



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Please join us for the 10th Annual Post Legislative Forum

"The Good, Bad, and the Ugly"

Sponsored by the Hawaii Alliance for Retired Americans (HARA) and Kokua Council

Wednesday, May 25, 2016 8:30 am to noon at the State Capitol, Room 325

Cost: Free A continental breakfast and light lunch will be provided.

Invited Speakers include:

Senator Ronald Kouchi, Senate President

Representative Joseph Souki, House Speaker

Senator Will Espero

Senator Rosalyn Baker

Senator Laura Thielen

Representative John Mizuno

Representative Mark Hashem

Representative Beth Fukumoto Chang

Representative Dee Morikawa

Representative Cynthia Thielen

To reserve a space, **please RSVP** by calling 722-9937 or email: wongj060@hawaii.rr.com.

The Legislative Review is a forum to hear from legislators about how senior issues fared this session and to allow attendees to share issues and concerns that may be considered in the 2017 Legislative Session and beyond.

Kokua Council Windward: Thursday, May 12: "Same-Sex Marriage after 20 years", with Justice Steve Levinson COMMUNITY WELCOME

11:30 (Optional) — Buffet Lunch in Dining Room, \$11. Reservation and Information: Samuel Cox (808) 779-3606 or revsamuelcox@gmail.com.

12:30 Program: "Same-Sex Marriage after 20 years"

Inside:

Kokua Council Windward Chapter program details

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Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland will not stand for re-election

(see p.2)

Telephone assistance is available to apply for SNAP benefits ("food stamps")

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Hawaii Legislature passes the CARE Act

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Kokua Council Windward Chapter

May meeting at Pohai Nani Retirement Community, 45-090

Namoku Street, Kaneohe, 2nd Floor Club Room

Thursday, May 12, 2016

12:30 – 1:30 p.m. **Public welcome.**

“Same-Sex Marriage after 20 years” with with Former Hawaii Supreme Court Justice Steve Levinson

Justice Levinson reflects on why marriage matters 20 years after historic HI ruling. Twenty years ago, Steven Levinson and the Hawaii Supreme Court made history.

In May of 1993 Levinson authored the Hawaii Supreme Court opinion in Baehr v. Lewin (later, it became Baehr v. Miike), which became the first appellate court decision in global history to find that a state constitution presumptively prohibited the exclusion of same-sex couples from access to marriage. In his opinion, Levinson declared that denying marriage to same-sex couples violates the equal protection clause of the Hawaii Constitution, and that if the state could not show sufficient justification for its denial of the freedom to marry, the ban on same-sex couples marrying would be overturned.

Discussion will follow.

He may also want to spend a bit of his time talking about some pending legislation that could significantly reduce the pay of Hawaii judges and cause serious problems.

For more information call Dick Miller 808 254-1796, Samuel Cox 808 779-3606, or Ruth Peterson (808) 236-7814. Optional buffet starts at 11:30 a.m. Call Samuel Cox for reservations.

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland will not stand for re-election

A request to Senator Chun Oakland’s office for a list of Kupuna Caucus bills that passed the just-ended legislative session instead yielded the reply that the Senator would not be continuing in

office. The news broke later in [Civil Beat](#). Senator Chun Oakland was the primary leader of the Kupuna Caucus and also the Keiki Caucus, among her other leadership endeavors. She will be missed.

Telephone assistance is available to apply for SNAP benefits (“food stamps”)

Roughly one in five Hawaii seniors live in poverty under the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM), which takes into account the cost of housing, utility and medical costs. Sadly, seniors in their 70s or even their 80s can be found among the homeless living in shelters or on the streets. Hawaii’s senior poverty rate is around the second in the nation, after California, under the SPM.

For those still living at home, the high cost of housing can make it difficult to juggle paying for rent and for food. Nationally, only about one third of seniors who would qualify for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participate, according to the USDA.

In Hawaii, anyone wanting to check to see if they might qualify for SNAP benefits can get assistance from Helping Hands Hawaii at (808) 536-7234. Helping Hands does a preliminary screening on the phone, provides assistance with the paperwork, and provide language interpretation when necessary. They may also be able to assist by making a home visit.

Hawaii Legislature passes the CARE Act

After a multi-year effort lead by the ARRP and other Hawaii advocacy organizations including Kokua Council, the Hawaii Legislature passed HB2252, the CARE Act, to join approximately 30 other states that already have this legislation. The CARE Act requires hospitals to give family caregivers instructions when a patient is discharged from the hospital. From the [ARRP announcement](#):

HB 2252 requires hospitals to establish procedures giving family caregivers the opportunity to be designated on a patient’s medical record, be notified in advance of a patient’s transfer or discharge, and receive instruction – prior to discharge – in medical tasks required when the patient goes home. The proposed measure would support unpaid caregivers who are often called on to provide complex medical care for which they receive

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USDA Nutrition 
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DYK? Only about one third of seniors who are eligible for SNAP participate in the program. [#OAM2016](#)



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little or no instruction.



Kokua Council for Senior Citizens of Hawaii Education Fund, Inc.
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<http://www.kokuacouncil.org>

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May 23 meeting: Jerry Coffee: “Homeless Overview and Update”

Kokua Council Windward: Thursday, May 12: “Same-Sex Marriage after 20 years”, with Justice Steve Levinson

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. “

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

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

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