

Legislative Update from...

Senator Mike Gabbard



2013

Aloha Friends,

Please don't forget all of the moms in your life on Mother's Day, May 12th. We finished the 2013 Legislative Session on May 2nd. Some of the highlights are that we didn't raise taxes, provided the necessary funding for the new teacher contract, deposited \$50 million into both our Rainy Day Fund and the Hurricane Relief Fund, and balanced the budget. Here are a few things I'd like to share with you. Please contact me at 586-6830 or 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

"Listen-Story" Meeting

My next "Listen Story" meeting will be at the Kapolei Starbucks (next to the Chevron Station) on Saturday, June 22nd at 9am.

Makakilo Drive Extension Moving Forward

I was very pleased to learn that the City has released \$3 million in design funding for the Makakilo Drive Extension which will connect to the Kualaka'i Parkway H-1 interchange. This is huge for our community, because the previous Mayor had made the decision to put the project on hold. The current plan is to possibly begin construction on the project in 2015 according to the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization's Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). The TIP lists all road projects that are eligible for federal funding. Mahalo to Mayor Caldwell, Councilwoman Kym Pine, Rep. Sharon Har, and the residents of Makakilo for helping to get this important road project back on track.

Senate District 20 Scores Big for State Construction Projects

I was also very pleased that Senate District 20 was able to secure \$91,750,000 in construction funding as part of the 2013 – 2015 budget. This funding will go toward improving our roads, university, schools, community groups, National Guard, and harbor. Here's a rundown of those projects:

- Kualaka'i Parkway Extension – Kapolei Parkway to Roosevelt Ave. - \$15,001,000
- H-1 Westbound PM Contraflow Lane - \$15 million
- H-1 Kunia Interchange Improvements - \$780,000
- University of Hawai'i - West Oahu Allied Health Building - \$11.8 million
- University of Hawai'i - West Oahu Road B - UHWO to Kualaka'i Parkway – \$3.5 million
- East Kapolei High School - \$5 million
- East Kapolei Middle School - \$3 million
- Seagull Schools Childcare Center Grant in Aid (Kapolei Elementary School) - \$1.2 million
- Kapolei Community Development Corp. Grant in Aid (Heritage Center) - \$1,150,000
- Mauka Lani Elementary Electrical Upgrades - \$700,000
- Army Aviation Support Facility - \$31,219,000
- Kalaeloa Barbers Point Harbor New Fuel Pier - \$3 million
- Kalaeloa Barbers Point Harbor Turning Basin and Entrance Channel - \$400,000



Energy and Environment Committee Wraps Up Session Work

I just completed my 5th session as the Chair of the Senate's Energy and Environment Committee. This year we passed several good pieces of legislation that will serve our community well. Here's a brief overview of several of those bills:

- **SB 1087** – this bill is HUGE! It sets up a Green Infrastructure Financing Program that will help us leverage private investment to assist lower and middle income folks in purchasing solar PV and other energy efficiency improvements through very low interest loans, which they would pay back on their electricity bill.
- **SB 19** – this bill will clarify the law to allow renters and commercial tenants to also gain access to the benefits of lowering their electricity bills through solar PV. This will greatly benefit the residents and businesses of Kalaheo who are faced with a steep increase in electricity costs that was recently announced by the Navy.
- **SB 1133** – this bill will close a loophole in our state's deposit beverage container program ("bottle law") that currently allows some energy drinks to evade this important recycling program.
- **HB 899** – this bill will restore the exemption for the deposit beverage container special fund from the Department of Budget and Finance's Central Services Assessment fee. This fee drains \$3 million per year from this fund. This exemption will help the Department of Health avoid raising the 1.5 cent administrative fee placed on beverages.
- **HB 988** – this bill will make funding for Hawai'i Wildlife Center a permissible use of the environmental response revolving fund (barrel tax). The Hawai'i Wildlife Center is dedicated to rehabilitating wild birds from throughout the Hawai'i archipelago that have been affected by oil spills.

Kanehili Hawaiian Homestead Classic Car Show a Success

I presented a certificate from the State Senate in recognition of the 2013 Kanehili Hawaiian Homestead Classic Car Show on April 20th. The residents of Kanehili, the newest of the homesteads in Kapolei, understand the importance of a close-knit community of neighbors that help each other in times of need and join together to create a safe place to live. Since 2009 when the first 'ohana moved in, the Kanehili homesteaders have been determined to be united for the common goal of an improved quality of life. Neighborhood security watches, Christmas parades, community yard sales and, now, a Classic Car Show, provide opportunities for every Kanehili resident to know their neighbors and participate in their homestead. The 2013 Classic Car show was the vision of Kanehili's own, Uncle Jarry Galdeira and Jodi Akau. The goal of the fun and engaging event was to raise funds for sports equipment for the soon-to-be-built Kanehili Park. With food booths and entertainment, along with street rods and hot rods looking their best and cruising the streets, the Kanehili Hawaiian Homestead 2013 Classic Car Show was a big success.



Senator Gabbard presented his good friend Leon Siu with an Honorary Certificate from the State Senate on April 2nd to recognize Christian Heritage Week in Hawai'i. The week, April 1 – 7, 2013, is designed to reflect upon and celebrate the significant role that the Christian church has played over the past 193 years in Hawai'i and serve as encouragement to motivate greater spiritual acts in the daily lives of Christian followers in Hawai'i.



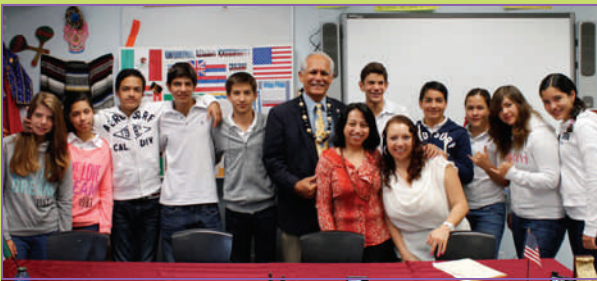
Senator Gabbard met with Lauren Michele of Sacramento in his office on April 11, 2013. Lauren, the owner of Policy in Motion, shared her ideas for smart growth communities, sustainability, and effective transportation planning with Senator Gabbard.

Bill Passes to Honor U.S. Senator Dan Inouye and U.S. Rep. Patsy Mink

I introduced SB 614 this session to honor the late U.S. Senator Dan Inouye and U.S. Rep. Patsy Mink. The bill passed the Legislature with a \$500,000 appropriation and now awaits the Governor's signature. The bill directs the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to commission a permanent, three-dimensional work of art to portray the life, vision, accomplishments, impact, and legacy of these extraordinary leaders of our state. These works of arts will serve as an inspiration for current and future generations.

Island Pacific Academy Making its Mark

I had a chance to visit Island Pacific Academy (IPA) in Kapolei on April 15th. I spoke with 8th-grade exchange students visiting Hawai'i from the Instituto Thomas Jefferson campus, a private school in Queretaro, Mexico which promotes international relations in their curriculum. Part of the two-week exchange program was to give students the opportunity to practice their second language of English and learn about the culture and life in Hawai'i. I also presented a certificate from the State Senate to the IPA team for being named a finalist in the 2013 STEM (science, technology, engineering and math education) Week of the Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools Science Fair competition. Four outstanding IPA students, Jonathan Spangler-Sakata, Ling-Yi Tsiang, Megan Bobilin, and Meghan Rodick, were chosen for their innovative science fair projects to advance to the next level of competition at the Hawai'i State Science and Engineering Fair. Beyond future employability, programs in STEM also provide an invaluable experience to students by building a sense of self-confidence and igniting a lifelong passion for learning. To recognize and encourage student and teacher participation, STEM Week is a multi-day celebration of STEM education outreach across Hawai'i, led by the Hawai'i Academy of Science and supported by the Hawai'i State Department of Land and Natural Resources. Major components include an industry exposition focusing on STEM career and job opportunities and a banquet featuring a STEM Institutional Awards ceremony. The goals of STEM Week are to unify the educational community while enhancing and sustaining STEM programs in Hawai'i. IPA, since its establishment in 2004, has been successful in providing children with an academically challenging and developmentally appropriate educational experience led by talented and caring teachers in a nurturing and supportive learning environment.



Exchange students from Queretaro, Mexico



IPA teacher, Michelle Bradley and STEM finalists

Varona Village Roads Finally Get Repaved

On March 9th I sent an email to Chris Takashige, the Director of the City's Department of Design and Construction requesting that he look into putting the roads in Varona Village on the City's comprehensive list for repaving. A few days later on March 12th, I received a response from him stating that he was moving forward to add these roads to the list.

I'm used to the wheels of government turning painfully slowly. Imagine my shock and surprise when I drove down Renton Road on April 16, on a smooth, no/pothole road. I admit I was smiling ear to ear, and actually turned around and retraced my driving route, just to make sure I wasn't hallucinating. Mahalo nui to Chris and the Mayor for a job well done.



Senator Gabbard with gift box of organic Ma'o Farms veggies from Office of Hawaiian Affairs given to Legislators on Opening Day, January 16th.



Senators Will Espero, David Ige, Michelle Kidani, Maile Shimabukuro, Clarence Nishihara and Gabbard on Sine Die (last day of session), May 2nd.



TeenPact Leadership School students visited the State Capitol on March 20th to visit with legislators, and dropped by Senator Gabbard's office. TeenPact is a dynamic, hands-on leadership program for Christian students, whose mission is to train youth to understand the political process, value their liberty, defend their Christian faith, and engage the culture at a time in their lives when, typically, they do not care about such things.

Senator Gabbard and his fellow State Senators recognized Dr. Doris Ching and Dr. Amy Agbayani on March 28th at the Capitol for their tireless efforts to increase Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) voices in higher education and for enlightening the nation on the contributions of AAPI higher education professionals. Pictured center front with lei: Dr. Doris Ching (left) and her husband Wilbert Ching; and Dr. Amy Agbayani (right) and her partner Mr. Gustafson.



Senator Gabbard joined fellow senators at the State Capitol on April 2nd to recognize and congratulate Wai'anae High School's Searider Productions Digital Media Program for their achievement in being designated as an Apple Distinguished Program.



On his visit to Hawai'i, Micronesia Consul-General Kandhi Elieisar (center) was delighted to visit the State Capitol on March 25th and meet with Hawai'i lawmakers, including Senator Gabbard and Senator Gilbert Kahele.



Minister Jung-Tzer Lin (Taiwan Executive Yuan Minister without Portfolio and Governor of Taiwan) and his delegation were welcomed at the Capitol on April 15th by Senator Gabbard and his colleagues on the Transportation and International Affairs (TIA) Committee. Minister Lin addressed the significance of strengthening the existing 20-year sister-state relationship between Taiwan and Hawai'i. Left to right: Director General V.C. Chu (Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Honolulu), Senator Will Espero, Senator Kalani English, Minister Jung-Tzer Lin, Senator Gabbard, Senator Gilbert Kahele, and Li-Ling Lin (Section Chief, Taiwan Provisional Government).



Senator Gabbard joined his colleagues in honoring and recognizing the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (front row) on their 70th Anniversary on March 25th at the Capitol.