



## The Senate

STATE CAPITOL  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

Senate Minority Leader Kurt Fevella  
Opening Day Remarks  
30th Legislature  
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Thank you, Senate President. I'm still nervous; even though I talk to a lot of you guys all the time, I'm still nervous in talking in front of you guys, but aloha and good morning. I just want to thank everyone here today for coming out to the State Capitol to join us on this Opening Day of the 2020 legislative session. First and foremost, I want to thank our heavenly father for his blessing upon me and my family every single day. I want to mahalo Senate President Ron Kouchi and Vice President Senator Michelle Kidani, Lieutenant Governor and your lovely wife, Jaime, and honored guests and my colleagues. I just want to share a little bit. When I first got here, I had a very open mind, I was willing to work, and I just want to thank all my colleagues, every single one, those that I had a lot of contact with and those I didn't have much contact with. It was a privilege and an honor working with everyone last session, and I really look forward in working this session with you guys the same way. I know I belong to 16 committees; I try very hard to be at every single one of them. That is my goal as serving to the state and also my community. But I just want to thank you guys all for opening up your hearts and minds, and giving me that aloha. Thank you, guys.

I'm also thankful every day, waking up in this beautiful State of Hawai'i that we call home, especially my hometown of 'Ewa Beach. I am grateful to stand here before you as the state senator, serving and representing my family and friends of District 19. I'd like to reassure you that we are focused and committed and assure that we're a better Hawai'i to implement beneficial and developmental programs and projects that benefit you, the people. We are the working people of Hawai'i, working long hours, laboring in every changing weather, sitting in traffic as we commute to work every day. Some of us have multiple jobs just to make ends meet. I want to let you know that I care, and I understand your everyday struggles. During this session, I'll make sure that the bills that we introduce will help each and every one of us here because one job should be enough.

Hawai'i is at a critical crossroads, and we all agree that Hawai'i should become energy-independent by the year 2045, but at what cost? This is what I share every day with my family and friends around the state. When our quality of life impact our public health and safety along killing our indigenous species, like our native bats, pollinating bees, and our environment and our ecosystem, we as legislators need to look closely in the process which we set forth to helping

our communities. It was really touching for me when my fifteen-year-old daughter who goes to Campbell High School—as you guys know, the most crowded school in the state—had wrote, “Who will take care of our aloha ‘āina if not we, the people? Until the last aloha ‘āina, I will not stop protecting my Hawai‘i.” When she wrote this, I didn’t have the chance to read it when she wrote this essay for one of her classes, and her teachers and her fellow students had spoken to me about it. Not everybody knows my daughter; I mean, she’s not like her dad (little bit more open-spoken), but she’s more reserved. So when I read this, it really touched my heart to know, not only are our kids worried about plastic straws and all the stuff that we have going on that we are battling here at this capitol, but also our environment and our ecosystem is very, very critical to these kids.

“I will not stop protecting my Hawai‘i.” What does that mean to us, guys? Every one of us here got into the position that we are in today, because we want to make sure that we protect our home where we love and we serve. And again, I would like to thank you all for just sharing and being with me through this session. All my colleagues here, it’s just a humbling experience for me to be here. Thank you, Senate President; again, thank you guys all here; thank you to all my colleagues. I look forward to working with you all and just making Hawai‘i a better place for everyone. Thank you and God bless.