



Fourth Quarter 2024

Aloha!

Aloha, Friend.

As we begin to close out the 118th Congress and enter the holiday season, I am reaching out to you again to report on some of my activities on behalf of our mutual constituents.

Helping Our Kupuna To Lower Prescription Drug Costs

Our Hawai'i has one of the highest percentages of residents age 65+, and our kupuna community continues to grow. Because of 2022's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which I strongly supported, starting in January 2026 the costs of several key prescription medicines for those on Medicare will be reduced for the first time ever. More about what drugs will have lower costs is at www.LowerDrugCosts.gov.

Also, through the IRA, Congress imposed a \$2,000/yr. cap on out-of-pocket drug costs for Medicare prescription drug plan enrollees. You can also sign up for a monthly payment plan for these costs.

In October, the Social Security Administration announced a 2.5% cost-of-living increase in benefits for 2025 following 2024's 3.2% increase. While inflation has eased, this increase is still not enough for too many. To help, I cosponsored the Social Security 2100 Act to assure the solvency of the Social Security Trust Fund

while improving benefits, and through my Appropriations Committee we are providing over \$1 billion/year for Senior Nutrition Programs for those needing more help.

U.S. House Passes My Measure to Further Strengthen Partnerships Between The United States and Pacific Island Nations

Our Hawaii's own roots lie in the Pacific, and we have led our country in a mutually beneficial partnership with the Pacific Islands which only continues to increase in historic, economic, cultural and strategy significance.

Our country's Indo-Pacific Strategy states in no uncertain terms that no region is of more consequence to the world and to everyday Americans than the Indo-Pacific. The United States and our allies and partners around the world who are aligned with an international rules-based order share the common vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific whose governance, priorities, goals and prosperity are determined by the countries of the Indo-Pacific without manipulation and dominance by malicious actors.

With the People's Republic of China working hard to increase its foothold in the Pacific, I worked for U.S. House passage in September of my Pacific Partnership Act, which I introduced together with 25 other bipartisan colleagues. The Act advances the breadth and depth of our engagement with the Pacific Islands on issues of particular importance to the Pacific Islands, as recently reconfirmed in the Pacific Islands Forum summit in Tonga.

Federal Funding For The University of Hawai'i Helps Us All

I joined in two major announcements on federal funding for our University of Hawai'i. The first recognized a record \$615 million in external research and development funding for Fiscal Year 2024, mostly federal, which marked the third year in a row that the UH has topped half a billion dollars in funding (a 19.3% increase over the previous record set last fiscal year). This funding contributes to Hawai'i's economy through business sales, employee earnings, state tax revenue and job creation, and serves as a main component in the diversification of our state's economy.

I also joined Dr. Naoto Ueno of our UH Cancer Center in Kaka'ako, along with colleagues and partners, in celebrating the Center's renewed designation by our National Cancer Institute (NCI) as one of the very top cancer research centers in the U.S. I spoke not only of celebrating this achievement, which comes with continued major federal funding, but of remembering our 'ohana lost to cancer and of recommitting to aid all those impacted and find the cure. That designation also comes with \$11 million in grant funding from the NCI.

Ka'ena Point National Heritage Area Feasibility Study

In 2022, Congress passed my measure to advance a first-in-Hawai'i National Heritage Area at Ka'ena Point. It's moving along well and now the National Park Service is asking for formal public comment on its feasibility study. The comment period will extend to November 25. The details and comment link are [here](#).

Staying In Touch With My District

As I spend well over six months in any year in DC or somewhere else away from Hawai'i, my time back home is critical to me to stay in touch with my district, meet with constituents, personally visit organizations and others, and generally assure I am aligning my efforts in Congress with Hawaii's needs.

Here's a sample of my recent district outreach:

- Keynote speech to Targeted Violence Prevention Symposium
- Remarks to State/County Government Federal Funds Summit
- Visit to Hawai'i Nature Center
- Meeting with Building Industry Assn. Hawai'i
- Visit to Culinary Arts program at Kapiolani Community College
- Remarks at University of Hawai'i Record Extramural Funding news conference
- Visit to Digital Learning Class at Kaimuki Library
- Joined U.S. House Oversight Hearing on Maui wildfires in Lahaina
- Meeting with Hawai'i State Representative Nadine Nakamura
- Joined Filipino Community Center Bayanihan Awards Ceremony
- Meeting with Retired Peace Corps Volunteers of Hawai'i
- Led U.S. House delegation to Rim of the Pacific multinational joint military exercise
- Meeting with Richardson Law School Refugee and Immigration Clinic

Addressing Our Deteriorating Federal Deficit And Debt Crisis

In September, I led what is referred to as a "special order hour" before the full U.S. House, when I and my colleagues in the House Bipartisan Fiscal Forum focused attention on what I called the "quietest and most avoided crisis in our country today." To see a clip from my speech, an outline of my remarks and more detail, and our full presentation, go [here](#) and [here](#).

These are just some of my efforts. For more information, as well as how we might help you and the great communities we both represent, please visit my website at case.house.gov. If I can help you and yours with your own questions and needs, email us at ed.case@mail.house.gov, or call us at (808) 650-6688.

My staff and I wish you and yours only the best of the Holidays.

*Mahalo nui loa,
Ed Case*

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