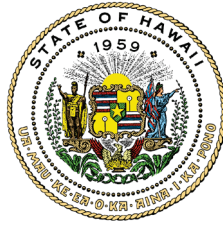


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NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT
250 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, SUITE 406
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2831**

**Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (PABEA)
Legislative Committee Meeting**
EOA Large Conference Room (250 S. Hotel St., Suite 406)
And via Zoom

MEETING MINUTES

Friday, March 6, 2026 | 9:30am-11am

PABEA Board Members in Attendance: William Kinaka, Sara Medeiros, Shelly Ogata, Marilyn Seely, Barbara Service, Gary Simon (Vice Chair), and Rick Tabor (Chair)

AAA/Community Members/EOA Staff Attendance: Roberta Murray, Cristina Valenzuela (EOA), and Sara Yuan

Board Members Absent: Poki'i Balaz, Stephen Lung and Suzie Schulberg

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Rick Tabor called the meeting to order at 9:30 am and roll call was taken. With 7 board members present there was quorum.

- II. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes: February 6, 2026 (See attached)
The draft minutes for the February 6, 2026 meeting were distributed. With no objections, the minutes were approved, including a minor clarification: the hyphen was removed from "first-year" in the second sentence of the third paragraph under Section IV, New Business, Item A: "PABEA Bylaws, Governor's Legislative Directive, and EOA Capacity."

The corrected sentence will read: "She (Caroline) emphasized that this is the first year departments received a directive regarding bill proposals..."

III. Old Business – Legislative Discussion

- A. The following bills were tabled for further information and discussion during the February meeting. Cristina provided some updates on these bills (see

below).

- a. KupunAloha (HB1973 HD1/SB2864) (More Info Needed)
Establishes within the Department of Health a one-year KupunAloha pilot program to provide in-home health care and support services to eligible participants who do not otherwise qualify for government assistance for these services. Appropriates funds for the program. Pilot program sunsets 6/30/27. Effective 7/1/3000.

Status:

Cristina reported that HB1973 HD1 (KupunAloha) was passed unamended by the Finance Committee on 2/27/26 and will likely cross over to the other chamber. She clarified that the Senate bill (SB2864) is dead.

She noted that at the hearing Jack Lewin, Director for the State Health Planning Development Agency (SHPDA) and who proposed the KupunAloha program, explained that the program will provide home and home health services that will be targeted for older adults living in urban Honolulu. Whereas the funds received from the Rural Healthcare Transformation grant will focus on increasing and improving healthcare services for rural areas in Hawai'i, home and home-health services offered through KupunAloha will focus on urban Honolulu.

Discussion/Comments:

Chair Rick asked if the committee wanted to support the bill. Cristina noted that EOA continues to provide "Comments" in their testimony. In their comments, EOA has offered to collaborate with SHPDA on the program to ensure that KupunAloha services are integrated seamlessly with current aging services and that there is no duplication of services (e.g. Kupuna Care program).

Shelly said that EOA has a handle on it. Chair Rick recommended tabling the issue. There were no objections to the recommendation.

- b. SNAP; Hawaii Food Security Special Fund (HB704/ SB 881) (Need more info. Special funding may have been covered from last year)
Establishes the Hawai'i Food Security Special Fund to restore Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefit levels to those provided in federal fiscal year 2023. Requires reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

Status: Cristina reported that both SNAP bills (HB704/SB881) are dead. They have not been scheduled for a hearing in the 2026 legislative session.

B. PABEA Priority Bills:

The committee reviewed the status of the following bills.

a. Kupuna Caucus Legislative Package

1. Caregiver Tax Credit ([HB1972 HD2/SB2863](#)) (Lead= Gary)
Establishes a family caregiver tax credit for nonpaid family caregivers. Requires the Department of Taxation to submit annual reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds. Applies to taxable years beginning after 12/31/2026. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD2)

Bill Status:

Gary reported that the House bill is alive and crossed over, and the Senate bill is dead.

2. Hearing Loss State Plan ([HB1974 HD1/SB2865](#)) (Lead =Rick)
Requires and appropriates funds for the State Health Planning and Development Agency to develop and publish a state plan on hearing loss. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Bill Status:

Chair Rick reported the measure (HB1974 HD1) is moving forward and will cross over. Cristina added that the Senate bill (SB2865) was never scheduled for a hearing and is now dead.

3. Kupuna Rent Supplement Program ([HB1975 HD1/SB2866 SD1](#)) (Lead = Sara)
Repeals the sunset for the State Rent Supplement Program for Kupuna. Appropriates funds to the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority for the State Rent Supplement Program for Kupuna and for positions to support the program. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Bill Status:

Sara reported that the bill had passed but was unsure of next steps. Cristina explained that both bills are advancing and will likely cross over to the opposite chamber, restarting the legislative process (e.g., new committee referrals and hearings). She noted that both measures, HB1975 HD1 and SB2866 SD1, passed their fiscal committees unamended.

4. First Responder Dementia Training ([HB1976 HD1/SB2867](#)) (Lead= Rick)
Requires the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency, fire chiefs, Law Enforcement Standards Board, and Department of Health to provide or require the provision of at least one

hour of dementia-specific training for first responders, including law enforcement officers, fire first responders, and emergency medical services personnel. Requires the Executive Office on Aging to take certain steps when reviewing and recommending dementia-specific training curricula. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Bill Status:

Chair Rick reported that the bill (HB1976 HD1) is moving forward. Cristina noted that the Senate bill (SB2867) is dead and added that the Finance Committee passed HB1976 HD1 unamended.

Discussion/Comments:

- Marilyn asked about EOA's role? Cristina clarified that EOA will provide a list of recommended dementia trainings.

b. Other Aging-Disability Related Bills

5. Cryptocurrency ATM Transactions (AARP – [HB2003/SB2387](#)).

Establishes limits on transactions through digital financial asset transaction kiosks. Requires operators of digital financial asset transaction kiosks to use blockchain analytics and tracing software to prevent fraud; make certain disclosures; provide receipts to customers; provide full refunds under certain circumstances; provide live customer service and a dedicated communications line for the Attorney General, Office of Consumer Protection, Department of Law Enforcement, and county police departments.

Bill Status:

Gary reported that the Senate bill (SB2387) is alive and the House bill (HB2003) is dead. He noted that the Senate Ways and Means passed the bill and it will cross over to the House chamber.

Discussion/Comments:

- Marilyn asked if there was opposition to the bill. Gary said the opposition comes from the cryptocurrency vendor industry.
- Sara asked whether kiosk locations (e.g. Safeway) receive payment. Gary was unsure if they would receive any commission or payment.

6. Long-Term Care Financing ([HB1804/SB2554](#)) (Lead =

Marilyn)

Establish a joint legislative Long-Term Care Financing Advisory Commission to examine the feasibility of different financing options for long-term care services and supports. Permits the Commission, through the Legislative Reference Bureau, to contract for services of a part-time project director and prepare proposals for contracts for consultants to support the work of the Commission. Requires the Commission to submit reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

Bill Status:

Marilyn reported that there has been no opposition to the bill and that it's (HB1804) moving forward. Cristina added that the Senate bill (SB2554) is dead. Marilyn added that the response has been very positive and thanked legislators and community members who submitted supportive testimony.

c. 2025 Kupuna Caucus Carryover bills

The committee reviewed and discussed the following carryover bills from the 2025 legislative session. Gary recommended removing these bills if they have not been scheduled for a hearing. Cristina asked to keep them on the agenda until the next deadline, when it will be confirmed whether the bills are officially dead.

7. Family Caregiver Tax Credit ([HB701 HD3 SD2/SB879](#))

Establishes a family caregiver tax credit for nonpaid family caregivers. Requires the Department of Taxation to submit annual reports to the Legislature. Appropriates moneys to the Executive Office on Aging. The tax credit applies to taxable years beginning after 12/31/2026. Effective 12/31/2050.

[HB2464](#) like HB701 HD3 SD2

8. Medicaid In-Home Services Funding ([HB702 HD1/ SB877](#))

Appropriates funds to increase the funding for Medicaid in-home services, conditioned on the Department of Human Services obtaining the maximum federal matching funds. Effective 7/1/3000.

IV. New Business

A. Additional 2026 Bills for Consideration of PABEA Legislative Priorities
Discussion and votes on bills to include in PABEA's legislative priorities, with lead assignments.

1. HB1965 HD1 (Rural Healthcare bill)

Establishes the Primary Care Providers Working Group

within the State Health Planning and Development Agency to address issues relating to, and develop recommendations for the stabilization of, primary care services in Hawai'i. Requires the Working Group to make a report to the Legislature. Sunsets the Working Group on 6/30/2027. Effective 7/1/3000.

Discussion/Comments:

- Chair Rick asked whether the committee wished to support HB1965 HD1 and called for a motion. Marilyn moved for PABEA to support the bill; Barbara seconded. The committee voted in favor with no objections.
- The committee discussed who should serve as lead for monitoring the bill and submitting testimony. Gary noted that supporting the bill requires someone to track it and prepare testimony. Sara was assigned as the lead for HB1965 HD1.
- Cristina informed the committee that on February 27, the Finance Committee passed HB1965 HD1 unamended and that the bill has no appropriation attached.

2. SB 2557 (Homelessness & Housing Solutions)

Requires the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions to make an annual report on the number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals and on housing placement. Requires the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions to annually report to the Legislature on contracts and plans or proposals to enhance Kauhale projects. Requires the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions to annually report to the Legislature on coordination between the office and any county, state, or federal agencies, or private or nonprofit organizations.

Discussion/Comments:

- Sara noted that the bill clarifies the responsibilities of the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions.
- Chair Rick asked whether PABEA should support SB2557 and requested a motion. Marilyn moved to support; Sara seconded. The committee voted unanimously in favor, with no objections. Sara will serve as lead.
- Sara added that several similar bills (e.g., HB2072) are also moving forward.

- Shelly asked if the bill would improve data collection on homeless kupuna. Sara said yes, explaining that the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count gathers data on houseless individuals and that related bills rely on PIT data. Chair Rick noted that PIT did not previously include age but now does. Cristina shared that advocates report seeing more older houseless individuals, although concrete data is limited. Sara added that while much of the information is anecdotal, she sees many older houseless individuals in Kona.
3. SB 2563 (Homelessness Sanctuary Pilot Program)
Establishes a three-year homelessness sanctuary pilot program to be administered by the Coordinator on Homelessness on designated land for the pilot program, which shall serve as a safe location for unhoused women and young children, under the age of ten, to reside and access services. Requires the Coordinator on Homelessness and the Coordinator's partner agencies to provide certain facilities and services to the designated location. Requires reporting to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

Discussion/Comments:

- Sara stated she believes the bill may be dead. Cristina will verify the status. She later reported that on February 5, the measure was rescheduled for decision-making and includes a \$5 million appropriation.
- Sara noted concerns about definitions (e.g., “unhoused women and children,” guardians vs. parents). She added that the pilot is intended for O‘ahu only.
- Chair Rick asked whether to table SB2563. There were no objections, and the committee agreed to table the bill.
- Sara will email Chair Rick and Cristina with additional homelessness-related bills for inclusion in next month’s agenda.

B. Guest Speakers: Discussion to Invite Speakers to Present on Proposed Bills.

Chair Rick asked whether the committee would like to invite guest speakers to either the Legislative Committee or PABEA meetings to speak on specific bills (e.g., Hearing Loss State Plan).

Discussion/Comments:

Sara recommended holding off on guest speakers for the Legislative Committee to allow more time for bill discussions as measures continue to move. Cristina added that if the Hearing Loss State Plan bill passes, it would be useful to invite a speaker later so the committee/PABEA can provide input on what should be included in the report.

- Marilyn suggested waiting to see how many bills survive so the committee can focus on those still moving. She noted that if questions arise later about specific bills, the committee could invite guest speakers at that time.

C. April Meeting Date – April 10, 2026 at 9:30am

Because April 3 is a holiday, Chair Rick proposed holding the next PABEA Legislative Committee meeting on Friday, April 10 at 9:30 AM. He asked for a motion. Barbara moved to approve the date; Marilyn seconded. The committee voted in favor of scheduling the next PABEA Legislative Committee meeting on Friday, April 10 at 9:30am. There were no objections.

D. Suggested Agenda Items for Next Meeting

The following bills were suggested for discussion at the next meeting:

- Hawai'i Farm to Families (SB2427)
- Uniform Healthcare Decision Act (SB3077)
- Homeless Special Services Fund, includes special section on older adults (HB2072)
- Paid Family Leave (HB2360)

V. Public Testimony on Agenda Items

No public testimony submitted.

VI. Announcements

1. PABEA meeting scheduled for Friday, March 6 at 12p.m. In person and remote meeting via Zoom.
2. Kupuna Caucus meeting scheduled for Friday, March 6 via Zoom or You Tube Live.
3. RAC (Recognition & Awards) Committee meeting scheduled remotely via Zoom and was scheduled on Thursday, April 9 (Tentative) @ 9:30am.

The next **Legislative Committee meeting** is scheduled for **Friday, April 10 from 9:30-11am**. Meetings are held in-person in the EOA Large Conference Room 406, and remotely via Zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 10:13 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by Cristina Valenzuela

