1

Making an Appropriation for the Development of a Non-emergency Reporting System, Known as 3-1-1

This bill appropriates funds to the Honolulu Police Department for the development costs of a 3-1-1 non-emergency reporting system.

Changes: Effective date from July 1, 2005 to July 1, 2010 to encourage further discussion.

Senate Members: Ige, Taniguchi, Fukunaga, Tsutsui, Slom

House Members: Ito, Chong, Tanaka, Yamane, Pine

SB 1685 SD2, HD1

Relating to Tax

This bill allows the State to share taxpayer information with counties.

Changes: Effective date July 1, 2005 to July 1, 2010 to encourage further discussion.

Senate Members: Ige, Taniguchi, Fukunaga, Tsutsui, Slom

House Members: Takamine, Tanaka, Fox

As a reminder, public testimony is no longer accepted during conferences. However, I encourage you to keep informed through my website at DavidIge.org or the official Legislative website at <http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov>. For any questions or concerns, feel free to contact my office at **586-6230** or e-mail me at sendige@capitol.hawaii.gov.

Beauty by Design...

The next scheduled town meeting regarding the **Kamehameha Highway Corridor Project** will be held at **Waimalu Elementary cafeteria** on **April 27th at 7:00pm**.

Department of Transportation officials and consultants from Parsons, Brinkerhoff, Quade and Douglas will be attending this meeting to discuss the Kam Highway beautification and safety project. Long standing issues from 2002 will be addressed as well as new concerns from the community.

The meeting will be hosted by Representative K. Mark Takai. For more information, please contact my office at **586-6230** or via e-mail at sendige@capitol.hawaii.gov.

Taking Notice of...

- + **Joelle Sugai** of **Aiea**, University of Hawaii soccer midfielder, who was selected as an Arthur Ashe Jr. 2005 Sports Scholar. She was named to the first team of her sport and honored as an undergraduate student of color who has succeeded academically and athletically.
- + **Walter Chu III** of **Aiea** who was recognized as Outstanding Rehabilitant by the Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division of the State Department of Human Services. Born deaf, Walter is skilled and gifted in fixing and customizing cars, but found it challenging because of his deafness to find someone who would hire him. He finally found a job with Voytek Szymanski of Bavarian Motor Experts. Walter proved to be a quick learner who is so efficient and hard working that he was given a big raise within six months of being hired! He is a big asset to his company and certainly deserving of his award.

From **April 25th to April 29th**, **Palisades Elementary School** will host a sign-waving campaign on **Auhuhu Street** to encourage careful driving and traffic safety. This event will be held twice a day—before and after school by concerned parents, teachers, students and community members. If you are interested in participating, please contact my office at **586-6230** for more information.

Traffic safety near all our schools is essential to the well-being of our children!

Saturday, **April 23rd** is the **Aiea Stream Cleanup** from **8:30am to 12 noon!** The stream is in terrible shape again from winter storms and littering and the community needs your help! We have even enlisted some help from the Marines!



The crew will meet in front of **Jamba Juice at the Aiea Shopping Center**. Be sure to bring your own sunscreen, wear proper footwear, and protective gear!

Capitol Connection

is published and distributed by:

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