



Legislative Update from...

# Senator Mike Gabbard

August  
2015

*Aloha e Friends,*

I hope you're enjoying the waning days of summer. The fall 2015 public school year began on July 29th, so we unfortunately need to plan for more traffic in the coming weeks. Feel free to contact me at 586-6830 or email [sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov) if I can help you or your family in any way. You can also follow me on Twitter [@senmikegabbard](https://twitter.com/senmikegabbard), Instagram [@sengabbard](https://www.instagram.com/sengabbard), and Facebook at [facebook.com/senmikegabbard](https://www.facebook.com/senmikegabbard).

## COMMITTEE CHAIR

Water, Land & Agriculture

## MEMBER

Transportation & Energy

Judiciary and Labor

Higher Education and the Arts

## District 20

Kapolei, Makakilo and portions of Ewa, Kalaeloa, and Waipahu



Sen. Gabbard held his Listen Story meeting July 25th at Kapolei High School.

## "Listen Story" Meeting

My next Listen-Story meeting will be at the Kapolei High School Teacher's Lounge **Saturday, August 22, from 9am to 10am.**

## Hemp Harvest

I participated in the harvesting of a test plot of industrial hemp in Waimanalo on July 23rd. Hemp is a versatile plant that is used in over

25,000 products and is part of the cannabis family, but can't be smoked like marijuana. This UH research is being led by Dr. Harry Ako and was authorized by Act 56 (SB 2175) in 2014, which I spearheaded. The tropical fiber variety of the hemp grew to over 10 ft. in 15 weeks. This definitely answers the question of whether or not hemp is a good fit for our state. Imagine the potential for a hemp cottage industry with products like Hawai'i Hemp Shampoo, Hawaiian Hemp Granola, Honolulu Hemp Toothpaste., etc. I hope to expand hemp research and hopefully allow for commercial production, as the new Chair of the Water, Land, and Agriculture Committee.



## Ho'okele Elementary School Opening

I took a tour of the new Ho'okele Elementary School on July 22, at the corner of Ft. Barrette Rd. and Kapolei Parkway. It's the first design-build school in the state, which allowed the school to be built in 16 months! It opened on July 29th with 500 students and will have a capacity of 750 preK-5 grade students. The school principal is Laureen Dunn. To help alleviate additional traffic in the area, the state Department of Transportation and city Department of Transportation Services recently repainted the lines on the left turning lanes in each direction on Kapolei Parkway to allow vehicles to go straight through the intersection.



Sen. Gabbard enjoyed touring Ho'okele Elementary School July 22, 2015.





## Solar Impulse: An Incredible Achievement

I was at Kalaheo Airport bright and early on July 3rd to welcome Solar Impulse2 to Hawai'i and later spoke at a press conference honoring its achievements. The Solar Impulse2 is a plane built in Switzerland that's flying around the world by using only solar power. The plane's wingspan is 236 feet with more than 17,000 solar cells, four electric motors, and lithium batteries. It left Abu Dhabi on March 15, 2015 and has made stops in the United Arab Emirates; Muscat, Oman; Ahmedabad & Varanasi in

India; Mandalay in Myanmar; Chongqing & Nanjing in China; and Nagoya in Japan. One of the plane's pilots, Andre Borschberg, set a world record for the longest solar flight and the longest solar-powered flight in the leg from Japan to Hawai'i. As I greeted co-pilots Andre and Bertrand Piccard, the first thing Bertrand said to me was "100% by 2045!" referring to our first-in-the-nation law, Act 97, which requires our state to get to 100% renewable energy by 2045.

That got me to thinking of the incredible symbolism of 3 lei encircling the globe: the Solar Impulse2 flying around the planet going east to show what's possible with solar energy; our beloved Hokule'a going west powered by the wind, spreading the message of aloha and future sustainability; and us here in Hawai'i, with our maile lei going north/south, showing the world that 100% renewable energy is possible on the most isolated land mass in the world! In 2008, we were at 9% clean renewables; today we're at 21%. The latest news is that Solar Impulse2 has battery problems and will be here until April 2016. When it takes off, it will head to Phoenix, Arizona.







### 2015 Award for Transformational Achievements in Clean Energy

I participated in "Hawai'i Clean Energy Day" hosted by the Hawai'i Energy Policy Forum on July 16. Co-chairs Mike Hamnett & Sharon Moriwaki presented Rep. Chris Lee and me with a "2015 Transformational Achievement Award." Here's an explanation of the Award from the Clean Energy Day program: "For their transformational efforts in championing clean energy policy and specifically their work on the adoption of SB 1050, which establishes a community-based renewables program—the first for Hawai'i. This will make the benefits of renewable generation accessible to a greater number of Hawai'i residents, increase use of renewable resources, and provide energy cost savings to many who are otherwise underserved. Signed into law on June 8, 2015 by Governor David, Act 100 will enable many more Hawai'i residents to enjoy the economic, environmental, and societal benefits of a clean energy future. Sound policy comes from collaboration—the Legislature, the Governor, Blue Planet Foundation and other clean energy advocates: the Public Utilities Commission, the Consumer Advocate, the Hawai'i State Energy Office, and Hawaiian Electric Companies, As the collaboration continues, the utilities will be able to implement this program and empower innovative solutions for sharing of renewable energy benefits.

### Free Diabetes Education Class

I was contacted by Mountain-Pacific Quality Health to help get the word out about a free, peer-led Diabetes Self-Management Education course that will be held on August 15 from noon to 2pm at the Trinity Missionary Baptist Church (2950 Paine Circle, Honolulu). This class will help those with diabetes to:

- Improve your quality of life and stay healthy
- Prevent serious complications and illnesses that can happen if you don't manage your diabetes
- Improve your eating habits
- Increase your physical activity
- Develop skills to take care of yourself—physically and emotionally
- Improve your relationships with your health care providers, so you better understand one another
- Use the community resources available to you

*For more information, please contact James Roberts at 440-6014 or james.robert@area-h.hcqis.org.*



### Savaliolefilemu Message of Peace Finds a Permanent Home

My wife, Carol, stood in for me in presenting an honorary certificate from the State Senate to celebrate the dedication of Savaliolefilemu Message of Peace church in Ewa Beach on July 25. Faafetai tele to Senior Pastor Tuli Amosa and Assistant Pastor Sai Amosa for your heartfelt efforts to build a strong, positive, and blessed church for the benefit of the community and in the honor of H.C. Seu Galuega Afuola Tagavailoa. I wish you all success in sharing your message of peace.



## PlantPure Nation Screenings a Big Success

I co-sponsored a screening of an important film, PlantPure Nation, with Transition O'ahu and Healthy Hawai'i Coalition at the State Capitol on July 28th. I also introduced another screening of this film at the Kahala Mall on July 30th. PlantPure Nation has a powerful message: that a plant-based diet can prevent the likelihood and even reverse chronic diseases, such

as diabetes, heart disease, and cancers. The film is backed up by the pioneering nutrition research conducted by Dr. T Colin Campbell, who I had the honor of having lunch with during his visit to Honolulu last October. You may have heard about his groundbreaking book, *The China Study*, which is the gold standard for documenting how a plant-based diet is best for human health.

PlantPure Nation was put together by Dr. Campbell's son, Nelson, and brings this research to the grassroots level as it's debated in the Kentucky State Legislature. The film also introduces Nelson's "10-day jumpstart sessions" which document how changes in diet can quickly improve a person's health. PlantPure Nation is more than a film; it sets out to be a national movement.

A key point made in the film is that, after learning about the message of healthy eating, people ask the question, "Why haven't I ever heard about this?" I was elected as a State Senator in 2006; since then, I've tried to do my part to spread this message. Since 2008, I've been introducing legislation to encourage our public schools to serve healthy, plant-based meals and to require our doctors to get more training in nutrition.

### *Consider these facts:*

- The Hawai'i Medical Journal reports that one-third of Hawaii's school children are now either overweight or at risk of becoming overweight.
- In 2012, U.S. health care spending reached \$2.8 trillion. Chronic diseases have played an important role in this cost escalation.
- It's estimated that preventable diseases account for approximately 75% of national health expenditures.
- However, fewer than 25% of physicians believe they have sufficient training to talk to patients about nutrition or physical activity and less than one-eighth of medical visits include counseling for nutrition.

I introduced a bill in 2013 to require the Hawai'i Medical Board to set up content standards for doctors to do continuing education in nutrition and lifestyle. It didn't pass. Then I introduced a follow up bill this year that just would have set up a Working Group to get this process started. It didn't pass. I communicated with UH Medical School about this issue and heard back that they don't require medical school students to take nutrition courses, but just integrate it into the curriculum. So you can see, there's much work to be done.

The most important thing about PlantPure Nation is that it's not just a movie to watch and put on the shelf, but it's a movement to transform lives and communities through healthier eating. During the coming months, members of the community will be looking to set up PlantPure Pods to help people make a transition to healthier diets. I'll also be looking at possible legislation to promote plant-based nutrition. I encourage you to check out the PlantPure website (Google PlantPure Nation), watch the film, and get involved.