



CAPITOL CONNECTION

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Courtesy Tyler Kruse

From the governor: Keeping promises and moving forward

Strong, steady and strategic. Whether it's helping disaster victims recover or improving the lives of working families, Governor Ige has committed to delivering on the state's most pressing challenges. This edition highlights the latest efforts for disaster relief, new laws to expand affordable housing, education, and environmental and consumer protection, the launch of major state projects, and the 150th anniversary of the Gannenmono, the first Japanese immigrants to Hawai'i.

Q. The past three months of dealing with floods and the volcano have tested your administration and the state's resources. What types of help are on the way?

A. We know many people have been devastated by these events. The state is committed to helping residents rebuild their lives. We've been working closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as it sets up disaster assistance centers for federal, state and county services to help individuals qualify for aid. We're making emergency loans available to farmers and have released millions of dollars to the counties of Kaua'i, O'ahu and Hawai'i island for disaster-related repair of roads and public facilities. In the case of Kilauea, even the FEMA people are saying this event is different because there's no end in sight for the eruption.

Q. You've made many trips to the disaster sites on Kaua'i and Hawai'i island. Why was it so important to see everything firsthand?

A. It's hard to imagine the devastation and destruction until you actually see it. We've talked about the rains on Kaua'i being overwhelming and the lava swallowing homes, but you need to see the damage firsthand and talk with those who have suffered losses. That was critical in helping me understand the impact. I have to say, the community response has been heart-warming and inspiring, and the residents have been very appreciative of everyone's support.

Q. What lessons have you learned as governor in responding to these natural disasters and in weighing policy issues that affect the whole state?

A. It boils down to understanding the authority you have and focusing on keeping the community safe. All of the decisions are focused on taking action. In a natural disaster with so many people involved and a real sense of urgency, you have to exercise your best judgment. In the case of the Puna Geothermal facility near the eruption, it was about choosing the best option, with advice from our team of experts, to quench the wells, move the pentane, and keep the community safe. When it comes to policy decisions, it starts with building a state budget that responds to the greatest needs, such as housing and homelessness, health and safety.

Q. You've signed several bills into law that support your priorities for working families. How would you assess the progress so far?

A. We've made tremendous progress in **creating systems that work**, such as building more affordable housing and helping to create successful homeless "navigation centers" such as Hale Mauiola on Sand Island. Everybody needs to work together — public and private — to leverage each other's best assets and invest in programs that produce results. We've also focused on expanding programs like Early College, Hawai'i's Promise and job training in quality job areas such as health care, information tech and cybersecurity as well as making highway commutes easier for working families.



STAFF SGT. JAMES RO

(Top) Gov. Ige thanks Renise Bayne and Pedraic Gallagher, Red Cross director of Disaster Services, for their help on Kaua'i. As the Kilauea eruption continues, the Hawai'i National Guard teamed with local organizations to build an emergency micro-shelter.

Governor, state and counties mobilize disaster relief

From temporary shelters to FEMA relief centers, farm loans and state and federal aid of all types — the message to disaster survivors on three islands is clear: “You’re not alone.” Governor Ige, the federal government and a multitude of state and county agencies have mobilized to offer support — on the ground and in person as thousands of residents try to rebuild their lives after devastating floods and the on-going Kīlauea eruption.

Since the April floods on Kaua’i and O’ahu and the continuing volcanic activity on Hawai’i island, the governor has criss-crossed the state to assess the damage and ensure residents get the help they need. **Among the latest news on disaster relief:**

- **A Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Disaster Assistance Center** opened in the Kea’au High School gym on the Big Island to serve as a “one-stop shop” for disaster survivors. FEMA assistance can help with temporary housing expenses, home repairs and disaster-related needs not covered by insurance. Representatives from state and county agencies that deal with social and mental health services, taxes and unemployment as well as the U.S. Small Business Administration, Veterans Affairs and the Red Cross are also there.

- **The governor’s second request to FEMA has been approved** for individual assistance to Kaua’i and O’ahu residents who suffered losses in the wake of the April floods. At least 760 homes were impacted by the storm, including 187 that were destroyed or suffered major damage.

- **A flood recovery bill signed by Governor Ige** allocated \$100 million to repair roads, bridges and public facilities on Kaua’i and \$25 million for repairs on O’ahu. Another \$12 million was released to Hawai’i County to help with mounting costs of emergency supplies and temporary shelter-related services. “This will help the county protect the health and safety of residents,” said Governor Ige. Mayor Harry Kim added, “We have had tremendous support from the governor and his departments from the get-go.”

- **Hawai’i Army National Guard soldiers and community volunteers** are working together to build an emergency community of temporary micro-housing units for seniors over age 60 and families with children under 18 left homeless by the lava flow. It’s hoped the “village” on the grounds of Sacred Heart Church in Pahoehoe could be the first of others from faith-based groups who want to help people who have been living in shelters after losing their homes to the eruption.

- **The state Department of Agriculture is making available emergency loans** of up to \$500,000 and microloans of up to \$25,000 for farmers who suffered damage to their crops on the three islands. “It’s painful to see all the damage to our crops and businesses caused by these natural disasters,” said the governor. “Our HDOA’s agricultural loan program will do its best to help our farmers and ranchers get back in business as soon as possible.”

Strategic decisions on major state construction projects

In recent months, Governor Ige and several state agencies have announced major construction projects as well as continuing to build more housing to meet pent-up demand. “We’ve made strategic decisions at a time when the construction industry is slowing,” said the governor. “Transportation and education capital projects totaled \$355 million during the first four months of 2018, and there’s more to come.” **The projects include:**

- **A new mauka concourse at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport** – The facility will deliver additional gate capacity to handle larger aircraft and 260,000 square feet of environmentally friendly space to enhance the overall passenger experience.

- **A permanent federal inspection station at the Ellison Onizuka Kona International Airport** – The project, funded with revenue bonds, is planned to begin in early 2019 and will help boost the Hawai’i island economy with international visitors. It also increases the state’s safety and security by providing a second entry point for transport of goods and passengers.

- **A safer, more secure Hawai’i State Hospital facility** – Construction of the new 144-bed facility, expected to start this year, will replace a 70-year-old structure, address overcrowding and improve patient care. The facility is designed to better monitor patients and represents a major step forward in treating those who are court-ordered for treatment as well as creating a better environment for patients and staff. The governor made fast-tracking the new facility one of his top priorities.



(Top) Gov. Ige, Kaua’i Mayor Bernard Carvalho and legislators meet on the release of flood recovery funds. (Above) HI-EMA’s Tom Travis, FEMA’s Willie Nunn and Big Island Mayor Harry Kim gather as Governor Ige announces more state aid.



Governor Ige describes improvements at the HNL concourse.

Governor enacts new laws to help working families

A home you can afford. A Hawai'i that's healthy and safe. A good education and jobs that pay a living wage. Those are some of the goals Governor Ige committed to when he first took office. Now, those goals are becoming a reality with several bills the governor has signed into law and strides already made during the past four years. They signal **major progress on affordable housing, environmental and consumer protection, and college opportunities and job training for the future.**

BUILDING MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- **Generating more than 10,000 housing units by 2020** - One of the governor's top priorities — affordable housing for low- and middle-income families — received a major infusion of \$200 million for the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation's (HHFDC) Rental Housing Revolving Fund through **HB 2748 (now Act 39)**. The measure also appropriates \$10 million to HHFDC's Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund (DURF), extends the general excise tax exemption for certain affordable rental housing projects, and increases the cap on GET exemptions to \$30 million until 2030.



Gov. Ige and housing advocates celebrate major legislative funding.

"Housing has been a top priority for my administration from day one," said the governor. "We have been advocating for increased investment in the Rental Housing Revolving Fund for nearly four years now. I'm so glad the Legislature is funding these very important programs." Since 2014, when Governor Ige took office, the state has completed 5,300 new homes statewide, including 2,000 affordable units. There are an additional 1,400 units under construction and another 4,000 in the planning phase.



The state takes action to protect the islands from climate change.

PROTECTING HAWAII'S ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMY AND CONSUMERS

- **Three bills to combat climate change and protect the state from its devastating effects.** The measures emphasize Hawai'i's leadership in fighting global warming and protecting the state for future generations. "This suite of bills establishes policies that address the reality of climate change we're already seeing," said the governor. The bills include **HB 2182**, which sets a goal to make Hawai'i carbon neutral by 2045, **HB 1986**, which creates a framework for a carbon offset program, and **HB 2106**, which requires a sea level rise analysis in environmental impact statements.

- Hawai'i also became the **first state in the nation to enact a law banning pesticides containing chlorpyrifos.** The governor signed **SB3095**, which calls for users of the pesticide to report annually to the state Department of Agriculture and applies restrictions around schools, until 2023 when it will be completely banned.

- A bill described as **"a victory for Hawai'i's energy consumers"** was signed by Governor Ige to align Hawaiian Electric's business model with consumer interests and the state's renewable energy goals. Known as the **Hawai'i Ratepayer Protection Act**, it requires the Public Utility Commission to create a framework by Jan. 1, 2020 that ties electric utility revenues to metrics such as affordability of rates, renewables and customer options for managing costs. "The bottom line is that SB 2939 is a victory for the state's energy consumers who will see more value for their hard-earned dollars," said the governor.



Legislators join Gov. Ige in applauding the ban on chlorpyrifos.

PROVIDING MORE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY AND "KAULANA'S BILL"

- The governor signed **HB 2501**, which appropriates funding for the **Hawai'i Promise Program**. "This makes it possible for everyone in our community to have access to a college education so they can increase their career earning potential," he said. It provides scholarships to eligible UH community college students who pay what they can for tuition and other expenses with the state making up the difference.



Family and supporters gather for "Kaulana's Bill."

- **"Kaulana's Bill," SB 2582**, was signed into law to authorize the courts to extend prison terms for offenders convicted of first-degree negligent homicide when the offender fails to render aid to the injured. It was named after Kaulana Werner, a former Kamehameha Schools football player, who was struck and killed by a car near his home in Nānākuli in April 2016. "I am signing this bill on behalf of the Werner family and all others who have tragically lost loved ones in this senseless manner," said Governor Ige. "I hope this new law will hold offenders more accountable and potentially save lives."



The Hawai'i Promise bill provides greater college access.

Honoring the Gannenmono and their enduring legacy

If you want to know where the story of Hawai'i's Japanese people begins, the answer lies in the **Gannenmono** — the first group of 148 contract laborers from Japan recruited to work on the islands' sugar plantations. They arrived in Honolulu Harbor in 1868 and were the first of the 180,000 Japanese workers who changed the course of Hawai'i and paved the way for future immigrants to come to the islands.

The Japanese community has launched a year-long celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Gannenmono that shows the many ways Hawai'i remains forever linked to Japan and the heritage that has shaped the state's economy, politics and cultural traditions. A highlight of the events was the first official visit to the U.S. by Prince Akishino, second son of Japan's Emperor Akihito, and his wife, Princess Kiko.

At several events, Governor Ige spoke of his own grandparents who immigrated to the islands from Japan and Okinawa. He paid tribute to the Gannenmono and the ties between Hawai'i and Japan that go "beyond business, beyond friendship. We are family." He noted many of them married Native Hawaiian women, raised families, and that their descendants carry on proud traditions of both Japanese and Hawaiian cultures. In a special 1-day exhibit, the State Archives worked with the Japanese Cultural Center to display never-before-seen historic documents. For a video, go to <http://bit.ly/2lcUvIc>.



The Imperial couple joined the governor and first lady at Washington Place. State archivist Adam Jansen describes Gannenmono artifacts at the Japanese Cultural Center.

Entrepreneur's Sandbox: A vision for a 21st century future



The name sounds like child's play, but the vision is real: Creating workspaces such as the **Entrepreneur's Sandbox** in Kaka'ako that support technology and innovation — the foundation for the Ige administration's goal of creating 80,000 new jobs paying \$80,000 a year by 2030.

An April groundbreaking ceremony for the \$7.3 million project marked the start of the Kaka'ako Innovation Block and tech park, just ewa of the John A. Burns School of Medicine. The project is planned as a business incubator space and will be operated by the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation (HTDC).

Governor Ige praised the project as a true public-private partnership with the Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism, the Hawai'i Community Development Authority, the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, the Legislature and developer Stanford Carr.

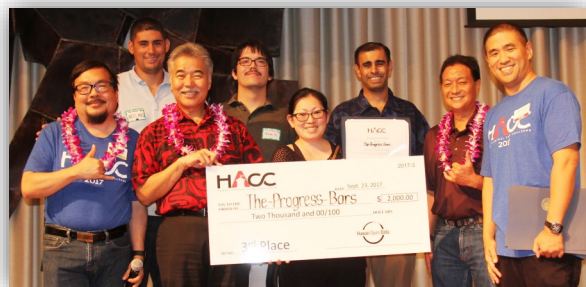


INNOVATION: (Above) Public and private partners break ground for the Entrepreneur's Sandbox, a workspace to support technology and business startups. (left) An architect's rendering of the \$7.3 million facility to create more high-paying jobs.

Code Challenge wins national Innovation of the Year award

What started as an idea from Governor Ige to tap local tech talent to improve state services has gone on to win the top **State IT Innovation of the Year award** from StateScoop, based in Washington, D.C. The annual award honors the nation's most outstanding efforts to make state and local government more efficient and effective.

Launched two years ago and coordinated by the Office of Enterprise Technology, the **Hawai'i Annual Code Challenge (HACC)** pairs state departments with community and student coders to develop practical computer solutions for improving services. "The HACC proves we have the talent right here in the islands to develop future tech careers," said the governor.



EXPANDING CITIZEN ACCESS: This winning community team at the HACC developed a more user-friendly way to access Office of Hawaiian Affairs grants — one of several solutions to improve government services.

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