

# \$1.8M released for Big Isle projects

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Gov. Neil Abercrombie announced Wednesday the release of \$1.8 million in funding for a pair of capital improvement projects on the Big Island.

A total of \$1.5 million was released to Friends of Connections in Hilo to fund the planning, design, construction and equipment involved in the first phase of the Kress Building's renovation to support Connections Public Charter School upgrades and improvements.

Friends of Connections, a nonprofit organization, purchased the 40,000-square-foot building in December 2006.

School Principal John Thatcher did not immediately return a phone call seeking comment late Wednesday afternoon.

Meanwhile, the governor's office also released \$300,000 to continue work on the Puainako Street extension. The money will go toward funding right-of-way acquisition for the conversion of easements on private properties necessary for the extension of Puainako Street from Komohana Street to the intersection of Kaumana Drive and Country Club Road in Upper Kaumana.

The project includes a new 4.8-mile, two-lane road with turning lanes, paved shoulders and swales, and drainage improvements.

