



Legislative Wrap Up from...

Senator Mike Gabbard



Aloha Friends,

Happy 4th of July! Please take a moment to reflect on how this day signifies our cherished freedoms and democratic way of life. Also, I hope you enjoy some quality time with your family and friends at the beach or in your backyard.

Let me know if I can help you in any way. I can be reached at 808-586-6830 or sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov.



COMMITTEE CHAIR

* **Energy and Environment**

MEMBER

* **Judiciary and Labor**

MEMBER

* **Transportation and International Affairs**

District 19

Waikele, Royal Kunia, Village Park, Makakilo, Kapolei, Kalaeloa, Honokai Hale, and portions of Waipahu and Ko'Olina

Royal Kunia Elementary School Finally Moving Forward

One of the highlights of this past session was finally getting the long awaited Royal Kunia Elementary School in the state budget. Many Kunia residents have contacted me over the years frustrated about the overcrowded conditions at Kalei'opu'u Elementary. I've done my best to get the new school moved up on the Department of Education's priority list. We've appropriated \$150,000 to start the planning for the new school. This will be one of the more creative school projects, in that a private developer, Kobayashi Group, will be designing and constructing the school and selling it back to the state. The idea is get it built as quickly as possible. We still don't have a definitive date, but we're told that it takes roughly 6 years to complete a school once the planning money has been expended.

Cool Red Cross App Could Save Lives

The Red Cross just announced that they have a cool new Red Cross First Aid App for iPhones and Androids. It gives folks instant step by step instructions and video on how to respond to the most common first aid emergencies. It also lets you know what to do in a disaster like a hurricane. You can find a video demonstrating how it works by searching for the "Red Cross First Aid App" on YouTube.com.



"Listen Story" Meeting

My next "Listen Story" meeting will be held at the Kamokila Community Park Meeting Room in Honokai Hale on July 21st from 9:00 to 10:00am. This will be my last community meeting in Honokai Hale, due to the fact that I will no longer represent that area if I'm re-elected in November.



District 19 Teachers Receive National Board Certification

Congratulations to Neil Bloomberg (Kapolei High), Matthew Deeley (Kapolei High), and Dana Tanigawa (Waikele Elementary) for undergoing a voluntary, time-consuming, and rigorous process to become 2011 National Board Certified teachers. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards was founded in 1987 as an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that is recognized for improving student learning in America's schools. They certify teachers through an intense assessment process that takes a year to attain and requires hundreds of hours of preparation. Teachers must participate in videotaped teaching demonstrations, take tests to demonstrate content knowledge, and submit examples of student work, as well as a portfolio of their professional work. Only 60 teachers in Hawai'i schools achieved this distinguished honor in 2011.

Ka Makana Ali'i Mall Brings More Shopping to Kapolei

Attention ladies...The planned Ka Makana Ali'i Mall is coming to Kapolei in the near future. This is a DeBartolo project that will be built on 67-acres of Department of Hawaiian Home Lands property at the intersection of Kapolei Parkway and Kualaka'i Parkway. At 1.1 million square feet, it will rival the size of Pearlridge Center and will include office buildings, a grocery store, and a hotel. The initial phase of the project will be 200,000 square feet and will be constructed starting in 2013. Tenant openings will be in 2014 and will include Walgreens, 24 Hour Fitness, Butterfly Ice Cream, McDonald's, State Farm Insurance, and Nailtek.



Walmart Foundation Announces Second Round of 2012 Grants

I recently received an email asking me to help get the word out that Walmart Foundation's Hawai'i State Giving Program is now accepting grant applications from non-profit organizations. The minimum award for the grants is \$25,000. The deadline to apply for this second round of their 2012 grants is August 10th. Interested 501(c) (3) organizations can apply at walmartfoundation.org/stategiving.



Governor Neil Abercrombie signed two key energy bills into law in the Governor's Ceremonial Room at the State Capitol on June 27th. Act 165 will set up a regulatory framework through which the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) will regulate any interisland electrical transmission cable developer as a utility. Act 166 will establish the Hawai'i Electricity Reliability Administrator under the PUC to better manage the integration of renewable energy onto the grid. Pictured (L to R) are State Energy Administrator Mark Glick, Lt. Governor Brian Schatz, House Energy and Environmental Protection Chair Denny Coffman, DBEDT Director Richard Lim, Senate Energy and Environment Chair Mike Gabbard, House Consumer Protection and Commerce Chair Bob Herkes, Governor Abercrombie, PUC Commissioner Mike Champley, House Speaker Calvin Say, U.S. Department of Energy advisor Jim Spaeth, PUC Chair Mina Morita, and DBEDT Deputy Director Mary Alice Evans.

Commitment to Solar Continues to be Important

You might have seen some of the latest news about how the Council on Revenues reported that state tax revenues were down a bit this past quarter. Surprisingly, the COR focused on the solar tax credit as being one of the main causes for the decrease in revenues. They claim that the state lost \$70 million in revenue in 2011 because of the money invested in the solar tax credit. What the COR failed to mention is the importance that the solar industry now has in our economy. For example in 2011, solar accounted for 15% of the construction in the state. This is coupled with a recent study commissioned by Blue Planet Foundation and conducted by UH economist, Dr. Thomas Loudat, who found that for every solar tax credit dollar invested, \$13.37 stays in Hawai'i and generates \$44.70 in additional sales, which means \$3.17 in new tax revenue. Solar remains a very important way for homes and businesses to reduce their electricity costs and our dependence on fossil fuels. Opponents of the solar tax credit fail to mention that nationally from 2002 to 2008 our federal government subsidized the fossil fuel industry to the tune of \$72.47 billion a year compared to \$5.61 billion in subsidies for the solar industry. How are we going to ever make any real progress if we keep our head in the sand and don't face the reality that "big oil" continues to have a strangle hold on us here in Hawai'i and across our nation?

Makakilo Drive Extension is Essential to Our Community

I received a response from Mayor Carlisle on May 14th to my letter urging him to reconsider his decision to re-direct \$3 million in funding for the design of the Makakilo Drive Extension. This just doesn't make sense, given its importance to the health and safety of the people of Makakilo. A big mahalo to Councilman Nestor Garcia for doing all he could to move this project along during the last several years. However, in the end, the power rests with our Mayor and I'm definitely not convinced he made the right decision.

Here's an excerpt from his response:

"I am greatly concerned about the estimated construction cost of the project, its increase on future debt service costs and the added operating and maintenance costs. Proceeding with the design of a new roadway extension would be contrary to the City's focus on addressing mandated, required or essential projects that maintain the delivery of ongoing City services. We can re-evaluate this project once the economy has improved and we have built up our fiscal stability fund."

Kapolei High School Students Awarded Study Tour in Japan

I presented certificates from the State Senate to Kapolei High School students, Michiko Detwiler and Brendon Thompson, at the Pacific and Asian Affairs Council's (PAAC) 2012 Scholarship Forum on June 7th. Michiko and Brendon were honored for being a part of the annual PAAC Summer Study Tour of Japan, which took place from June 11th to June 27th. Michiko is the daughter of Jack and Brenda Detwiler. Brendon is the son of Brian and Namsuk Thompson. While in Japan, they visited the cities of Tokyo, Hiroshima, and Kitakyushu. Each year, PAAC provides a group of public high school students the life-changing opportunity to travel throughout a country in Asia. These scholarships are generously provided by the Freeman Foundation. Students are exposed to different cultures and perspectives, gain first-hand understanding of current issues affecting the country or regions to be visited, and serve as cultural ambassadors for Hawai'i and the United States. For more information, please contact the PAAC High School Program Director, Natasha Schultz, at 944-7759 or visit www.paachawaii.org.



Senator Gabbard presented a certificate from the State Senate to Kapolei High School student, Michiko Detwiler, at the Pacific and Asian Affairs Council's (PAAC) 2012 Scholarship Forum on June 7th. Michiko was honored for being a part of the annual PAAC Summer Study Tour of Japan. Pictured (L to R) are Jean Rolles, PAAC Board Vice President; Frank Boas, PAAC Senior Advisory Council; Michiko; and Senator Gabbard.



Right Turn on Red Better for Kualaka'i Parkway

During the last year, I got repeated requests from constituents who were frustrated while driving in the southbound lane on Kualaka'i Parkway. Why? They couldn't legally make a right hand turn on red to get onto Farrington Highway. We took this concern to the Department of Transportation (DOT) on several occasions, but were initially told they had no plans to change the signal. I know many of you join me in thanking DOT for doing the right thing and putting in a right turn on red signal at this intersection this spring. It goes to show they are taking the input of the community seriously. A big mahalo to DOT Director Dr. Glenn Okimoto and his team!

First Wind Transportation Wind Turbines Through the District

As you may know, First Wind is beginning construction on the 69 megawatt Kawailoa Wind project. The wind farm will be located on Kamehameha School lands about 5 miles northeast of Hale'iwa. When completed, it will have 30 wind turbines and supply electricity to roughly 14,500 homes. **Heads up!** First Wind will be transporting the large wind turbine components (blade, nacelle, and tower sections) by truck from Kalaeloa Harbor to the project site until August. All the trucks will have police escorts and they will be confining the deliveries to Monday – Friday, 10pm to 5am. I'm hopeful this won't negatively impact your travels too much this summer.



Aloha City Rollers Host Boot Camp

For all you ladies who are looking for a new kind of exercise, there's a great new opportunity in Kapolei. The Aloha City Rollers will be holding a Roller Derby Boot Camp for those interested starting on July 11th. In order to attend, you have to have basic skating skills and also participate in practices in June. The boot camp will take place two evenings a week over a two month period. They will also be conducting an informational recruitment meeting at the Re/Max Hawai'i office in Kapolei. For more information, please email info@alohacityrollers.com or visit their website at www.alohacityrollers.com.



Governor Abercrombie Releases Construction Funding for Our Schools

I was stoked to learn that Governor Abercrombie released \$26.8 million in construction funding for schools across the state. Here's a rundown of the projects in Senate District 19:

- \$2.5 million – East Kapolei Middle School – design of new school
- \$1,938,678 – Kapolei High School, Kapolei Middle School, and Kapolei Elementary School – relocation or construction of temporary facilities (funding includes other schools)
- \$179,000 – Kapolei High School – additional construction for temporary restroom facilities (includes funding for another school)



Senator Mike Gabbard addresses the audience at the groundbreaking for the Mutual Housing Association of Hawai'i's Ko'oloa'ula affordable rental housing project on June 1, 2012. Phase 1 of the projects comprises the first 120 of 308 apartments planned. The MHAH is a local non-profit organization that provides affordable rental housing & supportive social services on O'ahu & Kaua'i.



Senator Gabbard congratulated Judge Richard Pollack for being confirmed as an Associate Justice of the State Supreme Court by the State Senate at the Capitol on June 29, 2012.



Senator Gabbard congratulated newly confirmed Circuit Court Judge (Maui) Peter Cahill and his wife, Jessica, at the State Capitol on June 29, 2012.