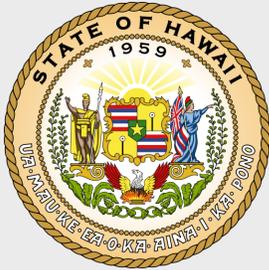


REP. JEANNÉ KAPELA

Na‘alehu, Ocean View | Capt. Cook, Kealakekua | Kailua-Kona



Contact Us

Phone:

808-586-9605

Email:

repkapela@capitol.hawaii.gov

Useful Numbers:

COVID-19 Price Gouging:

808-587-4272

Unemployment Claims:

808-322-4828

Legal Aid Society:

808-329-3910

Solid Waste Disposal:

808-961-8270

Kona Community Hospital

Vaccine Registration:

808-322-4451

West Hawai‘i Community

Health Center Vaccine

Registration:

808-334-2186



Aloha kākou,

As the 2021 legislative session ends, I am thankful to be serving as your representative. It is an honor to uplift the people of our community each day at the Hawai‘i State House of Representatives, where my office continues to champion the needs of working families and our environment.

This year, we faced unprecedented challenges. COVID-19 left our state struggling to maintain public health and created crippling budget shortfalls that threatened essential state programs. I’m happy to report that legislators were able to appropriate \$1.6 billion in federal relief funds to preserve key programs like HIV prevention, homeless services, and sex abuse treatment. We also prevented furloughs and layoffs for state employees, including the teachers upon whom our keiki’s learning growth depends.

Speaking of schools, we passed HB 613, which, if signed into law, will give teachers a \$2,200 retention incentive to remain in their classrooms. This is a modest reward for hardworking educators, especially in our district, which is the area that is most impacted by Hawai‘i’s ongoing teacher shortage.

2021 Legislative Victories

- HB 58: generates \$225-\$250 million over the next two years by taxing luxury real estate investments and closing GET exemptions that unfairly favor corporate interests.
- HB 558: establishes clean ground transportation goals for state agencies and accelerates acquisition of electric vehicles for government fleets.
- HB 576: expands access to reproductive care in remote communities by allowing advanced practice registered nurses to perform abortion procedures.
- HB 613: provides a \$2,200 retention incentive to public school teachers, as well as funding for trauma-informed care services and COVID-19 school safety protocols.
- SB 159: enacts automatic voter registration by making a voter registration application part of all state identification card and driver's license applications.
- SB 664: provides funding for the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission.
- SB 793: eliminates the sub-minimum wage for individuals with disabilities.
- HCR 112/SCR 140: declares a climate emergency for the State of Hawai'i.

To assist Hawai'i's women, we worked to expand access to reproductive care on the neighbor islands by allowing advanced practice registered nurses to perform abortion services. Additionally, we passed legislation that will strengthen the islands' fight against sex trafficking by holding sex buyers who target children fully accountable for the harm that they cause.

Climate change is an existential threat to Hawai'i and the world we share. I'm proud to have stood with my colleagues to declare a climate emergency for our state and supported measures that will enact clean transportation goals for our aviation industry and our government vehicle fleets.

Finally, I'm excited that lawmakers expanded the Coffee Berry Borer Beetle subsidy program to provide funding for our fight against coffee leaf rust. While I'm disappointed that the measure we passed focused heavily on pesticides, I promise to work with our district's coffee farmers to ensure that this program is further broadened to include fertilizers needed to ensure that our coffee trees are healthy enough to fend off infections of leaf rust.

That said, I know that more needs to be done to deliver a bright future to our islands' people. It is unconscionable to me that thousands of employees lack sick leave during the pandemic and are now struggling to return to financial prosperity. Accordingly, I am committed to creating a living wage of at least \$17/hour, establishing paid sick and family leave programs, and exempting unemployment insurance from our state's income tax.

We must also pass further policies to protect our 'aina, including a comprehensive green fee program to fund conservation initiatives and create green jobs, as well as a carbon tax and dividend program to accelerate our state's transition to a clean energy economy. Investing in regenerative agriculture, too, is of utmost importance in advancing a sustainable Hawai'i.

Furthermore, we should continue to fight to increase funding for public schools and give educators the resources they need to help our children succeed. And it is imperative that we establish truly affordable housing and a universal healthcare system, so that housing costs and medical bills no longer lead to bankruptcy.

As we celebrate this year's successes, we must organize for the political battles that we haven't yet won. I am dedicated to striving tirelessly to deliver the future our community deserves.

With aloha,

Jeanné Kapela

State House, District 5