

KOKUA



COUNCIL

WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

!!!WE'RE DOING SOMETHING DIFFERENT!!!

**NO LUNCHEON MEETING IN MAY AT HARRIS
INSTEAD JOIN US MAY 13, 8:30AM AT THE STATE CAPITOL**

Room 329

Note room change from earlier notice

**HARA /Kokua Council Legislative Review Forum for 2009
"THE GOOD, BAD AND UGLY"**

HARA and Kokua Council are hosting a third Legislative Review on **Wednesday, May 13 from 8:30 to 12 noon at the Hawaii State Capitol, Room 329**. We are meeting to a sum up of activities of the 2009 legislative session to help us to evaluate its successes and failures. More than ever, we believe it is important for like-minded organizations to work together toward common goals. Last year's Forum was attended by over 80 people, representing 30 organizations and members of the community. **We invite you to come early and join us for a continental breakfast. Then at the end of the program, about 11:30 a.m., we will host a light lunch to give us all an opportunity to engage in more informal conversation**

8:30 to 9:00 -- Registration (with name tags) and continental breakfast

9:00 to 9:20 -- Welcome and Introductions by HARA President Al Hamai, followed by greetings from President Colleen Hanabusa* and Speaker Calvin Say*

9:20 to 9:30 -- Questions and answers

9:30 to 9:40 -- Assessment of 2007 session by Majority Leaders, Senator Gary Hooser,* Rep. Blake Oshiro

9:40 to 9:50 Questions and answers.

9:50 to 10:20 -- Reports; Rep. Ryan Yamane, Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland*, Rep. Marilyn Lee* and from the minority party, Rep. Cynthia Theilen*.

10:20 to 11:20 -- Reaction and suggestions from the audience

11:20 to 11:30 -- Presentation of Awards

11:30 to 12:30 -- Light lunch and mingling

* confirmed

We hope you will be able to join us. Please RSVP to Laura Manis at 597-8838 or manis@lava.net by May 8th. We look forward to your participation in our 2009 Legislative Review.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT AS OF MAY 1

Sent to Governor:

HB319 Family Leave: Requires employers to notify employees annually of their entitlement to family leave and possible adverse impact.

Success! HB1212 Information Practices: Would have eliminated the record of complaints including dispositions from the Consumer Protection website. **DEAD**

Passed Conference:

HB982 Family Leave Data Collection: Includes private as well as public employers.

SB971 Income Tax; Conforms to Federal Law. Does not tax pensions.

HB895 Tobacco tax: Increases tax on tobacco products other than cigarettes to 60% of wholesale price. 33% will go to community health centers.

SB281 Traffic code: Allows counties to prohibit/regulate recreational electric personal mobility devices on sidewalk.

The budget bills have passed but differ from the Governor's. By the time you read this, she may have vetoed it.

We will have a more detailed report on our legislative progress in the next newsletter.

WATCH US ON T.V.!!

DATE: June 18, Channel 10, "The Graying of Hawaii" time not certain yet. It will be shown either before or after "Island Insights." Kokua Council members are featured many times on this excellent documentary directed and produced by Mark Delorme and assisted by Audrey Kubota.

THE FOLLOWING ARE TIPS FROM THE CDC ON AVOIDING THE SWINE FLU

There are everyday actions people can take to stay healthy.

- * Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- * Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- * Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
 - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
 -

"Remember When...?" The Value of Reminiscing

All people reminisce. Remembering times past is a pleasant diversion, stimulates the mind, and helps give us perspective and a sense of who we are. As a recent study from the Association for Psychological Science states, "Nostalgia is now emerging as a fundamental human strength."

Sometimes family members and friends are concerned when senior loved ones repeat stories, returning to the same ones again and again. But this can be a beneficial part of the life review process.

Reminiscing, the process of "life review," is an important part of old age. As seniors recall their accomplishments and come to terms with past conflicts and disappointments, they achieve a heightened sense of personal identity and meaning in life.

Reminiscing also enhances self-esteem. Studies suggest that seniors who are encouraged to share events from their lives with others experience an increased sense of peace and self-worth. We all have a lifelong need to see ourselves as unique individuals, and the recollection of pleasant experiences, past accomplishments, and triumphs over adversity is part of this

NOTES FROM APRIL LUNCHEON-“HOME FOR LIFE”, Anthony Lenzer, Bonnie Osaki

The Kupuna Caucus with the goal of empowering people of all generations to age in place started the Home for Life task force. A working group of 10 people from various disciplines have been focusing on three areas.

1. Encouraging more multiple person housing by analyzing codes, laws and regulations. They will propose legislation that will facilitate aging in place and multigenerational housing. For example, speeding up the permitting process, Ohana housing.
2. Helping the elderly and disabled improve existing unsuitable residences by identifying structural and design barriers. For example, many homes were built in the 1950's with narrow doorways, small bathrooms and 36-inch high counters. All of which cannot accommodate wheelchairs. Bathrooms are the most dangerous and should have grab bars and lower counters.
3. Encouraging the construction industry to use “universal design” concepts for new home and condo construction. Universal design includes large entries, non-slip flooring, good lighting, using lever handles to open doors and cabinets. The task force is investigating incentives to encourage compliance by the building industry.

The task force is also concerned about having trained competent professionals doing remodeling and are currently conducting a survey of members of the Building Association of Hawaii. They are asking have you done this sort of remodeling, what was covered, and what was the cost? When the survey is completed they will be able to recommend companies that are suitable for the type of remodeling needed.

Reacting to concerns of high costs, they informed the audience of a little known program of the City and County of Honolulu to provide low interest loans for remodeling projects. Maui County has a Federal grant for the same purpose.

Finally, we are all invited to a more extensive presentation on August 15, 9:30-11:30 at the Honolulu Country Club, Free, Refreshments included. Call 593-2808, information and reservations.

Coalition Releases Health Care Reform Recommendations for Seniors

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) yesterday released detailed agenda recommendations for national health care reform. LCAO is a coalition of 60 national not-for-profit organizations concerned with the well being of America's 87 million people over age 50. Highlights of the recommendations include creating a national public-plan option as an alternative to private health insurers and using the government's bulk purchasing power to negotiate volume discounts from drug manufacturers. The full recommendations are available at www.lcao.org.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

•Hawaii People's Fund and Hawaii Community Foundation Invite You to Meet their 2008 Grantees **EXPO** for Community Change, A public exhibition of community organizations you should know *Grassroots and Homegrown*, **Saturday, May 16, 10 am-12 noon**, Kapiolani Community College – Ohia Building (*above the weekly Farmers Market*). Free and Open to All, Refreshments Included. Over 30 groups funded in 2008 have been invited to participate. For more information call 845-4800.

•Grief and Bereavement Meeting; Honolulu Adult Group, 1st Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Hospice Hawaii. 860 Iwilei Rd.



Kokua Council for Senior Citizens

Education Fund, Inc.

20 South Vineyard Blvd.
Honolulu, HI 96813
<http://www.kokuacouncil.org>

Return Service requested

WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

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 advocates and 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	Treasurer Ed. Fund	T.J. Davies, 593-1026, tjdavies@juno.com
Vice President	Tony Lenzer, 261-2095, tlenzer@hawaii.rr.com	Treasurer Advocacy	Evelyn Shepard 595-4025
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Secretary	Lynda Gretz, 552-1464, lyndabearden@gmail.com	Newsletter	Jeanne Y. Ohta, 373-3186, jyohta@hawaii.rr.com

Website: www.kokuacouncil.org

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