

**Aloha e Friends,**

I hope you and your ‘ohana are well. I’ll begin with an office update... Rock Riggs, my longtime friend, Office Manager and Committee Clerk is leaving Hawai‘i. Rock has been working for me since I first got elected to the Honolulu City Council in 2002. Then, he shifted over to the Senate in 2006 when I first got elected to the Legislature. He and his family are moving to Oregon, where he’ll be a caretaker on a friend’s farm.

While we’ll miss him, I’m happy to introduce you to my new Office Manager/Committee Clerk, Brandon Kim.

Brandon comes to us with extensive experience, at the Capitol, including last session with Rock, Meg, and me, and is an awesome addition to my office staff.

AlohaCongrats to all the graduates of Campbell, Kapolei, and Waipahu High Schools, along with Island Pacific Academy, and American Renaissance Academy in Senate District 20. These graduates deserve huge praise for navigating the difficulties they were confronted with over the past year and a half because of the COVID pandemic. I recorded a brief song to congratulate to all the students on their achievements, which you can listen to on my YouTube channel (<http://bit.ly/GabbardAlohaCongrats2021>).

I also sent a short message to the UH West O’ahu grads you can check out here: (<http://bit.ly/GabbardUHWOCongrats2021>).

AlohaCongrats as well to the **Hawai‘i Army National Guard Hawai‘i Youth CHalleNGe Academy**, which holds a special place in my heart. I was able to attend the cadets’ graduation of Class 54 right down the street from me on June 10, as they’re one of the few schools that held an in-person ceremony. Parents, you deserve praise, too, for the sacrifices you’ve made to support your children and for helping them to reach this milestone. Let’s remember to honor and celebrate all the dads out there! Don’t forget that June 21 is Father’s Day! As always, please contact me at (808) 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](https://twitter.com/senmikegabbard), Instagram [@GabbardAloha](https://www.instagram.com/GabbardAloha), or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/senmikegabbard>.

Best wishes to you and your ‘ohana.



On June 10, Sen. Gabbard presented the “Mike Gabbard Scholarship” for \$500 to YCA Cadet Graduate CL 54, Acesyn-Leo Soderberg, who will begin studies at Windward Community College in Natural Sciences.



## COMMITTEE CHAIR

### AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

#### MEMBER

- ◆ Judiciary
- ◆ Government Operations

#### DISTRICT 20

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

#### Bill Deadlines

The Governor has three choices for the bills that passed the House & Senate:

Notify the Legislature by June 21 if he plans to veto the bill and deliver the veto by July 6, in which case the bill dies -- unless the legislature calls a Special Session and overrides his veto by a 2/3 vote in the Senate and the House.

Sign the bill by July 6 and it becomes law and is given an act number.

Do neither, in which case it becomes law.

Please let the Governor know how you feel about any of the legislation by calling him at 586-0034 or filling out the "Contact Us" form here: <https://governor.hawaii.gov/contact-us/comments-on-legislation/>

I completed my 15th legislative session as your Senator on April 29. This was a unique session, given that myself and many other Senators conducted our legislative hearings almost entirely remotely via Zoom. Leading up to session, we were facing a \$1.4 billion dollar deficit over the next four years. Governor Ige had announced probable furloughs of thousands of state workers, including teachers, and the gutting of state agencies. We had record high unemployment. Thanks to the federal government we received over \$1.2 billion in American Rescue Plan Funds. This prevented a catastrophic situation at the Capitol.

### **2021 Legislative Session Overview**

There were a total of 2,820 bills introduced during the 2021 Legislative Session (1,397 in the House and 1,423 in the Senate). Of those, 265 bills passed the Legislature.

#### **Climate Emergency Resolution—First in the Nation!**

This past session I authored SCR 44, the Climate Emergency resolution, that was adopted by both the State Senate and State House. The passage of this important legislation is a great example of "laulima", many hands working together. The efforts of the Hawai'i Climate and Environmental Coalition—the 37 organizations that came together to help get this legislation passed—deserve a lot of praise for their work. I'm stoked that our Legislature took this action to declare a Climate Emergency. This makes us the first state in the country to do so, which is very important in terms of our state's leadership nationally and internationally on this issue. It reminds me of how in 2015, Hawai'i was the first state to pass a 100% Clean Renewable Energy goal by 2045. Since then, 16 states have followed our lead. Hopefully, other states, will get on board and pass similar legislation to SCR 44. While resolutions are not binding legislation, passing this resolution gives our community something to rally around and to work toward real actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

#### **My Legislation**

Following is an overview of the six bills I authored this session which passed the House and Senate.

#### **Agriculture Loans (SB 336)**

Currently, agricultural loans of \$25,000 or more are subject to the approval of the Hawai'i Board of Agriculture. This bill streamlines the process for smaller agricultural loans by increasing the \$25,000 threshold to \$50,000 and allows loans up to this amount to be approved by the Director of the Department of Agriculture (HDOA) without Board input.

The current law hasn't been updated since the 1980s and HDOA wants to amend the law to meet the needs of 21st century farmers. It makes sense to give HDOA more flexibility to provide small scale ag loans to farmers, especially in these hard-economic times.

#### **Animal Sex Assault (SB 343, Act 31)**

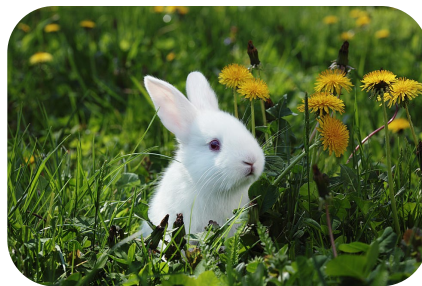
Bestiality is banned in 46 states, but not in Hawai'i. A study of more than 44,000 adult male sex offenders concluded that the sexual assault of an animal is the strongest predictor of the sexual assault of a child. Some studies have also drawn connections between the sexual assault of animals and serial homicide. This bill prohibits the sexual assault of an animal, and will make it a Class C felony offense. In addition to the Class C felony, if the act is committed in front of a minor, or if a minor was subjected to sexual contact with an animal, the offense will be a Class B felony. Mahalo Gov, for signing this into law on June 10. 😊

#### **Cruelty-Free Cosmetics (SB 345)**

Non-animal testing methods spare significant numbers of animals from pain, distress, and death. And crucially, non-animal testing methods have higher relevance for humans compared to tests in animals, and thus ensure better protection of human health. This bill would make our state one of just six states (including California, Illinois, Nevada, Virginia and Maryland) to pass such a law. We'd also join over 40 countries around the world that have restricted animal testing for cosmetics in recent years. This bill would prohibit cosmetic manufacturers from selling in the state any cosmetic product involving new animal testing beginning on January 1, 2022.

#### **Aluminum Cans (SB 348)**

Existing state law prohibits carbonated soft drink, juice, and beer operations from using the same equipment to can non-carbonated bottled water (We're the only state in the country that has this law in place). This is a problem because companies like Ball Corporation and Maui Brewing Company, could be selling bottled water in aluminum cans which could reduce the use of plastic bottles. Unlike plastic bottles, 100% of the aluminum can is recycled. This bill would repeal the requirement that noncarbonated bottled water be bottled in or through lines or equipment through which only water is passed.



## [Beach Restoration \(SB 367\)](#)

According to a 2012 study by the UH and the United States Geological Survey, 70% of beaches in Hawai'i are eroding. Burdensome regulations and permit requirements for the beach restoration and maintenance projects discourage and prevent individuals, community organizations, and government agencies from initiating beach restoration projects. This bill would waive the section 401 water quality certification requirement for beach restoration and management projects that have received notice of authorization to proceed from the Department of Land and Natural Resource's small-scale beach restoration program. With this bill, DLNR would be able to issue permits for 5 years for these beach restorations

## [Greenhouses \(SB 489\)](#)

The bill would expand the allowable size of agricultural shade cloth, cold frame and greenhouse structures from 20,000 sq. ft. to 60,000 ft., enabling farmers to benefit from economies of scale and expand their produce production. As stated in UH College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources' testimony: "Given the known advantage of such structures, this bill has the potential to have a significantly large effect on Hawai'i agriculture."

## **Construction Funding for Senate District 20**

I was pleased we were able to secure \$40,632,000 in the state biennium budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2023 for the benefit of Senate District 20. Here's a quick rundown of that funding:

- Farrington Highway Widening, Kapolei Golf Course to Fort Weaver Road – \$25m
- East Kapolei Elementary Ho'opili New School Design-\$4m
- East Kapolei High School New School Planning-\$500,000
- Kapolei High School, Additional Restrooms-\$500,000
- East Kapolei IIC Site Construction for the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands-\$2m
- East Kapolei Transit Oriented Development and Telcom Infrastructure-\$5,132,000
- University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu Renewal Projects-\$3.5 m

## **Hawai'i State Veterans Home Blessing & Groundbreaking**

Did you know we have over 117,000 vets in Hawai'i and over one-third are on O'ahu? With only one Veteran's Home in Hilo, the need for a new facility is much needed. The Daniel K. Akaka State Veterans Home is named after the former Hawai'i U.S. senator who championed veterans' issues. The project was awarded a \$44.7 million federal

grant from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and received \$53.7 million in state funds for planning, design, construction and equipment.



**Pictured: street view rendering, courtesy of MGA**

Located on a seven-acre parcel of land across from Walmart, the facility will contain 120

beds with single occupancy rooms; support facilities that include rehabilitation rooms, therapy rooms, kitchen, dining, laundry, and administrative offices. Services will include: Skilled Nursing Care, Rehabilitation Therapies, Hospice Care, Long-Term Care, Geriatric Mental Health, Alzheimer's Care, Dementia, Adult Day Health and Respite Care. The groundbreaking and blessing took place on Memorial Day, which was fitting. Given the space and land available, Kapolei was a good choice for the location. Veterans from all over the state will be able to live in the new facility. As an additional benefit for Kapolei/West O'ahu, the facility will provide approximately 200 healthcare and administrative jobs, along with internships with the UH West O'ahu and with neighboring high schools. Completion date is estimated for 2023.

## **CarWash808 Express & Pau Hana Express Convenience Store**



**Pictured L-R: Sen. Gabbard, Rick Price, and Reps Sharon Har and Ty Cullen.**

I was honored to welcome the Price 'ohana, (Ricky, Teresa, Chris and Brandon), proud owners of CarWash808, and Pau Hana Express Convenience Store, to the

second city, with the presentation of an Honorary Certificate on May 1. CarWash808 is the newest, largest, fastest, and highest quality car washing facility in the state! The new CarWash808 and Pau Hana Express Convenience Store in Kapolei features an amazing 140-foot tunnel outfitted with the latest technology in carwash equipment and can wash more than 200 cars per hour. The site also provides 21 complimentary industrial strength vacuum cleaners. Next to the car wash is the Pau Hana Express, full-service convenience store, featuring a fuel station with all four grades of gasoline and diesel fuel, plus all the snacks, drinks, and goodies needed for your drive.

## Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i Legislator Tour



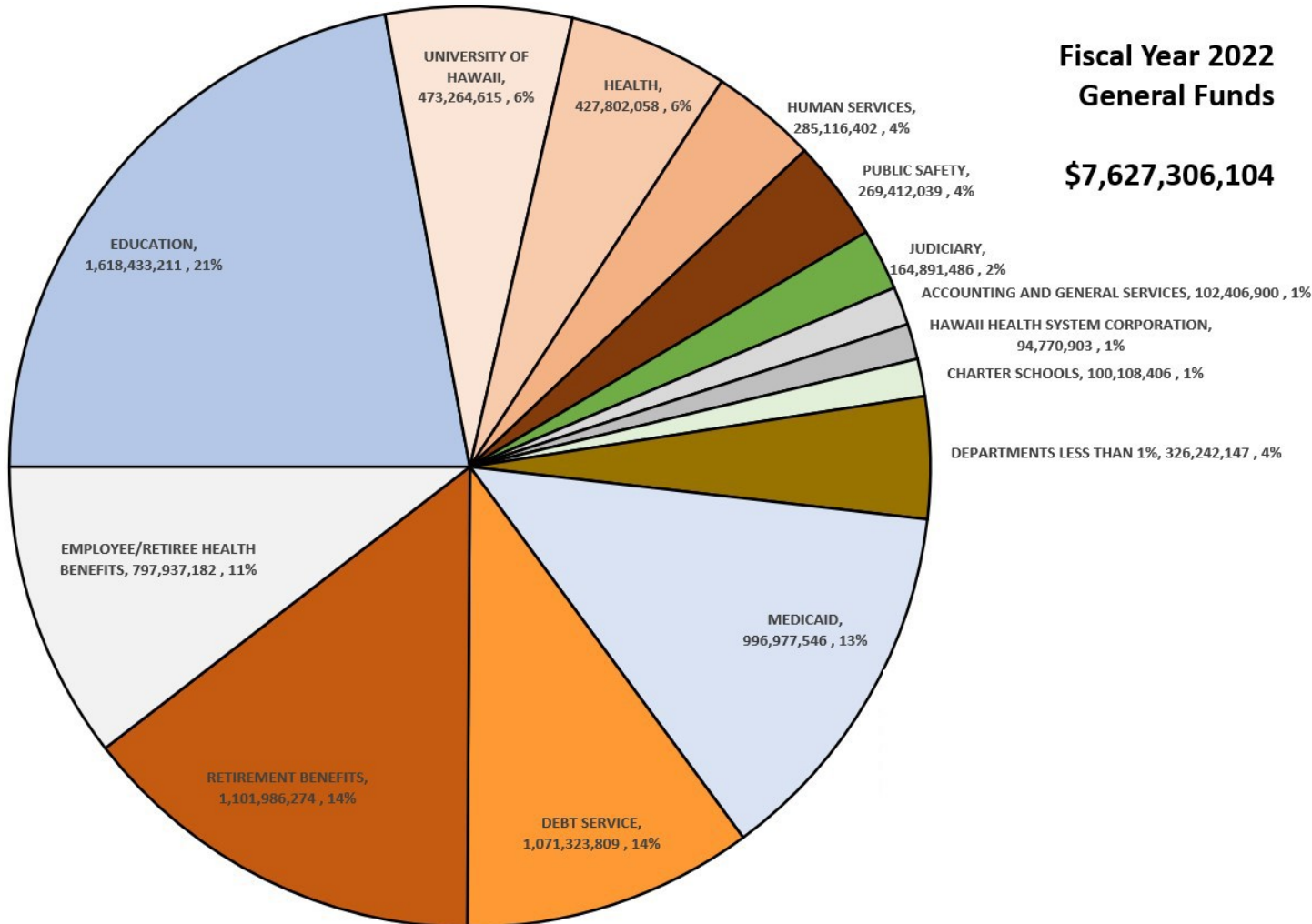
Pictured L-R: Sen. Gabbard, Rep. Sharon Har, Dr. Marcus Iwane-M.D Chief physician, Dr. John Yang, M.D.,-President and Medical Director of Hawai'i Permanente Medical Group Inc, Reps Stacelynn Eli, Cedric Gates and Ty Cullen.

We now have a brand new Kaiser Permanente West O'ahu Medical Office at Kapolei. The facility officially opened on April 5 to a largely virtual audience. On May 13, my colleagues and I were invited to an in-person tour by Kaiser's Government Relations Manager, Jon Ching. The beautiful and calming environment seems perfectly designed for healing. The facility is called "Kīpukaoha" – a combination n of two Hawaiian words: "kipuka"- an area of untouched land surrounded by lava flows, and "oha" - flourishing growth. State-of-the-art "NextGen" technology incorporates high-tech information boards (similar to those in an airport) to let clients know at all times where they are in the process of being able to meet with their doctor. The new West O'ahu Medical Office is 3x larger than their prior facility and more modern than anything we've seen here before. And BTW, their solar array over the parking

structure takes them off the grid...so need worry, if the power goes off !!! I was honored to present a certificate from the Hawai'i State Senate to Dr. Marcus Iwane, M.D, Chief Physician of their new facility. Mahalo for bringing more convenience and services under one roof to West O'ahu's growing community.

## State Spending

In case you've ever wondered how your taxpayer dollars are spent, the circle pie chart below will give you a pretty good idea. The 2021-2023 operating budget included a total of \$31.2 billion in funding. Some of the major components include: 19% for Medicaid; 13% for Education; 7% for Transportation; 8% for UH; 8% for Debt Services; 7% for Health; 7% for Retirement Benefits; and 5% for Human Services. Note: As chair of the Agriculture Environment Committee I'm saddened by the less than 1% of the total budget that goes to our Dept. of Ag. If we're ever going to decrease our dependence on imported food (yes, we import 85-90% of our food at a cost of about \$3 billion annually), we're going to have to put our money where our mouth is.



## Fiscal Year 2022 General Funds

**\$7,627,306,104**

## Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i

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