



Ke Ala Hou

A New Path Forward

Ke Ke'ena O Ke Kia'aina | Office of the Governor • June 2026

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE



Governor Josh Green

As we move into June our administration will continue to provide stable leadership and work toward the resilience of the future of Hawai'i.

The Wahiawā Dam Rehabilitation Project has begun and will meet security standards and continue to provide water support once finished. DLNR kicked off its Coastal Kuleana campaign to connect our keiki to ecosystems and islands during the nationwide Kids to Parks Day — and to inspire the next generation to care for Hawai'i's unique environment.

We also took time to remind people to be prepared as we enter hurricane season by encouraging residents to take action now during Hurricane Awareness and Preparedness month. And our Hawai'i State Energy Office shared information on its free program to recognize businesses and organizations that are working hard to increase their energy efficiency.

Last month, I stood alongside our Gold Star families, veterans and service members on Memorial Day to honor those who gave everything for our freedom. We will never forget their sacrifice. As we carry their legacy forward, let us do so with purpose, compassion and aloha.

Finally, we honor the legacy of the late Governor George Ariyoshi and show our gratitude to our public service workforce who serve with pride every day and keep our communities safe, connected and thriving. Mahalo to everyone who serves with kindness and compassion every day.

Mahalo,

Wahiawā Dam Rehabilitation Project Begins With A Blessing



The Wahiawā Dam Rehabilitation Project officially began May 11, 2026, with a blessing by Kahu Kordell Kekoa at the Wahiawā State Freshwater Park, alongside Governor Green, government officials and representatives of private-sector stakeholders.

The project will address critical concerns by bringing the dam and spillway into compliance with all relevant safety requirements. The new spillway will be the first sawtooth weir design to be constructed on any dam in Hawai'i. It will effectively expand the spillway to six times its current width, within the footprint of the existing structure.

Once complete, more water will be able to safely pass through the spillway and protect the dam from overtopping in a probable maximum storm, which is a storm that greatly exceeds a 100-year event. The improvements will also provide capacity for more water to be safely stored in the reservoir, from the 65-foot depth that is currently maintained, to approximately 78 feet, providing more water for farmers, fishers and wildlife.

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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.



Scan the QR code to view our digital newsletter.



Wahiawā Dam Rehabilitation Project Begins With A Blessing Continued from page 1



Governor Green along with elected officials, cabinet members and Kahu Cordell Kekoa smile for a photo at the groundbreaking.

During construction, the state will prioritize water supply to current users of the Wahiawā Irrigation System, provided that it can be done safely.

The start of construction is the latest step in the implementation of Act 218, passed by the Hawai‘i State Legislature and enacted by Governor Green in 2023. It authorizes the state to acquire the Wahiawā Irrigation System, on terms negotiated and agreed upon by the Office of the Governor, or by eminent domain – and to purchase, repair and maintain the associated spillway.

Hawai‘i Kicks Off Hurricane Season with Statewide Preparedness Push

Governor Josh Green joined officials from the National Weather Service, the Hawai‘i Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA) and county emergency management leaders on May 21 to present the 2026 Hurricane Weather Outlook — and to deliver a clear message to residents across the islands: prepare now, before a storm comes.

The event at the state Capitol also marked Governor Green's proclamation of May as Hurricane Awareness and Preparedness Month.

John Bravender, warning coordination meteorologist for the NOAA National Weather Service Honolulu Forecast Office, presented this year's hurricane outlook and urged the public to monitor forecasts closely, understand their local risks and act promptly when watches or warnings are issued.

“As we enter hurricane season, we are reminding everyone in Hawai‘i that preparedness saves lives,” said Governor Green. “When we prepare early and work in coordination, we strengthen resilience across Hawai‘i.”

HIEMA Administrator James Barros echoed that sentiment, noting that effective emergency management depends on trusted partnerships, coordinated planning and clear communication. Major General Stephen F. Logan, Director of HIEMA, added that the Hawai‘i National Guard stands ready to support response efforts whenever called upon.

County emergency management leaders from Kaua‘i, Maui and Hawai‘i Island also highlighted local coordination efforts and community-level preparedness initiatives.

Officials encouraged all residents to sign up for their county emergency alerts before hurricane season is in full swing:

For more information, visit dod.hawaii.gov/hiema/hurricane-or-weather.gov.



Governor Green, HIEMA Administrator Barros, county emergency management officials and National Weather Service John Bravender smile with the signed Hurricane Awareness Proclamation.



HCDA 50 Years of Serving Hawai'i

The Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2026, marking five decades of advancing infrastructure, housing and economic development throughout Hawai'i.

HCDA is best known for transforming Kaka'ako from a deteriorating industrial district into an award-winning mixed-use community that serves as a model for transit-oriented development. Today, Kaka'ako features walkable neighborhoods, expanded public open spaces and more than 13,000 residential units, including nearly 5,000 affordable and reserved housing units that help local residents and working families remain in Hawai'i.

"HCDA's work has always been about building communities that improve people's lives, through providing places where residents can live, work and thrive," said Craig Nakamoto, HCDA executive director. "As we celebrate 50 years of community development, we also recognize the importance of continuing to invest in housing, infrastructure and thoughtful planning to meet the needs of future generations."

The Legislature has invested hundreds of millions of dollars through HCDA for public infrastructure improvements, including roads, utilities, parks, shoreline access and public facilities. Those investments have leveraged billions of dollars in private mixed-use development and generated long-term economic growth, jobs and housing opportunities across the state.



Kolowalu Dog Park Blessing in February of 2025. Photo courtesy: HCDA.

Beyond Kaka'ako, HCDA has expanded its role statewide through redevelopment and infrastructure initiatives in Kalaeloa, He'eia, West O'ahu, Iwilei-Kapālama and Pūlehunui, Maui. The agency continues to support projects that address Hawai'i's housing crisis, infrastructure needs and long-range economic development goals.

This year also marks a significant period of growth for the agency. Recent legislation awaiting the governor's consideration proposes establishing the establishment of new community development districts under HCDA, including Banyan Drive in Hilo and the Hālawā Community Development District.

HCDA's 50th anniversary recognizes not only the agency's accomplishments over the past five decades, but also its continued commitment to shaping sustainable, resilient and inclusive communities throughout Hawai'i, with the support of the Legislature.

To learn more about HCDA visit <https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda> or follow them @hcda.hawaii.

Coastal Kuleana Campaign and Kids to Parks Day

Kids to Park Day is a national movement to engage keiki, 'ohana and communities with public lands and waters. Hawai'i celebrated on May 16 at the Lē'ahi Diamond Head State Monument. The DLNR Coastal Kuleana campaign uses this opportunity to inspire coastline stewardship among keiki with activities that promote exploration and foster connection with our islands.

"By bringing families into these spaces in a fun and welcoming way, we're helping to inspire future generations to care for Hawai'i's unique landscapes," said DLNR Division of State Parks Acting Administrator Alan Carpenter.

The event was free for Hawai'i residents to participate and park visitors who had regular reservations, were welcomed to join at no additional cost.



Keiki showing off their shakas at Kids to Parks Day. Photo courtesy: DLNR.

For more information about DLNR's Year of Our Coastal Kuleana campaign, visit: <https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/coasts/>

Ha'aheo: Pride in Public Service Month – May 2026



Hawai'i honors the dedication, talent and aloha embodied by our state workforce each May — and in 2026, this celebration continues with renewed appreciation.

Ha'aheo month remains a time to acknowledge the exceptional contributions of public employees who keep our communities safe, connected and thriving. State workers have consistently shown courage, perseverance and deep commitment, from supporting critical services, to uplifting families across the islands.

Governor Green issued a proclamation which emphasized that the spirit of ha'aheo — the pride that comes from meaningful accomplishment — shines through every department and every individual who serves.

Throughout the month of May and every day, we mahalo the people whose compassion and excellence help move Hawai'i forward.



Service and Stewardship: Ariyoshi's Legacy with the State of Hawai'i Department of Defense

Former Governor George R. Ariyoshi led Hawai'i from 1974 to 1986 during a period of transformation. Governor Ariyoshi and his administration guided the Hawai'i National Guard (HING) and State Civil Defense (Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency) through an evolving role for both organizations in disaster preparedness, emergency response and public safety.

Throughout Governor Ariyoshi's tenure, the HING increasingly demonstrated its value as a dual-purpose force, ready for both national defense and domestic emergency response. One of the most defining moments of Ariyoshi's administration came with the impact of Hurricane 'Iwa in November 1982. When Hurricane 'Iwa struck Kaua'i and O'ahu with destructive winds exceeding 100 mph, State Civil Defense activated emergency operations statewide, while more than 300 HING members were placed on state active duty.

State Civil Defense coordinated emergency warnings, damage assessments and recovery operations and helped synchronize local, state and federal response efforts during one of the most destructive storms in Hawai'i's history, to date. Guard personnel conducted evacuations, provided

emergency communications when other systems failed, distributed water and supplies and helped maintain public safety in devastated communities. Guard aircraft transported supplies and enabled aerial damage assessments, including flights carrying Governor Ariyoshi himself, to survey the hardest-hit areas.

These operations reinforced the Guard's role as Hawai'i's primary organized response force during crises. Beyond disaster response, Governor Ariyoshi's



Capt. Alan Harada of the Big Island's Co. B, 2/299th Infantry assists Gov. George Ariyoshi in aiming the DRAGON (anti-tank weapon) Photo by Sgt. Ist. Class Wayne Iha, 117th PAD, HARNG.

years in office saw important institutional developments within the Guard, including long-term state initiatives such as Operation Green Harvest, which provided aviation support to law enforcement efforts to eradicate illegal marijuana growing operations.

Governor Ariyoshi's administration further supported policies that benefited service members directly. In 1984, the passage of legislation establishing a tuition waiver program for qualified Guard personnel marked a lasting investment in education and retention. Meanwhile, organizational growth, including new units and leadership roles, reflected a maturing force prepared for both state missions and federal integration.

Governor Ariyoshi's steady leadership helped shape both the modern HING and Hawai'i's emergency management enterprise. By emphasizing readiness, interagency cooperation, community support and professional development, his administration strengthened the partnership between the Guard and State Civil Defense, ensuring both organizations remained vital to safeguarding the people of Hawai'i in times of crisis and in the decades that followed.

Staff Spotlight!



Congratulations to our Director of Communications, Makana McClellan, for being named the 2026 Communicator of the Year by the National Association of Government Communicators! She is the first person from Hawai'i to ever receive this national honor.

Makana has helped transform how Hawai'i communicates, especially during some of our toughest moments. From the Maui wildfires to severe flooding, tsunami warnings and other emergencies, she has led with calm, clarity and an unwavering commitment to keeping people informed. She's also helped build a stronger, more unified communications network across state government - making sure agencies work together, train together and serve the public with urgency and care.

This recognition reflects not only Makana's leadership, but the incredible work of communicators and public servants across Hawai'i who show up every day for our communities.



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

We invite you to stay connected with us!



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