



Legislative Update from...

# Senator Mike Gabbard

March  
2015

*Aloha e Friends,*

So far, it's been a busy session tackling issues related to solar energy, hydrogen/ electric vehicles, biofuels, and invasive species. I've also been focused on sustainable agriculture, with legislation to move us forward on growing industrial hemp. Directing state funding to West Oahu for school and road construction is also a high priority. As always, please contact me at 586-6830 or [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, Instagram @sengabbard, or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/senmikegabbard>.

## COMMITTEE CHAIR

Energy & Environment

## MEMBER

Health

Judiciary & Labor

Higher Education & the Arts

## District 20

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



## "Listen Story" Meeting

My next Listen Story meeting will be held March 28 from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. at Barbers Point Bowling Center, 91-1259 Saratoga Ave



## Legislative Updates

### Session Overview

This session, 2,883 bills were introduced (1,379 by the Senate, 1,504 by the House). So far, several of my bills have passed out of committee. The next step is for all bills which have passed out of their respective committees to be voted on by the entire Senate. The same process will occur on the House side. March 10 is the "Third Reading Voting on Senate Bills." March 12 is the "First Crossover for Legislative Bills." The bills that make it through, crossover to the House. The same process happens on the House side. Then, more committee hearings take place, before moving into Conference Committees in April.

## HECO

You've probably heard in the news that HECO recently sent out a letter telling customers they won't be able to connect to the grid until the [Public Utilities Commission](#) (PUC) rules to get rid of Net Energy Metering (NEM). However, if NEM is done away with, the rate of compensation for PV customers who installed their panels after Oct. 22, will go from 29 cents to 15 cents per kilowatt-hour. Not good! Ironically, a recent [National Renewable Energy Laboratory \(NREL\) study](#) showed HECO could go up to 1,000% daily minimum load without transient (surging) voltage becoming an issue. HECO even agreed on Jan. 20 to increase daytime minimum load (DML) from 120 percent to 250 percent. The PUC sent a letter Feb. 27 to HECO denying their request for the PUC to rule on their "getting rid of NEM" plan within 60 days. Unless there's a valid safety or reliability concern, HECO has a duty to interconnect PV to the grid. The PUC also stated that HECO doesn't have the right to impose a PV interconnection moratorium. Right on!

Did you know [Hawai'i ranks third in nation for solar workers](#)? The industry lost 400 workers in 2014. Now there are 2,200 solar workers. As of Feb. 2015, approximately 2,500 pending solar applications are waiting to be approved. HECO promises to connect most of them by April 2015 and all of them by December 2015.

### **Community-Based Renewables ([SB 1050](#))**

This bill would allow renters, non-profits, businesses, and those on saturated circuits to hui up and install PV panels at some offsite location and get a credit on their electricity bill. The utility would compensate participating ratepayers for their share of the energy produced. This is being tried in other states, including Colorado, New Mexico and Minnesota. The idea is to extend the savings of renewable energy to renters, non-profits, organizations and others left out of the popular net-metering photovoltaic program. This bill could also open the door to wind and other renewables. We got it close to the finish line last session, and I'm hopeful it will pass into law this time. It's a no brainer and a win-win for everyone.

**Barrel Tax ([SB 359](#))** In 2010, the Legislature increased the tax on each barrel of oil from 5 cents to \$1.05. The purpose of this tax increase was to put a greater investment in achieving food and energy security. We import 85 percent of our food and spend \$3 to \$5 billion each year on importing oil. Unfortunately, when the Legislature passed the tax increase, due to the downturn in the economy, 60 cents of the \$1.05 went to the General Fund to balance the budget. SB 349 would redirect the 60 cents back to where it belongs. This bill would increase the allocations for environmental emergency response (5 to 15 cents), energy (15 to 40 cents), and agriculture (15 to 40 cents). The committee on WAM recommended that the measure be passed with amendments.

## **Community Happenings**

### **Honouliuli National Monument**

You may have heard that Hawai'i's largest and longest-operating internment camp, the Honouliuli Internment Camp, was designated as a national monument by [Presidential Proclamation](#) on Feb. 19, 2015 by President Barack Obama. Located in Kunia, near Waipahu, the internment camp was open from 1943 to 1946. Its location was eventually forgotten until the late 90s when a volunteer from the Japanese Cultural Center began a search for it. She found it in 2002 by tracing an aqueduct in the background of an old photo.

During World War II, about 2,000 people of Japanese ancestry were incarcerated at the Honouliuli Internment Camp. The site of the former internment camp is located on land owned by Monsanto Hawai'i, who has stated that they are interested in donating the land. Congratulations to the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i for all their hard work and dedication in helping to preserve the artifacts of this difficult chapter of our nation's history.

### **Ka Makana Ali'i Groundbreaking**

The groundbreaking ceremony for [Ka Makana Ali'i](#) is scheduled for March 5. This 1.4 million-square-foot regional mall is huge for Kapolei. Now, Ala Moana and Pearlridge won't be our only full-scale shopping and entertainment option. With the new hotels, your out-of-town guests won't have to drive to Honolulu to stay in a hotel. The mall will have more than 100 shopping, dining and entertainment options, a department store, two hotels and LEED-certified office space.



### **First Solar Powered Plane**

Have you heard that the first solar powered plane trip around the world is scheduled to land at Kalaeloa Airport next month?! Solar Impulse 2 is scheduled to take off on March 3 from Abu Dhabi. With wings made of 17,000 solar cells, the plane gets its energy solely from the sun. Compared to other planes, its light weight makes it more vulnerable to turbulence and

other weather conditions. Two Swiss builders spent 12 years of research and testing and now feel it is ready to fly its 25,000 mile round-the-world flight. The pilots aim to demonstrate that "clean technology and renewable energy can achieve the impossible," said Bertrand Piccard, one of the pilots. It will land 12 times, with stops in India, Myanmar, and China – and then Kalaeloa! The leg from China to Hawai'i will be the most challenging, but if all goes well, the plane will land at Kalaeloa on April 20. The plane and single pilot will stay for 2 or 3 days for aircraft maintenance, a press conference and public visits. To remain focused while operating the plane, the pilot will practice yoga, meditation and self-hypnosis as he sits in a 4' x 6.5' cockpit.

## Save the Dates!

- March 5** Ka Makana Ali'i Groundbreaking
- March 14** 5k Run 1st Annual Pono Kapolei Fun Run
- March 28** Sen. Gabbard "Listen Story"
- April 20** Solar Plane Scheduled to Land at Kalaeloa Airport

### 5k Run 1st Annual Pono Kapolei Fun Run

On March 14, 8 a.m., the 1st Annual Pono Kapolei Fun Run will be held to raise monies and awareness to deter and stop drug abuse, alcohol abuse, and tobacco use by our keiki in Kapolei. A "Keiki Wellness Fair" follows, hosted by Xtreme Fun Rides & Kapolei Middle School. Email [sgtmacdonald102079@yahoo.com](mailto:sgtmacdonald102079@yahoo.com) for registration form and fees. Entry donation is \$25. Online entry deadline: March 10.

### Warrior Ohana Medical Home

Tripler Army Medical Center's Warrior Ohana Medical Home is a full service, primary-care clinic staffed with seven providers, including those who have completed fellowships in women's health and sports medicine. Renovations are underway at the Warrior Clinic, which is expected to be complete later this year. [Yelpers](#) highly recommend the clinic for military families living on the west side.

### Kapolei Town Hall Meeting

Everyone is invited to a Kapolei Town Hall meeting that will be held Wed., March 25, 7 p.m. at Kapolei High School. This will take the place of the regularly scheduled monthly Neighborhood Board Meeting. The discussion will revolve around rail transportation options.



Senator Gabbard presented intern Benjamin Balboa III De Guzman with an Honorary Certificate from the Hawaii State Senate in the Senate chamber on January 23, 2015.

### BOQ Update

Renovations of the interior are underway at the Bachelor Officer Quarters (BOQ) at Roosevelt and Franklin avenues in Kalaeloa. The official name is "Wakea Garden Apartments" and will soon appear on banner signs around the quarters. Applications will be accepted beginning April 1. All of the affordable rentals are one-bedroom apartments. There will be a leasing trailer in the Diamond Head parking lot of Roosevelt for approximately one month during the pre-leasing process. Eventually, after the offices are complete, they will relocate the offices.

Senator Mike Gabbard met with students from Waipahu Intermediate School who visited his office on February 11, 2015.

## Legislative Honorees



### Miss America 2014 Nina Davuluri

I had the pleasure and honor of presenting an Honorary Certificate, along with Senate President Donna Mercado Kim, to Miss America 2014, Ms. Nina Davuluri on Feb. 27, 2015. She also recently met my daughter, Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard, at Madison Square Garden in NYC at a function hosted by Indian Prime Minister Modi. Nina, the first Miss America of Indian descent, was one of over 14,000 to compete for the crown and the \$50,000 scholarship that goes with it. She plans to use the money to go to medical school.

Over the year that Nina served as Miss America, she traveled over 250,000 miles across the country sharing her platform of “Celebrating Diversity through Cultural Competency,” speaking at over 20 colleges and universities. An advocate for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education, she partnered with the Department of Education to bring awareness to STEM related fields, and served as the official National Goodwill Ambassador for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, visiting 12 hospitals across the nation to brighten the lives of sick children.

### Yang “Misty” Rui

Sen. Gabbard presented an Honorary Certificate from the State Senate to intern Yang “Misty” Rui on February 12, 2015. She was a very helpful intern in our office where she was able to experience first-hand our state’s political process and democracy in action.



### Kiniokahokulua “Kini” Zamora

The State Senate honored Kiniokahokulua “Kini” Zamora on Feb. 26, recognizing him for his achievements and success on the television show “Project Runway,” along with opening his own fashion company named KINlandDINKO and launching two clothing lines, KZ Hawai’i and Kini Zamora. Kini, who’s from my district, was a fan favorite on Project Runway last year where he came in third place. His widely anticipated spring collection from KINlandDINKO will be unveiled soon. Kini is a graduate of McKinley High School, and earned a degree from Honolulu Community College’s fashion technology program, before he furthered his studies at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. Kini is an example and an inspiration to those who will follow in his footsteps!

