



Legislative Update from Senator Mike Gabbard



Aloha Friends,

The 2012 Legislative Session wraps up on May 3rd. Please join me at my next "Listen Story" meeting at the Kunia Starbucks (Kunia Shopping Center) on Saturday, May 5th from 9:00am to 10:00am where I'll give a legislative wrap-up. Call me at 586-6830 or email me at sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov if I can do anything to help you. Here are a few things I'd like to share with you.



Mike



COMMITTEE CHAIR

* Energy and Environment

MEMBER

* Judiciary and Labor

MEMBER

* Transportation and International Affairs

District 19

Waikele, Royal Kunia, Village Park, Makakilo, Kapolei, Kalaeloa, Honokai Hale, and portions of Waipahu and Ko'Olina

Road Repaving in Makakilo, Waikele, and Waipahu

Grace Pacific was awarded a \$9.6 million contract by the City to repave 82 streets in Makakilo, 49 streets in Waipahu, and 12 streets in Waikele. The work for the Makakilo roads started on March 5th and should be completed on July 13th. The Waikele and Waipahu roadwork will start at the end of May and should be completed by the end of September. Construction will be conducted M-F from 8:30am to 3:30pm. The work will include resurfacing, replacement of curbs and gutters, adjustment of utility manholes, pavement markings, and tree trimming. We were advised that there will be some traffic delays due to the roadwork, so please be patient. Contact Grace Pacific at 842-3231 if you have any questions about the project.

Governor Releases Construction Funding for District 19 Schools

Great news! Governor Abercrombie released \$7.48 million in construction funding for schools across the state on March 7th. Here's a breakdown of how those funds were allocated, which includes District 19 schools.

- \$2 million – energy improvements (upgrades to AC systems and installation of data loggers and sub meters so that schools may track and manage their electrical use at a more detailed level) at Waikele Elementary, Kapolei Middle, and Kapolei High
- \$1 million – special education portable classrooms at Makakilo Elementary
- \$1 million – planning for new East Kapolei High School
- \$500,000 – playground equipment and accessibility improvements at Waikele Elementary and Kaleiopuu Elementary



A group of 3rd through 5th graders from Mauka Lani Elementary visited and toured the State Capitol on March 7. In the Senate gallery, Senator Gabbard gives them a rundown on how things work at the legislature.



Senator Mike Gabbard threw his notorious knuckle ball as the first pitch to Ezra Abraham of the Makakilo Kapolei Youth Baseball League Shetland Division Yankees, at the PONY MYKBL Shetland Baseball Tournament at Pointer Field in Kalaeloa on March 10. BTW, Ezra caught it, no problem.



The Hawai'i State Senate honored local author Kauai Hart Hemmings on March 1. Her novel, "The Descendants" was the basis of the hit George Clooney movie of the same name, which won an Oscar for the Best Adapted Screenplay. Senator Gabbard is pictured with Kauai and her parents, former State Senator Fred Hemmings and Suzy Hemmings.

Honoring Kapolei Community Development Corporation

I was honored to sponsor a floor presentation at the State Senate for the officers and directors of Kapolei Community Development Corporation (KCDC) on February 28th. KCDC was formed in 2008 by Kapolei homestead leaders. Their mission is to foster family and cultural preservation founded on the tenets of community, culture, education, and partnerships by leasing land and developing it in a way that benefits the community. Their goal is a family and educational center with space for offices, meeting areas, a certified kitchen, a hall for large gatherings, and storefronts for promoting homestead cottage industry products. By the end of 2010, KCDC's consistent work resulted in awards for both the funding to initiate planning and a 65-year general lease with the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands for a parcel of land for commercial development and revenue generation. Mahalo for the efforts of President Shirley Swinney, Vice President Paul Richards, Treasurer Homelani Schaedel, Director Clayton Brown, and Secretary Kanani Sang-Pereira to create a place for the community to thrive, learn, and strengthen their families. They are setting an inspiring example for what a small group of determined people can achieve for the betterment of the community by *Kulia I Ka Nu'u* (striving for excellence).



Clean Economy Bank Deserves a Serious Look

We passed HB 1033 out of the Senate's Energy and Environment Committee on March 20th. The bill now needs to pass out of the Commerce and Consumer Protection/Ways and Means by April 5th. HB 1033 would set up a clean economy bank to provide loans to help finance renewable energy and environmental projects in Hawai'i and other states to keep us moving forward to reach our goal of reducing our dependency on fossil fuels. It would allow us to tap unexpended federal stimulus funds that would otherwise expire. Right now, Hawai'i has \$13.3 million in unspent stimulus funds and there are \$2.6 billion unused funds nationally. Rather than operating as a traditional bank, the Hawai'i Clean Economy Bank would be structured to use loan loss reserve funds, loan guarantees and other credit enhancements to lower the cost of capital for clean energy projects. You can check out the language of the bill at this link: http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/measure_indiv.aspx?billtype=HB&billnumber=1033

Dog the Bounty Hunter

I had a small role in an episode of Dog the Bounty Hunter that premiered on March 21st. And no, I wasn't being chased by the Dog and I'm not joining his crew and quitting my day job! I had staged a surprise visit from the Dog for a group of at-risk high school students from Minnesota who were part of a Leadership Program vacationing in Hawai'i last summer. The "Training Day" episode will be shown as a rerun on A&E. You can also check it out on AETV at this link: <http://www.aetv.com/dog-the-bounty-hunter/>.



"Dog the Bounty Hunter" Chapman (far right), his wife Beth Chapman, and Dave Hyatt of HCC Surety visited Senator Mike Gabbard at his office on March 19.

City and Kapolei Property Development Open New Roads

Mayor Carlisle and Kapolei Property Development opened the following new connector roads in Kapolei on March 12th. The new roads will make it easier to get from point A to point B in our growing City.

- Kapolei Parkway – Kunehi St. to Alohika St.
- Wakea Street – Ala Kahawai St. to Kapolei Pkwy.
- Kamaaha Avenue – Manawai St. to Wakea St.
- Alohikea
- Kuou



Making Changes to the Solar Tax Credit

Making changes to the solar tax credit has been a hot topic at the Capitol this session. As it came over from the House, HB 2417 would have only allowed folks to take one solar tax credit per tax map key (TMK) instead of one per system as is presently allowed. This would have had a very negative impact on solar industry, which accounted for 15% of construction in state in 2011. I was getting an earful from the solar industry on the bill and so we drafted a Senate version of the bill based on their input. I'm a distributed energy guy, so where I'm coming from is that we've got to make solar as affordable as possible for homes and businesses. As it stands, there's a lot of confusion about the Department of Taxation's guidance on the solar tax credit. We've been hearing a lot of talk about gaming the system because people are getting multiple tax credits. What we're looking at doing with the Senate version of HB 2417 is to get rid of the caps all together, since people are getting multiple tax credits already. We're also looking at stepping down the tax credit percentage to hit 20% in 2015. This would lessen the impact on the state's finances without doing damage to the solar industry and people's ability to afford PV.



"Revenge of the Electric Car" Movie House Party

I'll be hosting a house party, co-sponsored by the Sierra Club, to show the movie "Revenge of the Electric Car" on April 17th at the Kapolei High Teachers' Lounge (next to the cafeteria) from 6:45pm to 8:30pm. The FREE movie focuses on exciting developments in the production of electric vehicles. Here's the trailer if you'd like to check it out: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jkRlu5a6Sb0&feature=player_embedded. Many of you may know I've owned an all electric Nissan Leaf for almost a year. Please call my office at 586-6830 to RSVP if you plan to attend. Seating is limited. Just so you know, the state extended the rebates for the purchase of new electric vehicles (up to \$4,500) and charging stations (up to \$500) through November 1st. There is currently \$387,000 left in the program. The federal electric vehicle tax credit (up to \$7,500) and charging station (up to \$1,000) won't expire until 100,000 vehicles are sold. By April, there will be 140 charging stations at 100 locations around the state (including Kapolei Commons and Kapolei Shopping Center). As of January 2012, 663 electric vehicles are registered statewide.



Congratulations to Oka's Auto Body and Paint

Congratulations to Oka's Auto Body and Paint of Waipahu for being featured in the March 2012 issue of Insight Americas Magazine. Oka's has made enough energy efficiency improvements, including the installation of a \$440,000 PV solar system, to be totally off the grid. This saves them \$3,000 a month in electricity costs and is the right thing to do in helping us kick our addiction to fossil fuels.



Senator Gabbard was visited by Kainoa and Jasmine Keaulii of Pearl City Highlands Elementary, during the Art at the Capitol event on March 2. The State Capitol was open that evening for the public to view pieces of art on display in participating Legislators' offices. Kainoa and Jasmine greeted Senator Gabbard with a plastic bag crown and lei. Kainoa had testified at the hearing in favor of Senator Gabbard's bill, SB2511, the disposable bag fee bill. The Sierra Club and the "plastic bag monster" were also visiting offices that evening to garner support for the bill, which passed in the Senate on March 6.



The Hawai'i State Legislature honored Capt. Stuart Hee of the Makakilo Fire Department at the 2012 Ko'olina District Awards Recognition Dinner at the JW Ihilani Marriot Hotel at Ko'olina on March 9. Capt. Hee received the District Award of Merit, which is the highest award a volunteer can receive for their service. Pictured left to right are: Takuya Ohki, Boy Scouts Aloha Council Ko'olina District Chairman; Senator Gabbard; Captain Hee and Representative Sharon Har.

Kapolei Businesswomen Shine

It was a privilege to recognize two successful Kapolei businesswomen at the State Capitol on March 28th. Kathleen Davenport of Kathleen Davenport Photography and West Oahu Women's Network was named the United States Small Business Administration's State of Hawai'i 2012 Women in Business Champion of the Year. This is a prestigious award that honors individuals who have, as an advocate for women entrepreneurs, fulfilled a commitment to the advancement of women's business ownership. Dana Hauanio of the Honolulu Minority Business Center was chosen as the United States Small Business Administration's State of Hawai'i 2012 Minority Small Business Champion of the Year. This award honors individuals who have fulfilled a commitment to support and assist minority entrepreneurs and small business owners. I commend both of these outstanding Kapolei residents for being inspiring and influential businesswomen.



Kanu Hawai'i and Common Cause sponsored the "Pizza and Policy" event at the Capitol on March 2. Middle and high school students played a game to learn about the legislative process by going to lawmaker offices to get clues on "Who Killed the Bill?" Ken Kakesako (wearing lei) brought a group of middle and high school students to Senator Gabbard's office.

Divalicious Opens Kapolei Store

I surprised Divalicious owner, Susan Leong, with a certificate from the State Senate at the Grand Opening of her new store in the Kapolei Shopping Center on March 24th. This is the third store for Divalicious, which also has boutiques in Aina Haina and at Ward Center. The Kapolei boutique is its largest venue, carrying women's clothing and accessories, including a plus size section, and a "Minilicious" room for sizes four to fourteen. The boutique strictly appeals to women, although men are welcome to shop for their wives or girlfriends. Mahalo to Susan and her team for bringing the divas in our community exciting new shopping choices. We wish you continued success for many years to come.



UH Head Coach Norm Chow and Senator Mike Gabbard met at the Capitol Rotunda on March 13, after the "Punt, Pass, Kick" Competition between Senate, House and the Governor's Office, for Education Week.



Senator Gabbard spoke with a group of students taking a TeenPact Political Communication Workshop on March 23 at the State Archives Building, where they discussed the use of persuasion and bargaining to get your point across, in order to influence legislation. Pictured from left to right are Nathanael Chang, Ryan Garcia, Marianne Garcia, Senator Gabbard, Nathanael Gentry, Joshua Kim, Joshua Koch, Stephen Blunk (TeenPact Staff) and Timmy Metcalf.



Students from American Renaissance Academy in Kalaeloa visited the State Capitol on March 16 to give testimony on education related bills being heard that day. They also stopped by Senator Mike Gabbard's office for a mini civics lesson. From left to right are: Crystal Boucon, Andy Wiers, Gabrielle Mason, Senator Gabbard, Samantha Beck, Samuel Castro, Hunter Bruno, Cody Porter, Derek Tanizaki-Hudson, Abigail Castro, and ARA instructor, David Suhs.

