



Capitol Connection with Gov. David Ige is a regular e-newsletter that provides you with updates from the fifth floor of the State Capitol. As the Governor's Office works to become paperless, the newsletter will be available on-line and via subscription. Check out the Governor's website at [governor.hawaii.gov](http://governor.hawaii.gov) to subscribe to this newsletter. Also, check the Facebook postings at <https://www.facebook.com/GovernorIge> for daily activities.

## From the Governor: The View from Here

**Q. What do you want the focus of this newsletter to be?**

A. "I hope this newsletter will keep readers updated on current issues we're working on and the progress we're making in strategic areas. We also want to highlight the talented, dedicated people of this administration who want to make life in Hawai'i better for all of us. Things may not move as quickly as some would like, and there will always be critics and naysayers. But we need people to stay involved in whatever way they can to help their community and our state."

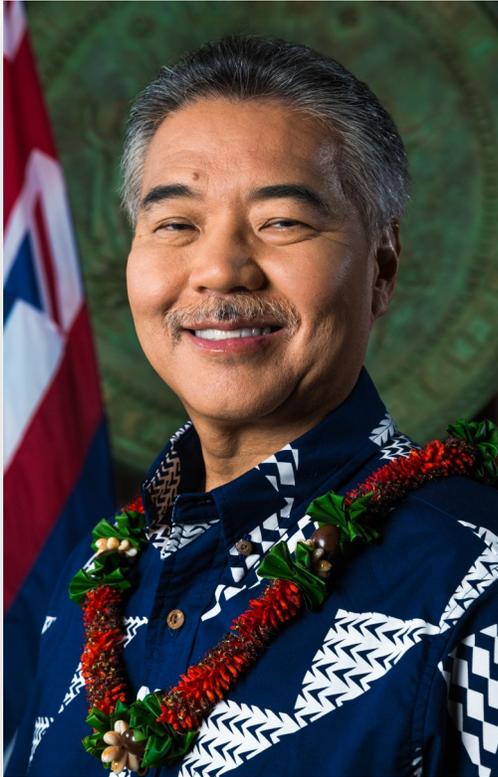
**Q. What has been the most challenging part of being governor?**

A. "The most challenging part is managing time since I'm involved in a wide range of issues and change is constant. In a typical day, I might meet with a department on our strategic plan, talk with a community group about a project, approve release of construction funds, interview a judicial candidate, prepare for international travel, conduct a press conference on homelessness and give a speech at an official reception."

**Q. You've also said that you want to restore the public's trust in government. How would you go about doing that?**

A. "I think it's about doing the right things in the right way for the right reasons and engaging with the community. It's about making government work, ensuring there's transparency and that decisions are made in the public interest rather than because of special interests."

*David Y. Ige*  
Governor David Y. Ige



Congratulations to these new homeowners! Under the Self-Help Housing Program, low-income families will help each other build their own houses, making these fee simple houses very affordable (\$256,000-\$276,000).

### NEWS UPDATES

- Tackling homelessness in Kaka'ako and statewide
- PUC "listening sessions" and hearings for NextEra
- Governor Ige's Young Adults Think Tank
- Cooling our Schools
- In the Spotlight—Scott Morishige
- OTEC blessing opens door to the future
- Kapolei Lofts: More rentals through public-private partnerships



# News Updates

Governor's Leadership Team on Homelessness addressing the press.

## PUC "listening sessions" and hearings for NextEra

The state's Public Utilities Commission will hold a Kauai public listening session for the proposed merger of Hawaiian Electric Industries and NextEra Energy on Wednesday, Oct. 21 at 6 p.m. in King Kaumuali'i School Cafeteria. (This is the last of the Neighbor Island sessions.)

The O'ahu public listening session will be on Tuesday, Oct. 27 at 6 p.m. in the McKinley High School Cafeteria, 1039 South King Street. At the meetings, the public can address the commission about NextEra Energy's proposed purchase of HEI.

Following this will be a separate set of evidentiary hearings where the public is allowed to attend but not speak. Instead, 28 official "intervenor," HEI, and NextEra will have a chance to voice their opinions, according to the PUC.

The commission will host these hearings from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Neal S. Blaisdell Center from Nov. 30 - Dec. 3, Dec. 7 -11 and Dec. 14 -16.

The purchase of HEI needs to be approved by the PUC, which is expected to make a decision by June 2016.

## Tackling homelessness in Kaka'ako and statewide

Everyone has seen the headlines and the photos of families huddled among rows of tents. So what is the state doing to remedy the situation — and how fast can it happen?

Gov. Ige has made it a priority by hiring Scott Morishige as the new state coordinator for homelessness, giving him a bigger staff, and establishing a Governor's Leadership Team on Homelessness to ensure interagency cooperation.

"This isn't just another committee," said Ige. "This team is making a commitment to work together to find solutions now. We are the people responsible for the public's welfare. This team is meeting face to face to address homelessness, and we are going to hold each other accountable."

Now the task is to tackle the complexities and challenges for those who live in poverty or close to its "tipping point." Morishige, 35, has devoted his career to social service and was recently honored with the Patsy T. Mink Courageous Leadership Award from the Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice.

(For more on the state's progress on homelessness, see "In the Spotlight" )

## Young Adults Think Tank

Gov. Ige recently gathered a focus group of young professionals to hear their views on hot topics such as the cost of living, the cost of housing, education and more.

"I'm grateful for the time they took to talk about issues that matter to their generation," he said. "I'm looking forward to future discussions with our bright leaders."

Part of Gov. Ige's vision for the state is to attract new businesses and advance technology, clean energy and other initiatives that will help our young professionals find jobs in the future.



Young professionals gather with the governor to share their hot button issues.

## In our Neighborhoods Cooling our Schools

Relief is on the way for those schools with the greatest need for heat abatement. Gov. Ige has approved the state Department of Education's request to move \$20 million in its capital improvement budget to accelerate cooling projects in public schools.

"Record-breaking temperatures have caused unacceptable conditions in some of our classrooms across the state," he said. "It is our hope that these funds will soon give our students and teachers much-needed relief."

For more information on the DOE's heat abatement efforts, go to <http://bit.ly/heatabatement>.



Portable ACs were installed as temporary supplemental cooling in some of Hawaii's hottest classrooms.



## In the Spotlight Scott Morishige

"Issues like homelessness impact us all. It could happen to anyone," says Scott Morishige.

### Scott Morishige, new State Homeless Coordinator

Maximize space. Accelerate placement. Find ways to help families and others into shelters or transitional housing. Those are the immediate priorities of Scott Morishige, the governor's new coordinator on homelessness and a man on a mission. He and his team are trying to stay ahead of the sidewalk sweeps, helping folks take advantage of available services— even to the point of transporting them to emergency housing.

They're also working to make the homeless more self-sufficient through a wide range of outreach services. However, past surveys have shown at least a quarter of the population just need affordable housing because their low wages can't keep a roof over their heads.

"Issues like homelessness impact us all," he said. "It could happen to anyone. I've seen so many clients — just regular working people — paying 70 to 80 percent of their income just toward rent. But they never imagined they would be homeless."

Morishige said that since August, the Governor's Leadership Team on Homelessness has placed 94 people — about a third of the Kaka'ako encampment — into shelters or more permanent housing. He credits Gov. Ige's group with helping to make progress faster. "This wouldn't have happened without the governor's team. There's better alignment of city, state and federal resources," he said.

Beyond Kaka'ako, Morishige listed four areas — Wai'anae, Waipahu, Waimanalo and Wahiawa — to help the homeless in a comprehensive way. "We're using the same approach of surveying the residents to get a better sense of the numbers, finding out what they need, then looking for available space. We're also looking at available state property for transitional housing and even longer-term affordable housing."

He and Rachael Wong, the Department of Human Services director, are also scheduling visits to the neighbor islands to bridge the gap with service providers and engage with the community.

For Morishige, helping people is part of his DNA. "My mom worked for DHS for 35 years and my dad was a Scoutmaster," he explained. "Both my parents were always involved in the community, and they tried to instill that in my brother and me."

"I've been doing this type of work (in human services) for the past 14 years, so I saw there was a large need. These problems didn't evolve overnight. There's no silver bullet. But I do feel we're making progress."

## Progress across the State

### OTEC blessing opens door to the future

Hawai'i and the rest of the world moved a step closer to a clean energy future with the recent dedication on the Big Island of the world's largest ocean thermal energy conversion plant.

"As an engineer, I'm excited to be here," said Gov. David Ige at the ceremony. "I'm glad the state is at the center of our commitment to renewables in the United States. As you know, Hawai'i was the first state to commit that 100 percent of our electricity generation come from renewable sources. . . . OTEC is a firm power source that allows us to generate electricity consistently when other renewable sources aren't available."

The plant will generate 100 kilowatts of sustainable, continuous electricity, which is enough to power 120 Hawaii homes annually. The project was funded and developed through a collaboration between Hawai'i's [Makai Ocean Engineering](#), the U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Research, and the state's Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI) at the University of Hawaii.



Top (L to R): Sen. Mike Gabbard, Brad Myers (President, Kapolei Properties LLC), Governor Ige, Mayor Kirk Caldwell, Jon Wallenstrom (President, Forest City of Hawai'i), Rep. Sharon Har

Bottom: Taking a tour of the one-bedroom model unit.



### Kapolei Lofts: More rentals through public-private partnership

The first tenants have moved into Kapolei Lofts, a new rental community that includes more affordable housing for West O'ahu residents.

The \$140 million project is a public-private partnership and part of a state strategy to help alleviate a housing shortage.

"We can leverage a small investment from the state of a \$5 million loan and end up providing 500 rental units to this community," said Gov. Ige. "The state does control lots of land along the (rail) transit project. . . . We will be looking for these type of opportunities to really leverage state resources."

According to a Pacific Business News article, 100 homes are reserved for those who earn 80 percent of the area median income, or \$76,650 for a family of four. Another 200 homes will be earmarked for those earning 140 percent of the median income, while the remaining 199 homes will be available at market rate.

#### Contact Us

Executive Chambers, State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Phone: (808) 586-0034 Fax: (808) 586-0006

Hilo Office (808) 974-6262 | Kona Office (808) 323-4542  
Maui Office (808) 243-5798 | Kauai Office (808) 274-3100

[governor.hawaii.gov](http://governor.hawaii.gov)