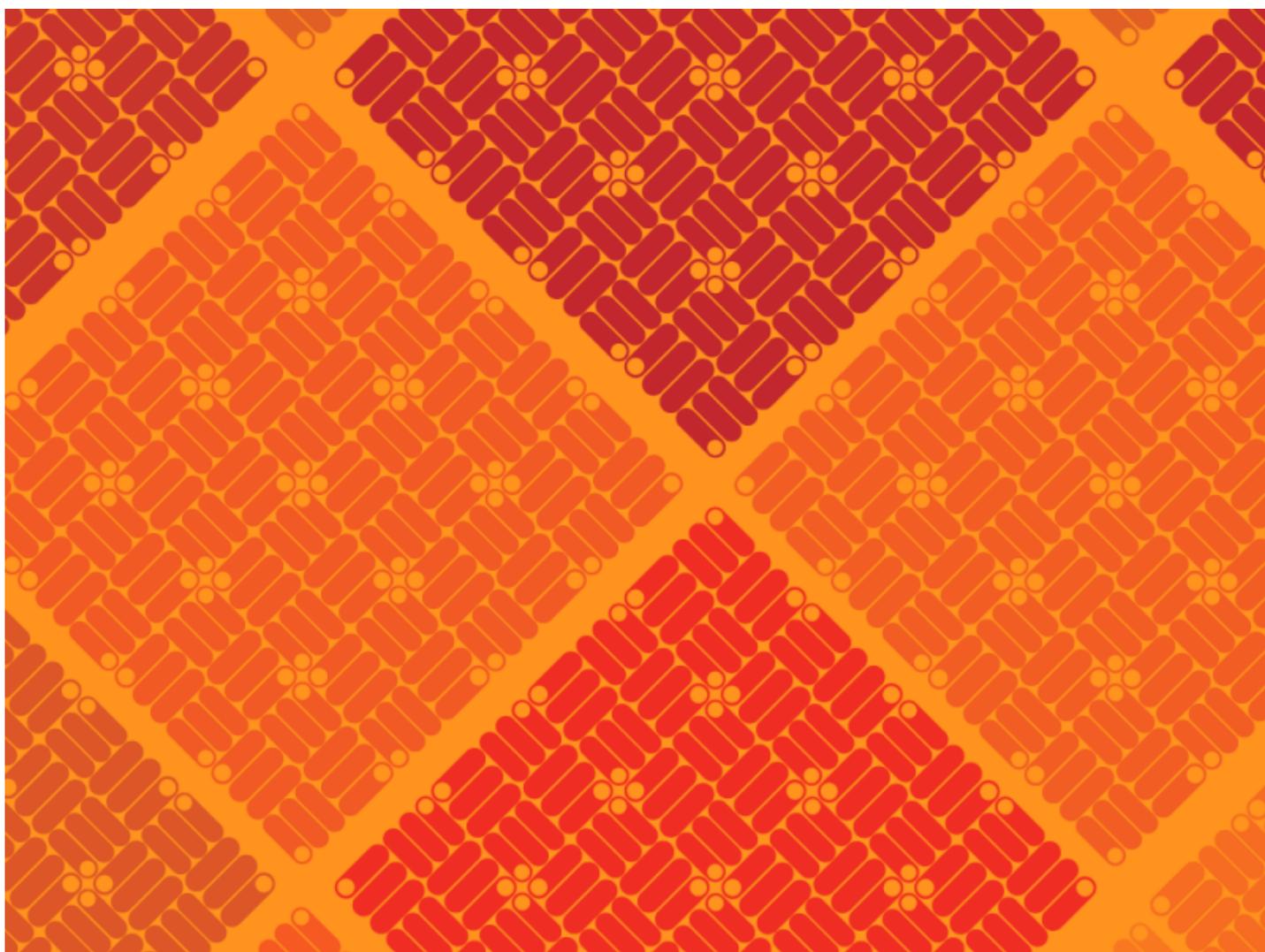




On the chopping block

Governor Abercrombie's current list of bills he is considering vetoing.

 Will Caron  June 26, 2014 10:29 AM



On Monday, July 23, Governor Abercrombie notified the state Legislature of his intent to veto 10 bills, which now join House Bill 1700 (the state budget bill) which the governor announced on June 9 he would line-item veto because it is \$444

million out of sync with House Bill 1712 (the bond authorization bill) and he cannot sign either into law.

The governor said on Monday, “I commend legislators for passing many important and relevant measures this session that will benefit Hawaii’s residents, like higher minimum wage and land preservation. However, there are a few bills I am considering vetoing because of input I have received from concerned individuals. Other bills, despite their good intentions, will not work as they are written.”

The 10 bills range from issues of fund-transference to requiring the disclosure of financial statements by members of boards, commissions and agencies in which the public has a vested interest to requiring that the Board of Land and Natural Resources includes at least one member with a background in native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices.

House Bill 1288 (Relating to Order of Succession): “Clarifies that the successor to the Office of Lieutenant Governor, when the Office of Lieutenant Governor becomes vacant, must be a member of the same political party as the Governor” and “Clarifies the order of succession if the Lieutenant Governor is temporarily absent from the State or temporarily disabled.”

House Bill 2163 (Relating to Parental Parity): “Requires the court to consider frequent, continuing, and meaningful contact with each parent when awarding custody of a minor child, unless the court finds that one or both parents are unable to act in the best interests of the child. Requires the court to consider any necessary reduction in employment due to the needs of a dependent child and wasting of assets when ordering spousal support and maintenance. Establishes a rebuttable presumption that in the division and distribution of property as a result of a divorce, any value given for a joint investment or asset is a joint gift except for inheritance assets.”

House Bill 2427 (Relating to the Repeal of Non-General Funds): “Repeals and transfers the unencumbered balances of various non-general funds and accounts. Transfers the balance of the fee simple residential revolving fund to the general

fund.”

Senate Bill 60 (Relating to Victims of Crimes): “Affords victims and surviving immediate family members, and any accompanying loved ones, the right to participate in restorative justice processes for the harm suffered by the victim, upon written request, and requires those parties to be informed of this right by the police or prosecutor.”

Senate Bill 2431 (Relating to the Hawaii Tourism Authority): “Makes permanent the exemptions granted to the Hawaii Tourism Authority, under certain conditions, from the supervision of accounts by the Comptroller, requirements for publication of consolidated financial statements, and approval of business and accounting forms. Also makes permanent the deposit of interest and revenues or receipts into the tourism special fund.”

Senate Bill 2483 (Relating to Condominium Associations): “Clarifies that a condominium association’s lien is subordinate to real property taxes, rather than all taxes. Clarifies that a condominium association may assess unpaid common fees against any purchaser who purchases a delinquent unit in a foreclosure. Specifies that a condominium board may only fill board vacancies temporarily until a duly noticed election.”

Senate Bill 2589 (Relating to Law Enforcement): “Transfers the law enforcement functions of the Harbors Division of the department of transportation to the department of public safety as of July 1, 2016.”

Senate Bill 2682 (Relating to Financial Disclosure Statements): “Requires the financial disclosure statements of members of certain boards, commissions, and agencies to be made available for public inspection and duplication. Limits information on the source of income of the spouse and dependent children of those whose financial disclosures are public to the name of the income source.”

Senate Bill 2821 (Relating to Insurance): “Adopts revisions to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners’ model laws on Credit for Reinsurance Model Act (Part I). Standard Valuation Law (Part II). Standard Nonforfeiture for

Life Insurance (Part III), and Insurance Holding Company System Regulatory Act (Part IV). Part I takes effect 01/01/2015. Part IV takes effect 01/01/2016.”

Senate Bill 2874 (Relating to the Board of Land and Natural Resources): “Amends the composition of the Board of Land and Natural Resources by requiring that at least one member shall have a background in native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, who shall not be the same member with a background in conservation and natural resources.”

The day after this list was announced, state Senator Sam Slom, the sole Republican in our state Senate criticized the governor for considering the veto of SB2682 saying, “Why shouldn’t the public and the media know if state board or commission members or their immediate family members have a financial interest or an association that may affect the member’s decision making? This is just an example of the “same old, same old,” where the Governor and his appointees get to wield power with a distinct lack of public scrutiny. Let’s face it, this veto doesn’t help the people of Hawaii establish any confidence in their government.”

Slom went on to say that, “This bill passed unanimously in both the House and the Senate. Not even one legislator chose to exercise a reservation vote in the committees or on the floor of either house. This shows the need for transparency and the public’s concern of the lack thereof in this state. The Legislature should convene to vote to override the Governor’s veto. My concern is that, with the 2014 election almost upon us, many legislators will be looking to their party interests instead of state interests.”

The state constitution requires that the governor provide 10 working days’ notice for any measures that he is considering vetoing by July 8, 2014, which means June 28 is the last day to add more bills to the list.

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