



Vol. 6

SENATOR WILL ESPERO & YOUR LEGISLATURE WORKING FOR YOU

CONFIRMATION TIME

Last week we told you about the Senate's Constitutional duty to "advise and consent" on nominations made by the Governor. So far, six State department heads have been confirmed by the Senate and now officially begin their second term as Director:

Agriculture	<i>Sandra Kunimoto</i>	Hawaiian Home Lands	<i>Micah Kane</i>
Budget & Finance	<i>Georgina Kawamura</i>	Transportation	<i>Barry Fukunaga</i>
Defense	<i>Maj. Gen. Robert Lee</i>	Taxation	<i>Kurt Kawafuchi</i>

These nominations will be heard soon:

<u>Nominee</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Committee Hearing Nomination</u>	<u>Date</u>
Lillian Koller	Human Services	Human Services & Public Housing	April 3
Ted Liu	Business, Economic Development & Tourism	Economic Development & Taxation	April 17
Chiyome Fukino, M.D.	Health	Health	April 11
Peter Young	Land & Natural Resources	Water, Land, Agriculture & Hawaiian Affairs	April 11

Other nominees, whose hearings are not yet scheduled, include: Accounting & General Services, *Russ Saito*; Attorney General, *Mark Bennett*; Commerce & Consumer Affairs, *Lawrence Reifurth*; Human Resources Development, *Marie Laderta*.

And now, to the bills

THROUGH THE ROOF...

H.B. 1072, will increase the number of affordable housing units in Honolulu by subsidizing and providing other types of assistance for the new construction, rehabilitation, acquisition, or preservation of certain types of multi-family housing units for income eligible residents. The bill passed the Senate Committees on Commerce, Consumer Protection & Affordable Housing, chaired by Senator Brian Taniguchi, and Water, Land, Agriculture & Hawaiian Affairs, chaired by Senator Russell Kokubun. It is now awaiting hearing in the Senate Ways & Means Committee, chaired by Senator Rosalyn Baker. *H.B. 1072, Relating to Housing.*

MONEY REMITTANCE

...is a way of life for many Islanders. Immigrants come to Hawaii to work and earn money and send part of their paychecks to the old country to support family back home. To protect the hard earned funds sent back to loved ones, **H.B. 1311 will improve regulation of money transmitters.** The bill authorizes the Commissioner of Financial Institutions to turn over information to other state and federal agencies for use in investigating civil or criminal allegations against a money transmitter. The bill passed the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection & Affordable Housing. It awaits a hearing in the Senate Judiciary & Labor Committee, chaired by Senator Clayton Hee. *H.B. 1311, Relating to Money Transmitters.*

I RESOLVE

Besides bills, which are ideas for laws, the Legislature also considers resolutions. These usually request a study of a proposal or problem with a report back to the Legislature, or request an action by other government officials or agencies. Resolutions do not have the force and effect of law, and are typically heard in subject matter committee, as bills are.

From Sugar Plantation to Now

Ewa's sugar plantation history is well known: plantation camps with homes for its supervisors and workers, athletic and recreational facilities, social clubs, community store, health centers and an administration building. The City & County of Honolulu planned to expand Ewa into a suburban "second city." The Ewa Villages Revitalization Project had four purposes: to provide affordable housing with a continued sense of community; to preserve the historic character of the villages; to remove the villages from the flood zone; and to break even financially. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the revitalization project was signed by several parties, but the properties have not yet been significantly renovated or maintained as agreed. **S.C.R. 161 requests the City Auditor to audit the project and report to the Legislature.** The resolution also requests the City to move the project forward. *S.C.R. 161, Requesting the City Auditor to Audit the Ewa Villages Revitalization Project.*

Ho'oponopono

Ancient chants and archeological sites point to Kaho'olawe as a sacred island to the Native Hawaiian people, who lived there for more than a thousand years. Because of this spiritual importance to Native Hawaiians, it has been sought out as a site of healing for offenders of Hawaiian ancestry. The Girls' Court Program, for female juvenile offenders, was granted the unique opportunity to volunteer on Kaho'olawe. They lived together, shared and restored the land by planting native species of vegetation, cleared trails and paths, and learned about the island's history. These young women learned about their culture, rendered community service and gained insight about their impending womanhood.

S.C.R. 182 would convene a task force to study the feasibility of a similar healing program for Native Hawaiian offenders. The program would promote healing by teaching Native Hawaiian traditions and cultural practices, helping these individuals to develop a cultural and community connection and a purpose in life through the spirituality of Kaho'olawe. Approximately 44% of female offenders and 37% of male offenders are Native Hawaiian. The proposed program would house at least 40 offenders, preparing them to become stewards of the land, learning life skills with an emphasis on Native Hawaiian cultural traditions so they can become reacquainted with their rich heritage. *S.C.R. 182, Requesting the Establishment of a Task Force to Study the Feasibility of a Native Hawaiian Healing Program on Kaho'olawe.*

(You can reach my office by telephone at 586-6360, fax at 586-6361, or e-mail at senespero@capitol.hawaii.gov. I represent Ewa through lower Waipahu. I chair the Senate Public Safety Committee, am Vice Chair of the Economic Development & Taxation Committee, and am a member of the Committees on Commerce, Consumer Protection, & Affordable Housing, and Transportation & International Affairs.)