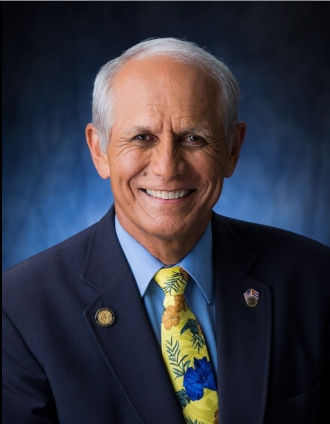


The Senate  
STATE CAPITOL  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

# Senator Mike Gabbard

## *Legislative update...*



*Aloha e friends,*

The pace of our 2017 Legislative Session has been non-stop since Opening Day January 18! Carol and I enjoyed seeing many folks who stopped by the office for our annual Open House. Be sure to check out the photos on my [Flickr](#) and [Facebook](#) photo albums and please email me if you'd like us to email you a copy of your photo.

For refreshments, Carol and I cooked up Basil Moringa Pate, Molo-ka'i Sweet Potato Salad, Mock Chicken Tofu, Lemon Grass Ginger Tea, with local honey, and of course, the Gabbard world-renowned Hawaiian Toffee Treasures. We served up over 200 plates and every-thing was made from local ingredients, except for almonds,

butter, soybeans, and some of the spices.

Thanks to all of you who took the time to come by and say hello. As always, I encourage you to participate in the political process. Some of you submitted ideas that have led to bill proposals that are now being scheduled and heard. You can track bills, get signed up to receive committee hearing notices, and submit testimony at the Capitol website: [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov).



Opening Day Legislative Session 2017. Pictured from L-R: Mick Ferreira, Celeste Connors (Hawai'i Green Growth), Craig Rothen, Nancy Cardinet, Bhakti and Kimi Gabbard, Narayan Gabbard, Mike and Carol Gabbard, Donna Lay (Assistant Committee Clerk), Mark Schnabel, Josh Atwood (HISC), and Meg Turner (Office Manager). Not pictured Vincent Mina (HFUU) and Rock Riggs (Chief of Staff/ Committee Clerk).

*Mike*

## LEGISLATIVE NEWS

### Agriculture and Environment Committee Priorities

This session, in my first year as Chair of the Agriculture and Environment Committee, I'll be focusing on efforts to double our local food production, fight invasive species, and better protect our natural environment. Here are a few noteworthy bills that I introduced that we'll be considering:

- ◆ **Farmer Apprentice Mentoring (SB 356)** - would establish a farmer apprentice mentoring program within the Dept. of Agriculture that would teach farmers about methods to improve soil health by using whole farm systems that practice sustainable agriculture and recycle locally available organic, diverse plant and animal agriculture nutrients, enhanced by fermentation and other ecological processes such as Korean Natural Farming.
- ◆ **Industrial Hemp Program (SB 226 and SB 773)** – would appropriate funding and make housekeeping changes to the state's industrial hemp pilot program to ensure that the farmers will soon be growing hemp in our state.

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### COMMITTEE CHAIR

- ◆ Agriculture & Environment

### VICE CHAIR

- ◆ Water and Land

### MEMBER

- ◆ Judiciary & Labor

### DISTRICT 20

Kapolei, Makakilo and portions of Ewa, Kalaeloa and Waipahu

### NEXT "LISTEN STORY"

My next "Listen Story" community meeting is on March 4, 2017, from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the Ewa Mahiko District Park, 91-1161 Renton Road, Ewa Beach.

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## LEGISLATIVE NEWS



Sen. Gabbard held the first hearing for the Agriculture and Environment committee of the 29<sup>th</sup> Legislature Jan. 30. Nine of 10 bills passed, including SB 778 and SB 779, related to pesticide use in Hawai'i.

- ◆ **Invasive Species Authority (SB 776)** – would establish an Invasive Species Authority as an attached agency to the Department of Agriculture to increase the state's coordination efforts in reducing the threat of invasive species in our islands.
- ◆ **Pesticide Regulation (SB 778)** – would provide the Department of Agriculture with \$3 million in funding to implement the recommendations of the Kauai Joint Fact Finding Report on pesticide use by large agribusinesses to better protect the public and environment from any negative impacts from pesticides.
- ◆ **Red Hill Underground Storage Tanks (SB 1259)** - would require the Department of Health to adopt rules for underground storage tanks that conform with recent revisions to federal regulations. It would require the Navy to double line the storage tanks and put in an improved leak detection system at their Red Hill facility by 2027 in order to better protect our island's drinking water supply.

## SUSTAINABLE HAWAI'I INITIATIVE INFORMATIONAL BRIEFING

On January 26, 2017, Representative Chris Lee and I held an Informational Briefing on the [Sustainable Hawai'i Initiative](#). (SHI) This meeting gave us an opportunity to hear from the Governor and his Administration on his plans to help us reach the goals laid out in his SHI plan.

Governor David Ige announced the SHI during his remarks at the Opening Ceremony at the World Conservation Conference in Honolulu on September 1, 2016. The SHI has these important goals: "100% increase in local agricultural production by 2020; stronger invasive species policy, infrastructure, and capacity by 2027; 30% of priority watersheds protected by 2030; 30% of nearshore marine areas effectively managed by 2030; and complete transfer to clean, renewable energy by 2045."

The briefing included on the Senate side: The Committee on Agriculture and Environment, with myself as Chair, and Senator Gil Riviere, Vice Chair; the Committee on Water and Land, with Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair; and the Committee on Transportation and Energy, with Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair, and Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair.

On the House side, the participating committees were: the Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection, with Rep. Chris Lee, Chair, and Rep. Nicole E. Lowen, Vice Chair; the Committee on Water & Land, with Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair and Rep. Sam Kong, Vice Chair; and the Committee on Agriculture with Rep. Richard P. Creagan, Chair and Rep. Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair.

I felt it was important to kick off the 2017 legislative session with a focus on sustainability as a key priority for the Legislature. The info briefing gave us an opportunity to discuss the plan's components in the proposed state budget and related 2017 legislative proposals. Presentations were made by: Suzanne Case – Chairperson, [Department of Land and Natural Resources](#) (DLNR); Scott Enright – Chairman of the [Department of Agriculture](#) (DOA), and Luis Salaveria – Director, [Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism](#) (DBEDT). (To view the presentations, click on the link.)



Sen. Mike Gabbard and Rep. Chris Lee led an informational briefing on the *Sustainable Hawai'i Initiative* on Jan. 26.

# LOCAL FOOD POLICY LEGISLATIVE DISCUSSION

Mahalo nui to the Local Food Coalition for sponsoring the Local Food Policy event on January 19, including catered dishes prepared with local foods. As we forge ahead in creating a sustainable ag economy, I saw some interesting statistics last week: **Hawai'i local food production sales reached \$84.4 million, according to the 2015 Local Foods Marketing Practices Survey report released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).** Of the \$84.4 million in total local food sales in Hawai'i, \$69.5 million were from produce such as vegetables, nuts and fruit, while \$14.9 million were from value-added products such as jams, meat, and cheese. Unfortunately, we couldn't find any statistics for 2014 or earlier, but I plan to continue to track our local food production going forward, and am committed to Governor Ige's goal of doubling food production in the state.

As I shared in my [January newsletter](#), I spent the last few months making site visits and checking out farms—organic and conventional – on O'ahu, Hawai'i Island, Maui, Kaua'i, and Ni'ihau. A trip to Moloka'i is planned for February. I saw up close the growing of taro, coffee, mac nuts, tomatoes, greens, tropical flowers, in addition to an irrigation system infrastructure, and listened to farmers' concerns.

Some of the big challenges farmers across the state shared with me are the food safety requirements ([FSMA](#)), availability of land, cost of labor, ag vandalism/theft, and inputs like fertilizers and access to water. Invasive species continue to be a huge issue —especially, the coffee berry borer, macadamia felted coccid, little fire ants, rapid ohia death, fruit flies... and the list goes on.

I strongly support the Governor's [Interagency Biosecurity Plan for 2017-2027](#). This will help us deal with the invasive species threat using a coordinated approach with our Dept. of Agriculture (DOA), Dept. of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR), Dept. of Transportation (DOT), Dept. of Health (DOH), University of Hawai'i (UH), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the private sector.

I'll be partnering with the Governor's Administration on the introduction of the [Hawai'i Invasive Species Authority bill](#) which would create an agency attached to the Department of Agriculture with permanent staffing; add new membership to what is now the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to include non-governmental conservation advocates, commercial agriculture or horticultural interests and expertise in Native Hawaiian cultural practices; and fund specific grants for groups tackling the invasive species program.

Our state hemp program is moving forward! A Request for Proposal (RFP) will soon be issued for growing the seed. The Administrative Rules (DOA agency regulations) will be completed by July 1, 2017. With our great weather and three annual growing seasons, the potential is huge for a cottage industry niche hemp market in our state. Hemp is hempening'...finally!

In addition to the bills above, I'm introducing legislation to provide funding for our irrigation infrastructure, an agriculture loan program, hemp program, biological control facility, and the Hawai'i Association of Conservation Districts. I'll also be championing bills to provide funding to the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) for additional staffing for their sustainable and organic ag program and for breadfruit (ulu) research.

With the average age of farmers in Hawai'i at 61 years, it's critical to get young people interested in farming. There's some exciting things going on that I'll let you know about as the session unfolds. This ties in with a bill I authored to provide a coordinator position for the P-20 Working Group – this working group is tasked with coming up with a plan to provide an agriculture curriculum for students from pre-school to college.



Sen. Gabbard co-hosted the Local Food Policy Legislative discussion on Jan. 19, along with his counterpart in the House, Rep. Richard Creagan, Ag Committee Chair. Others pictured L-R: Keone Kealoha, Co-founder and Board President of Malama Kauai; Sen. Gil Riviere; Vincent Mina, Hawai'i Farmers Union President; Amy Hennessey, Director of Communications for Ulupono Initiative; Kyle Datta, General Partner Ulupono; Simon Russell, Hawai'i Farmers Union Legislative Rep; Robin Pfahl, Farm to School Coordinator; Brandon Lee, Associate Ulupono Initiative; Dale Sandlin, Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council; Brian Miyamoto, Hawai'i Farm Bureau President; and Rep. Sam Kong.



# DISTRICT 20 NEWS

## Oahu Community Correctional Center Finalist Sites

Kalaeloa is not among the finalist sites for the new O'ahu Community Correctional Center. The Department of Public Safety ranked its original list of 11 potential sites in a progress report submitted to the Legislature on February 1. The top four sites were the Animal Quarantine Facility in Aiea; the current OCCC location in Kalihi; the Halawa Correctional Facility; and the Milliani Technology Park Lot 17. These finalist sites will now undergo thorough evaluation in an Environmental Impact Statement. All five of the Kalaeloa sites were ranked among the bottom seven spots, driving down the chances of the replacement facility being built in West O'ahu. But if one of the finalist sites is withdrawn for any reason, one of the other seven sites may be considered. DPS will announce when sites have officially been eliminated from the list.



On Jan. 17, Sen. Gabbard attended the blessing and grand opening ceremony of 'Ilima at Leihano senior living community presented an Honorary Certificate to Andrew Kohlberg, Kisco Senior Living founder, President, and CEO; Mark Tsuda, 'Ilima at Leihano Executive Director; and Mitchell Brown, Kisco Chief Development Officer.

The Department of Public Safety's report, "Planning for the Future of the Oahu Community Correctional Center," has a breakdown of the criteria used to rank the sites. The report also shows preliminary designs for the new facility; explains potential costs and funding options; and projects future inmate populations. You can read the full report and receive further updates on the Department of Public Safety's [website](#).

## Aloha Pacific Center

I was invited to speak at the Filcom Center Ballroom recently in Waipahu, in honor of the groundbreaking of the "Aloha Pacific Center," an exciting project to begin in 2017 in Kapolei.



Sen. Gabbard was invited to speak in honor of the groundbreaking of the "Aloha Pacific Center," on Jan. 13.

The [Aloha Pacific Center](#) (APC) will be a five-story retail and office complex with 14-foot

ceilings on the ground floor and loft-style 12-foot ceiling units on the pent-house floor. APC will be home to businesses offering a variety of services in education, various eateries, medical, dental offices, high-tech businesses, copy-computer center, banking & financial services and accounting/ legal ser-

vice providers. APC will also have several high-tech features to encourage science and educational endeavors and to better serve medical and dental businesses finding a home in Kapolei. It's expected to create 400 construction jobs, and many more once it opens up for business.

## UH West Oahu Campus Expansion

The University of Hawai'i will soon begin talks to develop 183 acres of vacant land near the UH West Oahu campus in Kapolei. The University chose Hunt Companies and Stanford Carr Development as master developers for the project. Plans for the project include housing, retail, and recreational development. Revenue from the completed project would help sustain the growing campus. UH Presi-



Senator Gabbard was interviewed by Antoine Laguerre on Jan. 20 for a French documentary on the 'meaning and history of the aloha shirt.'

dent David Lassner says negotiations will take 12 to 18 months to determine a schedule and financial commitments. The plan would then go to the UH Board of Regents for approval.

## Big Win for Kapolei Soccer

Congratulations to the Kapolei High School boys soccer team on claiming the OIA Division-I championship on Jan. 28. The Hurricanes edged out the Mililani Trojans with a final score of 1-0. Kapolei Sophomore Eric Aquino scored the game's only goal, but he gave credit to the team's strong defense for the win. This is Kapolei's third league championship for the boys' soccer team. Go Hurricanes!



Senator Gabbard held his Listen Story community meeting on Jan. 28 at the Kapolei High School Teachers' Lounge. Thanks to everyone who came out!