

# State Senator Sam Slom

Senate District 9 • Waialae-Kahala — Aina Haina — Kuliouou— Niu — Hawaii Kai  
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Waialae - Kahala Neighborhood Board #3 • Hoaloha Kai Montessori School • 7:00 pm • Thursday, March 20, 2014.

## Senate Confirms Judge Wilson to State Supreme Court

After an arduous process of two hearings, Gubernatorial Nominee **Michael D. Wilson** was confirmed as Associate Justice to the Hawaii State Supreme Court during the Senate's Regular Session on March 17, 2014. Senator Slom requested a roll call vote, which resulted in one "nay" (Senator **Baker**) and twenty-three "ayes" (Senator **Thielen** and Senator **Kidani** voting with reservations).

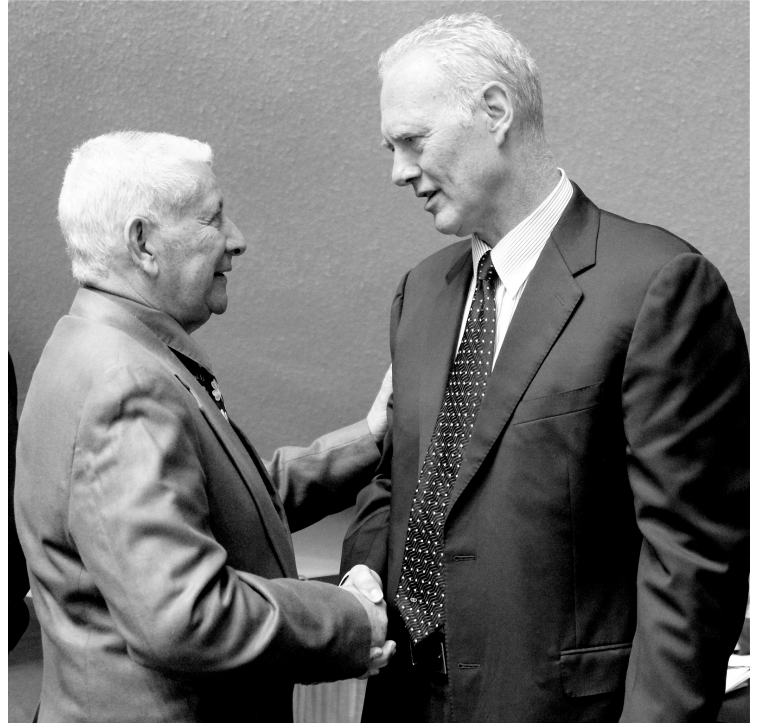
Senator Slom rose in strong support, mentioning that he had known the nominee for several decades. "We've seen him in action," he added.

"This is not a woman vs. man issue," he stated, referring to the second hearing, which was held in response to concerns brought up by the Senate Women's Caucus.

Wilson met all eight criteria of the Hawaii State Bar Association.

Senator Slom re-iterated that "every question given to the nominee was asked and answered," and pointed out that there was "no evidentiary substance to the allegations, innuendo, and falsehoods" which were raised. Ultimately, the requirements to consider are "character, experience, and will he serve the best interest of the people," providing "justice for all."

The roll call vote expressed the Senate's conviction that, indeed, Michael Wilson meets these requirements.



Senator Slom (left) congratulates Hawaii's newest Supreme Court Justice, Michael Wilson, shortly after he was confirmed by the Hawaii State Senate with a vote of 23 to 1. Judge Wilson's appointment will be effective for 10 years.

## Hawaii Business Hall of Fame Laureates Honored in Senate

Two individuals and a kama'aina family were recognized by the **Junior Achievement of Hawaii** as inductees to the **Hawaii Business Hall of Fame** for 2014. The Senate presented certificates of accomplishment to the honorees during the Friday, March 14th Session.

**Sherry Menor-McNamara**, the first female — and youngest ever — President and CEO of the Hawaii Chamber of Commerce was commended for her extensive community service and business accomplishments. Award-winning ukulele musician **Jake Shimabukuro**, who among his many other accomplishments founded the Four Strings Foundation, a non-profit organization that promotes music opportunities for the general public through nationwide workshops, was also honored.

**Wayne Kamitaki**, **Lynn Ushijima**, **Guy Kamitaki**, and **Paul Mizoguchi** were recognized as outstanding examples of excellence in free enterprise for building numerous Ben Franklin Crafts Stores and Ace Hardware Stores in Hawaii and

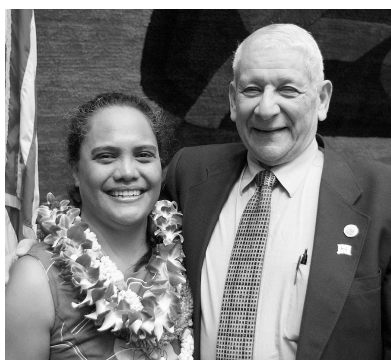


on the mainland. The Kamitaki & Mizoguchi Family have established a \$35,000 endowed scholarship fund for undergraduate students attending the Shidler College of Business at UH Manoa.



Senator Slom with Matthew Lawrence (top) and Celia Main-Anakalea (below).

## Educators Honored in State Senate This Week



**Matthew Lawrence**, a teacher at Waikiki Elementary School for 13 years, was selected as Hawaii's 2014 Teacher of the Year by MetLife/NASSP, and Vice Principal **Celia Main-Anakalea** of Kaimuki Middle School won the Hawaii Middle School Principal of the Year Award.

For their outstanding accomplishments, the Hawaii State Senate recognized both with certificates during Education Week, March 17th through March 21st.

Matthew Lawrence was commended for providing his students with educational experiences that encourage creativity and higher-level thinking skills in math and science, two subjects often considered difficult.

Vice Principal Celia Main-Anakalea was recognized for seven years of collaborative leadership and curricula advancements, as well as her support of family involvement and community organizations at Kaimuki Middle School.

### SENATE COMMITTEES

WAM—Ways & Means | JDL—Judiciary & Labor

CPN—Commerce & Consumer Protection

AGL—Agriculture | ART — Arts & Technology

EDH—Economic Development & Housing | EDU—Education

ENE—Energy & Environment | HRE — Higher Education

HWN—Hawaiian Affairs | HTH—Health | HMS—Human Services

PSG—Public Safety & Military Affairs | TSM—Tourism & Government

Operations | TIA—Transportation & International Affairs

WLH—Water, Land & Housing | HSH - Investigative Committee

Wednesday, March 26 - Kuhio Day Holiday

## U.S. Ship Build Requirement of Jones Act is a Contributor to the High Cost of Living



Top photo: State Reps. Cindy Evans and Gene Ward flank Sen. Slom at the Jones Act Electronic Press Conference held on March 13 in the State Capitol Room 414. Appearing though teleconference software were Alaska State Sen. Fred Dyson (on audio) and Puerto Rico Senator Rossana Lopez Leon (video image lower right). The electronic press conference was covered by several media outlets and attended by local participants.

State Senator **Sam Slom** and State Rep. **Gene Ward** led a bipartisan, interstate press conference via the internet with lawmakers from Alaska, Guam and Puerto Rico requesting the U.S. Congress to exempt all jurisdictions from the U.S. ship build requirement of the Jones Act.

The conference was televised through the internet from the State Capitol Room 414 on March 13. **SCR 93** and **SR 45** were introduced by Senator Slom to exempt Hawaii from this part of the Jones Act.

The States of Hawaii and Alaska as well as the territories of Guam and Puerto Rico have tried to persuade the United States government to provide exemptions, waivers and relief from the Jones Act.

One of the solutions offered by the noncontiguous states and territories is to have the federal government grant an exemption from the requirement that ships be built in the U.S.

Participating in the press conference were Hawaii-based legislators **Slom**, **Ward** and **Evans** as well as **Michael N. Hansen**, President of the Hawaii Shipper's Council, and **Cliff Slater**, a transportation professional. Joining in the electronic meeting were Sens. **Fred Dyson** and **John Coghill** of Alaska, and Senator **Rossana Lopez Leon** of Puerto Rico.

Senator Slom's resolutions have not yet been heard.

## My Position on GMO Food Labeling

By State Senator Sam Slom

Let me answer your questions about my position on GMO labeling and the topic itself briefly.

I have been involved in this issue for several years, and have attended nearly every hearing and briefing. I have met with supporters of labeling and anti-GMO activists. I have watched anti-GMO DVDs. And, I am only one voice among 25 Senators.

My position is very clear and has been publicly stated for years: I absolutely believe in every citizen's right to know about what they buy or ingest. I praised the papaya farmers who slap a "GMO" sticker on their fruit. But I don't like this bill.

Many in my own family are for GMO labeling.

The problem is that several key activists, local and from the mainland, have an agenda far beyond labeling. They hate companies like Monsanto and Syngenta for a variety of reasons—and say so. They threaten those of us not in lockstep with all of their ideas and demands. They want to dictate the wording of the label, its size, font type, placement on the product, etc. To my mind these are unreasonable and costly demands.

Also, people have well publicized alternatives, just as they have had for a long time with organic and non-organic. Several producers do their own labeling as "NON-GMO," so the public does have choices. Individuals and organizations that hand out information also have websites. This means the people do have the right and the ability to know. If businesses do not provide answers to questions, then don't patronize them. We do have a choice—and choices.

Then there are the scientific arguments, non-action by the FDA, and multiple disputes, right or wrong, on the harmful effects of GMOs. Ingredients are called "poisons" and so on. But that is another matter.

Hope this is of some help in clarifying my position. As I've always said, I will be glad to speak with all concerned individuals and businesses.

## Minority NewsBytes

- Senator Slom voted "aye" on **HB611, HD1** in a joint committee hearing March 20th. The bill, "Relating to Tanning," makes it unlawful for anyone under the age of 18 to use tanning beds. Testimony indicated that excess ultraviolet radiation is more damaging while people are young.
- In conformance with Senator Slom's desire to reduce and eliminate unnecessary taxes, he has expressed support for **HB1849, HD1**, which will limit taxes on premium cigars. Currently Kauai offers high-paying jobs to growers of quality tobacco, which is then hand-wrapped in Nicaragua and shipped back to Hawaii. The resulting luxury cigars provide a valuable source of income for local small businesses.

## Investigative Committee Meets

The **Senate Special Investigative Committee on the Hawaii State Hospital (HSH)** met for the first time on March 5 to launch their investigation of the workplace safety of psychiatric workers and allegations of administrative improprieties and practices at the Hawaii State Hospital.

The objective of the initial meeting was to adopt rules of conduct for the investigation and discuss organizational and procedural matters for future hearings, including securing the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents.

Members of the committee include Senator **Clayton Hee**, Co-Chair; Senator **Josh Green**, Co-Chair; and Senators **Maile Shimabukuro**, **Rosalyn Baker** and **Sam Slom**.

The committee next meets on Thursday, March 27 at 10 AM.

## Find Us on the Web

Information and archived articles that have appeared on this report and elsewhere can be found on our Senate websites:

Hawaii Senate Minority Website  
<http://www.hawaiisenateminority.org>

Hawaii Senate Watchdog  
<http://hawaiisenatewatchdog.wordpress.com/>

Hawaii Senate Informer  
<https://www.facebook.com/hawaiis.senate.informer>

Senator Slom on Twitter [https://twitter.com/Senator\\_Slom](https://twitter.com/Senator_Slom)



## Television for "A Better Day"

Don't forget to catch "A Better Day" with **State Senator Sam Slom** every month on your nearest 'Olelo Cable TV Channel (usually Channel 54). This month Senator Slom discusses legislative issues with legislative aide **Ediana Sallee** (right) and University of Hawaii intern **Chelsea Pelton** (center). The program will be available on our Senate Minority Blog at <http://www.hawaiisenateminority.org>. Updates to TV showtimes are available online at 'Olelo.org.

# State Instrument Debate Highlights First Crossover Session

By State Senator Sam Slom (R)

The most debated item of the March 4 bill crossover vote focused on whether or not the ukulele should be declared the official State Instrument (**SB 3107**).

While the ukulele seems to be a worthy nominee as state instrument, several Senators, including myself, mentioned that the ukulele was imported to Hawaii from Portugal — even though today it is widely regarded as a mainstream component for Hawaiian music.

I mentioned the nose flute as a possible, made in Hawaii instrument, while Senator **Rosalyn Baker** advocated for the steel guitar and Senator **J. Kalani English** spoke highly of the pahu drum. The bill passed 17 to 7. I voted “with reservations.”

SB 3107 was later passed in the House and a similar bill (**HB 2573**) was also passed out of the Senate Technology & Arts Committee on March 18.

The bill to raise the minimum wage will have long-lasting consequences for the economy, future employment and business. **SB 2609** will raise the minimum wage from the current \$7.25 to \$10.10. The minimum wage is a “training wage” and most people get paid well above the minimum. SB 2609 passed with a vote of 24 to 1, I being the lone opponent.

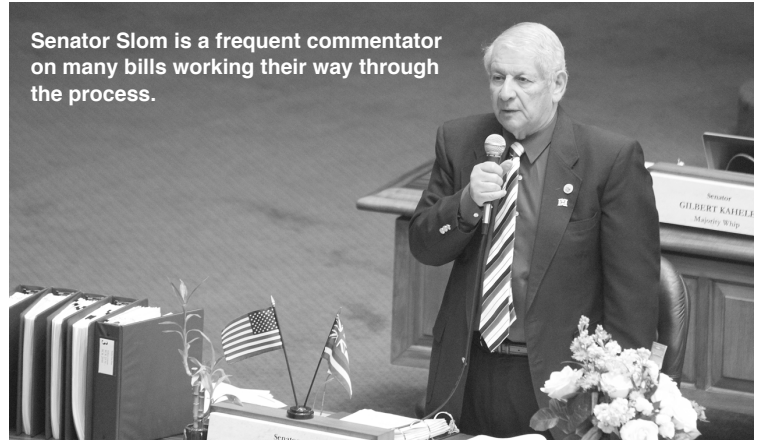
At right is a list of some bills that I voted “no” on:



Senator Slom welcomed Serhiy Vedernikov and Ihor Kovalskiy to his State Capitol office and the Senate floor. Mr. Vedernikov and Kovalskiy are contractors from the Ukraine who are visiting the islands to learn about our government and business climate. They were accompanied to the capitol by Debra Martin and Kirk Beauvais, local business and education specialists.

## Julie Sparks is Mother of the Year

**Julie Sparks**, our legal “extern” in the Senate Minority Research Office, is being named the Hawaii Mother of the Year by American Mothers, an organization that is committed to valuing mothers through service and education and has been “MomStrong” since 1935. She received a Senate Certificate from my office on Feb. 28. She will be honored again by American Mothers.



Senator Slom is a frequent commentator on many bills working their way through the process.

- SB2497:** Increases fees for tobacco retailers
- SB2609:** Minimum Wage increase; Tip Credit
- SB2222:** Prohibits sale of flavored tobacco Products
- SB3041:** New tax on small breweries or brewpubs
- SB2303:** Fireworks; Permit Fee; Increase
- SB2454:** Genetically Modified Organisms; Task Force; Regulation
- SB2437:** Rail Transit; working groups; state agencies near train stations
- SB2234:** Child care licensing exemption for private schools
- SB2496:** 85% tax imposed on wholesale price of tobacco products.
- SB2344:** \$560,000 appropriation for a Climate Change committee
- SB 2731:** New tax on car sharing
- SB 2704:** Overtime compensation for public works construction contracts
- SB 2761:** Disputed roads, county surcharge (tax)
- SB 2858:** Establishment of Office of Environment Information and Management
- SB 2139:** 990 student instructional hours
- SB 2246:** Appropriations for claims against the state
- SB 1227:** Mandated coverage for brain injury
- SB 702:** Internet crimes against children; “Alicia’s Law”
- SB 2054:** Mandatory health coverage for autism
- SB 2495:** Definition of electronic smoking device as a tobacco product and the establishment of an excise tax on such products

The second crossover, where House bills move out of the Senate and go back to the House, is scheduled for March 10.

More information on third reading bills is online at:

<http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov>