

# ***SENATOR GILBERT KAHELE***

February 2014



**Gilbert Kahele**

Serving Hawai'i's  
Senate District 1 - Hilo

Majority Whip

Chairman,  
Committee on Tourism



## **A Message From Senator Kahele**

Aloha!

On January 15, 2014, the 27th Hawai'i State Legislature was gavelled into session. This year we welcomed back thirty three former State Senators to help us honor the 55th year of statehood. Much of what we have in our State today, can be attributed to these individuals who's tireless work and public service are seen and felt throughout Hawai'i.

The 2014 session has a renewed vigor throughout the Capitol as our State enjoys an \$844 million dollar surplus partly due to the economic turnaround but also due to prudent, smart budget decisions by the Abercrombie Administration and the Legislature. This has allowed the State to make critical investments in our unfunded liabilities and retirement accounts, education, clean energy and reducing the backlog of critical and outdated infrastructure.

As the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Tourism, it is vital that we invest in the number one economic driver in our State, Tourism. Last year 8.2 million visitors traveled to Hawai'i with total visitor expenditures at \$14.5 billion, contributing to \$1.5 billion in State tax revenues. On any given day in 2013 over 204,000 visitors were in our islands. With Hawai'i opening its doors to China this year with direct service to Beijing and the easing of visa restrictions, the world's most populous country with 1.35 billion people will have a direct gateway to our island state and tropical paradise.

Here on Hawai'i Island, important issues for me this year are the University of Hawai'i at Hilo College of Pharmacy and the funding of its long awaited facility; combating invasive species, specifically the Little Fire Ant; the Hawai'i Health System Corporation Primary Care Training Program at Hilo Medical Center and the continued program development of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo/Hawai'i Community College Aviation program, just to name a few.

As always, my office is open to serve you, the constituents of Hilo and our State. I value your input and feedback and encourage you to be a part of the legislative process by adding your voice to issues that resonate with you and your family. By working together, we will ensure, like those thirty three Senators did before us, that our State is left in good hands for the next generation.

Hau'oli ka mana'o,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gilbert Kahele". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

# Senate and House Committees on Tourism Informational Hearing

The Senate and House Committees on Tourism held a joint informational briefing on January 8, 2014 to discuss the concerns raised in the December 2013 Audit of Major Contracts and Agreements of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

Chairs Kahele and Brower agree that when it comes to spending the states funds there shall be transparency and simplicity. Every state agency shall be held accountable for the way they spend and budget their funds.



## Adam Onishi Eagle Court of Honor



On January 05, 2014 we honored Adam Onishi of Waiakea High School for attaining the prestigious rank of Eagle Scout. Adam is the son of Win and Eileen Onishi and nephew to State Representative Richard Onishi and County Councilman Dennis Onishi.

*Congratulations Adam!*

## 55 Years of Statehood



*Left:* Former State Senator and Governor of the State of Hawai'i, George R. Ariyoshi

*Right:* Former State Senator and Mayor of Hawai'i County, Dante K Carpenter

## State Senate Congratulates Shane Victorino

On January 28, 2014 the Hawai'i State Senate honored and congratulated Shane "The Flyin Hawaiian" Victorino for his many athletic and personal achievements in Major League Baseball and more importantly to our youths here in Hawai'i.



Former State Representative Herbert Segawa



Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 213  
Phone: (808) 586-6760  
Toll Free From Hawai'i Island: 974-4000 ext. 66760  
Email: [senkahele@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:senkahele@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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