



Legislative Update from...

Senator Mike Gabbard

March
2016

Aloha e Friends,

Hope you and your ohana are well. It's that time of year. For all you folks procrastinating on doing your taxes... a non-profit, Free File Alliance, is partnering with the IRS to offer free e-file tax preparation services. Taxpayers who earned \$62,000 or less in adjusted gross income in 2015 are eligible and can visit www.IRS.gov/freefile to prepare and file their federal tax return at no cost. As always, please contact me at 586-6830 or 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 www.facebook.com/senmikegabbard.

COMMITTEE CHAIR

Water, Land & Agriculture

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District 20

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



Listen Story Community Meeting

My next Listen Story meeting will be held March 26 from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. at Kapolei High School Teacher's Lounge, next to the cafeteria. If you can't make it, send me an email, and I'll send you a summary of the meeting.

Sen. Gabbard held his monthly Listen Story community meeting on the Feb. 27 at Ewa Mahiko District Park. Topics included his bill on Industrial Hemp, revocable permits on public lands, and the Leeward Bikepath. His next one is March 26 at Kapolei High School Teacher's Lounge. (Pictured: John Rogers and his wife, Eileen Gawrys.)

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Session Overview

This session, 2,387 bills have been introduced (1,127 by the Senate, 1,260 by the House). The next step was for all bills which passed out of their respective committees to be voted on by the entire Senate March 8. The Senate passed 265 bills on Third Reading and sent them to the House. The same process occurred on the House side. March 10 was the "First Crossover for Legislative Bills" deadline and the "Second Crossover" is April 14. Additional committee hearings will take place before bills move into Conference Committees at the end of April. I'm happy to report that several of my bills and legislative priorities passed out of the Senate and will cross-over to the House.

Hemp ([SB 2659](#))

You may have read in the news that the House hemp bill passed on March 4, and is on its way to the Senate. There's also a Senate bill that I introduced, which passed out of the Senate on March 8, and is on its way to the House. While not companion bills, they're similar in that both bills seek to establish an industrial hemp pilot program under the Department of Agriculture which would allow the cultivation of industrial hemp for agricultural and academic research, and would include the commercial sale of hemp as marketing and industry development. I'm hopeful this will be the year we move closer to realizing my vision for a hemp Hawai'i cottage industry (Hawaiian Hemp Shampoo, Hemp Toothpaste, Hemp Granola, etc.) Hawai'i's climate and soil is perfect for growing industrial hemp, which can grow to over ten feet in a short period of time. According to estimates by the Hemp Industries Association, retail sales of industrial hemp products grew to over \$620,000,000 annually in 2014. **(Continued p. 2)**

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Industrial hemp has over 25,000 uses, including food, fiber, and fuel products, and has high potential to contribute to the future viability of the State's agricultural industry. SB2659 passed out with the following amendments: 1) The Board of Agriculture would adopt rules concerning industrial hemp production no later than July 1, 2017, rather than November 1, 2016; and 2) Technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency would be made.

Invasive Species ([SB 2799](#))

This bill restructures the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) as the Hawai'i Invasive Species Authority, administratively attached to the Department of Agriculture, for the enhancement of the State's invasive species prevention, early detection, rapid response, control, enforcement, and outreach programs.

It also establishes the Hawai'i Invasive Species Authority Special Fund and appropriates monies to that fund to implement the Authority and relevant invasive species projects. On March 8, this measure was adopted, passed Third Reading, with amendments, and will now cross-over to the House for consideration.



Sen. Gabbard, along with many others, including Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard, journeyed to Hilo for the memorial service celebrating the life of Sen. Kahele on Feb. 8 at the Afook-Chinen Civic Auditorium. The Senator had a nice moment with Gil's grandson, Makai Okalani Snyder.



On Feb. 12, Inga Gibson surprised Sen. Gabbard with the "Humane State Legislator Award" for his commitment to supporting animal-friendly legislation in Hawai'i, and also surprised his Chief of Staff, Rock Riggs with an award for his support. (Pictured L-R: Rock Riggs; Inga Gibson, Hawai'i Director, The Humane Society of the United States; and Sen. Gabbard)



One of the highlights of Hawai'i Invasive Species Awareness Week (HISAW) included a proclamation by Governor Ige and presentation of awards to community members on Feb. 26. As an active legislator on issues dealing with invasives, Sen. Gabbard joined in the Governor's ceremony room to present awards to Laura Hew and Paul Zweng. Also pictured are Scott Enright, Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, and Josh Atwood, Hawai'i Invasive Species Coordinator with the Dept. of Land and Natural Resources.





Congresswoman Gabbard dropped by Sen. Gabbard's office on Feb. 17 after joining the Legislature's Hawai'i Island Caucus members who represent Hawai'i Island county. They met on how to better serve residents affected by the island's dengue fever outbreak.



On Feb. 18, Sen. Gabbard welcomed Sen. Kai Kahele to the Senate on his first day in his official capacity as Senator Kaiali'i Kahele. Kai will step into some big shoes as he assumes immediate responsibility for the committees Senator Kahele senior sat on: Education; Higher Education and the Arts; Judiciary and Labor; and Tourism and International Affairs.

Auwae receives scholarship from VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Congratulations to Kapolei High School senior, Sean Auwae, who will be the first player from Hawaii to sign a scholarship letter from Vanderbilt University in Vanderbilt's 125 years of playing football. The prestigious university, located in Nashville, Tennessee, is a private research university and medical center offering a wide range of undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees. The 6-foot, 5-inch, 300 pound offensive lineman plans to major in economics and received 18 scholarship offers. At first, he was unsure about Vanderbilt, but once he visited he liked it and could see himself playing there.



Sen. Gabbard met with several students from Kapolei High School on Feb. 27, while they were at the Capitol participating in an all day workshop entitled "Taking Action." The goal of the workshop was to motivate students to become involved in the political process, learn how to provide testimony during bill hearings, and how to follow measure statuses online. Sen. Gabbard participated in a Legislative Lunch and Talk Story and then brought the students back to his office to answer some of their questions. He discussed with the students the importance of civic engagement, different ways they can be civically engaged, how he gets ideas and inspiration for bills, and what made him decide to serve. (Pictured L-R: Senator Gabbard, Chloe Salacup, Paula Rae Penullar, Chloe Robello, Elizabeth Giguere, and Mr. Daryl Madela, KHS Student Activities Coordinator.)



LEGISLATIVE HONOREES

Hawai'i Green Growth

The Senate honored and commended Hawai'i Green Growth for their innovative efforts to help achieve Hawai'i's 2030 sustainability goals.

Hawai'i depends on imports for 95% of our energy and 85-90% of our food, at an estimated annual cost of \$8.6 billion. Hawai'i is also known as a place of great biodiversity loss. Yet, Hawai'i challenges can be our golden--or rather green--opportunities, according to Hawai'i Green Growth (HGG), an innovative partnership that brings together leaders from across disciplines to advance sustainability.

One of HGG's innovative incentives is the Aloha + Challenge, which was launched by the Governor, Hawai'i's four mayors, and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs in 2014. The State Legislature unanimously endorsed the Aloha+ Challenge through SCR 69 that same year.

The Aloha + Challenge sets six statewide targets to be achieved by 2030--clean energy transformation, local food production, natural resource management, waste reduction, smart growth, climate resilience, green job creation, and education.

HGG's Aloha + Challenge was internationally recognized as a model of integrated sustainability at the 2014 UN Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa.

The Senate honored and commended Hawai'i Green Growth Executive Director Celeste Connor, founder Audrey Newman, and other members for their innovative efforts to help achieve Hawai'i's 2030 sustainability goals. They're truly a "bright spot" in our island state's determined efforts for green growth.



SAVE THE DATES!

March 10	"First Crossover for Legislative Bills"
	Congressman Mark Takai, College Prep Fair, Kapolei Middle School , 6:30 pm. – 8:30 pm.
March 12	Free Caregiver Workshop 625-7773 (Connie) or 348-2973 (Deb); 95-370 Kuahelani Ave., Mililani
March 22	Kapolei Blood Drive 7:45 am - 11:45 am, Bank of Hawaii – James Campbell Building. To schedule an appointment or check on drive information, call 848-4770 or visit BBH.org .
March 26	Sen. Gabbard "Listen Story" KHS Cafeteria
	Kapolei Shopping Center hosts OC16 " Spring Fest ," 10am-2pm. free, fun-filled day featuring carnival games and prizes, craft activities with Joy Shimabukuro of "Joy of Crafting", and entertainment by Da Braddahs, Brown Bags to Stardom winners, Pas De Deux Hawai'i and others.
April 2	2nd Annual Pono Kapolei 6K Fun Walk/Run , "Proud to be ME and Stay Drug-Free" Start time: 8 a.m. UHWO to KHS. E Ola Pono Ma Kapolei is a coalition for drug free Hawai'i organization.
April 12	Chamber Music Hawai'i Concert at the University Of Hawai'i – West Oahu Campus, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm.
April 14	"Second Crossover for Legislative Bills"



Sen. Gabbard presented Celeste Connors, Executive Director of Hawai'i Green Growth, with an Honorary Certificate from the State Senate on March 4. She was joined in the Senate Chamber by her husband, Paul Parish and son James Parish -- a first grader at Punahou who is learning about the Hokulea and sustainability and is representing the next generation!

Sen. Gabbard presented an Honorary Certificate to the Hawai'i Green Growth Partnership on the Senate Chamber floor, March 4. (Pictured L-R: Matt Lynch, Sustainability Coordinator, University of Hawai'i representing academia and youth engagement; Piia Aarma, President for Pineapple Tweed Marketing and Public Relations representing private sector partners; Rob Parsons, Environmental Coordinator for the County of Maui representing the counties; Celeste Connors, Executive Director for Hawai'i Green Growth; Breanna Rose, Operations and Partnerships Manager for Hawai'i Green Growth; Dr. Kamana'opono Crabbe, Chief Executive Officer for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs representing the Aloha+ Challenge signatories.)