



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

**Please join us for lunch
MONDAY, February 23, 2009**

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:** Vegetable/ Meat Lasagna, Garlic Bread, Salad, Dessert by Eloise- \$5.00 Donation
- 11:45 Welcome, Introductions and remarks, Larry Geller, President
- 12:00 **Program:** Karl Kim, Ph.D. U. H. Manoa, Department of Urban and Regional Planning
“**PLAN 670 - Overview of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance**”. Kim received his Ph.D. in Urban Studies and Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- 12:30 Questions and Answers
- 12:45 Announcements
- 1:00 Adjourn

Lunch Host: Grace Furukawa

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

KOKUA COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS, 2009-2010

OFFICERS	DIRECTORS	APPOINTED	
Larry Geller President	T.J. Davies, Jr.	Jim Shon	Program: Marilyn Seely
Tony Lenzer, 1 st Vice President	Eloise Monsarrat	Marilyn Seely	Legislative Chair: Laura Manis
Laura Manis, 2 nd Vice President	Lyn Moku	Harry Mattson	Newsletter: Jeanne Ohta
Lynda Gretz, Secretary.	Sam Cox	RoseAnn Poyzer	General Info: Eloise Monsarrat
Evelyn Shepard, Treasurer	George Fox	Phyllis Hiramatsu	Labels: Lyn Moku

Don't forget to pay your 2009 Membership Dues!! Look at your address label to see the last payment date. Individual dues continue to be \$5.00, Lifetime \$100, Organization \$25. Send payments to Kokua Council, Harris United Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard, Honolulu HI 96813. Donations welcome.

MEDICARE CAUTIONS ABOUT FRAUDULENT PHONE CALLS

A caller says he needs to know the name and address of the Medicare member in order to mail a new card. Another caller tells the Medicare member to make a one-time lump-sum payment and premium deductions from the member's Social Security benefits check will cease forever so please provide a bank account number. Medicare does not sell products or services nor is issuing a new card.

Do not volunteer personal information to anyone claiming to call from Medicare. If this happens, report the call to SMP Hawaii, a fraud prevention program at Executive Office on Aging at 586-7281. If you think you have given your bank account number to a scam artist call your bank immediately.

HOW TO FIND, TRACK AND SEND TESTIMONY FOR 2009 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Go to the legislature's website at www.capitol.hawaii.gov and click on the link to "Bill Status and Documents." The first box on that page will give you a resource for doing text searches to find bill numbers, if you don't already know them. Once you have bill numbers, you can put them into the blank space there in the first box and then choose what you want to see – 'status' (which is to say, the measure history), 'text' (which will give you all versions of the bill/s you've chosen), and 'committee reports' (which are the reports generated when a measure moves from one committee to the next).

To send in electronic testimony, follow the instructions on the bottom portion of the hearing notice. There on the "Bill Status and Docs" page, go down to the second box ("2007 interim/2008 regular session hearing notices") and choose the hearing notice you want. Instructions on providing testimony in various ways will be found in the section below the list of actual measures, beneath the line that says either "Decision Making to Follow" or "Decision Making to Follow if Time Allows." *Public Access Room*

JOIN THE FUN

In a 7-day time span that started January 21, three to four thousand bills were introduced, all of them envisioned by someone as a way to improve life in Hawaii Nei in some way. The entire rest of the session, until early May, will be devoted to winnowing those bills down to a few hundred laws. In the process, people will disagree, sometimes strongly, on which of them will truly help the most, and how.

Bills and resolutions will bump along from hearing to hearing, some changing, some staying the same, some dying. An amazing array of folks will sit in the hearing rooms, waiting their turns to be heard. They'll be elderly and young, homeless and wealthy, professional, amateur, clueless, profound, and everything in between. It's an exasperating, exhausting, empowering thing to see and be part of – it's democracy in action.

Come down to the Capitol and see for yourself. Hear the array of viewpoints being presented, debated, and (for some of them) turned into law. Bring your own opinions, your testimony on the bills that matter to you, and bring your laptops too if you'd like – almost the entire Capitol is WIFI-enabled now. (And if you can't come down, you can still write. You can be an active part of the legislature without leaving home these days, and it's pretty easy to learn how. *Suzanne Marinelli, Access Room State Capitol*

THE UNITED STATES PAYS MORE THAN TWICE AS MUCH PER PERSON FOR HEALTH CARE THAN THE AVERAGE OF THE OTHER WEALTHY COUNTRIES, ALL OF WHOM ENJOY LONGER LIFE EXPECTANCIES.

<http://www.calnurses.org/>: Establishing a national single-payer style healthcare reform system would created 2.6 million new jobs and \$317 billion in new business and public revenues, with another \$100 billion in wages according to the findings of a study. The number of jobs created by a single-payer system, expanding and upgrading Medicare to cover everyone, parallels almost exactly the total job loss in 2008.

LEARN MORE! ONGOING WORKSHOPS TWICE WEEKLY

Want to learn about the state legislature legislative process and how to participate more effectively? Public Access Room workshops are free and will be offered Tuesdays at 12 noon and Thursdays at 5 pm through March in room 401 at the State Capitol.

From Dr. Tim Fern. Medical Myth: We only use 10% of our brains.

No, but it sure seems like some people use less! Most of our brains don't "loaf," but brain studies haven't found the non-functioning 90%.

NOTES FROM JANUARY LUNCHEON- Coral Andrews, Vice President Healthcare Association of Hawaii. "Waitlisted Patient Issues, A Symptom of our Broken Health care System."

"The Health Care System is constipated", declared Andrews. Hawaii's healthcare system is broken. Symptoms of this broken system are waitlisted patients. These are patients deemed medically ready for discharge and no longer in need of acute care services but who cannot be discharged (due to various barriers) and therefore must remain in the higher cost hospital setting.

A Waitlist Task Force, working under the direction of the Healthcare Association of Hawaii's (HAH) Board of Directors, studied the waitlist issue and identified four barrier categories that contribute to the waitlisted problem. They are: reimbursement, capacity, regulatory/government and workforce. With waiting lists for any vacancy, nursing homes will select those whose reimbursement is assured, who present no behavior problems, and who require no special treatment for special needs. Especially out of luck because staff has no behavior management training or homes have not the special equipment for the care, are geriatric patients and younger, usually male long-term care patients. Recommendations aimed at addressing these barrier categories are summarized in the 2008 and 2009 Reports to the Legislature. HAH has introduced and will support legislative bills that address these barriers. The full report can be found at www.hah.org

QUEST EXPANDED ACCESS APPROVED DESPITE QUESTIONS

The state will proceed with the start of a new managed healthcare program for Medicaid recipients on Feb. 1, though some doctors and medical service providers say they aren't going to participate. Quest Expanded Access or QeXA — includes coordinators who will be tasked with lowering costs by improving care and decreasing hospital and nursing-home admissions for Aged, blind and disabled on Medicaid. Dr. Kenneth Fink, state Med-Quest Division Administrator said he would look into reports of health plan agreements being offered to physicians, pharmacies and others with reimbursement rates that are lower than are provided currently by the state.

"I've heard that," Fink said. "I've made a request that people send the contracts to me." The Small Business Regulatory Review Board requested that Fink report back to it on the program in the spring and said it passed a motion for review of QeXA rules relating to reimbursement.

GLOBAL WARNING FROM RASMUSSEN REPORTS:

- * 44% Say Global Warming Due To Planetary Trends, Not People
- * 41% who blame it on human activity
- * Fifty-nine percent (59%) of Democrats blame global warming on human activity, compared to 21% percent of Republicans

Global warming has been a contentious issue for many years now, and with Al Gore's documentary showing the effects of CO2 emissions on the planet, many have questioned whether this recent phenomenon is due to human activity or part of the planet's dynamic, ever changing cycling.

This author believes there is scientific evidence to support Gore's claims of global warming. There have been great fluctuations of temperature throughout the ages, but the Earth's recent increases in temperature have been out of the norm.

The U.S. Senate is debating President Obama's American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan, known as S. 1. The bill contains several important provisions that directly affect retirees.

- Retiree Stimulus Payment - A \$300 payment for all retirees receiving Social Security, SSI Benefits, Railroad Retirement benefits, or Veterans Benefits.
- Nursing Home Help - \$87 billion in help for state Medicaid programs. Medicaid funds are the single largest source for nursing home care.
- COBRA Help – A 65% percent subsidy for 9 months for workers who have lost their jobs from September 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009 so they can keep their health



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. “

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Vice President Tony Lenzer, 261-2095, tlenzer@hawaii.rr.com Treasurer Advocacy Evelyn Shepard 595-4025
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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