



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Please join us for lunch

MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2006

11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Miyama Main Hall, Harris United Methodist Church

Nuuanu Ave. and South Vineyard Blvd.

Ample parking - driveway off Nuuanu Ave.

AGENDA:

11:30 Lunch: Eggplant Parmesan w/Pasta, Salad and Dessert by Eloise, \$5.00 donation

11:45 Welcome, Introductions and Remarks, Larry Geller, President

11: 50 Legislative Report

12:00 Program: Panel: "It's Not Where You Live, It's How You Live—Maintaining Quality of Life in Any Setting," *Nanette Geller, Options for Elders Geriatric Mental Health Consultant; Deborah Jackson, Eldercare Hawaii; Barbara Kim Stanton, State Director, AARP*

12:45 Announcements

1:00 Adjourn

Board Meeting: 10:00 a.m. preceding lunch

Donations for the Homeless: The Kokua Council Board of Directors has voted to contribute to a fund for the homeless. In addition, we will collect donations from anyone wishing to contribute during the luncheon meeting.

PRESS RELEASE

GROUP CALLS UPON HAWAII LEGISLATURE TO PROHIBIT LOBBYIST CONTRIBUTIONS DURING SESSION

Since the Abramoff/DeLay lobbying scandal broke, talk of reform has reverberated in the halls of Congress. A movement has also started in Hawaii to counter the pervasive influence of lobbyist and special interest money on the legislative process at the state level.

A letter was delivered today by fourteen organizations to Speaker of the House Calvin Say and Judiciary Chair Sylvia Luke. The letter requests passage of Senate Bill 1061, a measure prohibiting lobbyist contributions during the legislative session.

This bill was passed unanimously by the Senate but deferred by the Judiciary chair. The letter requests that this bill be passed as a first step to assure that the legislature is making its decisions in the public interest.

Several lawmakers held major fundraisers even as the bill progressed through the legislature. The writers hold that having a financial relationship with people who lobby for particular legislation during the period of their decision-making is a conflict of interest.

According to Larry Geller, President of Kokua Council, "This is the start of a comprehensive grassroots movement aimed at reforming the Hawaii State Legislature. We need to reclaim the democratic process in which our representatives are responsible first to the voters and not to special interests."

A popular "Voter Owned Elections" or "Clean Elections" campaign has also gained momentum. Activists are researching and revealing the extent to which lobbyists have targeted contributions to powerful committee chairs and others who can determine the outcome of special interest bills.

Another effort is underway to reveal the extent to which corporate executives and employees have been placed in legislative offices under an internship program designed for university students and others who want to have some basic experience of how the legislature operates.

George Fox, Executive Director of Citizen Voice states "it's about time for legislators to step up and represent the folks that elect them and not the

lobbyists who are always working against the public interest and for the bottom line of their employers."

"Perhaps the Abramoff scandals in Washington have energized ordinary people to make their government more open and accountable to them as voters," said Mr. Geller.

The groups below presented a petition to Rep. Calvin Say and Rep. Sylvia Luke to pass SB1061 Lobbyist Contribution Ban to Legislators During Session.

Advocates for Consumer Rights
Citizen Voice
Hawaii Consumers
Hawaii Institute for Human Rights
Hawaii Media Action Group
Hawaii Pro-Democracy Initiative
Kokua Council
League of Women Voters of Maui
League of Women Voters of Hawaii
League of Women Voters of Hawaii County
League of Women Voters of Honolulu
League of Women Voter of Kauai
Right to Know Committee
Voter Owned Elections

NINETEEN LEGISLATORS JOIN BIPARTISAN KUPUNA CAUCUS

With bills ranging from Identity Fraud, Refundable Tax Credit for Caregiver Support, to Pedestrian Safety, the legislators listed below have organized to support legislation that will help elders. Senator Chun Oakland's Elder Abuse Committee is now subsumed in the Kupuna Caucus. The meeting held on April 12 will be reported in the next newsletter.

Co-Conveners

Rep. Dennis Arakaki (D)
Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland (D)
Sen. Les Ihara (D)
Rep. Cynthia Thielen (R)

Members

Sen. Rosalyn Baker (D)
Rep. Rida Cabanilla (D)
Rep. Mele Carroll (D)
Rep. Corrine Ching (R)
Sen. Carol Fukunaga (D)

Sen. Colleen Hanabusa (D)
Rep. Michael Magaoay (D)
Rep. Barbara Marumoto (R)
Rep. Hermina Morita (D)
Sen. Clarence Nishihara (D)
Sen. Norman Sakamoto (D)
Rep. Alex Sonson (D)
Rep. Joseph Souki (D)
Rep. Kameo Tanaka (D)
Sen. Shan Tsutsui (D)

Thank you legislators, we are looking forward to good legislation that we can support.

COMING EVENTS

- Kokua Council treasurer **T. J. Davies** will be recognized for his volunteer work at the City and County Senior Recognition event to be held on **Monday, April 24th, from 9:30-11:30**, at the Sheraton Waikiki Hotel Kauai Ballroom.
- Volunteers are invited to join **AARP Hawaii** on **Thursday, May 11** in a statewide community service project aimed at promoting pedestrian safety. Call

545-6003 or write hiaarp@aarp.org to find out how to take part in a **National Day of Service** project aimed at making Hawaii's crosswalks and intersections safer for people on foot.

•**"The Weapons of Fraud,"** Friday, May 19, 2006, Ala Moana Hotel, Garden Lanai Room, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Register (toll free) at 1-877-926-8300;

presented by author/expert Doug Shadel. A free workshop— Refreshments Provided.

• Next Kokua Council Meeting: Scott Spallina, Deputy Prosecuting Attorney. He specializes in

prosecuting domestic violence cases and is a senior deputy in the Domestic Violence Felony Unit.

AGING ISSUES 2006: A Briefing Guide for Hawaii State Legislators

This report, written by our Dr. Anthony Lenzer and published by the office of Senator Les Ihara, Jr., identifies seven issue areas that influence the well being of Hawaii’s older citizens and their families. Copies were distributed at our last Kokua Council meeting. The report describes the bills and resolutions that are available to deal with these issues during the Legislative Session. Its intent is to give legislators and others a sense of how the many bills introduced during the 2005-6 legislative session relate to each other and to major areas of concern. It

does not give any priority order but is intended as an inventory. The guide is available from Sen. Ihara’s Office, Room 217 or call 586-6250.

Although the legislative session will be almost over by the time you read this, we thought you ought to know about the report and read it. Many of the bills will be in conference committees to work out differences and some may be dead, but may live another day. In any case, we hope this issue is the first of a yearly series that can be published early in each session.

Hawaii Caregiver Coalition—Legislative Thank You Project

Show your appreciation to your elected officials for supporting legislation that makes life easier for family caregivers! Many proposals are being discussed that such as:

- \$1,000 refundable caregiver tax credit
- Standardized educational curriculum for professional and family caregivers
- Convenient access to Hawaii’s long-term care system
- Statewide coordination of caregiver support services and policies
- Expanding respite services
- Housing and visitation rights for grandparents raising grandchildren

Please take a moment to thank your legislator for considering these bills. We anticipate that many will pass. Please be sure to include:

- ✓ **Who you care for (i.e. my dad, my wife, my mother-in-law, etc.);**
- ✓ **The length of time you’ve been a caregiver (i.e. 8 months, 3 years, etc.);**
- ✓ **How these potentially new laws will be beneficial (i.e. I pay \$25/hour for a nurse aide and a \$1,000 a tax credit will allow me to purchase 45 hours of services).**

Thank you for sharing your comments. We’ll compile these notes of appreciation into a booklet that will be given to each Legislator. *Please return no later than Tuesday, April 25, 2006 by mail to the Executive Office on Aging, 250 S. Hotel Street, Suite 406, Honolulu, HI 96813 or by fax at 808-586-0185.*

Hawaii Caregiver Coalition

Improving the Quality of Life for Those Who Give & Receive Care

Name: _____ Town: _____



c/o Harris United Methodist Church
 20 South Vineyard Blvd.
 Honolulu, HI 96813

Who Are We?

The **Kokua Council** is one of Hawaii’s oldest advocacy groups. There is a \$5 annual membership to defray printing and postage costs. At each meeting, topical issues are presented for discussion and possible action. We embrace diversity and extend a special invitation to any senior or intergenerational minded individual interested in advocating for these important issues in Hawaii.” All are welcome. **WHEN** 4th Monday of every month, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. **WHERE** Harris United Methodist Church @ Nuuanu and Vineyard Blvd., Ample parking and a light lunch are provided for \$5. **REACH US** c/o Harris United Methodist Church, 20 South Vineyard, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Mission: “Kokua Council seeks to empower seniors and other concerned citizens to be effective advocates in shaping the future and well-being of our community, with particular attention to those needing help in advocating for themselves. “

- Website: www.kokuacouncil.org
- President Larry Geller, 540-1928, lgeller@igc.org Treasurer Ed. Fund T.J. Davies <tjdavies@juno.com>
- Vice President Tony Lenzer, 261-2095, tlenzer@hawaii.rr.com Treasurer Advocacy Evelyn Shepard
- Vice President Laura Manis, 597-8838, manis@lava.net
- Secretary Betty Sugarman, 261-8936, betty333@lava.net
- General Info Eloise Monsarrat, 839-1545
- Newsletter Jeanne Y. Ohta, 373-3186, jyohta@hawaii.rr.com

JOIN KOKUA COUNCIL!

Yes! I want to join Kokua Council. Here are my annual dues and my contact information. I understand that my phone number will be added to the Kokua Phone Tree and I will receive the monthly newsletter and occasional e-mails. Our fiscal year starts in January. Please make checks payable to Kokua Council.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS	LIFE MEMBER	ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS	DONATIONS
_____ \$5.00	_____ \$100.00	_____ \$25.00	_____

Name _____ Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Mail to: Treasurer, Kokua Council, Harris United Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard Blvd.,
 Honolulu, HI 96813