



Chair, Council Committee on Planning

Vice Chair, Council Committee on Parks, Community & Customer Services

Member, Council Committees on Public Health, Safety & Welfare; Transportation; and Executive Matters & Legal Affairs



**COUNCILMEMBER IKAIKA ANDERSON
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SEPTEMBER 2018 UPDATE**

Proposed Constitutional Amendment

Of great concern among each of the Counties this year is the proposed Constitutional Amendment on education funding to be included on the forthcoming November 6th ballot. Introduced on behalf of the Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA), SB 2922 SD1 HD1 passed the Legislature this session and places the question: “Shall the legislature be authorized to establish, as provided by law, a surcharge on investment real property to be used to support public education?” on the general election ballot. Voters will have a chance to decide whether to amend the Hawaii Constitution to allow the Legislature to impose a property tax on investment real estate to presumably support public education. We must be clear however, on just what we are voting on, are we voting to improve education or for new taxes? Yes, our keiki deserve a better education and our teachers deserve better pay but this is not necessarily the question we will be answering on the ballot this fall.

Currently, the State Department of Education (DOE) receives roughly 20% of the entire budget of the State of Hawaii. A nearly \$2 billion annual budget that provides upper tier funding per-pupil national ranking and yet the

HSTA claims additional public education funding is needed from a surcharge of real property taxes. In Hawaii, a decision was made long ago, to establish a statewide school and healthcare system, which differs from most of the nation in that the State is solely responsible for the education of Hawaii’s students and would be funded solely through state tax collections. With the DOE’s already substantial budget, HSTA’s desire to pursue this surcharge merits an examination of DOE expenditures before a request for additional funding. An audit may expose inappropriate allocations and recommend changes toward efficiency and better suited programs such as teacher salaries. How much more revenue is the Department of Education requesting to, “support public education?”

Article VII, section 3 of the State Constitution reserves to the State the power to tax, except all functions, powers and duties relating to the taxation of real property, which is to be exercised exclusively by the counties. Real property taxes are the most significant source of revenue for the City to provide numerous critical services like transportation, sewer, water, police, fire and park maintenance.

(Cont.)

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

Wednesday, Sept. 12

Full Council	9 am
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Tuesday, Sept. 18

Parks	9 am
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Planning	10 ³⁰ am
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Executive Matters	1pm
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Wednesday, Sept. 19

Budget	9am
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Public Works	1pm
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Thursday, Sept. 20

Zoning and Housing	9 am
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Transportation	1 pm
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Public Health	2 ³⁰ pm
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Proposed Constitutional Amendment (Cont.)

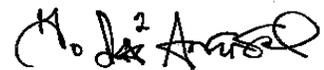
This measure encroaches into the City's only permanent taxing authority. The question before voters is misleading because it would give the Legislature the power to levy and collect the tax, but does not specify what properties would be taxed and fails to provide a definition of investment real property. The proposed amendment as written applies broadly to all residential and commercial "investment real property," a wide range of real property used for investment purposes, from large-scale commercial projects like big shopping centers and tony office towers to small storefronts leased to mom-and-pop merchants and apartments rented to low-income residents. It also doesn't specify exactly how much to tax and has no set limits or specifications.

Equally troubling is the fact that bond raters consider the legal authority to modify property tax rates by each county a significant factor to elevated bond ratings. Ratings based on the premise that each county has sole taxing power of real property taxes and have demonstrated a willingness to increase rates and raise taxes in order to pay bondholders. The proposed amendment threatens each county's ability to freely in-

crease revenues which will adversely affect our bond ratings and subsequent funding efforts.

Hawaii's teachers do have a legitimate complaint with the seemingly top-heavy administrative structure of the DOE which demands additional reports, schedules and evaluations of them to help justify the role of so many administrators while taking more and more time away from time in the classrooms. As our history has shown us however, continuing to just throw money at a problem is not an effective solution. Rather, a thorough examination of the DOE's expenditures and administrative structure is a more viable option than an unlimited tax on unknown properties to provide an additional blank check to the DOE with no safeguards. The proposed amendment leaves too many questions unanswered at the risk of too many critical City services and projects, the financial burdens of which would ultimately fall on Hawaii's residents. We ask you to consider the implications of this proposed Constitutional Amendment carefully this November and vote No.

Malama Pono,



Real Property Tax Credit

The City and County of Honolulu is offering a real property tax credit to certain homeowners. Applicants who qualify can receive a tax credit equal to the amount of taxes owed for the current tax year that exceeds three percent (3 percent) of the titleholders' combined gross income. This tax credit will be applied to next year's taxes. However, an annual filing is required for this credit.

Eligibility requirements include the following:

- Homeowner must have a home exemption in effect at the time of application and for the subsequent tax year.
- Any of the titleholders do not own any other property in any other location.
- The combined income of all titleholders cannot exceed \$60,000.

Applications are available at the following locations:

- All Satellite City Halls on O'ahu.
- Treasury Division at Honolulu Hale, 530 South King Street, Room 115, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
- Tax Relief Section at 715 South King Street, Room 505, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
- Online at <http://www.honolulu.gov/cms-bfs-menu/site-bfs-sitearticles/6416-treasury-division.html>
- The application deadline is **October 1**.

For more information or assistance, contact the Real Property Tax Relief Office at 768-3205.

Hurricane Preparation and Information

We are urging all residents to prepare for this hurricane season. We have already experienced a number of near misses to the islands and now is the time to make sure your 14-day hurricane kit is fully stocked. Also, please remember to check our homes for any loose items or debris that could become projectiles during windy conditions.

Develop a 14-Day Disaster Supplies Kit :

Your disaster supplies kit should contain enough of the following items to last for 14-days minimum:

- **Water** - One gallon of water per person per day for 14 days for drinking and sanitation
- **Food** - Non-perishable food that does not require cooking. Survival foods such as Peanut Butter, Protein Shakes, Dried Fruits, Nuts
- **Eating Utensils** – Plates, mess kits, forks and chop sticks. Don't forget a non-electric can opener for canned foods
- **Radio** - Battery-powered or hand crank radio with NOAA Weather alert
- **Light** - Flashlight and or a portable fluorescent light
- **Spare batteries** - Check annually
- **First Aid** – Get a good kit and consider enrolling in a certified first aid course
- **Whistle** – Important for signaling for help. A whistle carries much farther than the human voice and uses less energy than yelling
- **Dust Mask** – Helps to filter contaminated air
- **Sanitation** - Moist towelettes, heavy duty garbage bags, hand sanitizer gel, toilet paper, baking soda/kitty litter to absorb odors, gloves and plastic

ties for personal sanitation

- **Tools** - Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities, duct tape
- **Maps** - Local area maps
- **Prescription** – Special medications, glasses and medical devices
- **Pets** - Pet food and extra water for your pet
- **Miscellaneous** - Infant Formula, diapers, incontinent supplies, feminine products

Disaster Preparedness:

Take the time now to consider basic disaster preparedness and what actions you or your family will take in the event a hurricane threatens O'ahu. Due to our isolation and large population nearing one million residents it could be many days before local disaster relief efforts reach all of those who are affected.

Individuals, families and businesses should be prepared to be on their own **for at least 14-days**. Assemble basic supplies such as food, water, clothing and important medications for a **14-day kit**. Also, visit: www.honolulu.gov/DEM for more disaster preparedness information and to access downloadable information sheets.

Evacuation Zones:

Be aware that if you live on the shoreline or near the ocean you may have to evacuate due to the hazard of hurricane produced storm surge. Review coastal evacuation maps in your telephone white pages or visit:

Real Property Tax Information

If you own your home and have been living in it for at least a year, then you are eligible for the standard Homeowner's exemption which exempts the first \$80,000 of your property's value from taxation – if you're over 65 then the exemption amount increases to \$120,000. You only need to file for this exemption once. Additional exemptions are also available for persons with qualifying disabilities including totally disabled veterans. These forms are available online at:

www.realpropetyhonolulu.com

For those on fixed or limited incomes the City offers a real property tax credit program which, depending on your age, limits your tax liability to a fixed percentage of your income. To be eligible for this property tax credit all titleholders can own only one property, they must live on the property, have a current homeowner's exemption and the combined income cannot exceed \$60,000. Because these tax relief programs are income dependent, you need to file for them every year. The forms for the tax credit are available at: <http://www1.honolulu.gov/budget/propertytaxcredit.pdf>

**HONOLULU
CITY COUNCIL
DISTRICT 3 STAFF**

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Executive Secretary

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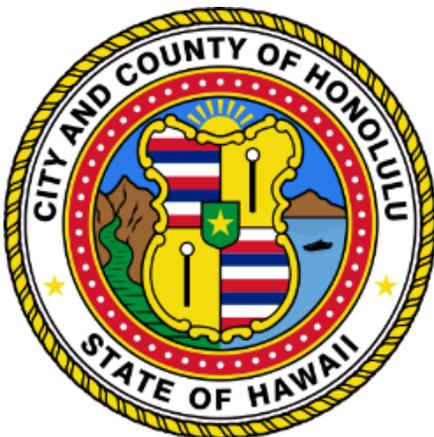
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DISTRICT 3 WEBSITE:

www.honolulu.gov/councild3
* * *

FACE BOOK:

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* * *

INSTAGRAM:

[www.instagram.com/
ikaikaanderson/](http://www.instagram.com/ikaikaanderson/)

www.honolulu.gov/DEM and follow the instructions on the *Tsunami Map Viewer* to quickly see if you are in a tsunami/hurricane evacuation zone.

Emergency Alert System (EAS):

Important official emergency information such as evacuation notification and shelter locations will be broadcast over all TV and radio stations statewide using the EAS. Should your power go out during an emergency such as a hurricane, it then becomes vitally important that each household have a battery operated radio and spare batteries on hand to receive emergency information. EAS broadcasts for major coastal evacuations will be aired in conjunction with a three-minute sounding of all Outdoor Siren Warning Systems on O'ahu.

Emergency and Community Information via Social Media/ Online:

Like and Follow the Department of Emergency Management on Twitter at @Oahu_DEM and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/OahuDEM. Additional preparedness information can also be found on our website at www.honolulu.gov/DEM. Residents are also urged to follow Mayor Caldwell's social media channels at: Twitter: [@MayorKirkHNL](https://twitter.com/MayorKirkHNL); Facebook: [facebook.com/MayorKirk](https://www.facebook.com/MayorKirk); Instagram: [instagram.com/](https://www.instagram.com/)

[mayorkirkhnl](https://www.youtube.com/MayorKirkHNL); and YouTube: youtube.com/MayorKirkHNL.

HNL.info alert messaging system:

HNL.info is the go to source for credible and actionable emergency information, in addition to updates from the City and County of Honolulu. Registered users of HNL.info can customize their experience by selecting which departments they would like to receive information from, as well as the level of alert, from informational to urgent. HNL.info messages are sent as email, SMS texts and push alerts. Messages can include emergency information as well as information regarding road closures, traffic alerts, community disaster preparedness programs, weather and disaster information and more. To register for HNL.info click this link <https://hnl.info/alerts>.

Preparing your home:

Protect your property. Remove debris from drains and gutters. Consider hurricane shutters. Review insurance policies.

Be prepared to bring loose, lightweight objects inside that could become projectiles in high winds (e.g., patio furniture, garbage cans); anchor objects that would be unsafe to bring inside (e.g., propane tanks); and trim or remove trees close enough to fall onto structure.

Be prepared to cover all of your home's windows. Permanent storm shutters offer the best protection for windows. A second option is to board up windows with 5/8" exterior grade or marine plywood, cut to fit and ready to install.