



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

PLEASE JOIN US FOR LUNCH

Monday, February 22, 2016 Miyama Main Hall, Harris United Methodist Church
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Nuuanu Ave. and S. Vineyard Blvd.—Ample parking—driveway off Nuuanu Ave

Agenda:

11:30 **Luncheon (optional): Various Pizzas, Salad, and Dessert**—\$5.00 Donation

11:55 **Welcome, Introductions and Remarks**

12:00 **Program:** Victor Geminiani: **“The barriers to economic justice for low and moderate income residents in Hawaii and some thoughts on reversing the downward trend”**

Victor Geminiani is Co-Executive Director of the Hawai‘i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice. He has been recognized for his contributions to legal services delivery by being presented with the Reginald Heber Smith Award by National Legal Aid and Defender Association, John Minor Wisdom Award by the ABA's Litigation Section, and the Social Justice Award by Hawai‘i State Bar Association's Champion.

1:00 **Adjourn**

TIME TO PAY YOUR 2016 KOKUA COUNCIL DUES. Look at your address label to see last payment date. Individual memberships are \$10.00, Lifetime \$100, Organization \$25.00. Send payments to Kokua Council, c/o Harris Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard Blvd., Honolulu HI 96813. Donations are also welcome. Check our website at <http://www.kokuacouncil.org> **Note:** the mailing list is undergoing revision, there may be some errors in the date on your label! We hope to have everything in shape soon.

-- **Special membership premium** -- New members may request a free copy of the DVD "Graying of Hawaii" by checking the box on the membership form. The video was produced by videographer Marc Delorme and directed by Audrey Kubota and was featured in a two-hour special on PBS Hawaii in 2009.

Inside:

Long-term care bill passes initial legislative hurdles

(see p.2)

How to get emails when a bill is scheduled for a hearing

(see p.3)

Long-term care bill passes initial legislative hurdles

A bill that would provide a benefit of \$70 per day for up to one year of in-home care and would help seniors wishing to “age in place” has passed its first hurdles in the 2016 Legislature. [SB2478](#) passed the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health on February 10 and the Senate Committee on Human Services on February 11. The next stop for this bill will be Ways and Means, where it may face its first challenge.

The bill calls for funding the long-term care insurance via a 0.5 percent increase in the general excise tax, considered by most to be a regressive tax. The City and County of Honolulu has recently voted to continue the 0.5 percent rail surcharge through 2027, and another bill moving through the Legislature proposes a 1 percent increase in the GET to fund air conditioning for school classrooms. For those living on fixed incomes as well as for low- or moderate-income families, any increase in the GET becomes a burden, so the outcome of these requests may become uncertain as the legislative session moves forward.

Senior advocacy organizations have fought for long-term care insurance for almost a decade. This could be the year that it finally moves out of the Legislature.

HSPAN – the Hawai‘i Statewide Public Access Network – provides video access to Legislative hearings and meetings



For those who can't get down to the Capitol or who live on Neighbor Islands, `Olelo's new HSPAN service brings the Capitol to you. The service began at the end of January and is available on cable channel 50 or [on demand](#) via a computer.

To access HSPAN from a computer, go to olelo.org and click on “Whats On” and then on “HSPAN”.

The new service is in addition to the existing Capitol TV that airs on channels 49 and 54.

Now, all we need is a way to testify via video link and Neighbor Islands residents will gain a measure of equality with those living on Oahu who can easily get to the State Capitol by car, bus or even hoverboard (spotted several times on Beretania Street).

Department of Health tries to squeak out of its responsibility to post care home reports

SB1114 was added to a committee agenda on Wednesday, February 11. The bill would have eliminated the requirement that DOH post care home inspection reports and would have eliminated two classes of homes entirely from the law.

Kokua Council president Marc Delorme and board members Barbara Service, Jim Shon, T. J. Davies Jr. and Larry Geller testified against the bill, which was ultimately deferred by the committee chair.

Many more reports have been posted on the DOH website since Kokua Council filed a Sunshine Law request demanding copies of all inspections. The request is still pending, but at least more information has so far been made available to the public.



Correction: How to get emails when a bill is scheduled for a hearing

In the January newsletter I reported that there was no easy way to get emails when a bill you are following comes up for a hearing. It seems that was incorrect—there is a way. Here is a guide to getting your emails..

1. Go to <http://capitol.hawaii.gov> and sign in or register.



2. Click on Hearing Notification, towards the middle of the web page.



3. Enter the bill number with no spaces



4. Click the blue "Add" button. That's it!



Kokua Council for Senior Citizens of Hawaii Education Fund, Inc.
 20 South Vineyard Blvd.
 Honolulu, HI 96813
<http://www.kokuacouncil.org>

Return Service requested

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February 22 meeting: “The barriers to economic justice for low and moderate income residents in Hawaii and some thoughts on reversing the downward trend”--see inside for details

Who Are We?

Kokua Council is one of Hawaii’s oldest advocacy groups. There is a **\$10.00 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. There is ample parking. A light lunch is provided for a \$5 donation. **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. “

Board Members

President Marc Delorme

Vice President Laura Manis, 597-8838, manis1350@gmail.com

Secretary Helen Wagner, 247-7962, helennjeff@hawaii.rr.com

Treasurer /Advocacy Barbara Service, 732-3688

Treasurer, Education Fund, T.J. Davies, tjdavies@juno.com

Charles Carole, Samuel Cox, Marilyn Seeley

Jim Shon, Larry Geller

Website: www.kokuacouncil.org Newsletter editor: Larry Geller



JOIN KOKUA COUNCIL! **New member premium – check to receive free DVD (see p. 1)**

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 Member __ \$10.00 Life Member __ \$100.00 Organizational Member __ \$25.00

Donations: 501(c)(4) Advocacy _____ Education Fund: 501(c)(3) _____ (Tax Deductible)

Date _____

Name _____ Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Mail to: Treasurer, Kokua Council, Harris United Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard Blvd., Honolulu, HI 9681