



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Please join us for lunch
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 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 Luncheon: Tofu & Shiitake Mushroom Stir Fry, Roast Chicken, Vegetable Chow Mein
Rice & Tossed Salad, Drinks, and Dessert by Eloise. \$5.00 Donation

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

11:50 Legislation Report

12:00 Al Hamai, Hawaii Delegate to the White House Conference on Aging, The WHCOA advises the federal government on concerns of the aging to help develop public policy. How was this conference different from the others? Who attended this time? What was the role of the Hawaii delegation?

12:45 Announcements

1:00 Adjourn

Lunch Hosts: Rose Ann Poyzer

BOARD MEETING: 10:00 a.m. Preceding Lunch

Please pay your 2006 dues. \$5.00 to Kokua Council, Harris Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard Blvd. Honolulu HI 96813

Letters to Editor

“You have done a superb job of morphing the EAD Silver Legislature process into one that is citizen owned. Because of that ownership by you and other senior advocates, it has become more powerful. This is exactly what Lynette [Kurren, deceased former director] wanted to happen and I am so very pleased. Thank you for your commitment, perseverance and tremendous leadership!” Karen Miyake, Dtr, Elderly Affairs Division, City and County of Oahu

“I would like to let you know that I am happy that there is now a "Kupuna Caucus" at the Capitol and within our wider statewide aging network. I know that this caucus is discussing the bills that came out of the 2005 Silver Legislature. This office fully supported this event and its process, which is now ongoing, as evidenced by this new caucus.” John Tomoso, Maui Agency on Aging

To find out what bills have been introduced and to track legislation, go to <http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov>
Use the Public Access Room, State Capitol, Room 401 to review Bills, Hearing Notices, Referral Sheets, for Photocopying testimony, distribution of testimony to proper Committee, to use computers for drafting testimony.

Kokua Council has a box in the Access Room for advocates to leave messages for each other.

VOTER OWNED ELECTIONS - Kory Payne, Field Director,

1. We've added new staff. Alicia Maluafiti and John Higgins are leading our legislative contact and advocacy effort, and Kory Payne is our new Field Coordinator. Katie Berry is coordinating students as a Democracy Matters intern. Expect to be hearing from some of these folks.

2. Away we go! The curtains of the 2006 Legislature have opened and at the center of the stage are none other than political corruption and campaign violations. From the current Jack Abramoff scandal on the national scene, to the campaign contribution convictions and fines here in Hawai'i, the time to pass Public Funding option for candidates has never been better.

For far too long have mainland and local developers, tobacco, drug, and oil companies influenced our local government with their campaign donations. For far too long have our elected officials been forced to spend much of their limited time collecting large amounts of corporate money in order to fund their election campaigns - time which might have been better spent studying the vital issues confronting Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your continued interest in Voter Owned Hawai'i and our legislative effort!

Office: 808-599-1600 kory@voterownedhawaii.org

NOTES FROM JANUARY MEETING- ALICIA MULUAFITI

How Do Voter Owned Elections Work?

- The program is voluntary. Candidates decide whether to run on public money.
- No private money could be raised or used if running as a VOE candidate.
- Spending by candidates would be limited to the amount they receive from a fund by qualifying by raising a minimum number of signatures and \$5 from registered voters in their district.
- Enough public money would be provided to run and win a competitive race.
- VOE candidates agree not to seek or use private money while in office.

Why is it good for candidates?

- They will be free to run on the strength of their ideas not their wallets.
- They will avoid any perception of obligation towards campaign contributors.
- Free candidates from fundraising, allowing them more time to serve the public interest.
- Allow people from many different backgrounds to have a fair chance at running for office.

Will it work?

- In Arizona, in 1998 79% of all races were won by the candidate with the most money. In 2002 the percentage dropped to 2%.
- Both parties benefited. 22 Republicans and 17 Democrats won using public funding.
- In Maine, 79% of all Maine legislators won using public funding in 2004.

Is Public Funding good for Labor?

- Labor is vastly outspent. Big business gave \$2.2 billion, labor unions only \$187 million.
- In Hawaii, unions contributed only 1/5th of the total funds given to candidates in 2004.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE LEGISLATURE- As of deadline 2/10/06

It appears there will be a strong push to kill the gas cap and Single Payer Universal Healthcare. It will be a really big fight. Both are on (the administrations) kill list and when the time comes any testimony in favor will be greatly appreciated. Aloha, George Fox (But see below)

HB 2107 Caregiver Grant hearing scheduled at 10 AM was finally heard at 1 PM. All those waiting to testify on the 10 am hearing were treated to lunch in HUS.-Vice Chair Dr. Green's office—lots of delicious Korean food. Florence Lau

Re: SB 2343--Criminal History Record Checks heard on Fri., 2/3. **Passed** Health and Human Services with technical amendments. I spoke to Sen. Chun-Oakland after the session and she said that they feel a bit more confident of passage as they tried to address many of Sen. Hanabusa's objections of last year. Sen. Baker commented that this may be the lucky year for passage. Bob Masuda

HB 2670 Creates Authority for Universal Health (Silver Legislature Bill) **Passed** Health Committee.

HB2107 Caregiver Grant passed Health committee.

Hi---and HOORAY!! HB3128, our single-payer universal health care bill, passed out of committee today, against all odds!! An initial double referral to two committees is considered the "kiss of death" usually, so we're jumping up and down for joy!

It was touch and go, and the first attempt to get a quorum to vote on HB3128 failed. The second attempt the next day, would have been the last try, and they were one short of a quorum again---and Jim was running around catching legislators!

But as soon as the number for a quorum was reached, they voted, and the bill passed in minutes!

Thanks to everyone for your testimonies at the Feb. 3rd hearing. There were as many of "Us" as there were of the vested interests testifying on the bill, and we held our own! Jim Brewer, Renee Ing

I'm a new member of KOKUA COUNCIL. Reason to join was to put my 30+ years of work and volunteer experiences to a meaningful use.

Until two years ago, I was "too busy" and didn't pay attention to my own aging—I'll live forever. Now, I want to know: 1. process of aging, pros and cons, 2. what's happening to other "silver seniors" like myself who are getting old, 3. what services are available when we need them in our "sunset" era.

To me, the quickest way to find out what's happening in the community was to explore the legislative process where people's thoughts and wishes are expressed and they are ultimately translated into Legislative Bills. This led me to determine, if even one voice, like myself, can make a difference that results in a Bill that helps others, I want to help. I have testified on several Bills related to "caregiver/caregiving."

If you, too, would like to join me as a "silver senior advocate" join KOKUA COUNCIL, it's worth your curiosity, effort, and energy..... IMUA...LET'S GO FORWARD!!!

Submitted by Florence M. Lau

COMING UP

WHAT: Hawaii's International Active Aging Conference

WHERE: IMIN Conference Center, East West Center, Marriott and Pacific Beach Hotels

WHEN: February 26-28, 2006

WHY: International global exchange to share ideas and find solutions to the challenges that face the rapidly increasing global elder population.

SPONSORED BY: Center on Aging, University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Other supporting organizations include the School of Social Work, UH Center for Japanese Studies, Hawaii State Executive Office on Aging, Department Business, Economic Development and Tourism, Volunteer Resource Center of Hawaii, and Hale Makua Nursing Facility (Maui).

Hawaii's Senior Tsunami – Finding Solutions from East Asia?

Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann said "Hawaii's older adult population, increasing three times faster than our total population, continues to outpace national statistics. Life expectancy is rising in our island state, with women outnumbering men and experiencing growing financial and physical challenges."

Given the challenges facing Hawaii, the University of Hawaii is convening this international

meeting with senior care experts to discuss best practices in Hawaii, China, Japan and Korea. Can we learn from each other? Are there methods or approaches that will allow us to become more efficient and creative in how aging is addressed in the 21st Century?

Those interested in participating should call VRCH at 236-9201 to register. 2/27 only/\$100 & 2/26-2/28 \$300.



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 defer 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. "

President Larry Geller, 540-1928, lgeller@igc.org
 Vice President Tony Lenzer, 261-2095,
tlenzer@hawaii.rr.com
 Vice President Laura Manis, 597-8838, manis@lava.net
 Website: www.kokuacouncil.org

Secretary Betty Sugarman, 261-8936<betty333@lava.net>
 General Info Eloise Monsarrat, 839-1545
 Program
 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
 ___ \$5.00 ___ \$100.00 ___ \$25.00 DONATIONS _____

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