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AND THE STATE OF HAWAII

# Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz

HAWAII STATE SENATE - DISTRICT 22  
Mililani Mauka • Wahiawā • Whitmore Village • Waip'ō Acres • Wheeler • Poamoho



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## Majority Whip

**Vice Chair:** Committee on Ways and Means

**Member:** Committees on Education; Government Operations; Water, Land and Agriculture.



You can view Senator Dela Cruz's senate website at [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov).



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## NEARLY 900 ACRES OF FARMLAND TO BE PRESERVED IN CENTRAL OAHU

This past session, I worked with my colleagues to appropriate \$31.5 million to the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) for the purchase of 895 acres of agricultural land in Central Oahu. Governor David Ige recently signed the release of the \$31.5 million. When the acquisition is completed, these lands along with other parcels pending transaction, will increase the farmable acreage in the Whitmore Project from the initial 1,200 acres to over 2,800 acres.

Since Dole announced its plans to sell nearly 18,000 acres of land in Central Oahu and on the North Shore, I have worked to ensure that the state acquires additional lands near the 1,200 acres. Under ADC's management, these lands will be protected in perpetuity for farming.

Supporting agricultural acquisitions is the first step towards food sustainability. The Governor recently announced his plans to double local food production. According to the Increased Food Security and Food Self-Sufficiency Strategy report, replacing just 10% of the food Hawaii currently imports would amount to approximately \$313 million remaining in the state. Without access to good farmland, farmers are unable to scale up their crop production affecting our reliance on imported foods and sending dollars out of the local economy.

This past summer, I attended a harvest by Sugarland Farms, a tenant of the Whitmore Project, as they celebrated their first crops on a portion of the 1,200 acres. Sugarland Farms produced an estimated 2.7 million pounds of watermelon and 750,000 pounds of bell pepper. Crops were sold for local consumption, helping to replace imported products. The harvest of two different crops are examples of diversified agriculture that can be accomplished in Central Oahu.

Other components of the Whitmore Project that I have completed or continue to work on include an ag-foreign trade zone, re-designation and expansion of Enterprise Zone No.1, creation of an ag-technology park to consolidate processing and packaging facilities, workforce housing for farm employees, establishment of K-12 workforce training, and reclaiming wastewater for irrigation from the Wahiawa Wastewater Treatment Plant.

As the above mentioned report indicates, increasing agricultural production is an economic benefit to Hawaii. Acquiring 895 acres to expand the agricultural footprint of the Whitmore Project ensures farmers have access to land that will be used to produce food. I will continue to support these efforts so we can guarantee the protection of agricultural land for farming activities.

# COMMUNITY UPDATES

## HIDESIGN Studio master plans the First Responders Tech Campus and Cybersecurity Data Center

The HIDESIGN Studio, a University of Hawaii School of Architecture community outreach program, has been hired by the High Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) to design a proof of concept for the First Responders Technology Campus and Cybersecurity Data Center in Mililani Tech Park Phase II.

Currently, many state and county first responders face a common problem - increasing costs with decreasing budgets. Many facilities are either leased from private landowners or in need of facility upgrades. Agencies can even share facilities if there are common needs between two or more stakeholders. This will cut development costs and ongoing maintenance costs in the future.



The HIDESIGN Studio recently visited Mililani Technology Park Phase II to see the 150-acre parcel and the potential it holds for a centralized first responders and cybersecurity facility and will be meeting with state and county agencies to find their common and independent needs. The proof of concept is expected to be completed by early next year.



(Top Left) I spoke to 2nd graders at Mililani Ike Elementary on the legislative process and the importance of public participation. (Top Right) Senators Lorraine Inouye, Michelle Kidani and I presented the 2016 John S. Martinez Leadership Scholarship to Sydney Millard from Waipahu High School.



(Bottom Left) I annually participate at the 2016 AYSO Opening Ceremony to kick off the 2016 Mililani AYSO 2016 Fall Season. (Bottom Right) My office continues to meet with state and county first responders to discuss the First Responders Tech Campus and Cybersecurity Data Center.

