



## The Senate

STATE CAPITOL  
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### **Senator Gilbert Kahele Recognizes Adopt-a-Behive with Alan Wong**

HONOLULU—Senator Gilbert Kahele honored key individuals involved in the Adopt-a-Behive with Alan Wong Program at the University of Hawai`i at Hilo with a Certificate of Recognition today. Those individuals are renowned Chef Alan Wong, University of Hawai`i at Hilo Chancellor Donald Straney and University of Hawai`i at Hilo Professor of Entomology Dr. Lorna Tsutsumi.

Last year, Chef Alan Wong teamed up with UH Hilo to create the “Adopt-a-Behive with Alan Wong Program” in order to bring awareness of the honey bees’ critical decline in population. Now offered for a second year, the successful innovative program supports the education of student beekeepers, promotes research and development of healthy beehive practices in Hawai`i, and educates the public about the vital role that honey bees play in sustaining agriculture.

“I was very impressed with this innovative idea that partners Chef Alan Wong and UH Hilo conceived in educating their students and the community on the vital role that honey bees play in sustaining agriculture in Hawai`i,” said Senator Kahele, who represents District 2, encompassing Ka`u, Puna, Hilo.

Senator Kahele, vice chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, co-adopted a beehive with Senator Clarence Nishihara, chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture.

There are 25 bee hives at the UH Hilo apiary located on the 110 acre Panaewa farm that are used for the hands-on beekeeping laboratories. The hives are assigned to students who learn manipulation skills and then send public “adopters” monthly updates on the status of their hives.

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According to the University of Hawai`i, honey bees across Hawai`i have helped sustain agriculture for over 150 years. But, bee colonies began collapsing in 2007 due to the invasion of the varroa mite.

UH Hilo Chancellor Donald Straney has been a strong supporter of the program since its inception. He believes UH Hilo has the potential to become a global model in promoting research and educating the public about the vital role honey bees play in sustaining agriculture.

UH Hilo Professor of Entomology Dr. Lorna Tsutsumi has taught students the importance of sustainability for more than 25 years. She has said honey bees are responsible for the pollination of many important agricultural crops and their health and well-being is especially important as we strive to lessen our dependency on food imports.

The Senate Committees on Agriculture and Education passed House Bill 2100, relating to bees this past Monday, March 19, 2012. The bill would appropriate funds to the University of Hawai`i for statewide bee hive research. The bill is now with the Senate Committee on Ways and Means for consideration.

(Photo Caption: Senators recognize the Adopt-a-Behive with Alan Wong.) ((L-R) Sen. Gilbert Kahele, UH Hilo Professor of Entomology Dr. Lorna Tsutsumi, UH Hilo Chancellor Donald Straney, Chef Alan Wong and Senator Clarence Nishihara.)

(Photo Courtesy: Senate Communications)

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