Senator Mike Gabbard's
FEBRUARY 2010 **LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

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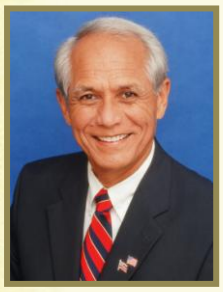

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Senator Mike Gabbard, 19th Distsrict

WAIKELE, VILLAGE PARK, ROYAL KUNIA, KAPOLEI, MAKAKILO, KALAELOA, HONOKAI HALE, AND PORTIONS OF WAIPAHU & KO 'OLINA

Aloha Friends,

I hope you and your family are well. Best wishes for a Happy Valentine's Day as well as a fun and safe Chinese New Year celebration as we bring in the Year of the Tiger.

I encourage you to get involved in your state government and weigh in on legislation that is now being considered at the State Capitol. Please contact me if I can help you in any way. My email is sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov and my phone number is 586-6830.

Me ka pumehana, Mike

UH West Oahu Update

I met with Dr. Gene Awakuni, Chancellor of UH West Oahu, recently to get an update on the planned UH West Oahu campus. He assured me that they are still on target for a fall 2011 opening. On my end, I'll be working with my colleagues in the Legislature with the goal of getting $48 million appropriated for the construction of the new campus.

I've introduced SB 2355, which would establish a digital media enterprise subzone in the area surrounding UH West Oahu. This would provide tax benefits to companies that make investments in digital media infrastructure development. The idea is to position UH West Oahu and the Kapolei area as a center for the digital media arts and prepare our community to be an economic engine for the state.

I'd also like to mention that I'm fortunate to have the UH West Oahu student body president, Tyrell Ma'ae of Kapolei, as one of my legislative assistants for the session.

Listen-Story

My next Listen-Story meeting will be at the Kunia Starbucks (94-673 Kupuohi Street, Kunia Shopping Center) on Saturday, February 20th from 9:00 – 10:00 am.

The photo at right is from my January meeting at Kapolei Starbucks with community members as young as 3 years old!

"Green" Initiatives

by the Senate's

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

As you know, the state has the ambitious goal of having 70% of our energy needs met through renewable energy and energy efficiency by 2030. One of my main priorities, as the Senate Energy and Environment Committee Chair, will be to pass legislation that keeps us on the path to meeting these goals and kicking our addiction to fossil fuel.

We should be looking at this sector as a way to stimulate our economy. According to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, the potential economic impact of the renewable energy industry in the near term is $1.3 billion in revenue ($158 million in tax revenue) and 2,600 construction jobs.

Three measures that I'm putting forward that deserve mention are:

SB 2235 – a bill to require developers to incorporate design elements and minimum equipment installation to make all new single-family homes photovoltaic-ready, starting in 2012.

SB 2551 – a bill to require all new single-family homes to be net zero energy capable by 2015. Net zero energy capable means that the home would be built in a way to make it practical for the homeowner to be able to produce as much energy as he/she consumes, thus making his/her electricity bill zero.

SB 2865 – a bill to establish a property assessed clean energy bond financing program in the state. This would allow the state to issue bonds which could be used by the counties to help homeowners and businesses finance efficiency improvements and small renewable energy systems. The loans would then be repaid over a prescribed time period through their property tax bill.

I was honored to co-chair the Hawai'i Energy Policy Forum at the State Capitol on January 8th.

Another big focus will be our environmental review process. In 2008, the Legislature appropriated funding for UH to conduct a study and make recommendations on improvements that could be made to our environmental review process--environmental assessments (EAs) and environmental impacts statements (EISs). The UH team presented their findings to the Legislature on January 1st. On January 15th, Rep. Hermina Morita, Chair of the House Energy and Environmental Protection Committee, and I held an informational briefing at the Capitol to hear from the authors on what they thought are the best ways to make the process more efficient, effective, and fair.

Our environmental review system has been in need of an overhaul a very long time. "Manini" projects, like driveways, have been caught up in the costly environmental review process when they really shouldn't have been. At the same time, larger projects that do have a greater environmental impact, such as the Superferry, have escaped scrutiny.

I've introduced SB 2818 this session based on the UH team's recommendations to revise our environmental review system in a way that is in the best interest of our environment and also good for our economy.

What a turnout for the "Wear Blue for Oceans" Day event at the State Capitol on January 13th!

CONSTITUENTS
PUT FORWARD IDEAS FOR NEW LEGISLATION

Many ideas that I use to craft legislation often come from residents of Senate District 19. Whether I get input from residents at one of my listen-story meetings, when I run into someone at a store, or at church, I'm always happy to hear how we can make our state a better place to live. Here are short descriptions of several of the bills I've introduced that were inspired by our neighbors:

SB 2361 - a bill that would require telephone directories to only be distributed to persons who have signed a written authorization to receive a directory. This would cut down on a proliferation of phone books, which waste paper and often end up in the landfill.

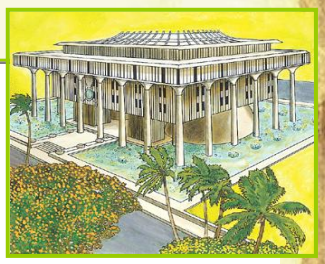
SB 2365 - a bill that would impose a total ban on consumer fireworks except for religious and cultural purposes.

SB 2227 - a bill that would allow a surviving spouse of a police officer, fire fighter, deputy sheriff, or public safety officer who died in the line of duty to remarry and continue to receive pension and other retirement benefits arising from their former spouse's employment.

SB 2329 - a bill that would require homeowner associations to make association documents available to owners and prospective buyers in hard copy for a reasonable fee (not more than 20 cents per page) or in electronic form through a website maintained by the property management company.

SB 2424 - a bill that would mandate minimum sentences of imprisonment for all negligent homicide convictions involving the death of a pedestrian.

SB 2328 - a bill that would recognize September 26th of each year as Mesothelioma Awareness Day and encourage those at risk to receive proper screening for the disease.



2010 Legislative Calendar

1-Jan	Holiday: New Year's Day
18-Jan	Holiday: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
20-Jan	Opening Day and Non-Admin Bill Package Cutoff
25-Jan	State of the State Address and Admin. Bill Package Cutoff
26-Jan	Recess #1
27-Jan	State of the Judiciary and Bill Intro Cutoff
29-Jan	Grants/Subsidies Cutoff
3-Feb	State of the University
15-Feb	Holiday: President's Day
19-Feb	Mandatory Five Day Recess Begins
25-Feb	Mandatory Five Day Recess Ends
26-Feb	First Decking (Bills)
1-Mar	Recess #2
4-Mar	First Crossover (Bills)
8-Mar	Budget Decking
10-Mar	Budget Crossover and Substantive Reso Cutoff
25-Mar	Recess #3
26-Mar	Holiday: Kuhio Day (Observed)
1-Apr	Second Decking
2-Apr	Holiday: Good Friday
5-Apr	Recess #4
8-Apr	Second Crossover (Bills) & Disagree
9-Apr	First Crossover (Conc. Resos)
16-Apr	Last day for Constitutional Amendments
19-Apr	Second Crossover (Conc. Resos.)
22-Apr	Final Decking (Non-Fiscal Bills)
23-Apr	Final Decking (Fiscal Bills)
29-Apr	Adjournment Sine Die

Hosting International Exchange Student from Morocco

I hosted Zakaria Rami (at right), an international exchange student from Morocco, as an intern for a day at the Capitol on January 22nd. Zak is a participant in the Youth Exchange and Study Program (YES) and is currently attending Kapolei High School for the year. Zak is a member of the school's wrestling team and lives in Kapolei with Mr. Doug Brown. Zak is from Essmara where he lives with his mother who is a school administrator. His first language is Arabic and he also speaks French and English. When he's older, he'd like to become an engineer or businessman.

The team at Simply Organized celebrated 1 year in Kapolei on January 16th. In photo above from right: Operations Manager Bill Cabe, Store Manager Rochelle Ortiz, and Vice President Carol Ai May.

Walt Disney Resort Coming to Ko ‘Olina Soon

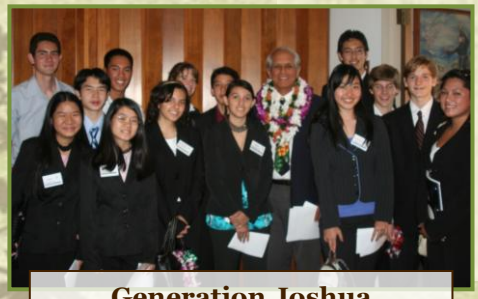
I had the opportunity to check out a "model" of the planned Aulani Disney Resort and Spa (above photo with Zak) in Senate President Colleen Hanabusa's Capitol office on January 22nd. The name "Aulani" expresses a connection to tradition and deep story-telling. The 21-acre will include 360 hotel rooms and 481 Disney Vacation Club timeshare villas. There will also be an 18,000 square-foot spa, a 14,545 square foot conference center, two restaurants, and 48,685 square feet of outdoor venues. Phase one of Aulani is scheduled to be open by fall 2011. Once the project is fully operational, it will be a huge economic engine for West Oahu and will provide 1,000 jobs.

Foodland & Kapolei Village Center Break Ground

It was great taking part in the groundbreaking ceremony for the Kapolei Village Center on January 14th. This will be a 56,620 square foot shopping area located at the intersection of Wakea Street and Kapolei Parkway. The shopping center will include a 36,320 square foot Foodland and also a dozen retail shops, such as a florist, bank, hair salon, and Mexican restaurant. The stores are expected to open spring 2011 and will be a great addition to our growing city.

Representative Sharon Har and I presented Honorary Certificates on behalf of the Legislature to (in photo above, from right) Mark Bratton (Manager, Kapolei Shops LLC), Roger Wall (Foodland Vice Chairman), Jenai Wall (Foodland Chairman & CEO), and Kim Scoggins (Manager, Kapolei Shops LLC).

Mahalo for Visiting Your State Capitol on Opening Day of the 2010 Legislative Session on January 20th!



Generation Joshua

Blue Planet Foundation

Hawai’i Civil Air Patrol