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## Opinion

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## Letters to the Editor

### PIGS

### HUNTERS IN TANTALUS BECAUSE OF COMPLAINTS

I'd like to respond to Christopher Santos' letter (April 6) about pig hunters using the same trails as the hikers in the Tantalus and Manoa areas.

We are there because of numerous complaints by Manoa and other nearby residents that pigs are digging up their backyards and scaring their children.

After a couple of meetings at the Capitol, it was agreed that hunting with dogs is the only effective way to get rid of these pigs.

Hunters pay for a hunting license every year, and that pays for the signs and upkeep in those trail areas. Hikers pay nothing toward that upkeep.

We have asked the state to tell hikers not to bring any animals on trails while this authorized state hunt is going on.

Most hunting dogs wear collars and tracking devices. If necessary, you can read the names and telephone numbers of the owners on them and call them if there is a problem.

*Rodney Jose*

*Past president, Pig Hunters Association of O'ahu, Wahiawa*

### GOLF

### TADD A WONDERFUL REPRESENTATIVE FOR ISLES

This is an open letter to the parents of Tadd Fujikawa.

At the Pearl Country Club recently, I saw two teaching pros showing Tadd how to hit a flop shot.

I observed Tadd briefly, but those few minutes showed me that you have brought him up well.

Much as I admire his skills and swing mechanics, what impresses me most about your son is his demeanor and comportment.

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He exemplifies much of what we want in our heroes and idols.

He is nice, humble, friendly, open, accessible and a credit to the game of golf and Hawai'i. He is a wonderful representative of Hawai'i because of the way he conducts himself.

Congratulations for a job well done!

*George Kagawa*  
*Honolulu*

## **MIDEAST**

### **MUST BE RECOURSE TO BUSH'S ACTIONS IN IRAQ**

Whether we like it or not, the U.S. Congress has passed a bill to fund the George Bush escalation of the Iraq war. But Bush says he will veto the measure and turn down the funding because Congress is telling him to take steps to end the war.

Bush has already started sending more poorly trained and poorly equipped troops into that civil war without waiting for the funding.

The Bush arrogance, ignoring the wishes of the American people and the independent action of another branch of our government over which he no longer has absolute control, is almost certain to result in the deaths of more U.S. soldiers.

If Bush thumbs his nose at Congress and the American people, there must be some recourse. Impeachment comes to mind and maybe war crimes trials, since Bush's actions — starting a war by attacking the wrong country — have led to the deaths of more than 3,000 Americans and thousands of innocent Iraqis. It was not Iraq that attacked the U.S. on 9/11, and the Iraqis had no ties to al-Qaida, and posed no threat to our country.

As an American veteran, I am very upset by George Bush's desire to continue the Iraq war indefinitely.

*C. Keith Haugen*  
*Nu'uano*

### **FUNDING BILL UNDERCUTS U.S. MILITARY IN IRAQ**

Hawai'i hosts what may be the largest military population, as a percentage of permanent residents, of any state in the nation.

And one of our senators holds the nation's highest military decoration as a result of his courageous service in World War II.

During that service he enjoyed unwavering support on the homefront. That's why it is such a stunning disappointment that Sen. Daniel Inouye, in fact our entire congressional delegation, voted to undercut our troops and impose on them a military defeat.

The recent supplemental funding bill to continue financing the troops was loaded with unacceptable pork and contained, incredibly, a specific date for our troops to retreat from the Iraq battlefield and accept a defeat in the war on terror.

The intent, of course, was to create a problem for our president, irregardless of the message received by our brave troops and their battlefield enemies. Unfortunately, that message was: "Defeat at any cost."

Those who voted for this bill will try the "we support the troops but not the mission" shibai, but we now know how they all really feel.

Our troops are doing a fantastic job on the battlefield. They shouldn't have to worry about their backs at home.

*Robert Kessler*  
*Retired commander, U.S. Navy, Waikiki*

## **WAIKIKI**

### **LEWERS STREET OF 1980 PLACE OF ENERGY, MUSIC**

I felt compelled to write after reading your article regarding the transformation of Lewers Street in Waikiki (Page One, April 5).

The Lewers Street I remember around 1980 was a place of energy and music. From 11 p.m. until around 4 a.m., Flip Nunez, the great jazz pianist, along with guitarist Sam Ahia, would hold court at a club called Keone's.

The late-night atmosphere, wild and racy at times, inspired improvisation.

While there are many words I would use to describe my experiences there, dingy would not be one.

*Scott A. Kohler*  
*Winfield, Ill.*

## **HONOULIULI**

### **NO EVIDENCE UPGRADE WILL IMPROVE WATER**

The Hawai'i Water Environment Association is an organization of professionals recognized for preserving and enhancing the water environment in the Pacific island region.

We are troubled with the recent Environmental Protection Agency decision that requires the City and County of Honolulu to upgrade its Honouliuli Wastewater Treatment Plant to secondary treatment.

There is no scientific evidence to show such an upgrade will improve water quality, yet preliminary capital costs to comply with the decision are \$400 million.

In addition, other critical considerations include increased operations and maintenance costs, increased energy costs and increased production of greenhouse gases.

It doesn't seem justified for the city to raise wastewater bills (again) for plant upgrades when there is no scientific evidence that it will improve our livelihood in or around the ocean.

Our mayor is committed to improving the city's aging wastewater collection system to reduce wastewater overflows and spills.

Improvements to our collection system will have a much stronger impact on maintaining a healthy environment and protecting our public health.

Let's reconsider wasting hundreds of millions of dollars on an EPA decision that is not expected to improve our water environment, our economy or our livelihood.

*John H. Katahira*

*President, Hawai'i Water Environment Association*

## **TRAFFIC**

### **NEED TO MOVE FORWARD WITH CITY'S TRANSIT PLAN**

Small kid time in the '50s: Being a Kailua boy, I'd look forward to the summers with my Aunt Nancy and cousins in Ma'ili. We'd beach the days away; at night we'd go to movies in open-air theaters. Later, we'd come home to their Quonset hut and drink hot chocolate, then sleep to the crickets' serenade.

When I think of the fixed- guideway system, I remember my aunt and other family and friends who live on the Leeward side of the island.

Certainly they, and islanders living near and in the Second City who can't afford a car, much less two, will find helpful a second transit option for their daily commute to jobs.

I understand the system as bringing more equity to laborers moving back and forth between our population hubs. While there are critics to the current option, it is clear that no single option will solve all our traffic problems. I think we need to move forward with what we have.

For those who think we got stuck with a lemon, climb aboard and make lemonade. For those who wish we could have dedicated the funds to more worthy causes, "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride them."

*Clarence Liu  
Honolulu*

## **ACCIDENTS**

### **LIVES WILL BE SAVED BECAUSE OF TRAFFIC DATA**

Up to now, the Department of Transportation has kept accident data from the public because of fear of "legal consequences."

This is understandable, but also sad. Secrecy is one of the hallmarks of bureaucratic paranoia. It appears to me that self-protection on the part of the state Department of Transportation has trumped public safety.

The good news is that we can make progress by looking at the danger areas. Lives will be saved as a result of this new-found transparency.

I applaud The Honolulu Advertiser for investigating and publicizing this issue. I also applaud the DOT for finally allowing public scrutiny of its data.

Close inspection and analysis of this data will make our streets safer. That's something we can all live with.

*William C. Madauss, M.D.  
Kailua*

## **GET EXEMPTION**

### **ALOHA PETROLEUM WILL PASS ON ANY TAX CUT**

As you know, the state general excise tax break for ethanol-blended fuel expired at the beginning of the year. At that time, many legislators proposed to roll back the 11-cent-per-gallon gasoline-tax increase that took effect in January.

I was surprised to see that some legislators now say the promised 11-cent-per-gallon gasoline general-excise tax break is unlikely to pass.

I was particularly disappointed to hear some legislators attempt to blame oil companies for the retreat on proposed gas tax relief by suggesting any reduction might not be passed on to consumers.

To support their claims, certain lawmakers and oil company critics argue the price at the pump did not immediately fall last April when the general excise tax exemption took effect. Of course, these same critics conveniently ignore the double-digit increase in the state's mandated gas cap at about the same time, essentially canceling the tax relief.

Our company, Aloha Petroleum, is not a refiner and markets gasoline only in Hawai'i, so we are closely attuned to local drivers. We strive to offer our product at low prices, but the price our customers pay for a gallon of gasoline includes 61 1/2 cents in state taxes, more than drivers pay in any other state.

There is no question that in a market free from price controls, any tax relief should be directly passed on to consumers. If the Legislature were to follow through with a reduction in the gas tax, I guarantee Aloha Petroleum will pass on this tax relief to its customers.

*Bob Maynard*  
President and CEO, Aloha Petroleum Ltd.

## TARO RESEARCH

### BIOTECH CAN HELP SAVE ISLES' ANCESTRAL KALO

Hooray for the courage of House Speaker Calvin Say and Rep. Clift Tsuji to stand up to a small band of activists pushing for an unnecessary bill to kill taro research.

I encourage them to continue the good fight for reason over emotion.

There are many reasons why a ban on biotech taro research is bad. But, I find this irony telling: Biotech insulin, which is saving the lives of many Native Hawaiians every day, is a blessing, but the use of biotech where it might help to save ancestral kalo is claimed to be a curse.

Rapidly declining ancestral kalo varieties may likely be lost forever unless new cultivars can be produced to restore vigor and improve resistance to pests and disease by using all the tools of research available. Biotech is not the problem.

Kudos to all legislators with the courage to stand up for the people against activists who seek to prevail with fear and ignorance.

*Rick Klemm*  
Kailua

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