



**WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS**

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR LUNCH**

**Monday, January 24, 2011**

**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: Various Subway Sandwiches, Salad, and Dessert**—\$5.00 Donation
- 11:45 Welcome, Introductions and Remarks, Larry Geller, President
- 12:00 **Program:** Joy Yadao, St. Francis Palliative Care: What palliative care services are provided, who gets them, what kind of expansion has been done at St. Francis, how it has helped patients and families.
- 12:20 **Questions and Answers**
- 12:30 **Preparation for Advocacy**
- 12:45 **Election of Officers and Board Members**
- 1:00 **Adjourn**

**Lunch Host: Diane Stowell**

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

**TIME TO PAY YOUR 2011 KOKUA COUNCIL DUES.** Look at your address label to see the last payment date. Individual dues continue to be \$5.00. Lifetime: \$100, Organization: \$25.00. Send payments to Kokua Council, Harris Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard, Honolulu HI 96813. Donations are welcomed. Check our website at [www.kokuacouncil.org](http://www.kokuacouncil.org)

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS**

**OFFICERS** (Elected Annually) **CLASS OF 2012** (To be elected) **CLASS OF 2011** (CARRYOVER)

Larry Geller, President  
Tony Lenzer, 1<sup>st</sup> VP  
Laura Manis, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP  
Lynda Gretz, Secretary  
Evelyn Shepard, Treasurer

T.J. Davies, Jr.  
Lyn Moku  
Sam Cox  
Phyllis Hiramatsu  
Rose Ann Poyzer

George Fox  
Jim Shon  
Marilyn Seeley  
Richard Miller  
Wes Lum

## BOARD DECISIONS

- Advocacy: Kokua Council will concentrate primary advocacy on issues listed below for 2011 Legislative Priorities. We will continue to follow issues we have supported in the past.
- Membership: Formulate plans to have meeting(s) other than Honolulu.
- Post instructions on how to advocate on website.
- Prepare information for membership to help in advocacy.
- Work with Kupuna Caucus to publicize their efforts.

### 2011 KOKUA COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

**The Council will testify and work to generate numbers of supporters to appear and/or testify on behalf of these matters. We will also continue to support issues we have supported in the past.**

- Advocate placing Kupuna Care in the base budget and expediting release of funds, (Jim Shon, 946-7878).
- Post on web inspections for the whole spectrum of Long Term Care licensed and certified facilities, (Larry Geller, 540-1928)
- Add to existing law, unannounced inspections for care homes, (Lynda Gretz, 544-1464).
- Consolidate all inspections of LTC facilities in one administrative unit, (Phyllis Hiramatsu, 533-3105).
- Greater authority for the Executive Office on Aging (Tony Lenzer, 261-2095, Marilyn Seely, 235-5566).

#### REAPPORTIONMENT COMING UP

The once-a decade-U.S. Census figures show that overall the U.S. population grew by about 9.7 percent to 307,745,538 over the last decade, the slowest rate of growth since 1940. In January, state legislatures begin the reapportionment process even in states which did not gain or lose seats. Lawmakers will remake congressional districts to reflect population shifts within the states.

#### CLEANING FOR A REASON

If you know any woman currently undergoing chemotherapy, please pass the word to her that there is a cleaning service that provides FREE housecleaning—once per month for 4 months while she is in treatment. All she has to do is sign up and have her doctor fax a note confirming the treatment. Cleaning for a Reason will have a participating maid service in her zip code area arrange for the service. This organization serves the entire USA and currently has 547 partners to help these women. It's our job to pass the word and let them know that there are people out there

that care. Be a blessing to someone and pass this information along, <http://www.cleaningforareason.org/> . Great information. You may not know someone going through chemo, but someone on your email list might.

#### AL HAMAI HONORED

Al Hamai, Kokua Council Member and President of the Hawaii Alliance for Retired Americans, recently won an award for outstanding community service from the Hawaii Pacific Gerontological Society. The Society praised the Hawaii Alliance's work, under Al's leadership, in "organizing the disparate retiree organizations of various union groups into one voice."

#### SENIOR FALL PREVENTION TIPS

- ✓ Have your eyes checked
- ✓ Exercise regularly for balance and strength
- ✓ Have your Doctor or Pharmacist review your medications yearly
- ✓ Make your home safer by removing fall hazards and improve your lighting.

## **VETERANS AFFAIRS PERSONAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE.**

Any veteran or veteran's spouse who is on Medicaid and living in a nursing home is entitled to a PNA of \$90/month on top of the \$30 from SS and \$20 from the State General Fund. Hawaii has a large percentage of seniors who were veterans and are entitled to this benefit but they don't know about it. We need some PSA to educate the public about this.

Working Families reports that a new survey finds that small business owners say the Affordable Care Act will spur them to provide health insurance for their workers. They say provisions of the health care reform law—the law that House Republicans with taxpayer-paid health insurance want to repeal—make them more likely to provide health insurance to their employees.

## **LETTER FROM REP. COLLEEN HANABUSA**

I realize that as I enter Congress, and as we enter the New Year, we do so with a lot of optimism. “Don't Ask, Don't Tell” has been repealed. A major food safety bill has been passed. And a historic nuclear arms treaty with Russia has been ratified.

My goal as I enter the House is to work everyday to continue this momentum, of working with the interests of the people of Hawai'i and the rest of the country in mind. That means I will work everyday to make sure more of our neighbors are getting back into the work force. That means I will work everyday to make our education system the best in the world once again for our children. And that means I will work to make healthcare accessible and affordable, while fighting to protect and improve on Hawai'i's prepaid healthcare program.

The Senate has passed a bill covering the cost of medical care of 9/11 first responders, who are now suffering from long-term or crippling illnesses after inhaling toxic fumes and smoke during their rescue work at ground zero. The Senate reached a compromise with Republicans, who were concerned over the initial cost of the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, which would have provided \$7.4 billion over ten years. The approved legislation will provide \$4.3 billion over five years.”

## **NEW RULES FORCE HEALTH INSURER TO JUSTIFY PREMIUM HIKES**

Starting next year, health insurance companies will no longer be able keep big premium increases off consumers' radar screens. Under new rules for the Affordable Care Act announced last week, not only will big insurance companies be required to publicly announce premium increases of 10 percent or more, they must justify those increases.

Health insurance premiums have risen rapidly over the past decade, straining pocketbooks for American families and businesses. Since 1999, average premiums for family coverage have risen 131 percent. Says Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius: “Year after year, insurance company profits soar, while Americans pay more for less health care coverage.”

The Affordable Care Act is bringing unprecedented transparency and oversight to insurance premiums to help reign in the kind of excessive and unreasonable rate increases that have made insurance unaffordable for so many families.

Under the rules, state insurance commissions will review premium increases of 10 percent or more and in 2012, states will be able to set their own thresholds for review.

In 2014, states will be allowed to exclude health plans that show a pattern of excessive or unjustified premium increases from the new health insurance exchanges.

## **PRESIDENT SIGNS CRITICAL SENIOR HOUSING BILL INTO LAW**

“Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Act of 2010,” amends financing and project operation requirements for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's program to allow for increased housing opportunities for low-income seniors. Under this legislation, the oldest Section 202 properties, built between 1969 and 1974, will be able to refinance to provide much needed rehab funds for property upgrades. In addition, residents of those older buildings will receive a rental subsidy to continue to live in service-enriched housing, preventing displacement.



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

Return Service requested

WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Non Profit Org.  
 US Postage  
**PAID**  
 Kailua, HI  
 Permit No. 623

### Who Are We?

The **Kokua Council** is one of Hawaii's oldest advocacy groups. There is a \$5 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., 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, tjdavies@juno.com
Vice President	Tony Lenzer, 261-2095, tlenzer@hawaii.rr.com	Treasurer Advocacy	Evelyn Shepard, 595-4025
Vice President	Laura Manis, 597-8838, manis@lava.net	General Info	Eloise Monsarrat, 839-1545
Secretary	Lynda Gretz, lbj065@hawaii.rr.com	Newsletter	Jeanne Y. Ohta, jyohta@hawaii.rr.com
<b>Website</b>	<b><a href="http://www.kokuacouncil.org">www.kokuacouncil.org</a></b>		

### 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.

<b>INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS</b>	<b>LIFE MEMBER</b>	<b>ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS</b>	<b>DONATIONS</b> _____
___\$5.00	___\$100.00	___\$25.00	

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