

# Ke Ala Hou

*A New Path Forward*

*Ke Ke'ena O Ke Kia'aina | Office of the Governor • March 2025*

## GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE



Governor Josh Green, M.D.

As your Governor, I would like to take a moment to share with you what our state has accomplished this past month. In line with my administration's priorities, I have signed an executive order to advance our state's renewable energy initiatives, ensuring we remain on track to achieve our goals. Additionally, I am pleased to

announce that we are expediting the state hiring process to fill critical positions sooner to strengthen our workforce and ensure we have the necessary resources to serve our community effectively.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to our state employees for your tireless dedication and hard work. Your efforts—ranging from improving our state Capitol to successfully and safely transporting our burn victims to Arizona—reflect an

unwavering commitment to the well-being of our people. It is your hard work that makes a real difference in the lives of our residents.

Additionally, I appreciate the invaluable research being conducted to better understand the wellness and resilience of Hawai'i's residents. By working together, we can deepen our understanding and how to best respond to the needs of our community.

While there are still challenges ahead, I am confident that as long as we work together, we can overcome any obstacle that comes our way. Our strength lies in our unity so let's continue to stand by each other and remain committed to our shared goals and values. Together, we can build a brighter, more resilient future for our community.

Mahalo,

## Governor Green Reinforces Commitment to Renewable Energy

Governor Josh Green, M.D., signed an executive order (EO) in late January to promote and expedite the development of renewable energy in the state of Hawai'i.

In the face of federal uncertainty regarding renewable energy and concerns over grid stability across the state, the Governor is committed to expanding and accelerating Hawai'i's renewable resource development, and has outlined priorities to reduce energy costs, prevent blackouts and slash emissions for Hawai'i residents and businesses.

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*Left: Kūihelani Solar-Plus-Storage is the state of Hawai'i's largest solar facility, generating 60 MW of renewable energy supported by a 240 MWh lithium-ion battery energy storage system. Photo courtesy: AES Hawai'i.*



*Ke Ala Hou intends to elevate, recognize, and celebrate the hard work done by our state departments. Our goal is to share top achievements from our state employees, emphasize aloha and kindness in action and demonstrate caring leadership at the state level. It is our hope that by sharing these stories, we build trust and understanding in what we do everyday in service to you.*



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## Governor Green Reinforces Commitment to Renewable Energy Continued from page 1

The EO was developed over the last year with the Hawai'i State Energy Office and included the input of various energy stakeholders across the state. The EO outlines new policy objectives and directives for the state of Hawai'i, including accelerating renewable development for neighbor island communities to hit 100% renewable portfolio standards to 2035 from 2045. It also set a statewide goal of 50,000 distributed renewable energy installations (such as rooftop solar and battery systems) by 2030, and directs state departments to streamline and accelerate the permitting of renewable developments to reduce energy costs and project development timelines.

In addition, the EO calls upon the Hawai'i Public Utilities Commission and Hawaiian Electric Company for support in reducing redundancies and inefficiencies in energy permitting and to prioritize reduced energy costs and energy stability for Hawai'i's people.

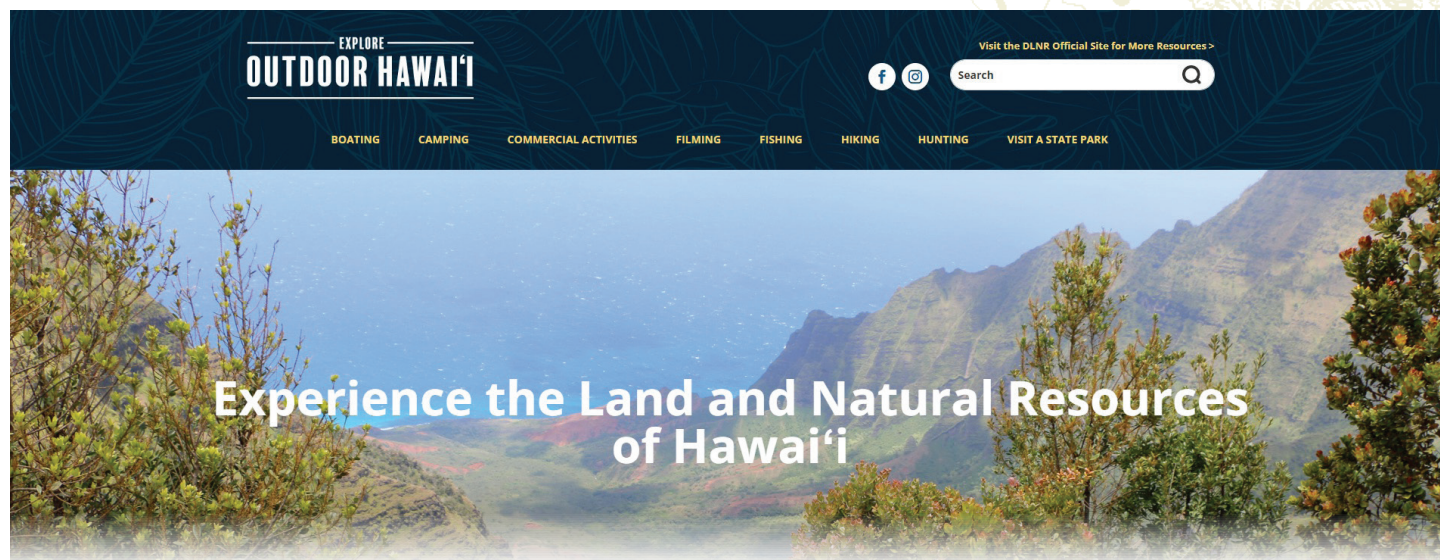
"Hawai'i needs to take some drastic steps to reduce energy costs, which have continued to rise contributing to the high cost of living for our people," said Governor Green. "We know that high energy costs in Hawai'i are due to our reliance on burning oil for electricity and old infrastructure, which is

really unacceptable. We can and must do more to get this under control."

Despite the federal administration signaling a turn away from renewables, Governor Green is doubling down on a diversified, renewable-centered approach to cut costs and emissions.

"This EO represents the start of real action to lower costs, support a stable energy system, and reduce emissions," said Chip Fletcher, the Governor's climate advisor and interim dean of the School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology (SOEST), University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. "Governor Green is cutting the red tape to realize our shared energy goals, including the first-ever push to get neighbor island communities to energy independence a decade sooner."

With this EO, Hawai'i is taking bold steps to secure an affordable, stable and sustainable energy future, ensuring that residents and businesses benefit from lower costs, cleaner power and a more resilient grid. By accelerating renewable energy adoption and cutting bureaucratic delays, Governor Green is reinforcing Hawai'i's leadership in energy innovation and climate action—proving that despite federal uncertainty, the state remains committed to a self-sufficient, renewable-powered future for generations to come.



## Explore Outdoor Hawai'i Site Wins Web Design Gold

The Explore Outdoor Hawai'i website, launched in July 2024, won gold in the Best of the Web – Government Agency category at the 2024 Horizon Interactive Awards (HIA). The HIA, now in its 23rd year, recognizes excellence in interactive media production and web design.

Explore Outdoor Hawai'i was designed to be user friendly, helping residents and visitors to easily find recreational information and services available across

the state. This includes material on hiking safety, camping and hunter education, as well as applications for various licenses and making reservations at popular state parks.

The site highlights unique and wide-ranging cultural, historical and natural resources that the Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) manages. Users can easily and seamlessly find information about responsible

boating, pono fishing practices, and permits that are required for commercial businesses and activities.

Though relatively new, Explore Outdoor Hawai'i, created for the DLNR by Tyler Technologies, is a trusted source for information on a variety of topics to help residents and visitors get outside and access Hawai'i's resources, on land and in the water. Check out the website at <https://outdoor.hawaii.gov/>.





## Special Mission Helps Get Fireworks Disaster Survivors to Mainland Medical Treatment Center

Brigadier General Walter R. Ross recently visited the Brooke Army Medical Center and the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command's Institute of Surgical Research Burn Center's Burn Flight Unit. He met two Burn Flight Teams (BFTs) from the prestigious Brooke Army Medical Center Burn Unit in San Antonio, Texas.

The BFTs accompanied the survivors of the New Year's Eve Āliamanu (Salt Lake) fireworks disaster, who were flown to a specialized burn center in Arizona for crucial treatment, along with a Critical Care Air Transport Team (CCATT). The CCATT, a specialized team capable of converting an aircraft into a mobile ICU, ensured that patients received continuous, high-level care throughout the flight. The BFTs, consisting of skilled nurses, respiratory therapists and burn treatment physicians, collaborated closely with the CCATT to ensure smooth and safe transport for their patients.

The lifesaving mission required precise coordination, involving military

ambulance support and the Hawai'i Air National Guard, which transported patients from Queen's Medical Center and Straub Benioff Medical Center to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam before their flight to Arizona aboard a C-17 military aircraft.

This critical mission involved a collaborative effort among military medical personnel, aircrews and ground support teams, including active duty and Hawai'i Air National Guard members, working alongside civilian authorities to provide the necessary care.

During Brig. Gen. Ross's visit, he met the BFTs responsible for aeromedical care during the transport of six burn patients from Hawai'i to Arizona. To honor their outstanding service, Ross presented the team members with a special military coin in recognition of their exceptional care.

The special military coin features the word Ho'ōmau which means to persevere or to carry on, and has seals from the state of Hawai'i and the five U.S. military branches. Ross said, "This



Special military coin that was given to the BFTs. Photo courtesy: HIDOD.

coin was very fitting to give to the BFT members as they personally understood what it means to persevere." He spent about an hour talking story and thanked them for the help they provided.

Visit this website for details about the mission from the U.S. Air Force: <https://www.22af.afrc.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/4022060/944th-fw-joins-forces-for-life-saving-mission-after-hawaii-fireworks-explosion/>.

## Capitol Pools Renovation Preview

The renovation of the state pools is taking shape! Governor Josh Green, M.D., and First Lady Jaime Kanani Green, along with Cabinet members and state lawmakers were among the first to see a mock-up of the glass pools in February.

DAGS Director and Comptroller Keith Regan led a series of tours throughout the month, with assistance from Public Works Administrator Gordon Wood and artist Solomon Enos.

The ocean-inspired mural sample is currently a 12-by-12-foot square of glass laid around one of the columns, but when it's done, the entire mural will cover over 54,000 square feet of what were once water-filled pools. For the full effect, one can look at what the glass installment looks like at the Capitol Modern.

Director Regan assured people the panels, which are nearly three inches thick, are meant to be walked on. The surface is dotted with bumps for a non-skid surface. There is a thin space between the glass panels to allow for drainage to the ground below.

The glass pools offer a creative alternative to the traditional brackish water pools, which have caused significant damage to the Capitol over the decades. Maintaining and repairing the

original pools have been costly and challenging. In contrast, the glass pools will transform the Capitol into a venue for community events and create a lasting artistic landmark for future generations.

The project is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2026.



DAGS Director and Comptroller Keith Regan gives a tour of the glass pool mock up. Photo courtesy: DAGS.



# New Hawai'i Quality of Life and Well-Being Dashboard Launches

## Social Determinants of Health



Social Determinants of Health  
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Healthy People 2030

The College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, in partnership with the Office of Wellness and Resilience in the Office of the Governor, recently launched the 2024 Hawai'i Quality of Life and Well-Being Dashboard. Surveying more than 8,000 residents statewide, the dashboard provides an in-depth look at pressing social, economic and health issues affecting Hawai'i residents. It is now the largest statewide survey on health in Hawai'i ever conducted, as well as the largest dataset using the Center

for Disease Control's (CDC)'s National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Worker Well-Being Questionnaire (NIOSH WellBQ).

The survey findings underscore the need for strategic policy initiatives that address Hawai'i's unique challenges. Key findings from the dashboard include:

- **Economic strain and stress:** The economy (73%), personal finances (73%), and housing costs (64%) rank as the most significant stressors for residents, particularly for households with incomes below \$50,000. Among those surveyed, 40% considered moving out of the state in the past year due to high living costs, a rate even higher among Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities (47%).
- **Health disparities:** Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander residents experience notably higher levels of stress and unhealthy days compared to White and Asian residents. These disparities are compounded by challenges in accessing affordable healthcare, with 19% of all surveyed residents reporting medical debt over \$500.

- **Community strength and workplace support:** Despite hardships, 67% of residents feel safe in their neighborhoods, and a similar percentage report that neighbors are willing to help each other. Workplaces are also viewed positively, with 83% of employees feeling respected by their employers and 78% feeling that their contributions are valued.
- **Workplace priorities:** The dashboard data reveals a shift in workplace expectations. Employees looking to change jobs prioritize flexible work schedules, paid family leave, and telework options, while those planning to stay with their current employer value traditional benefits like health insurance and retirement contributions.

The Hawai'i Quality of Life and Well-Being Dashboard aims to foster transparency and community engagement, providing individuals, community leaders and policymakers with the information they need to create meaningful change. For more details and to explore the interactive dashboard, visit [health-study.com](http://health-study.com).

## Operation Hire Hawai'i is a Go!

Governor Josh Green, M.D., signed an executive order to implement Operation Hire Hawai'i (OH-HI) on February 18, 2025. Operation Hire Hawai'i is a targeted outreach initiative featuring an expedited state hiring process, fast-tracking qualified candidates into job opportunities throughout Hawai'i. This initiative aims to support Hawai'i residents impacted by layoffs, resignations, loss of federal funding and other interested job seekers.

Candidates who apply through the OH-HI project will be referred immediately to hiring agencies for consideration and should expect to hear from them shortly thereafter. The state is currently recruiting for a wide range of careers, from engineering, IT professionals, planners, accountants, HR specialists, registered nurses, investigators and much, much more.

For more information on Operation Hire Hawai'i and to review current OH-HI recruitments, visit [dhrd.hawaii.gov/ohhi](http://dhrd.hawaii.gov/ohhi).



**Operation Hire Hawai'i**  
An expedited state hiring process, providing opportunities for individuals impacted by layoffs, resignations, loss of federal funding, and other interested job seekers.

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