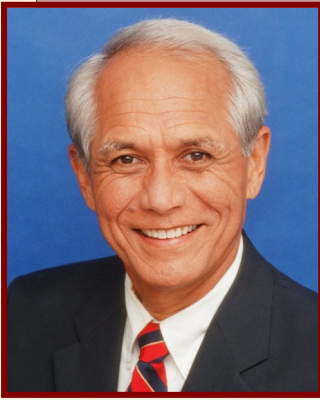


Senator Mike Gabbard



July 2011

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SENATE DISTRICT 19

MAKAKILO, KAPOLEI, KALAELOA
WAIKELE, VILLAGE PARK
ROYAL KUNIA, HONOKAI HALE,
WAIPAHU, AND KO 'OLINA

Aloha,

Have a Happy 4th of July with your friends and family! Here are a few things happening around District 19 and at the Capitol. Please contact me if I can help you in any way. My phone number is 586-6830 and email is sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov.



Listen-Story Meeting

My next "Listen-story" community meeting will be at Waikele Starbucks (Waikele Shopping Center) on Saturday, July 16th from 9am to 10am.

UH West Oahu Campus Coming Together

I was given a tour of the construction work on the new UH West Oahu campus in Kapolei by Chancellor Gene Awakuni on June 16th. Chancellor Awakuni explained how they are currently constructing the initial 5 buildings of the campus, which will include the library, campus center, classroom building, laboratory building, and maintenance/mechanical building. The buildings will be completed by April 2012. Part of the tour was driving up a long dirt road mauka of H-1 on the 900 acre parcel UHWO owns, and checking out a 2.5 million gallon water tank. There's another reservoir the same size master planned for the future. This first phase of the campus will have a capacity of 2,750 students when it opens its doors to students in the Fall 2012. As I've said many times before, this project has been "a long time comin." It was 1966 when the Legislature made its first appropriation of \$300,000 for planning. And here we are 45 years later, with the grand opening just around the corner. My prediction: there will be a massive celebration in our district before the fall semester opening next year. I'm stoked.



Governor Releases Funding for Barbers Point Elementary Student Safety

On June 8th, Governor Abercrombie released \$26,000 in funding for Barbers Point Elementary School as part of his New Day Works Project to create jobs and get money flowing through our economy. This funding will be used to construct a traffic barrier near the school's playground fronting Roosevelt Avenue. There was concern that increased traffic on Roosevelt Avenue with the opening of the Kapolei Costco could impact student safety. I commend Governor Abercrombie for working to improve our schools.

Hawai'i Bicycling League Promotes Safety with "The Ride"

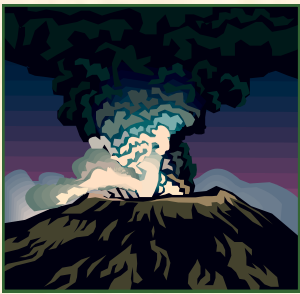


I'll be joining with other bicycle enthusiasts at the Kapolei Police Station at noon on July 9th for a safety awareness event being put on by the Hawai'i Bicycling League (HBL) called the Zachary Manago's Ride in Paradise. The event commemorates the life of Zachary Manago, an 18-year old man who was killed by a hit and run driver on Kamehameha Highway near Wahiawa while riding his bicycle on December 17, 2010. There will also be a discussion on road safety issues. If you'd like more information, please contact HBL Executive Director Chad Taniguchi at 255-8271 .



Welcoming Down to Earth to Kapolei

As a vegetarian for almost 40 years, I was very pleased to be a part of a sneak preview and traditional Hawaiian blessing for Down to Earth's new 10,000 square foot store at the Kapolei Commons on July 1st. This will be the flagship store for Down to Earth, which specializes in natural all-vegetarian foods. They have other stores in Pearl City, Kailua, and Moiliili on Oahu, Kahalui on Maui, and Hilo on the Big Island. I wish them many years of success in our community as Kapolei continues to grow into a world-class city.



FBI Coming to Town

You may have noticed the construction at the corner of Ft. Barrette Road and Roosevelt Avenue. Well, that will soon be the home of a 160,000-square-foot FBI Honolulu Field Office. The contractor is Penrose/Walsh of La Jolla, California and they are expected to be completed in June 2012. There will be a total of 250 personnel working at the "green" facility, which will be designated as LEED Silver with possible photovoltaic panels on its 140-space covered parking lot. I'll be participating in a Building Celebration at the construction site on July 7th. I see the FBI facility as being an anchor and centerpiece for Kalaeloa as it develops into a community we can all be proud of.

Kapolei Elementary Principal Michael Miyamura's Retirement

Principal Michael Miyamura retired on May 31st after 18 outstanding years at the helm of Kapolei Elementary and 40 years in Hawai'i schools. I had the opportunity to surprise him at a faculty luncheon at Kapolei Elementary on June 22nd with a certificate from the State Senate to honor his achievements.



After graduating from Damien Memorial High School in 1967, Mr. Miyamura went on to receive his Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Education from the University of Hawai'i. He jumped right into the classroom and got his feet wet in a variety of schools and teaching environments across the island. He has done everything from teaching English to coaching the track team. From 1989 until 1993, Mr. Miyamura was the Principal of Kamaile Elementary School which was a new school for that community. In 1993, Mr. Miyamura agreed to become the principal for Kapolei Elementary. Since then, his school has blossomed from an enrollment of 200 to 1,180 students today.

Upon Mr. Miyamura's retirement, he will always be remembered for greeting staff members, parents, and students every morning and for frequently walking the campus, making himself available. His long hours, times of frustration and heartache, as well as the moments of joy have helped to build Kapolei Elementary School into a safe, nurturing environment that is a place of excellence. I wish him many healthy and happy years with his loving family, wife Mona, sons Jon and Marc, and grandson Jace.

Geothermal Energy a Possible Solution to Meeting Our Energy Needs

As the Senate's Energy and Environment Chair, I will be joining with Rep. Denny Coffman, Chair of the House Energy and Environmental Protection Committee, in leading an informational briefing to discuss the prospect of using geothermal energy as a statewide resource for electricity production. The informational briefing will take place at the State Capitol in Room 325 on July 7th from 1pm to 3pm. We will have presentations by the Innovations Development Group, Mililani B. Trask of Indigenous Consultants, and the Geothermal Working Group. The great thing about geothermal energy is that it is "firm", as opposed to solar and wind which depends on favorable weather conditions. Both the Big Island and Maui have substantial geothermal resources that could be tapped to benefit those islands as well as possibly the whole state. I'm hopeful that we can look at expanding our use of geothermal in a culturally beneficial way and also give our host culture an "ownership" stake in its development. If you'd like more information, please contact my office at 586-6830.

Crossroads Alternative High School Students Get to Meet the "Dog"

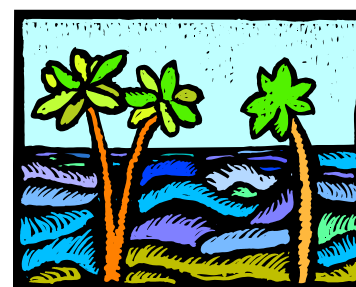
Twenty students from Crossroads Alternative High School of Coon Rapids, Minnesota were a part of an important Hawai'i trip from June 12th to June 21st. Carol and I greeted the students with fresh plumeria lei upon their arrival, helped them get their bags to UH where they stayed, and also provided them with a very exciting day at the State Capitol. I did something similar for a group of Crossroads students in 2007. I had seen the movie, *Freedom Writers*, and was blown away by what teacher Erin Gruwell had done in California to help turn the lives of inner city students around for the better. After seeing the movie, I got in touch with Marcia Nelson, the Crossroads Leadership Class teacher who uses techniques similar to Ms. Gruwell to improve the lives of her at-risk students, and offered to assist them on their visits to Hawai'i.



Since 2003 Ms. Nelson has been successful in reaching out to these kids, many of whom had already given up on themselves. She encourages the students to write their life stories in a book format. Through these writings, Marcia learned that a majority of her students live in extreme circumstances. Their parents are absent, imprisoned or dead. Many of the students are drug users and/or dealers. They lacked a support system, and consequently, they lacked confidence and self-esteem. Marcia recognized this as a deadly combination, and realized these students had no reason to feel hope for their futures.

The Crossroads Leadership Class has been successful in encouraging the students to form close bonds with each other and their teacher, and at the same time holding them to a higher standard through academics and attendance, two areas in which alternative students typically struggle. In addition, they have to stay drug and alcohol free to be in the program. Many of the students are now going on to good 4-year universities and are excited about their future. You can check out their website at www.D2LEP.org.

During their Hawai'i trip, they experienced new environments and cultures, including hiking and camping at Volcano National Park on Hawai'i island and enjoying the sunset and party at Paradise Cove. Most importantly, they have seen that anything is possible for their lives as long as they believe in their ability to change and never give up hope.



On June 21st, I gave each of the students a certificate from the State Senate, sang a song I co-wrote with Leon Siu called "*E Kupono Me Ke Aloha*" for them, shared my own personal stories about overcoming difficulties, and surprised them with a visit from Duane "Dog" Chapman from the hit A&E TV show, "*Dog the Bounty Hunter*". Dog gave a moving talk about the time he spent in a Texas prison and how he got into the bounty-hunting business, which led to his current fame and fortune. He also encouraged the students to believe that they can do anything they want as long as they choose the right road. A big mahalo to Marcia Nelson for her dedication to improving the lives of these young people and to Dog for caring enough to take time out of his very busy schedule. I also wish the 2011 Crossroads students the best of luck as they chart their new paths in life.





Senator Gabbard (far left) dropped in for a car wash at the Kapolei Korean United Methodist Church in Kalaeloa on June 11th. The church's pastor is SonHye Kim (far right).



Senator Gabbard served as a judge at the Kapolei Middle School's Project Citizen mock hearing on the quality of the state's school lunch program on May 16th. Senator Gabbard evaluated and asked questions of the 8th grade students who made their presentation.



Senator Gabbard attended his first pro baseball game while visiting friends in Cincinnati, Ohio on June 1st. Note the very nice welcome he received on the Cincinnati Reds' score board!

Kunia Resident Colonel Danny Melton Retires From Marine Corps

I was honored to make a certificate presentation from the State Senate to Colonel Danny Melton at his Retirement Ceremony from the US Marines aboard the USS Missouri on June 10th. Colonel Melton and his family live in Royal Kunia and he served our country with distinction for 31 years.

Colonel Melton's list of accomplishments in military education, distinguished U.S. awards as well as foreign awards, prove that his career--as one of the few, the proud--was rightly chosen. His expertise in Asian language, culture, and people has allowed him to make important connections with military leaders in those areas. Colonel Melton's military career boasts many accolades, so the following is only a snapshot of some of his service: From June 1993 to June 1996 as the Korean Foreign Area Officer, Liaison Officer, and Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, Major Melton's exceptional initiative, resourcefulness, and superlative leadership resulted in the accelerated establishment of the Headquarters, U.S. Marine Forces Korea. This was the first Marine Corps component headquarters to the Commander in Chief in Korea.

From July 2001 to May 2003 as the Chief, North Asia Division and PACOM Studies Team, Colonel Melton was the impetus behind critical intelligence support efforts for the Commander, U.S. Pacific Command and his staff of the theater's potentially most dangerous threat country. From August 2005 to July 2008 as Marine Attaché in the United States Defense Attaché Office, located in Tokyo, Japan, Colonel Melton's outstanding performance earned him wide recognition as one of the Department of Defense's leading authorities on Japanese defense and security matters. In 2007, Colonel Melton spearheaded an unprecedented effort to gain the approval of the first U.S. search for USMC war remains on Iwo Jima since the end of World War II.

We owe him a debt of gratitude for his untiring efforts to carry out demanding tasks with unflinching good judgment, effectiveness, and total devotion to duty. Colonel Melton's life and work are an ideal representation of the best of our military men and women. I wish him happiness and aloha upon his retirement.

