



Aloha e Friends,

I hope you and your 'ohana are well... Time is flying by. Just a reminder that our next legislative session begins January 17. If you have any ideas on bills that need to be introduced, let me know. As always, please contact me at (808) 586-6830 or 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:

[Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) @SenatorMikeGabbard, [Twitter](#) @SENNIKEGABBARD, and [YouTube](#) @SenatorMikeGabbard. Also, if you'd like to be added to my mail list, you can send an email to sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov with "mail list" in the subject line.

Best wishes to you and your 'ohana.

COMMITTEE CHAIR

AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

MEMBER

- ◆ Judiciary
- ◆ Government Operations

DISTRICT 21

Kapolei, Makakilo, Kalaeloa, and portions of:
Fernandez Village, Ewa

Listen Story Community Meeting

Please join me at my next Listen Story Community meeting on Saturday, November 4, from 9am-10am at the [Kapolei High School](#) Teachers' Lounge. We'll have a Guest Speaker followed by District 21 Community Updates. There'll be time for Q & A. You'll also have the option to attend virtually. Please email or call my office for a link to the zoom meeting. You can view this and all the past recordings of Listen Story meetings on my [YouTube channel](#).



Gandhi Celebration

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."- Mahatma Gandhi

On October 1, my Chief of Staff, Meg Turner, presented on behalf of myself and the Hawai'i State Senate of the 32nd Legislature, as well as the House of Representatives, an Honorary Certificate to Dr. Raj Kumar to honor and commend the [Gandhi International Institute for Peace](#) upon the celebration of the 18th International Day of Non-Violence and Mahatma Gandhi Day.

My Chief of Staff, Meg Turner presented on my behalf an Honorary Certificate to Dr. Raj Kumar, President IAFC, Hawai'i Chapter & Founder & President Emeritus GIIP-Gandhi International Institute for Peace, to honor and commend the GIIP Oct. 1.

In Hawai'i, the GIIP was founded by Dr. Raj Kumar, Ph.D., President- IAFC, Hawai'i Chapter & Founder & President Emeritus GIIP-Gandhi International Institute for Peace, with a mission to provide information, consultation, education, and training to resolve conflict in a non-violent manner. Dr. Kumar's initial efforts resulted in the Hawai'i State Legislature unanimously adopting Senate Bill 332 to designate October 2nd of each year as "Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi Day," a day of recognition and observance. On April 9, 2015,

Governor David Ige signed the bill into law as Act 5, making Hawai'i the first state to so honor Gandhi. We're grateful for the efforts of GIIP to serve our state by championing the cause of non-violence and reminding us of the true Aloha Spirit. We wish GIIP continued success in the fulfillment of their mission to honor the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi, while promoting a culture of global peace, tolerance, and understanding.

Hawai'i Tropical Fruit Growers Conference

On October 5, I spoke at the 33rd Annual [Hawai'i Tropical Fruit Growers](#) Conference, at the Neal Blaisdell Center in Honolulu, and gave a 2023 Agriculture Legislative Summary. The conference was geared toward farmers, educators, orchard managers and proponents of sustainable agriculture, and was open to the public. The theme was "Security Starts with the Soil." Many mahalos to Ken Love, Executive Director, and Mark Suiso, President, for inviting me to speak. I was honored to have been part of the afternoon program.



Honored to share the 2023 Agriculture Legislative Summary at the 33rd Annual Hawai'i Tropical Fruit Growers Conference, at the Blaisdell Center, Oct. 5.

AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT UPDATES

Kaua'i Site Visits

During the first week of September, I spent time touring various agricultural sites on the North Shore of Kaua'i. As Chair of the Senate Agriculture and Environment Committee, the best part of my job is getting out to meet and talk story with producers across the state. Hearing, seeing, and feeling the passion in their hearts often brings tears to my eyes. Here's a brief run-down of the sites I visited:



Cacao beans being dried in the sun at Moloa'a Organica'a - wonderful family farm owned by Ned and Marta Whitlock on Kaua'i, Sept. 3.



Moloa'a Organica'a on Kaua'i, Sept. 3 (Pictured L-R: with Anny Bruch, Hawaii Farmers Union United, Kauai Chapter VP, Ned Whitlock, Moloa'a Organica'a, Natalie Urminka, HFUU Kaua'i President, Ueli Muller, BAUM Farms, Nandi and John Wooten's Produce of Kaua'i, Marta Whitlock, and Roland Parker, HFUU Secretary.)

run by Ned and Marta Whitlock. Ned and Marta began organic farming on 28.5 acres with a vision of restoring the land and providing their growing family and the people of the Kaua'i with organic food and exotic tropical fruit. In

2002, the land had been fallow for 20 years with a prior history of papaya, pineapple and sugar cane cultivation. In time, the Whitlocks gradually became known by locals and tourists as one of the



With Yoshi L'Hote of 'Aina Ho'okupu O Kilauea on Kaua'i, Sept. 3.

most consistent growers of high-quality organic produce and exotic tropical fruit on the Garden Isle. Next stop was Kilauea Community Agricultural Center, 'Aina Ho 'okupu O



I was amazed at the contented look on this mom's face at 'Aina Ho'okupu O Kilauea on Kaua'i, Sept. 3.

Kilauea, run by Yoshito L'Hote, Executive Director. The Center contributes to island food security and a healthy, stable, balanced local agricultural economy by providing valuable productive agricultural land at low or no cost to farmers; providing low or no cost community garden plots;



Phil Davies proudly holds up some freshly picked turmeric at Kailani Farms, on Kaua'i, Sept. 4.

operating Kilauea Community Farm, producing produce at low or no cost to community members in need; and, providing a stable, safe, and permanent Farmer Market facility for ongoing direct-to-consumer produce market development. I enjoyed learning about this Center and spending time with Yoshi.

The next day, I visited **Kailani Farms**, owned and run by Phil Davies. While walking with his family in Kilauea after Hurricane Iniki, Phil found a 100-dollar bill which he used to make his first seed purchase. He named his farm after his daughter Sophia Kailani. He started growing a variety of organic greens and vegetables which he sold at a couple of restaurants and farmers markets on the North Shore of Kaua'i. (Continued pg. 3)



With Phil Davies in his turmeric field at Kailani Farms, on Kaua'i, Sept. 4.

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(Continued from pg. 2) He eventually decided to focus on salad greens, ginger and turmeric, slowly and steadily growing his business from a few short rows to 30 acres today. Phil now produces greens for many of the restaurants and health food stores on the island. His ginger and turmeric are sold both locally and across the U.S. and Canada. Phil follows Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) and is Certified Organic. He works closely with the [Hawaii Farm Bureau](#), [Hawaii Farmers Union United](#), [UH College of Tropical Agriculture](#), [Department of Health](#), [East Kauai Soil and Water Conservation District](#) and [Natural Resources Conservation Service](#) to make sure he's involved in all aspects of farm related food safety and strives to grow his crops with the most environmentally friendly, safe and sustainable methods available.



Angelina McRoberts of Naaja Organics on Kaua'i, Sept. 4.

Next was **Naaja Organics**, founded in 2020 by Angelina McRoberts, who runs this small orchard in Kilauea on a 12-acre parcel of land. Unfortunately, Angelina was dealing with some nasty CRBs (Coconut Rhinoceros Beetles) so we met to discuss possible solutions.

My next stop was [Malama Kaua'i](#). Run by Megan Fox, Executive Director for the past 10 years, Malama Kaua'i is planning to scale its food aggregation and distribution efforts with a new food hub it's building in Moloa'a in partnership with the Moloa'a Irrigation Cooperative, a hui of 70 farms on more than 600 acres. The two-story, \$3M Moloa'a 'Āina Center will have a commercial kitchen, cold storage, processing



equipment and a marketing office. The Cooperative received a grant from the state in 2016 to purchase land to build the food hub. The 3,490-square-foot center will be Kaua'i's first food hub. What is a food hub, you may ask?

Food hubs help small farms by offering a combination of production, distribution, and marketing services. There are an estimated 400 food hubs in the U.S., (14 in Hawai'i) with more popping up all the time. Food hubs help connect



Moloa'a 'ĀINA Food Hub at Malama Kaua'i with Megan Fox, Executive Director and Rose Hayes, Project Mgr., Moloa'a 'ĀINA Center, Sept. 4.

producers (farmers and ranchers) with consumers and institutional buyers (restaurants, hospitals, schools...) They help farmers gain access to larger markets so they can focus more on farming and less on marketing, distribution, etc.



Trying my hand at cracking mac nuts with Angelina McRoberts, Naaja Organics on Kaua'i, Sept. 4.

The new facility is scheduled to be complete this month.

My next stop on Tuesday was Johnny Gordines' [Tropical Flower Express](#) in Kapa'a, Kaua'i. Over 25 years ago, Johnny and his wife, Theresa, switched from raising

farm animals to growing flowers on their two-acre farm. They were inspired by their neighbor, Howard Yamamoto, one of the pioneers in raising tropical flowers in Hawai'i, who said that flowers would be the next big thing. Gordines' farm sells at farmers markets and, through [Kauaiflowers.com](#), (continued pg. 4)



Admiring Johnny Gordines' flowers at Tropical Flower Express in Kapa'a, Kaua'i, Sept. 4.



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Continued from pg. 3.) ships out about 100 boxes a week during busy periods like Christmas, Valentine’s Day and Mother’s Day. For the past two decades, Gordines has watched the floriculture and nursery products develop into one of Hawai’i’s largest ag industries, bringing in \$67.4 million in revenue in 2015.

My last stop was [Common Ground](#), run by Farm Manager, John Parziale. John has practiced organic, ecological agriculture on Kaua’i for 23 years. He’s taught permaculture and sustainable agriculture in Hawai’i, the mainland, and Europe. The type of regenerative and ecological agriculture he does is called “successional agro-forestry.” This is the integration of crops and animals with trees. Common Ground serves as a lab environment that demonstrates in real time how the farm of the future can look, feel, and taste. This farm blew me away with their agro-forestry project and plans for the future.

Hawai’i State Senate Called into Special Session

On August 21-22, the Hawai’i State Senate confirmed the judicial appointments of Jordon J. Kimura to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit; and Erika E. Ireland, Robert J. Brown, and David M. Hayakawa to the District Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawai’i. The First Circuit is located on the island of O’ahu. All four judges are graduates of the UH Mānoa William S. Richardson School of Law. As the Vice Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I sat on their Committee hearings and feel confident that they’ll do a great job.

Jordan J. Kimura has been confirmed to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawai’i. He is currently a co-managing partner at McCorriston Miller Mukai MacKinnon LLP where he focuses on civil litigation and estate planning.

Erika E. Ireland has been confirmed to the District Court of the First Circuit after serving as a Per Diem Judge to the same court for two years.

Robert J. Brown has been confirmed to the District Court of the First Circuit. He has been employed as a civil litigation associate with Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher since 2018, and also serves as a Per Diem Judge for the Family Court of the First Circuit.

David M. Hayakawa has been confirmed to the District Court



Common Ground Farm, Sept. 7. (Pictured with Jen Luck, CEO, John Parziale, Farm Mgr., and Adam Watten, Dir. of Food Systems.)

of the First Circuit. Since 2012, he has managed his own criminal defense law practice, the Law Office of David Hayakawa. Judge Hayakawa also has experience in family law and serving as a deputy public defender for the Office of the Public Defender for the State of Hawai’i.



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