

Legislative Update from...

# Senator Mike Gabbard



2013

*Aloha Friends,*

Sorry, no community meeting in April. It's crunch time at the Legislature. I'll be hosting my next "Listen Story" meeting at the Kapolei Starbucks on May 4<sup>th</sup> at 9am. This meeting will take place right after the Legislative Session, which ends on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. I'll be giving a wrap-up of all the session highlights (and lowlights ☺). Here are a few things I'd like to share with you. 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.



### COMMITTEE CHAIR

\* Energy and Environment

### MEMBER

\* Judiciary and Labor

\* Transportation and

International Affairs

\* Technology and the Arts

### District 20

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

### Waipahu High School Turns 75

Congrats to the administration, teachers, students, and alumni as Waipahu High School celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on April 5<sup>th</sup>. Since 1938, the school has graduated 35,000 students. There will be a gala event for the community at the high school to celebrate from 4pm to 8pm that evening. The event will have food vendors, performances by area schools, and a showcase of the school's programs. A free shuttle service will be provided from August Ahrens, Honowai, Kaleiopuu, Waikele and Waipahu elementary schools, and from Waipahu Intermediate to Waipahu High. Buses leave every 30 minutes until 9 p.m.



### Kalaeloa Public Safety Team Honored at the State Senate

As a longtime resident of Kalaeloa, I took special pride in honoring the Kalaeloa Public Safety Team (KPS) in the Senate on March 15<sup>th</sup>. The KPS was formed in May 2006 and is headed up by the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA). The KPS includes federal, state, and county agencies that hold monthly meetings and serve as a one-stop shop for all public safety issues in Kalaeloa. By combining resources, public safety issues are addressed with minimal cost to the public. Some of their accomplishments include increasing daily patrols by Navy and Honolulu Police Departments, restoring the Kalaeloa Campgrounds for public use, significantly reducing criminal activity in the neighborhood--including illegal dumping, trespassing, motor vehicle break-ins and thefts--increasing vehicular and pedestrian safety by establishing an ongoing maintenance contract to control overgrown vegetation along the roadways, and improving road conditions in Kalaeloa. The team members I honored were Commander Carola List of the United States Coast



Guard, Victor Flint of Navy Region Hawai'i/NAVFAC Installation, Director Glenn Okimoto of the Department of Transportation (DOT), Pratt Kinimaka of DOT's Highways Division, Pearlyn Fukuba of the HCDA, Acting Deputy Director Darrell Young of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, Sergeant Kurt Ng of the Honolulu Police Department, Captain Rob Main of the Honolulu Fire Department, Sergeant Charles DeLugo of Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam - Westloch Police Annex, and Dexter Liu of the City's Department of Parks and Recreation.

## Teachers Now Have a Contract

Congrats to Governor Abercrombie, the Department of Education, and the Hawai'i State Teachers Association for arriving at a tentative agreement for a new teacher's contract on March 24<sup>th</sup>. This is very good news, considering that the teachers have been working under a contract that was imposed by the Governor back in July 2011. The specifics include:

- 2013-2014 School Year – 5% pay cut restores, all teachers move up one step on the salary schedule (roughly 3% pay increase), teachers already at the top of the HSTA pay scale receive a one-time \$1,500 bonus, teachers paid for 21 additional hours of professional development
- 2014-2015 School Year – all teachers receive a 3.2% increase
- 2015-2016 School Year – all teachers move up one step on the salary schedule, teachers at the top of the HSTA pay scale receive a one-time \$1,500 bonus (excluding those who previously received it)
- 2016-2017 School Year – all teachers receive a 3.2% increase
- The tentative contract will now need to be approved by a vote of our 12,000 teachers on April 17<sup>th</sup>. The Legislature will also have to appropriate the needed funds in the state budget we pass out by the end of session.

## American Samoa's Own Victoria Coffin Named 2013 Leeward District Teacher of the Year in Hawai'i

American Samoa native and current Hawai'i resident, Victoria Coffman, was named the 2013 Leeward District Teacher of the Year. She was recognized during a Hawai'i State Senate presentation for Education Week on March 21, 2013. The presentation was sponsored by Senator Will Espero and myself. Victoria is the daughter of Thomas and Faaaliga Coffin of Pago Pago and is the youngest of eight children. She graduated from Samoana High School in 2003 (where I taught in the early 1970s!) and attended Chaminade University on a scholarship where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education and a Masters of Education degree in Child Development. She is a teacher at Keoneula Elementary School in Ewa Beach. Among her accomplishments, she created a Kids Initiating Change program, which encourages students to work with the community on traffic safety, recycling, and energy conservation issues. Last Summer, Victoria attended a prestigious Fulbright Japan-U.S. Teacher Exchange Program for Education in Sustainability Development in Hiroshima, Japan. This exchange allowed her to share her initiatives and learn from other educators. Malo lava, Vicky!



Senator Gabbard was joined at the State Capitol on March 20th by other solar energy advocates for the Hawai'i Solar Energy Association's "Power to the People" Rally. From left to right: Senator Gabbard (Chair, Energy & Environment Committee), Jeff Mikulina (Exec. Director, Blue Planet Foundation), Senator Ruderman (Vice-Chair, Energy & Environment Committee), and Robert Harris (Hawai'i Director, Sierra Club).



Senator Gabbard (Chair, Energy and Environment Committee) and Rep. Chris Lee (Chair, Energy and Environmental Protection Committee) gave members of the Hawai'i Energy Policy Forum (HEPF) an update on March 15th, of key energy bills moving through the Legislature.

## LPGA LOTTE Championship Needs Volunteers

The LPGA LOTTE Championship will take place April 16-20, 2013 at Ko Olina Golf Club. Volunteers are needed as Standard Bearers for this world famous professional golf tournament. The Standard Bearer carries a light weight sign with the golfers' names and score and walks for 18 holes each day. Morning and afternoon shifts are available Tuesday through Thursday. Friday and Saturday shifts will be only in the morning. All proceeds from the tournament will go to Friends of Hawai'i Charities to directly benefit the people of West Oahu. For more information, contact Bev Brennan, Standards Chairman, at 782-3402 or by email at [aliikoa52@aol.com](mailto:aliikoa52@aol.com).

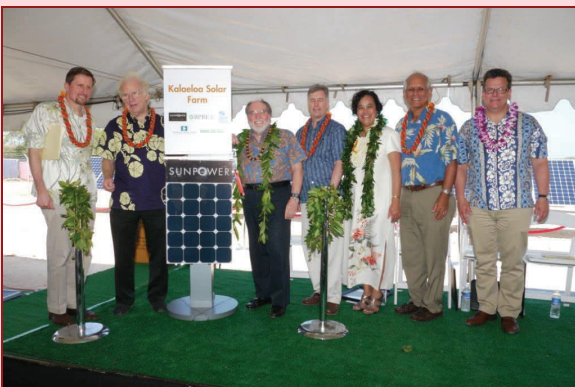
### Ewa Beach Emergency Preparedness Committee Doing Great Work for the Community

I met with Chair Don Harlor and Co-Chair Rodney Boucher of the Ewa Beach Emergency Preparedness Committee in my office on March 8<sup>th</sup>. The committee was formed in March 2011 after a severe windstorm knocked down power lines and caused 1,700 Ewa Beach residents to lose power, and the tsunami scare which occurred after the severe earthquake in Japan. It is made up of volunteers to prepare for an "All Hazard Event" (i.e. natural disaster or terrorist attack). They are currently planning to work with schools to get students and staff CPR/AED trained. They encourage folks to sign up with the Honolulu Department of Emergency Management to receive emergency updates at <http://www.nixle.com/dem> or texting your Zip Code to 88877. To find out more information or to get involved, please contact them at 682-0111 or [getreadyewabeach@gmail.com](mailto:getreadyewabeach@gmail.com). They're also on Facebook @ Get Ready Ewa Beach Emergency.



### Kalaeloa Solar Farm Producing Clean Energy in the Westside

I participated in the blessing for the Kalaeloa Solar Farm on March 8<sup>th</sup>. During the event, I had the opportunity to present certificates from the State Senate to Bright Plain Renewable Energy (BPRE), the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL), Hawaiian Electric Company (HECO), Keahole Solar Power, and SunPower Corporation for all their efforts in making this project a reality. The Kalaeloa Solar Farm is the second largest solar farm in the state. It produces clean, renewable energy while preventing pollution and helping to preserve the Native Hawaiian culture. In December 2012, the 5-megawatt (MW) Kalaeloa Solar Farm began operations on DHHL lands across Boxer Road from Barbers Point Elementary. On what was otherwise unusable land, it now provides a revenue stream to DHHL from land rentals that will support the construction of new homes and other programs for Native Hawaiians. BPRE purchased the project from SunPower Corporation, which developed and constructed the project. HECO will purchase the output of the 5 MW plant from BPRE over the next 20 years. The Kalaeloa Solar Farm will provide enough power for roughly 1,000 Oahu homes, while contributing to Hawai'i's renewable portfolio goals. Impressively, the Kalaeloa Solar Farm will prevent almost 9,500 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per year from polluting our environment. The Kalaeloa Solar Farm was completed at a critical time for the future of solar in Hawai'i. With solar incentives under intense legislative pressure, the project demonstrates that solar can be a viable and cost effective source of energy. At the same time, it's generating a critical revenue stream to sustain DHHL in their efforts to support the self-sufficiency of Native Hawaiians, as well as ensuring adequate infrastructure and financial support to the occupants.



## Challenger Center for Space Science Education Celebrates 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Barbers Point Elementary

I joined with Senator David Ige and Senator Jill Tokuda in honoring the Challenger Center Hawai'i at Barbers Point during a floor presentation of the State Senate on April 1<sup>st</sup> to commemorate 20 years of operation at Barbers Point Elementary. The Challenger Centers were founded by the families of the Challenger crew as a legacy of the seven members who lost their lives in the 1986 space shuttle disaster. Included in that historic crew was Hawai'i's very own Ellison Onizuka whose legacy continues to live on in those who aspire to shoot for the stars. Their mission is to engage middle school students and teachers in dynamic, hands-on exploration and discovery opportunities that strengthen knowledge in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, inspire students to pursue careers in these fields, and provide an outlet to learn and apply important life skills. The first learning center was opened in 1988 in Houston, Texas. The center at Barbers Point Elementary is the 14<sup>th</sup> in a global network of 48 learning centers located throughout the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, and South Korea. Since it opened on April 8, 1993, Challenger Center Hawai'i at Barbers Point Elementary School has hosted more than 96,000 students and trained more than 1,500 teachers from O'ahu as well as the neighbor islands. A big mahalo to the Estate of James Campbell for all their efforts in the center's development. The Estate spearheaded Challenger Center Hawai'i's fundraising and assisted the Leeward District in obtaining legislative and community support.



Pictured are Senator Jill Tokuda, Senator David Ige, Charles Toguchi (Vice President of Friends of Challenger Center of Hawai'i), Liane Kim (Director of Challenger Center Hawai'i), Heidi Armstrong (Department of Education Complex Area Superintendent for the Campbell Kapolei Complex area), Clinton Churchill (President of Friends of Challenger Center Hawai'i) and Senator Gabbard.



During their March 12th visit to the State Capitol, the Mauka Lani Elementary School Student Council Group from Kapolei had an interactive session with Sen. Gabbard on how a bill becomes a law. Student Council Advisors Arisa Domingo (very top) and Tammy Sakato (far right, 2nd row up) escorted the group on their tour of the Capitol.



The Officers and Advisors of the Kapolei High School Chapter of Best Buddies Hawai'i dropped by Sen. Gabbard's office on March 14th to say hi to their senator and tell him a bit about what they're doing for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in their district. Pictured (from left to right) are: Kristen Okano, Stefanie Michaud, McKenna Maki-zuru, Glenn Hiro, Chloe Chan, and Program Manager, Elizabeth Torres.



Senator Mike Gabbard presented the "Above and Beyond Award 2013" to Scott Godwin, who works in resource protection for the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, at the kickoff event for Hawai'i Invasive Species Awareness Week at the Capitol on March 4th.