

## Aloha e Friends,

Summer is here and I hope you and your 'ohana are well and enjoying the more laid-back season... I know I am... Still, there never seems to be a dull moment and there's a lot happening.

Please don't hesitate to 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. I also invite you to follow me on social media: [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

*Mike*

## AMVETS Hawai'i HEAL Summit

Sadly, as many of you know, our veterans suffer greatly from PTSD, suicide, and a host of other issues. At the end of June, [AMVETS Hawai'i](#), in collaboration with the Department of Veterans Affairs, held a 3-day summit in Ewa Beach, called HEAL, to shine a spotlight on the need to help support the well-being of local veterans. HEAL, which stands for Healthcare, Education, Advocacy, Legislation—was designed to provide attendees with up-to-date education on promising innovations in mental health, gender-based healthcare, the military transition experience, along with the latest updates on legislation and advocacy that impacts service members and veterans.

On June 25, I was honored to be invited to recognize some of the key individuals who play a role in these services. I presented Honorary Certificates on behalf of the Hawai'i State Senate to: Cigale C. Lemieux, Sgt, USAF Headquarters, Pacific Air Force, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam; Janet Covington, Clinic Dir., Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Child & Family Service; Rolly Alvarado Spark

Matsunaga VA Clinic, Center for Development & Civic Engagement; and Donovan Lazarus, State Commander AMVETS Department of Hawai'i. It was truly an honor to meet active duty and retired service members, family members of veterans, caregivers for disabled veterans, mental health professionals, and organizations that support the military and veterans. BTW, my dad was in the Air Force for 20 years. I tried to enlist in the Navy in 1965 but was turned down because of a severe surfing injury I was recovering from.

## Concerts are Back!

Jack Johnson, one of my fav musicians, announced two concerts at the Waikiki Shell, a benefit for the [Kōkua Hawai'i Foundation](#), with support from good friends Paula Fuga and Tavana. All net proceeds earned from Jack Johnson's Hawai'i shows will be donated to the Kōkua Hawai'i Foundation to support environmental education in the schools and communities of Hawai'i. In addition, \$2 from every ticket will be directed to carbon offset projects on the islands. Sounds worthwhile to me.



(Pictured L-R: Sen. Mike Gabbard; Cigale C. Lemieux, Sgt, USAF Headquarters, Pacific Air Force, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam; Rolly Alvarado Spark Matsunaga VA Clinic, Center for Development & Civic Engagement; Janet Covington, Clinic Dir., Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Child & Family Service; Donovan Lazarus, State Commander AMVETS Department of Hawai'i .)

## COMMITTEE CHAIR

AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

### MEMBER

- ◆ Judiciary
- ◆ Government Operations

### DISTRICT 20

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

## Listen-Story Virtual Meeting:

August 20, 9-10am

# COMMUNITY UPDATES

## Listen-Story Meeting:

ICYMI, I hosted my Virtual Community Listen Story on July 9. Big mahalos to our special guest speaker, Lori Kahikina, Executive Director and CEO of the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation ([HART](#)), for the update on rail. Mahalo to everyone who came to the event and helped to make it a success! [Visit my YouTube page to view a recording of the meeting.](#) My next one will be Aug. 20, 9-10am so SAVE THE DATE!

## Roosevelt Blvd. Opening July 31! Yay!!!

The [HUNT Kalealoa](#) construction team is still on target for opening the Kamokila/FDR intersection and two lanes of FDR on July 31. Contractors have been working overtime 7 days a week to complete construction at the [Franklin D. Roosevelt Ave. and Kamokila Blvd. intersection.](#) Curbs, gutters, and sidewalks are being put in along the 1,300-foot stretch of Kamokila Blvd. There will be sidewalks on both sides of the road. The Kamokila extension will also have two travel lanes going in both directions with bike lanes continuing both sides of the roadway.

## Farrington Highway Widening

I was pleased to receive a letter from the Governor informing me that he was releasing \$135 million in funding for CIP or Capitol Improvement Project funds that I requested to widen [Farrington Highway.](#) The project will extend three miles from Kapolei Golf Course to Ft. Weaver Rd. The widening will add a center left-turn lane and will include new sidewalks, bike lanes, bridges, culverts, and major utility relocations. Estimated construction is set to begin October 2023, with estimated completion in July 2025.

## District Reapportionment

Every 10 years after the census, the district maps are redrawn, based on population shifting numbers. All 76 seats in the Legislature are up for grabs—25 Senate and the 51 House seats. I first got elected in 2006, serving District 19, which included all of Campbell Industrial and about 1/3 of Ko Olina. During the 2010 Census, it became District 20, where we lost Campbell Industrial Park, Ko Olina and Honokai Hale. The new district formed as a result of the 2020 Census is [District 21](#), which comprises a portion of Fernandez Village in Ewa, Kapolei, Makakilo, and Kalaeloa.

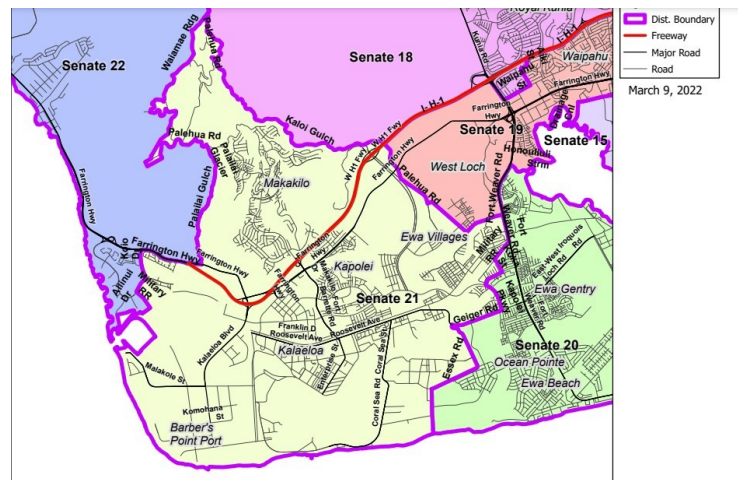
We lost West Loch and Waipahu and added Honokai Hale neighborhood and Campbell Industrial Park. District 21 also includes the 41st, 42nd, 43rd, and 44th House of Representative Districts.

## Voting Deadlines

Based on your address, this year you'll receive a mail ballot packet by July 26, which will consist of a ballot, ballot secrecy sleeve, and a prepaid postage return ballot envelope. Voters with special needs may request an electronic ballot through the [Voter Registration Application](#) or by contacting their [County Elections Division.](#) The registration deadline for the Primary Election is August 3, and the elections take place on the 13th. The deadline for the General Election is October 21 and Election Day is Nov. 8.

## Returning Your Ballot

You may return your voted ballot by mail or in person at a designated place of deposit within your county. Voted ballots must be received by your County Elections Division by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. In Nov 2020 thousands of voters who wanted to cast their votes in-person on Election Day waited for hours in long lines outside Kapolei Hale. That was the year we switched to all-mail voting and only had eight in-person voting locations across the islands. This year, I'm told we're more prepared. Voter Service Centers offer in-person voting and are open 10 days before and on Election Day. Locations and hours will be announced closer to the election.



**The new district formed as a result of the 2020 Census is District 21, which comprises a portion of Fernandez Village in Ewa, Kapolei, Makakilo, and Kalaeloa.**

# COMMUNITY UPDATES

## Ho'omaka Marketplace Groundbreaking

After waiting 12 long years, on June 22, [Ho'omaka Marketplace](#) finally broke ground! Ho'omaka means "to begin, to set forth on a new endeavor." It can also refer to a keiki's first tooth or a fresh blade of grass. It is with this freshness and excitement that the marketplace begins, offering simple convenience to make our lives on the Westside a little easier to navigate. I was honored to participate in this momentous occasion.

The 45,737- square-foot retail development will be located in the heart of the thriving hub of Kapolei, across from Ka Makana Ali'i Shopping Center, Ho'opili Residential Community, at the corner of Kualaka'i Parkway and Kapolei Parkway, just down the road from UH West O'ahu. It will also be home to a 1,200 square foot facility for the Kapolei Community Development Corporation ([KCDC](#)), which will be an important gathering place and resource for the neighborhood. KCDC is a 501C3 nonprofit started in 2008 to serve the Kapolei homesteads in the areas of community, culture, education, and partnerships. Ho'omaka Marketplace features an 18,000 square foot Longs Drugs, a Chick-fil-A eatery, HELE Gas station, and 7-Eleven. It has store spaces available for rent and provides opportunities to create jobs on the West Side. It will also help alleviate traffic congestion in other parts of Kapolei. Revenues will support Kapolei Homesteads, including the [Kapolei Heritage Center](#) and other Homestead programs that support beneficiaries. The complex is expected to be completed in 2023. Alohacongrats KCDC!

## Tax Refund Check

You've probably heard that single filers and head of household tax filers with an adjusted gross income under \$100,000 will get \$300 for each exemption. Single and head of household tax filers with an adjusted gross income of \$100,000 or more will get \$100 for each exemption. Married couples filing jointly with an adjusted gross income under \$200,000 will get \$300 for each exemption. Married couples filing jointly with an adjusted gross income of \$200,000 or more will get \$100 for each exemption. Married couples filing separately with a combined adjusted gross income under \$200,000 will get \$300 for each exemption. Married couples filing separately with a



Sen. Gabbard participated in the Ho'omaka Marketplace Ground O'o Ceremony, East Kapolei, on June 22. (Pictured L-R: William Aila-Dir. of DHHL, Sen. Kurt Fevella, Aunty Shirley Swinney-KCDA Founder, Rep. Sharon Har, Gov. David Ige.)

combined adjusted gross income of \$200,000 or more will get \$100 for each exemption. by December 31, if you want to get your refund check.

If you received a tax refund by direct deposit for your 2021 tax return, you'll get this payment deposited in the same bank account. If not, you can expect to receive a paper check. Taxpayers who submit their 2021 state tax

return by July 1 and are set to receive their refunds electronically can expect a direct deposit by the end of September. Residents who file by July 1 and are set to receive a paper check can expect their refunds by the end of October. Residents who file their 2021 tax returns after July 1 can expect a longer wait. Make sure that you file by December 31, if you want to get your refund.



Sen. Gabbard was honored to share this moment with his former Honolulu City Council staffer Patty Kahanamoku Teruya, DHHL O'ahu Commissioner at the Ho'omaka Marketplace Ground O'o Ceremony, East Kapolei, June 22. Aloha-Congrats to KCDC Kapolei Community Development Corporation.

# LEGISLATIVE NEWS

## Governor Ige Vetoed 26 of 343 Bills Passed by the Legislature

Depending on how closely you follow Hawai'i politics, you may know that the Gov. vetoed 26 of 343 bills we passed last session. Despite the often-arduous journey to get a bill passed through the House and the Senate, the Governor has the last say on whether a bill will make it across the finish line. Of course, the legislature can choose to override his veto by a 2/3 majority vote. However, that didn't happen this time. After the Gov. announced the bills he intended to veto, he had until July 12 to change his mind...

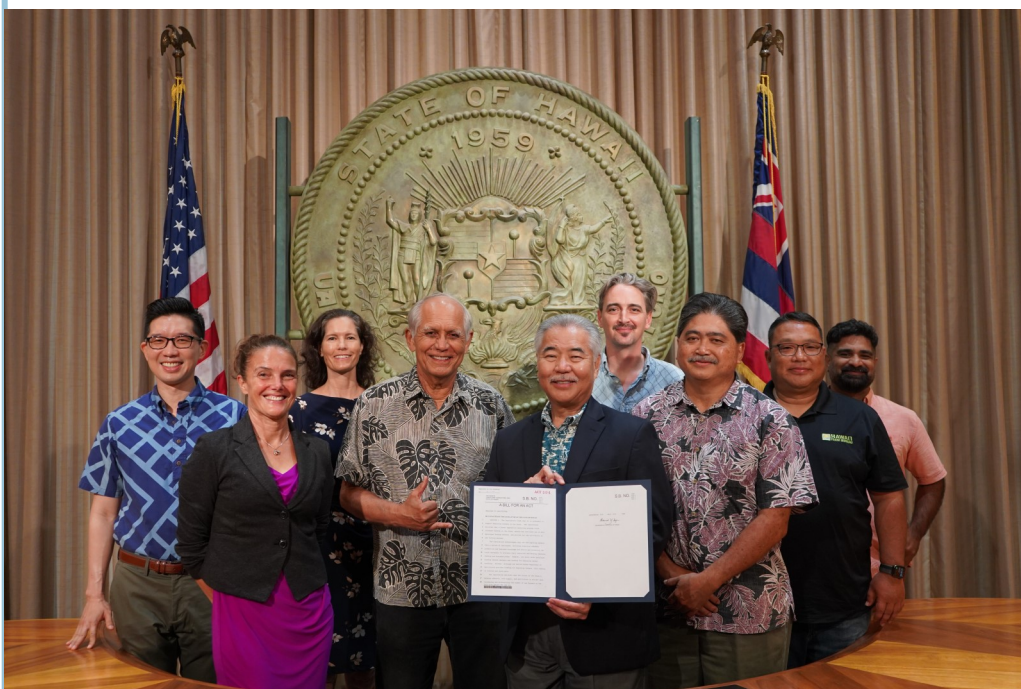
While I was hugely disappointed at the [Healthy Soils Program SB 2989](#) that I introduced being vetoed, it gives us a chance to go back and possibly tweak the bill for next session. This bill appropriated \$500K for a Statewide assessment of best practices for soil health and would've helped farmers with the tools and knowledge to implement and put these healthy soil practices into place. Over the years I've talked with many young people who are considering becoming farmers, and one consistent theme I've heard is their desire to take care of the land properly—malama 'āina, and to be good stewards. I was pleased to learn he backpedaled on a couple other bills important to Ag: [SB2218](#) and [SB 2990](#).

## Let's Celebrate Ag in Hawai'i

I was stoked to be part of the bill signing ceremony on July 18 for two bills I introduced, along with my colleagues and partners who collaborated with me on the bills... first is the [Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program \(SB 3197 ACT 304\)](#). It's been a long time comin' but I'm pleased to report that after working on this bill with the [Hawai'i Farmers Union United](#), the [Hawai'i Farm Bureau](#) and the [Hawai'i Department of Agriculture](#), it finally passed. The bill appropriates \$300,000 to the HDOA to establish and implement a farmer apprentice mentoring program in order to increase farming in the State, ensure the continued use of well-developed farming methods, and provide for the cultivation of new farming methods. The average age of our farmers in Hawai'i is 61. We need young people to consider farming as a noble profession, no less noble than being a doctor, lawyer, or business person. And we need to do all we can to support young farmers. This bill is a step in the right direction.

The Governor also signed [SB 3004](#) into law as [ACT 302: the Compost Reimbursement Program](#). This establishes and appropriates funds for a compost reimbursement program within the HDOA and allows for one full-time permanent compost reimbursement program manager position. According to the USDA, 30-40% of the food in the US is wasted. In 2010,

food waste corresponded to 133 billion pounds and \$161 billion dollars! One way to reduce food waste is to compost it, which also leads to environmental benefits, such as reducing and eliminating chemical fertilizers; reducing methane emissions, promoting higher yields of ag crops; aiding reforestation and sequestering carbon. This makes permanent a three-year pilot program established in 2018. An appropriation of \$945,000 was made for the program, plus \$55,000 for the management position for the program. With an operating budget of almost \$17B for FY23 and only ½ of 1% (\$49M) going to HDOA, we've got to put our money where our mouth is, if we're serious about doubling our local food production by 2030, and decreasing the 85-90% of the food we import each year, at a cost of about \$3B annually.



July 18, in the Governor's ceremonial room, Sen. Gabbard attended a bill signing ceremony for SB3197 and SB3004, two bills that will help small farmers in Hawai'i. (Pictured L-R: Sen. Stanley Chang; Rep. Amy Perruso; Rep. Lisa Marten; Sen. Gabbard; Gov. Ige; Hunter Heavilin, HFUU; Morris Atta, HDOA; Brian Miyamoto, HFB; Saleh Azizi, HFUU.)