



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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ONE SMALL STEP FOR MAN

THE DEBATE IS ON AS TO WHO WILL GET TO THE MOON NEXT—Japan, China, or the United States. Hawaii is on its way to becoming a major partner in the U.S. effort to return to and colonize the moon as well as a major player in space exploration through PISCES, the new Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems. PISCES is funded by S.B. 907 which I introduced and which became law this year.

In March 2007 Hawaii signed on to collaborate in NASA's Vision for Space Exploration, its plan to return humans to the moon and later travel to Mars. NASA awarded PISCES \$640,000 in Innovative Partnership Program grants to conduct lunar analog simulations. PISCES will be housed at UH-Hilo and complements Mauna Kea's world class astronomy center.

Hawaii could lead in space tourism, an industry now taking off worldwide. Next Session we will request state funding to apply for a commercial space port license. Tourists and residents will have the chance to take a short space flight, and new ground-based industries will grow.

Hawaii is the only state with a NASA agreement to explore future collaborations for innovative programs in aerospace research, education, and workforce development, as well as commercial space initiatives. These foundational steps are the beginning of a partnership in a global, billion dollar industry. I will continue efforts to secure a prominent role for Hawaii in this emerging field.

PISCES is a visionary idea with countless supporters. Imagine Hawaii residents designing a lunar space station with living and research modules, a lunar surface vehicle, or a robot to

collect moon rocks and soil for testing while others create energy and power with solar technology or nuclear fuel. Astronauts train and prepare for moon exploration in a setting that is as close to the moon as one can find on earth. These are possibilities PISCES brings.

The first PISCES conference was held November 8 and 9 in Hilo, where I was invited to speak and share my hopes for Hawaii's role in space exploration. The audience and students I met were impressive. Honolulu Community College students won the Lunar Habitat Student Design competition, beating out colleges from the mainland. It seemed that NASA scientists and administrators made up at least 75% of conference attendees, and that they had a strong interest in working with PISCES.

S.B. 907 also created the Office of Aerospace Development, to create an industry that diversifies our economy and provides high paying jobs for our residents; support Hawaii space tourism; and spur student interest in science and space exploration.

The NASA-Hawaii partnership through PISCES will give us many opportunities never before available here. The STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) initiatives the Legislature passed last session for our high school students are connected directly to PISCES. Our children -- potential scientists, engineers, mathematicians, geologists, astronauts and others -- will have a chance to grow-up, be educated, and work in Hawaii in this exciting field.

PISCES is a collaboration of the Japan-U.S. Science, Technology & Space Applications Program, University of Hawaii at Hilo and Hawaii State Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism.

PISCES
 PISCES



One giant leap for Hawaii

HAWAII'S INMATES ON THE MAINLAND

Senators Norman Sakamoto, Clarence Nishihara and I completed an informative, productive visit of the Red Rock and Saguaro correctional facilities in Eloy, Arizona. Ideally all our inmates would be in Hawaii, but mainland prisons alleviate our local overcrowding. We met with admin-



the facilities, and reviewed the programs and services available to our inmates. When the majority of our male Hawaii inmates are transferred from the Red Rock site to the Saguaro facility, the monitoring and oversight of the prison and its inmates should be easier and more efficient. The new Saguaro facility, in the middle of rural land between Phoenix and Tucson, is in excellent condition. Saguaro just opened in July, and all inmates incarcerated here will be only from Hawaii. I introduced S.B. 932, now a law, to emphasize re-entry programs that help ex-offenders get better able to become law abiding citizens after serving their sentences. Programs and services which are or will be available to our Hawaii inmates include electrical training, woodwork or carpentry skills, computer training, music, GED classes, adult basic education, faith-based programs, Hawaiian cultural programs, animal care working with a local humane society, drug treatment, library services, life skills, and hobbies that can be done in individual cells.

The current contract with Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) is \$52 million a year, so minimizing recidivism and cutting prison costs through re-entry programs and support makes a lot of social and economic sense. Regrettably not all programs were up and running. Opening a new prison is like opening a new school, and I thought more should have been available on the first day of operations. I plan to visit Saguaro again and expect more satisfactory results, with all programs available by the first quarter of 2008.



The Hawaii Department of Public Safety (DPS) will closely monitor this transition period.

Of 1300 Saguaro inmates, 864 had prison jobs, and many others were interested in getting one. Work furlough is not available to our prisoners in Arizona, so a prison job is the next best thing available to them. Inmate concerns brought to our attention will be looked into on a case by case basis.

I hope the Legislature funds an Arizona-based part-time prison advocate to check with the prisoners on a weekly basis and make certain their needs are being met and any grievances are being resolved. DPS is responsible for monitoring the contract with CCA. Expanding video con-

RED ROCK & SAGUARO

A Report from Eloy, Arizona

ferencing will be a priority, as a major concern discussed by some prisoners was the distance away from their families and loved ones. Prisoners complained about the high cost of a long distance call at 25 cents per minute. My office will check if less expensive rates could be available to improve family communications. It does not appear that gang issues or safety of our prisoners are significant issues, and from what I was able to witness, the prison facilities are safe and secure. Drugs in the facilities do not appear to be a problem as both inmates and staff are randomly tested.



On a related note, my committee is working with the DPS to return to Hawaii the 175 women prisoners currently incarcerated in Kentucky. One possibility is to house the women at the Federal Detention Center near the airport by the end of next year. Being in Hawaii helps inmates and their families respond better to treatment and services with support nearby.



NEW DIRECTOR

Congratulations to Clayton Frank, new Department of Public Safety Director. Senator Espero, as Chair of the Public Safety Committee, has been working with Mr. Frank, who has acted as Interim Director of the department for the last few months. During the weeklong Special Session on the Superferry bill, the Senate was also busy hearing testimony and voting on more than 120 of the Governor's nominees to fill vacancies in various boards, commissions, judicial and department positions. Congratulations also go to new Cabinet members Laura Thielen of the Department of Land and Natural Resources and Darwin Ching of the Department of Labor, and new Intermediate Court of Appeals judge Katherine Leonard.

Interested? Visit www.hawaii.gov/boards and click on "Directory" to see if there are vacancies on a board or commission you're interested in. Qualifications, responsibilities, & time commitments vary with the position.

COMMUNITY UPDATES

FORT WEAVER ROAD WIDENING

Construction work has begun. The two new lanes are expected to be in use by 2009.

NORTH SOUTH ROAD

Construction work is ongoing. North South Road is expected to open in 2009.

INTERSTATE COMMISSION ON ADULT OFFENDER SUPERVISION

The Commission will reconvene next month. My Public Safety Committee will consider suggestions and findings of the Commission for our bill package for next Session.

BROADBAND TASK FORCE

The Broadband Task Force is still in its infancy. We are working on a report for the Legislature on the options available, benefits to Hawaii, and recommendations for the direction the State should take.

HONOLULI WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

I held further planning meetings with officials from the Japanese Cultural Center for the Internment Camp Memorial. We will try to obtain federal funding to supplement state funds for the project.

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

The Mayor held his second community meeting in Waipahu. Residents got a chance to hear how transportation-based planning will enhance life by adding convenience and reducing transit time.

WITNESSING HISTORY

Keone'ula fifth graders were on hand for the Superferry vote. Senator Espero spoke to the group before the floor session started, then introduced them to the Senate before debate began.



DECEMBER COMMUNITY CALENDAR

11/30	6p	St. Joseph's School	Christmas Concert, 6p-food concessions, 7p-concert, free
1	10a-2p	Waipahu Cultural Gardens	"Plantation Cooking" demo by guest chef Alan Wong & tasting
3-14		Ewa Beach E.S.	Food drive
4	10:30a	Waipahu Public Library	Preschool storytime
5	3:30	Waipahu Public Library	Christmas holiday Sing-along
7	1p-6p	Iroquois Point E.S.	School carnival, open to public
13-14	6:30p	St. Joseph's School	Christmas Program, \$5
15	9a-2p	Holomua E.S.	Craft & Gift Fair, food & games
15	6p 1p-3p	<u>Boys & Girls Club</u>	<u>Ewa Beach Parade, 6 p</u> teen dance to follow 1-3: Santa photos & raffle
16	8a-1p	Blood Bank	Waikele Center
19	10:30a	Ewa Beach Library	Christmas stories & craft
22	8a-1p	Blood Bank	Kapolei HPD
23	7a-2p		Ewa Beach Shop. Ctr./Star Mkt
31	7:30a-1p		Waikele Center

Read. Be Inspired. Write back.

LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE CONTEST, Gr.4-12
Books take readers to places where they experience exciting adventures and meet intriguing characters, or rise above peer pressure, bullying, prejudice, disappointment or loss. Where have books taken your young reader? Go to librarieshawaii.org, "Programs" and click on "Letters About Literature" for information and application. Deadline: **December 14.**

Foreign & Sign Language Interpreters

The Hawaii State Judiciary Court Interpreter Certification Program will begin its 2008 testing cycle in January. Foreign language and sign language interpreters who wish to interpret in the state courts may apply. Interested persons can call 539-4860 for questions and schedule.

Fundraisers, Schools & Grand Opening



Sen. Espero supports the community. Clockwise from top right:

Holomua E.S.'s Legislative Back to School Day.

Island Pacific Academy's National Readers' Day.

Waipahu Festival Marketplace Grand Opening.

Steve Favela Fun Run to benefit charity.

Ewa Weed & Seed Fund-raiser.

