

JANUARY 2025

# SENATOR GLENN WAKAI

WAKAI'S DISTRICT INCLUDES PUNAPUNA, AIRPORT, SALT LAKE, ALIAMANU, KAILUA, KAILUA-VILLAGE, HICKAM, PEARL HARBOR, AND PORTIONS OF KAPALAMA AND PEARL CITY



## Cutting the Fuse on Fireworks



*Devastation at the home on Keaka Drive in Aliamanu.*

The Aliamanu blast seen across the globe has ignited calls for a ban on fireworks. Sen. Wakai is working with the Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) to draft a bill proposing to end all fireworks, except for permitted public displays.

Instead of stuffing our prisons with fireworks dealers and enthusiasts, Sen. Wakai will go after civil forfeitures. Violators will be cited and sent a letter of nuisance abatement. On the second offense, the state has the right to sue and seize the violators' home or place of business.

There are numerous fireworks laws on the books, but very little enforcement. DLE is now the agency in charge of investigating and intercepting the movement of fireworks. They are asking for 8 staffers and a \$2 million laboratory to take more cases to trial. Sen. Wakai supports those budget requests.

Last Friday, the Illegal Fireworks Task Force issued its report highlighting its seizure of approximately 187,000 pounds of illegal fireworks from shipping containers in 2023, and another 40,000 pounds in 2024.

So far two men have been indicted with felony illegal distribution of aerial fireworks to undercover officers. Both pled "No Contest" and await sentencing.

## Getting Harbor in Ship Shape



*The state is on target to finish improvements to the Kapalama Container Terminal this fall.*

Lawmakers toured progress being made at the Kapalama Container Terminal. Construction began in 2017 and is expected to be completed in October of this year.

The state is expanding the harbor by 86 acres at a cost of \$555 million. For nearby residents, 50,000 truckloads per year will be taken off Nimitz Highway and Auiki Street. The containers bound for neighbor islands will move directly between facilities. "Taking that many rigs off the road is going to enhance life for those in Kalihi," said Sen. Wakai. "This is the largest project undertaken by the Dept. of Transportation. It's on budget and on time."

## Flipping Switch on Committees



Sen. Wakai is Chairman of the new Energy Committee and will be handling legislation affecting the future of HECO – its solvency, reliability, and affordability.