

Ke Ala Hou

A New Path Forward

Ke Ke'ena O Ke Kia'aina | Office of the Governor · August 2023

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE



Governor Josh Green, M.D.

As I stated at the start of my Administration in my first address to the Hawai'i State Legislature in January, it is imperative that we come to the table with new ideas, new solutions, and bold action rooted in our shared values. Business-as-usual won't work anymore – there is simply too much at stake to accept the status quo, which is why on July 17, I signed the Emergency Proclamation (EP) on Housing to accelerate relief from the statewide housing crisis.

The EP will advance the safe construction of thousands of critically needed, public, low-income, affordable, workforce, and market-rate for-sale and rental units for Hawai'i residents across the state, while ensuring careful stewardship of our irreplaceable natural resources and respecting our iwi kūpuna.

The affordable housing crisis in Hawai'i has reached a state of emergency. The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) finds that our state will require an additional 50,000+ homes by the year 2025.

Our statewide effort to address the affordable housing crisis is focused on three main priorities:

- *Prioritize, protect, and provide housing for our local people;*
- *Invest in critical infrastructure and development of new housing units;*
- *Collaborate and coordinate with key federal, state, county, and private sector stakeholders to streamline the process.*

Our EP on Housing encompasses these three priorities. As we did in May when we opened Pūlama Ola, the first kauhale community built under my Administration, we will continue to take bold action on providing affordable housing for working families, ending homelessness, protecting our environment, and doing everything in our power to make Hawai'i more affordable for our people – who are leaving their 'āina at alarming rates.

We pledge transparency in our efforts and remain steadfast in our commitment to prioritize, protect, and provide housing for our local people.

Mahalo,

Josh Green

Easing Hawai'i's Housing Crisis



Chief Housing Officer for the Governor's office, Nani Medeiros, 2nd from right.

Born and raised in Hawai'i, Nani Medeiros has been a public servant for nearly 17 years with a passion for Hawai'i's people and culture. In particular, she has worked hard on Hawai'i's housing and homelessness crisis for most of her career, and she continues to address the crisis today in her role as the Chief Housing Officer for the Governor. Now, with the backing of an Emergency Proclamation (EP) for Housing, she is positioned to meaningfully move the needle for the state in tackling the statewide housing crisis.

Issued on July 17, 2023, the EP relating to Housing is intended to accelerate relief from the statewide housing crisis by suspending specific provisions and addressing sticking points in the affordable housing approval process. The EP was developed after countless hours of speaking with hundreds of stakeholders statewide to identify redundancies and bottlenecks within the current process, while working to keep safeguards in place to avoid compromising safety, as well as environmental and archeological concerns.

"Given our severe shortage of housing, Hawai'i has become one of the most expensive and competitive housing markets in the world," said

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Governor Green. "The EP was necessary to address this crisis, which has impacted homelessness and our people migrating to the mainland, which ultimately threatens our families and culture."

"The EP establishes a working group to improve coordination of state and county agencies, and to ensure housing projects keep on schedule by providing flexibility to direct resources to our agencies," said Medeiros. "While it streamlines processes for housing development, it also ensures respect for our iwi kūpuna

and our environment, which is of the utmost importance to me as a Native Hawaiian and someone born and raised in Hawai'i."

Medeiros was formerly the executive director of HomeAid Hawai'i, policy and public affairs director for the Hawai'i Primary Care Association, the deputy policy advisor for former Governor Linda Lingle, vice chair on the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority's board of directors, and has also served on the board of directors for the Institute for Human Services.

"Nani and her team have been working tirelessly to provide more affordable housing options across the state, and for that, I commend them," said Governor Green. "We must coordinate and modernize processes across the various agencies in order to provide housing for our communities. This work is long overdue, and I am excited to see the start of this collaboration between state and counties to create more affordable housing for our people."

Highlights from Bill Signings

The 263 bills that have been enacted into law relate to:

- **Affirming Reproductive Rights**
- **Affordable Housing and Homelessness**
- **Agriculture**
- **Beaches and Shorelines**
- **Child Welfare and Well-Being**
- **Clean Energy and Climate**
- **Domestic Violence/Sex Assault**
- **Education and Early Education**
- **Firearms Safety**
- **Good Government**
- **Health Care Access**
- **Kūpuna and Disability Access**
- **Tax Credits and the State Budget**
- **Tourism Management**
- **Traffic Safety**
- **Vaping**

Many of these categories support our state's priorities such as homelessness, affordable housing, health care, education, and climate change.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the legislature, stakeholders, and community advocates for making this bill signing season such a success. With their help, our Administration passed



vital legislation to help better care for the people of our state.

"We are grateful for the critical funding provided by the Hawai'i State Legislature to support several major initiatives of our administration. This is just the beginning of improving our state for our families. Addressing health care, housing, homelessness, education, and climate initiatives are critical in creating a brighter future for our communities," said Governor Green.

Stats as of July 12:

Total number of bills enacted into law: 263

Total number of bills proposed: 274

Total number of vetoes issued: 13

Total number of Bill Signing Ceremonies: 18



Joint Collaboration Between State and Private Sector Wins NAIOP's 2023 Kukulū Hale Award



A joint public-private collaboration between the state and the Kobayashi Group has won the National Association of Industrial Office Properties (NAIOP) 2023 Kukulū Hale award for Public/Government Projects. The project utilized underused state grounds to develop an innovative mixed-use space, including an affordable rental tower, Juvenile Services Center, and a six-story parking garage. This project comprised of Hale Kalele and Hale Hilina'i, sought to address a pressing need for affordable housing and

critical services to vulnerable youth, all in one building.

"The all-affordable rental tower Hale Kalele is groundbreaking because it marks the first inter-agency partnership between HHFDC, the Judiciary, and a private developer," HHFDC Interim Executive Director Dean Minakami said. "We hope it provides a blueprint for other partnerships to form in the years to come."

The new building is 30,000 square feet, with the first two levels dedicated to the Hale Hilina'i juvenile services center and shelter of the Hawai'i State Judiciary. The rest of the building contains Hale Kalele's 200 affordable rental units. Residents cannot earn more than 60 percent of the area median income in order to qualify to rent a unit.

Hale Kalele/Hale Hilina'i was made possible through the partnership between the State Judiciary, Kobayashi Group, and the HHFDC. The focus of the project was sustainability and affordability. To make the project possible, HHFDC provided LIHTC, tax-exempt revenue bonds, and a low-interest loan. Furthermore, thanks to the Kobayashi Group, they were able to expedite the project's implementation so that construction began less than ten months after the HHFDC financial award.

"The Judiciary is a proud partner in this historic and innovative endeavor. Thanks to the vision and commitment of House Speaker Scott Saiki, HHFDC, the Kobayashi Group, Design Partners, and our First Circuit leadership team, Hale Kalele/Hale Hilina'i is now a place of hope and promise for our community," said Chief Justice Mark Recktenwald.

NAIOP Hawai'i is the local chapter of the nation's leading organization for developers, owners, and investors of office, industrial, retail, and mixed-use real estate. Its annual Kukulū Hale Awards program celebrates the best of Hawai'i's commercial real estate industry. It honors individuals and organizations that have enhanced our community through their projects, personal achievements, and civil service. To see the list of all the 2023 awardees, visit www.naiophawaii.org/kukulu-hale-awards/.

Protecting Access to Women's Rights

The United States Supreme Court's 2022 decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, the constitutional right to abortion, set off a series of changes to the way that abortions would be handled from state to state.

An attempt by a federal judge in Texas in April 2023 to revoke the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) approval for mifepristone, a drug approved by the FDA for medical termination of pregnancy through seven weeks gestation, then expanded to ten weeks gestation in 2016, was blocked by the U.S. Supreme Court that for now, preserves access to medication abortion using mifepristone.



"As a physician and a Governor, I feel strongly about health care, including reproductive health care and a woman's right to make health care decisions that affect her," said Governor Green. "We cannot condone any scenario in which individual judges in other states seek to override decades of careful, scientific research and approvals of mifepristone by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Our state joins all others that support women's freedom of choice and their access to all forms of safe, legal health care."

Governor Green's administration has been dedicated to ensuring that the people of Hawai'i will have access to the health care they need, including abortion rights which protect women's health care rights.

"Through the heroic efforts of Comptroller Keith Regan and Department of Tax Director Gary Sukanuma, our administration has secured a year's supply of mifepristone to help ensure uninterrupted access to this medication," said Governor Green.

Comptroller Regan assisted in encumbering funds for a unique contract in which the state will pay only for stock-piled medications that expire before use. In addition, Director Sukanuma was vital in expediting the process to ensure compliance and allow the encumbering of funds.

Attorney General Anne Lopez commented, "I will continue to fight against unnecessary restrictions on medication abortion and vigorously support and defend Hawai'i's laws protecting abortion access."



Queen Lili'uokalani's Royal Standard Returns to Hawai'i After 130 Years



The Queen's Royal Standard finally returned home after 130 years. Thanks to two private benefactors, Queen Lili'uokalani's

Royal Standard, and other historical documents have been saved from the auction block. The Royal Standard was last witnessed flying above Washington Place on January 20, 1893, three days after the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom by members of the military force of the Provisional Government.

Colonel John Harris Soper, commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the Provisional Government, sent a trooper over to Washington Place to inform the Queen that she may fly the Hae Hawai'i (the Hawaiian Flag we use today for the State), but she could not fly her Royal Standard. Three days later, the Royal Standard was again seen flying at Washington Place,



took the listing down. The two private benefactors, Princess Abigail Kawānanakoa and Brendan Damon Ethington, purchased the Queen's Royal Standard and the Soper letters. Deputy Attorney General Dave Allin and State Archivist Dr. Adam Jansen took a trip to New York to physically take

future for our keiki. It has been a humbling honor to welcome the standard home, where it belongs."

Now the Queen's Royal Standard is being added to the collection of other kingdom standards in the State Archives, where it will stay until efforts to raise funding to restore it are completed.



"Many of these items and others from the Kingdom desperately need restoration and are in no shape or form to be publicly displayed. The state hopes to raise sufficient funds for these important pieces of Hawai'i's history to undergo full conservation treatment," said State Archivist Dr. Adam Jansen. "We also hope that this inspires more people to be on the lookout for historic objects that should be held in the public trust and more benefactors willing to help us acquire these irreplaceable historic objects for the benefit of generations to come."

thus Colonel Soper ordered that the flag be seized. From there, it vanished from history until it appeared in the auction catalog at Bonham's Auction House in Oct 2022.

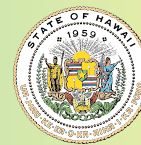
Up until about two years ago, the previous owner of the Royal Standard was the Soper family, at which time it was subsequently bought by a Hawaiian antiques dealer. Wanting to turn over the items to make a profit, he sent the Queen's Royal Standard, a collection of Soper letters and other Soper artifacts to Bonhams auction house in New York City.

A Notice of Claim was shortly sent to Bonhams. Once received, it quickly

custody of the historic objects and hand carry them back home.

The Royal Standard arrived at Washington Place on July 24, 2023, via cultural procession and was made available for public viewing for that day. At a ceremony following the procession, First Lady Jaime Kanani Green said, "Queen Lili'uokalani was a prime example of peace, prosperity, and servant leadership. She put the well-being of her people first and provided resources in perpetuity for future generations of Hawai'i. The Royal Standard carries the Queen's mana, including her legacy of leadership that allows Hawai'i to move forward in unity toward a brighter

Ke Ala Hou is a monthly publication of the Office of Governor Josh Green, M.D.
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