

Aloha e friends,

I hope you and your families are well. Wow, what a momentous way to say goodbye to 2018 for the Gabbard 'ohana. Carol and I celebrated our golden 50th wedding anniversary on December 27 with family and it was so nice to have the kids and grandkids around for simple family time... Happy New Year to you and your 'ohana. Opening Day of the 2019 Legislative Session will kick-off on January 16. Please drop by for refreshments that day. During the upcoming 2019 session, I'll continue to be Chair of the Agriculture and Environment Committee. I'll also

serve as a member of the Judiciary Committee and the Labor, Culture, & the Arts Committee. As Chair of AEN, my priorities in 2019 will be to continue working to increase local food production and to reduce single-use plastics. As always, please feel free to contact me at (808) 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](https://twitter.com/senmikegabbard), Instagram [@sengabbard](https://www.instagram.com/sengabbard), or Facebook at [face-book.com/senmikegabbard](https://www.facebook.com/senmikegabbard)

COMMITTEE CHAIR

◆ AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

MEMBER

◆ Judiciary
◆ Labor, Culture & the Arts

DISTRICT 20

◆ Kapolei, Makakilo and portions of Ewa, Kalaehoa and Waipahu

At Your Service...

My staffing is set for the 2019 legislative session. My Office Manager will be Meg Turner, who will oversee the overall operations of my office and will be my scheduler. A former teacher, Shelly Wilkinson, will assist Meg with office duties and constituent services. Rock Riggs will shift over from the Office Manager role to help me run the AEN committee, which I chair. Thomas Rounds, an attorney from California, will serve as a legislative aide and assistant Committee Clerk. We'll also have the assistance of an intern Sautia Tanoa, a senior studying political science at UH Manoa.

Get Involved in the 2019 Legislative Session

As the Legislative Session gets underway, I hope you'll take the time to weigh in with testimony on legislation that you think is important to you and your family and to the future of our state. The first step is to visit the State Capitol website --capitol.hawaii.gov, where you can get signed up to "submit testimony", "hearing notifications" and "measure tracking."

Informational Briefing on Department of Agriculture Budget Coming Up

As the AEN Committee Chair, I'll be co-hosting an informational briefing with Ways and Means Committee Chair, Donovan Dela Cruz, on January 7 at 10am in Conference Room 211 at the Capitol on the Department of Agriculture's

budget. This informational briefing will give me and other legislators an opportunity to hear from the Department on their budgetary priorities for the upcoming biennium, which will run from 2019-2021. The Department's share of the state budget is currently only 0.3%. This is woefully inadequate given the pressing need for our state to increase local food production so that we can be more sustainable. One of the most important programs under the Department is the agricultural loan revolving fund. This loan fund provides assistance to new and struggling farmers and also to those who have been impacted by natural disasters. I'm hopeful that we can dedicate more state funding to agriculture this time around.

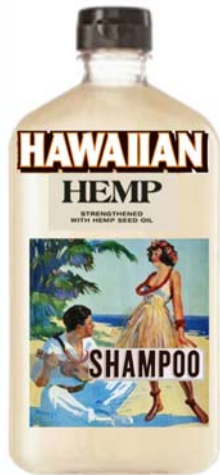
-with Chief of Staff, Rock Riggs, during a Maui Invasive Species Committee led helicopter tour over priority project areas, including a little fire ant infestation in Nāhiku and a coqui frog infestation in Māliko Gulch on November 28.



COMMUNITY UPDATES

Hemp, Hemp Hooray!

I was stoked that President Trump signed the 2018 Farm Bill into law on December 20, 2018, which included removal of industrial hemp from the Schedule 1 Controlled Substance List, thus legalizing it and paving the way for a successful hemp industry in Hawai'i. It's been a long time coming since Governor Ben Cayetano, declared December 14, 1999 as "Industrial Hemp Day of Hawai'i." Since that time, I've authored four hemp bills that have become law, including Act 228 (2016), which established a 5-year industrial hemp pilot program. Today, there are farmers growing hemp statewide under the pilot



program and the potential benefits that this amazing plant offers for our economy, sustainable agriculture, environment, and human health are truly incredible. My vision has been for a cottage hemp industry using Hawai'i branding, with the hula girl underneath the coconut tree and the guy strumming his 'ukulele... Hāna hemp granola—Hanalei hemp toothpaste—Honolulu hemp aloha shirts—and Hawai'i Island hemp CBD tincture, are just some of the many products that could be coming our way. The signing of the 2018 Farm Bill signals a great leap forward for our state and nation in realizing the benefits

of keeping an estimated annual \$820 million in retail value of hemp products that we can be growing and producing here.

Need Input on Polling Places and Precinct Boundaries for 2020 Elections



-with Jame Schaedel at the UHWO Health and Administrative Building Grand Opening on November 18.

I received a letter from Chief Election Officer, Scott Nago, letting me know that the Office of Elections is in the process of preparing for the 2020 Elections. He said that they are reviewing current polling places and precinct boundaries to determine if they are convenient and accessible to voters. He asked for my input, so I'm reaching out to you to see if you'd like to share any comments. You can contact my office about this or call Rhowell Ruiz, of Election Support Services, at 453-VOTE.

Kapolei Middle School Student Safety Meeting

My office worked with Kapolei Middle School Principal Richard Fajardo and Kathleen Davenport of the Blue Zones Project to hold a meeting at Kapolei Middle School on December 27th. The purpose of the meeting was to bring community stakeholders together to discuss student pedestrian/bicycle safety at Kapolei Middle School and the proposal for a community-led painted intersection project (temporary) at the intersection of Kapolei Parkway and Kama'aha Avenue. The painted intersection is an innovative, low-cost way of improving pedestrian/bicyclist safety by using colors and creative designs to bring attention to an intersection and get people to slow down. Others who attended the meeting were representatives from the Hawai'i Housing Finance & Development Corporation, City Department of Transportation Services, and City Department of Planning and Permitting.



-with Gov. Ige, Sen. Will Espero, and Sen. Sam Slom at the signing of Senate Bill 2659 - Act 228 on July 7, 2017, one of the four hemp bills Sen. Gabbard authored that became law.

COMMUNITY UPDATES

Youth Challenge Academy Graduations

I still get “chicken skin” standing amongst the Youth Challenge Academy graduating cadets, their families and friends, and this year was no different as I congratulated Class 49 of the Kalaeloa program (part of my District 20) and Class 16 of the Hilo program. One student is chosen from each program to be presented with the "Mike Gabbard Scholarship" of \$500. This year, Cadet Alfred Damas was chosen from the 79 total graduates at Pearl City Cultural Center on December 16 and Cadet Link Reinier was the recipient out of the 64 graduates at the Kamehameha School Auditorium in Kea'au, Hawai'i Island on December 21.

I have to say, the commencement ceremony on O'ahu was particularly poignant as the keynote speaker, Boyd Torricer, was actually a graduating cadet from Class 16 in 2002, who has gone on to a successful career as an air controller at the Honolulu airport. He also presented a \$500 scholarship to one of the cadets. Graduate Faith Almosara, gave a moving closing message. I had just given the cadets a pep talk the day before, as I do each class before graduation, as they journey forth into their future... I spoke to them of many things, not the least of which was "your mind can be your best friend or your worst enemy." I gave practical and timely examples of when our mind tries to lead us astray. I reminded them how important it is to be a servant leader, and that real



-with Boyd Torricer—Graduate CL16, Keynote Speaker; Sina Atanoa—Deputy Director, Youth Challenge Academy; Brigadier General (Ret.) Bruce Oliveira—Director of Community Programs for the State of Hawai'i, Department of Defense; Alfred Damas—Scholarship Recipient; and Major General Arthur Logan, The Adjutant General, Dept. of Defense at the YCA graduation ceremony on December 21.

happiness lies not in serving ourselves and our own desires, but in the efforts we make toward serving others...Congrats Class 49! And 16! IMUA!

Volunteer as a Canine Decoy

I was asked by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to help get the word out about volunteer opportunities as a canine decoy with the National Explosives Detection Team Program. TSA trains canines to detect explosives and explosive materials at the Honolulu International Airport. The canines work with a handler searching travelers and their belongings in the security checkpoint. The canine handler is trained to read a change in the dog's behavior when it indicates an explosive scent has been detected. Currently, TSA has more than 320 passenger screening canines at airports across the country. TSA is seeking volunteers who can act as decoys to help train these canines. In order to qualify, you need to be at least 18 years of age and the commitment on a given day will range from 1-4 hours. You wouldn't be paid to be a volunteer, but parking validation at the airport would be provided. For more information contact Hollie Cruz at 895-0660 or hollie.cruz@tsa.dhs.gov.

Be a Court Interpreter

Ever thought of becoming a court interpreter? You might want to attend the Basic Orientation Workshop for O'ahu residents on February 23-24, 2019. The Court Interpreter Certification Program was established to promote and ensure equal access to Hawaii's courts for limited English proficient, deaf, and hard-of-hearing parties by providing the most qualified interpreters available. Further, the Certification Program sets standards in obtaining certified status for selected languages, and alternate credentialing for other languages. Court Interpreters service the courts as independent contractors and receive:

- ◆ compensation starting at \$25.00/hour;
- ◆ roundtrip mileage reimbursement at \$.55 per mile;
- ◆ exemption from expired meter parking ticket while on assignment; and commuter time payment, if applicable.

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HONORARY CERTIFICATES

(Be a Court Interpreter, continued...)

Freelance court interpreters are not Judiciary staff and do not receive employee benefits.

The Basic Orientation Workshop is offered only once a year statewide and is the first mandatory event in the Certification Program. The BOW is a two-day seminar that includes the role of interpreters in the state court system; court interpreting skills; interpreting practice techniques; court interpreter ethics and protocol; legal terms and resources; and next steps in the Certification Program. Applicants must attend the BOW in order to become qualified to interpret in the Hawai'i State Courts. This year, through grant funding, the BOW is \$50 – 2/3 off the regular cost of the workshop -- which covers the two-day workshop, course materials, and a resource binder developed for Hawai'i court interpreters. The deadline to register is Thursday, January 31, 2019. Late registration will be accepted provided that there is still space available. For more information about the Court Interpreter Certification Program or the BOW, contact the Office on Equality and Access to the Courts by email at OEAC@courts.hawaii.gov or by calling (808) 539-4860.

Hawai'i Thousand Friends Unsung Hero Awards

I presented Gary Hooser and Lea Hong with Honorary Certificates from the State Senate at the Hawai'i Thousand Friends' (HTF) Annual Dinner Meeting and Unsung Hero Recognition Banquet at the Hale Koa Hotel on November 11. Gary and Lea were proud recipients of the 2018 Unsung Hero Awards for their dedication to protecting the environment. The HTF Unsung Hero award began in 1992 to provide an opportunity to publicly thank people for all their work in protecting the environment, natural and cultural resources, protecting public health, working for the good of community, and for open and transparent government.

Gary has been a long-time advocate of labeling genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and was a leading opponent of the Superferry. He helped pass major legislation including the first-in-the-nation pesticide disclosure requirement and also a law that made blocking beach access a criminal

offense. In his last four years as majority leader (2002-2010), Gary represented the islands of Kaua'i and Ni'ihau in the State Senate. He served as director of the Office of Environmental Quality Control (2011-2012) and served for eight years on the Kaua'i County Council. He then founded Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (H.A.P.A.), and currently serves as its president. He also founded the Pono Hawai'i Initiative, of which he is the Executive Director. More recently, during the Legislative Session 2018, Gary worked tirelessly to lobby for Senate Bill 3095, making Hawai'i the first in the nation to ban the pesticide, chlorpyrifos.

Lea has been Director of the Trust for Public Land since her appointment in 2006. Prior to that, she was a partner and chairwoman of the Environmental and Cultural Resources Law Practice Group at Alston Hunt Floyd & Ing. In 2005, Lea represented OHA in OHA v. NASA, winning an important decision requiring federal agencies to do appropriate cumulative impact analysis in environmental assessments. Ms. Wong works with communities to protect our Islands' 'aina, including notably 182 acres of the Ka Iwi Coast and 630 acres of windswept shoreline from Kawela Bay to Kahuku Point. She partnered with Aloha Kuamo'o 'Aina to acquire the culturally significant 42-acre Kuamo 'o battlefield in Kona. Lea was also an attorney with the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, representing HTF in five Clean Water Act lawsuits.



-with Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Gary Hooser-President, Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (H.A.P.A.) and Lea Hong-Director of the Trust for Public Land. Senator Gabbard presented Honorary Certificates to Gary and Lea at the Hawai'i Thousand Friends' (HTF) Annual Dinner Meeting and Unsung Hero Recognition Banquet at the Hale Koa Hotel on November 11.