



Senator Mike Gabbard

19th District, West Oahu

WAIKELE, VILLAGE PARK, ROYAL KUNIA,
KAPOLEI, MAKAKILO, KALAELOA, HONOKAI HALE,
& PORTIONS OF WAIPAHAU & KO 'OLINA

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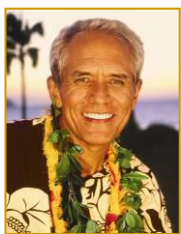
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TRANSPORTATION, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

MEMBER
PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

◆ November 2009 ◆

Aloha Friends,

It's been a tough couple of weeks with the start of the teacher furloughs. As a lifelong-educator, I'm very disappointed as students stand to lose 17 instructional days this school year. I assure you that I'm working with my colleagues to find the best way to resolve this crisis.



I wish you and your ohana happiness and health and hope you have a nice Thanksgiving holiday with family and friends. My prayers go out to the troops who are currently serving overseas. You're all appreciated and missed here at home. Please contact me if I can help you in any way. My email is sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov and my phone number is 586-6830. Me ka pumehana,



Listen-Story

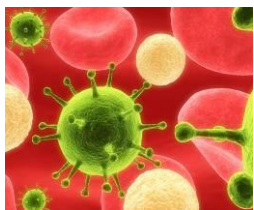
My next Listen-Story meeting will be at Waikele Starbucks on Saturday, November 21st, from 9:00 - 10:00 am. I hope to see you there. The photo at right is from last month's meeting at the Kapolei Starbucks.

Interisland Wind Project Would Move Us Toward Clean Energy

On October 29th, I attended a news conference at the Governor's Office announcing that the state was issuing a request for proposals for the environmental impact statement for the interisland wind project. This process is expected to take up to two years.



The state is currently working on a project to bring 400 MW of wind power from Moloka'i and Lana'i to Oahu via an undersea cable. First Wind Hawai'i would develop the 200 MW wind farm on Moloka'i and Castle & Cooke would do the same on Lana'i. HECO will be working with the state and those companies to upgrade our electricity grid so that it can handle this amount of wind power. There will be public meetings in the near future where people can learn more about the project and weigh in. In the meantime, you can check out www.interislandwind.com to learn more.



Prepare Your Family for Possible Outbreak of Swine Flu

Since the first cases of swine flu appeared on the mainland in April, I've been urging our state administration to be more vigilant to prevent the spread of the virus in our state. So far we've had well over 3,500 confirmed cases and 11 deaths. Just this month, President Obama declared the swine flu outbreak a national emergency. *(More on Page 2.)*



(Continued from Swine Flu story on Page 1) On October 27th, the state Department of Health (DOH) held a press conference stating that we should expect a surge in swine flu cases over the next few weeks. It's very important for us to do everything we can to protect ourselves and families from getting the virus. If you're able, I'd recommend you get the H1N1 vaccine as soon as possible. Right now, the DOH has identified the following groups to be first in line to get the vaccine: healthcare and emergency medical services personnel; pregnant women; caregivers for children younger than age 6 months; people from age 6 months through 24 years; and, persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions. Please visit <http://hawaii.gov/health/flu-hawaii-gov/vaccination.html> to find out the latest information on the swine flu vaccine.



"BEE"ing a Costume Judge was VERY Sweet!

What an honor it was to again judge the Kapolei Library's costume contest at their 5th Annual Halloween event on October 28th. This year, my judging counterparts were Representative Sharon Har and Marya Zoller, the Director of the Public Libraries Branch of the Hawai'i State Public Library System. We fit right in wearing our bumblebee caps with flapping wings! There were roughly 650 people who attended the event and enjoyed watching K-6 graders having a great time as their favorite character for Halloween. I hope to participate again next year.



Many thanks to Caroline Coleman, the Children's Librarian at the Kapolei Public Library, for coordinating this fun family event.



- ★ November 19th, 3:00-7:30pm
Christmas Shake-Out Festival at Mid Pac
- ★ November 29th, 4:00pm
LCC Annual Christmas Concert
- ★ December 3rd, 7:30-8:00pm
Ward Warehouse Amphitheater
- ★ December 16th, 8:00-8:45pm
Ala Moana Center Stage
- ★ December 17th, 8:30-9:30pm
Makakilo Elementary School Cafeteria
- ★ December 20th, 5:00-6:00pm
Hilton Hawaiian Village Main Lobby



Makakilo Elementary's Choral Music Program a Hit

Makakilo Elementary School has launched a new afterschool Choral Music program for students, grades Kindergarten – 5th. The chorus has 80-members and will be performing at festivals and venues around the island this Christmas season. The program began under the leadership of school principal, Sean Tajima.

If you'd like more information about the following performances, please give him a call at 672-1122. Hope you can make it to one the performances.





Leeward Young Artist Awards

Who says you have to go to a gallery to see good art? If you happened to be in West Oahu recently you could have visited the 16th Annual Leeward Young Artist Awards at Kapolei Hale on November 3rd. The annual event recognizes and encourages talented youth from Pearl City to Waianae in grades K-12. Walmart served as the lead sponsor for the program this year. Other sponsors of the event were the Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts and the Department of Education Leeward District.

The following is a list of this year's finalists and winners in the Kapolei area. Their artwork will be available for public viewing at Kapolei Hale from November 2nd – 6th. Kapolei Middle School 7th-grade student Julie Kuratsu's winning art will be displayed at the James Campbell Building for one year.

Kapolei Middle School

Julia Kuratsu, Grade 7 - Winner
Bahia Kelly, Grade 6 - Finalist
Jennifer Yoon, Grade 8 - Finalist

Kapolei Elementary

Paul Wyatt Russell, Grade K - Finalist
Charlene Saguiped, Grade K - Finalist

Barbers Point Elementary

En'Deyah Jack, Grade 2 - Finalist
Teah Laupapa, Grade 2 - Finalist
Jordyn Lono, Grade 2 - Finalist
Aiden Sutherland, Grade 2 - Finalist

Makakilo Elementary

Justin Khamninh, Grade 1 - Finalist



Congratulations!

Congratulating Kapolei Middle's Julia Kuratsu (above), 2009 winner of a Leeward Young Artist Award, are (from left) Senator Mike Gabbard, her art teacher Daryle Mishina, Councilman Nestor Garcia, and Kunia/Waipahu Walmart Store Manager Debbie Shima.



Support for Royal Kunia Elementary School

I submitted testimony to the Board of Education regarding the Department of Education's Capital Improvement Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 on October 15th. I've been working closely with many Royal Kunia residents concerning school overcrowding in their community. The existing elementary school serving the community is Kaleiopuu Elementary. This school was designed for a capacity of 750 students, but now has 960 students. A much needed new elementary school for Royal Kunia has been delayed for a number of years due to financial troubles experienced by a previous developer. In my testimony, I requested that the DOE consider moving Royal Kunia Elementary higher on the DOE's Capital Improvement priority list. I pointed out that it's essential we move forward on this important project to coincide with the construction of the 2,000 new homes that are planned for the area. While the BOE voted to leave Royal Kunia at the same place on its priority list, it's important to note that as it stands, it will be the 5th new school to be built in our state. The new Kapolei II Elementary is the 2nd new school on their priority list and East Kapolei Middle School is 4th.





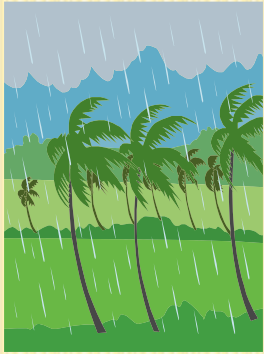
Western States Energy & Environment Symposium Highlights Hawaii's Leadership

Rep. Mina Morita, Chair of the House Energy & Environmental Protection Committee (EEP), Rep. Denny Coffman, Vice Chair of EEP, and I attended the Western States Energy & Environment Symposium from October 25th – 27th in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Our trip was paid for by the state of Wyoming and brought together legislators and energy/environment experts from 13 western states to discuss how we could better coordinate energy policy. This concept was a bit tricky given Hawaii's push to have 70% of our energy needs through clean energy by 2030 and at the same time taking into consideration the fact that Wyoming is the nation's largest coal producer.



During one of the panels, I had the opportunity to share how distributed energy is really the way that all states can find common ground. We can agree that it's a good thing to make it easier for homeowners to put a solar water heater, photovoltaic panels, or a small wind turbine on their house. This saves them big time on their electricity bills and also makes people feel that they are doing good for our environment.

Kalaeloa Businessman Comes Up Big for Samoa Disaster Relief



During the past several weeks, I've been working with local businesses and labor organizations on relief efforts for the Samoas, which were recently devastated by a tsunami. Tiva Aga, the coordinator of the Samoa Disaster Relief Information Center, has been one of the key people in these efforts. Recently, I was contacted by Francis Martin, who owns Containers Hawai'i which is located in Kalaeloa. Mr. Martin informed me that he had seven 40-foot containers of hotel furniture that he was willing to donate to the cause. I contacted Ms. Aga and she's enthusiastic about coordinating efforts to get the furniture to the people who need it in the Samoas. Mahalo to Francis Martin for showing his aloha and being so generous in these difficult times.



Non-GMO Project Gives People a Choice

As you may know, for the past two years I've introduced legislation to require that all genetically engineered (GMO) "whole foods", such as papaya, squash, and sweet corn, be labeled. I've championed this effort because poll after poll shows that people want to be able to choose whether they eat genetically engineered foods or not. In fact, a recent study by UH Hilo professor, Dr. Sabry Shehata, found that 85% of Hawai'i residents think it's important that genetically engineered fruit be labeled. That's why I was particularly interested to learn about an organization called the Non-GMO Project. They are a non-profit collaboration of manufacturers, retailers, processors, distributors, farmers, seed breeders and consumers whose mission is to sustain the availability of non-GMO choices. This is increasingly a concern because over 70% of processed foods on grocery store shelves contain genetically engineered ingredients. They are in the process of developing North America's first, third-party verification program for GMO free food products. They are also planning to launch a uniform seal for GMO free products by this fall. For more information, please visit their website at www.nongmoproject.org.



Ross Opens in Kapolei

I enjoyed attending Ross' Grand Opening Celebration at the Kapolei Commons Shopping Center on October 9th. The new store is 30,000 sq. feet in size and offers discount name brand & designer apparel, accessories, footwear, and home fashions. I wish store manager Marivic Higa (center at right) and District Director Don Hettrick the best of luck in our community. If the awesome turnout for the Grand Opening is any indication, they're a perfect fit.

