

Legislative Update from...

Senator Mike Gabbard



Aloha Friends,

Hope you're all well and enjoying the summer months. Lots of excitement in the air about UH West Oahu opening up after so many years on the drawing table. Here are some things I'd like to share with you. Please contact me at 586-6830 or sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov if I can ever help you or your family in any way.



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District 19

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

"Listen Story" Meeting

My next "Listen Story" meeting will be held at the Kapolei Starbucks (next to the Chevron Station) on August 25th from 9:00 to 10:00am.



UH West Oahu Grand Opening



Just a quick reminder that the Grand Opening for the new UH West Oahu campus in Kapolei will be Saturday, August 18th from 11am to 5pm. The public is welcome to attend this free event. There will be entertainment, food trucks, and family activities. The address is 91-1000 Farrington Highway. Classes will begin two days later on August 20th. For more information, please call 454-4750.

Kalaeloa Community Development District Rule Making Public Hearings

As you know, the Barbers Point Naval Air Station closed in 1999. For many years, Barbers Point (now referred to as Kalaeloa) lay dormant, attracting vandalism, overgrowth, and was in general disrepair. I've been a resident of the community since 2004. The Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) was given the task of redeveloping the area which includes housing, National Guard military installations, a Coast Guard facility, and an airport. Things were slow going for many years until 2006 when the Kalaeloa Master Plan was adopted. Since that time, we've seen many businesses popping up, the Tripler's Wounded Warrior medical facility opening up, solar farms on the way, and the new Pacific FBI headquarters soon opening its doors in September. HCDA is currently in the process of adopting the rules, which will establish special zoning districts in Kalaeloa. The plan is to balance commercial, residential, light industrial, and recreational uses in the community. There are two public hearings coming up that you might want to attend:

Dates: August 16th (presentation) and September 11th (decision making)
Place: Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, Hale Pono Conference Room (91-5420 Kapolei Parkway)
Time: 9am

If you'd like to take a look at the proposed rules, please go to: <http://hcdaweb.org/plans-rules>. You can email written comments before the public hearings to contact@hcdaweb.org. For more information, call 594-0300.

Williams Aerospace Makes Kapolei Home

I presented a certificate from the State Senate to CEO Jeff Williams upon the opening of Williams Aerospace's new manufacturing facility and office in Campbell Industrial Park on July 19th. Williams Aerospace was founded in 2002 by Jeff and his wife, Leilani who is the company's COO. They provide turn-key solutions for government or corporate security needs with unique products that are leading the way in unmanned systems technologies such as Hybrid Propulsion, Next Generation Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Design, and Artificial Intelligence. They were recently awarded a contract to design, engineer, and build Hawai'i's first Unmanned Aircraft System (better known as drones) through a partnership with Saint Louis University. Congratulations to Jeff and Leilani for all their dedication and hard work and for their efforts to diversify our economy.



Pacific Health Research Lab Raises Concerns and Offers Benefits

You might have heard about UH's plans to build the 31,000-square ft. Pacific Health Research Lab (PHRL) in Kalaeloa at the existing National Guard compound off Saratoga Avenue. The purpose of the lab is to help us be better prepared for contagious disease outbreaks, such as SARS, dengue fever, and avian flu. This past session, we at the Legislature, appropriated \$12.5 million for the PHRL. This state funding will be paired with a \$32 million grant from the National Institutes of Health grant. UH is one of 15 universities around the country selected to receive the grant money. The PHRL would be one of 13 regional Level 3 labs in the country. Level 3 labs work on airborne microbes, such as West Nile, TB, Avian Flu, and SARS. The project is currently in the middle of the planning process with the environmental assessment scheduled to be completed by October 2012 and construction to be done by summer 2016. UH tells us the facility will host 20 permanent employees and create 254 construction jobs. Dr. Gene Awakuni, Chancellor of UH West Oahu, has spoken publicly about how the PHRL would be a big benefit to their new Kapolei campus because of the scientific research which will go on there.

Some other points to consider: a recent MIT study rated our airport as the 3rd most likely to spread virulent disease. They listed these three reasons for our high ranking:

- Our geographical positioning in the middle of the Pacific Ocean makes it a prime layover between the US west coast and large Asian hubs;
- It's also "well connected" to other powerful spreader airports, such as LAX;
- It sees a high volume of long-range travel; all of which would help spread a disease outbreak

I'm aware that some Kapolei/Kalaeloa residents are concerned about this facility being built so close to our community. I'll continue to keep in close contact with UH staff as their planning process moves forward.

Governor's Vetoes

Of the 345 measures that passed out of the 2012 Legislature, 329 are now law. Governor Abercrombie signed 323 measures into law and 6 bills became law without his signature. He vetoed 14 bills on July 10th. The Legislature chose not to hold a Special Session to override those vetoes. One of those bills he vetoed was SB 2424, which would have required professional employer organizations to place a \$500,000 surety bond in a local bank. I opposed this legislation because it could put some smaller professional employer organizations out of business due to the financial burden this would cause. I'm glad the Governor vetoed it.



Hawai'i Electricity Reliability Administrator: A Big Plus for Push for Renewable Energy

A big piece of legislation that became law in 2012 is SB 2787 (Act 166). This new law gives the PUC the authority to set up a Hawai'i Electricity Reliability Administrator, which will help get more renewable energy on the grid. California had its Gold Rush in the mid-1800s; Hawai'i continues its "PV Rush" in 2012. Right now, there are more than 11,000 PV systems installed statewide out of a total of 267,000 homes. As it stands, HECO ultimately has been making the decision on whether more PV or wind can be on the grid. There are 741 circuits statewide, not counting Kaua'i, and more and more are reaching a 15% renewable energy cap. In Kapolei, 3 of our 15 circuits have hit the cap. In these cases, homeowners and businesses must pay thousands of dollars in studies before HECO will allow them to hook up their PV system. This law takes that power out of HECO's hands and instead has HERA make those decisions. This will create a fairer and more objective system for all.

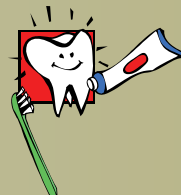


Pacific Biodiesel Launches "Big Island Biodiesel" Plant

I joined with U.S. Senator Inouye, Governor Abercrombie, and Mayor Billy Kenoi of the Big Island in honoring the Grand Opening of Pacific Biodiesel's "Big Island Biodiesel" plant in Kea'au on July 2nd. The plant will produce 5.5 million gallons of biofuels each year by processing 16,000 gallons each day of locally collected used cooking oil and trap grease oil, as well as animal fats and virgin crop oils. Area growers now have a new opportunity to diversify and strengthen their businesses by growing biofuel crops. The new plant also provides 85 jobs. Congratulations to Pacific Biodiesel founders, Bob and Kelly King, for helping to build a stronger, more self-sufficient Hawai'i.



Senator Gabbard, Senator Gil Kahele, and Rep. Denny Coffman made a presentation from the State Legislature to Bob and Kelly King, founders of Pacific Biodiesel, upon the Grand Opening of their new 5.5 million gallon per year Big Island Biodiesel plant in Kea'au on July 2nd. Pictured (L to R) are Senator Gabbard, Kelly King, Bob King, Senator Kahele, and Rep. Coffman.



Senator Gabbard met with Suzanne Jones (left) of Honolulu and Poonam Gupta (right) of Waikale in his State Capitol Office on July 23rd. Suzanne and Poonam are students in the University of Hawai'i's Nursing Masters program and are working on a project focused on improving dental screening for our keiki.

Integrated Resource Planning Advisory Group Planning Our Energy Future

I was recently invited by the Hawai'i Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to join the Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) Advisory Group. Our first meeting took place in Honolulu on July 23, 2012. The next meeting will be in Kahului on August 7, 2012, with video-conferencing from Hilo and Honolulu. IRP is a planning, analysis and decision-making process that examines and determines how utilities will meet future demands. It integrates energy efficiency programs, load management programs, societal concerns and public participation, as well as costs, into the planning process. And IRP is one of several steps that utilities must undertake before getting PUC approval for new utility resources. The PUC initiated the IRP process for Hawaiian Electric Companies – HECO, Hawaii Electric Light Company (HELCO) and Maui Electric Company (MECO) on March 1, 2012, and established the Advisory Group on June 29, 2012. The Advisory Group consists of members from the Big Island, Maui County and O'ahu, representing a diverse range of perspectives. The Advisory Group's main task is to propose scenarios for the utilities to consider in its resource planning. The preliminary objectives proposed by Hawaiian Electric are 1) Increase the use of renewable energy resources; 2) Maintain reliability; 3) Provide electricity at a reasonable cost; 4) Reduce dependency on imported oil, increase energy security and improve price stability; and 5) Protect Hawai'i's environment, culture and communities. HECO, HELCO and MECO must file their IRP reports and Action Plans with the PUC by June 29, 2013. The IRP process for Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative (KIUC) and the Gas Company will begin later.

Convoy of Hope Helps the Less Fortunate

It was awesome to participate in the Convoy of Hope at the Kapolei Fairgrounds on July 28th. Rep. Sharon Har and I had an opportunity to speak to over 1,000 volunteers and present a certificate on behalf of the State Legislature to the event organizers. An estimated 7,000 West Oahu residents attended and received free services, including getting lunch, groceries, a haircut, a family photo, a medical screening, and school supplies. This event is part of a nationwide effort called the "Day of Compassion" focused on distributing food, goods, and services to the needy. They also held simultaneous events at McKinley High School and Kailua District Park. A total of 135,000 pounds of groceries were distributed at the three locations. The events were sponsored in part by the Assembly of God churches. Mahalo to CEO/Founder Hal Donaldson, Vice President for Global Initiatives Michael Redmon, Hawai'i Coordinator Pastor Scott Sonoda, Leeward Site Coordinator Pastor Mel Corpuz, Kunia resident Danny Melton, and all the dedicated volunteers who made these important events a reality.



Senator Gabbard and Rep. Sharon Har got a tour of the "Convoy of Hope" Leeward Site at the Kapolei Fairgrounds on July 28th. Pictured (L to R) are volunteer retired Colonel Danny Melton of Kunia, Senator Gabbard, Leeward Site Coordinator Pastor Mel Corpuz, and Rep. Har.



Senate Energy and Environment Chair, Mike Gabbard gave a legislative update on the progress of clean energy initiatives at Hawai'i Energy Policy Forum's Clean Energy Day on Friday, July 6, 2012 at the Laniakea YWCA.



Congratulations to the Makakilo-Kapolei-Honokai Hale Little League Majors Softball team for winning the Western Region Tournament over Arizona by a score of 5 to 4 on July 27, 2012 in San Bernardino, California! They will now go to the World Series in Portland from August 9 to 15, 2012.

