



Water, Land, and Agriculture Committee Defers "Hokuli'a" Measure



A bill that had come to be known as the "Hokuli'a" bill, after a controversial development on the Big Island, was deferred in an April 6 meeting of the Senate Water, Land, and Agriculture Committee, of which Sen. J. Kalani English is a member. The bill, which the Honolulu

Star-Bulletin said would have meant "a potentially explosive change to state land-use policy," was opposed by environmentalists, who feared it would open Hawaii's agricultural lands to land speculators and developers.

Sen. J. Kalani English opposed the measure, which would have recognized existing luxury homes and other housing on agricultural land. "The bill would have undermined existing land use guidelines for Maui County, which I drafted when I was a member of the Maui County Council," he said. "We need to set strict standards for agricultural lands. Hawai'i cannot afford to lose agricultural land to luxury developments and private homes. This bill would have weakened standards already in place in Maui County."

The Hokuli'a is a projected luxury golf retreat near Kealahou Bay on the border between North Kona and South Kona. On March 14, 2006, a legal settlement was reached that would allow Hokuli'a developers to proceed with a 665-unit project. Under terms of the settlement, the developers agree to build affordable units, donate to community non-profit organizations, and build a connector road to ease traffic congestion.

"This issue is not going away," Sen. English said. "My fellow lawmakers and I will need to address the issue of agricultural land in Hawai'i. We need a clear definition of 'agricultural use,' and we need strict standards, to ensure that Hawaii's agriculture can thrive for generations to come."

Chair, Committee on Energy,
Environment,
and International Affairs
Committee Memberships:
Intergovernmental Affairs;
Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs;
Media, Arts, Science, and Technology;
Water, Land, and Agriculture;
Ways and Means



A Message From Kalani

Aloha,

We are moving into the critical final weeks of the 2006 Legislative Session. In the remaining weeks, joint House-Senate conference committees will look at measures that have been reviewed by both Houses and have been the subject of public testimony. During this final decision-making phase of the session, lawmakers benefit greatly from the testimony they have heard all session from members of the community.

J. Kalani English



Sen. English Addresses Chinese Trade Delegation on Investment and Business Opportunities

Trade between the United States and China is increasing rapidly, with trade volume between the two countries estimated at \$212 billion U.S. dollars in 2005 -- 86 times the figure in 1979, when the two countries established diplomatic ties. Plans for increased trade, and growing recognition of Hawaii's role in developing U.S.-China trade, brought a delegation of more than 150 Chinese business and government leaders to Honolulu on April 4 and 5. Sen. J. Kalani English, who chairs the Senate Energy, Environment, and International Affairs Committee, welcomed the delegation on behalf of the Senate. The Senator, a Mandarin speaker, offered a few words of welcome in Chinese, and then said: "Your visit to us is especially significant because of the many historical ties that exist between the people of Hawai'i and the people of China. For more than two centuries, Hawai'i's Chinese population has made a significant contribution to our growth, both economically and culturally. The first Chinese came to Hawai'i in the late 18th Century. Trade between China and Hawai'i came at the beginning of the 19th century, when a sandalwood trade grew up between our islands and South China."



Sen. English opened his remarks at the Hilton with a few words of welcome in Chinese.

"In those days the Chinese referred to Hawai'i as Tan Heung Shan, or Sandalwood Mountains. Ever since that initial contact, our people have enjoyed cordial relations. It is therefore highly appropriate that we build on that background by exploring further avenues for the development of our tourist economies."

Deputy Commerce Minister of China Ma Xiuhong told the meeting in that the U.S. has become one of the biggest investors in China, with some 50 thousand businesses and a total investment of \$50 billion dollars. National Tourism Administration Director Shao Qiwei said China was willing to strengthen cooperation with the United States on tourism, which has become "a new hotspot of consumption in China."

Sen. English said historical ties between Hawai'i and China meant Hawai'i was ideally suited as a trading partner with China. He cited areas of opportunity in tourism, science and technology, and agriculture. The Chinese government has only allowed two American states -- Nevada and Hawai'i -- to open tourism offices there.



The event was given extensive coverage by Chinese national media. In the photo above, a television reporter takes notes during Senator English's address.

Sen. English Introduces Resolution Aimed at Cultural Exchange Between Hawai'i and Ra'iatea



Sen. English and Ka'uhane Lee, Native Hawaiian cultural practitioner, testified about the historical importance of



The Marae, or sacred site, at Ra'iatea known as Taputapuatea draws thousands of visitors a year. Photo by Ka'uhane Lee.

SCR 83, a Senate Resolution “recognizing the importance of a cultural exchange between the people of Hawai'i and the island of Ra'iatea” and calling for a task force to facilitate the exchange, is moving through the Legislature. Sen. English, Ka'uhane Lee, and Sydney laukea, Research Assistant in Sen. English's office, all testified in support before an April 7 joint hearing of the House Committee on International Affairs and the House Committee on Tourism and Culture.

From Sydney laukea's written testimony: “Ra'iatea is the cultural, political, and social center of Polynesia. Around 1200 AD, voyagers set sail from this island and navigated towards Aotearoa (New Zealand) and Hawai'i. Today Ra'iatea, also known as Havaiki, is recognized as being the birthplace of Polynesian culture and the ancestral land of native Hawaiians... A cultural exchange between the people of Ra'iatea and Hawai'i will help to encourage cultural connections and recognizes common ancestry.”



Research Assistant Sydney laukea presented paddleboarder Chris Owens with a Senate Certificate in recognition of his 65--mile crossing from O'ahu to Kaua'i.



Tosie Elley, Chief Clerk of the Kosrae State Legislature in the Federated States of Micronesia, with Sen. English, Deputy Chief Clerk Andy Andrew, and Rep. Glenn Wakai.

\$2.3 Billion State Airport Plan Includes 6th District Upgrades

The State's \$2.3 billion State Airports Modernization Plan is slated to include a number of improvements to smaller airports around the State. The funds will be drawn from airport fees and federal monies -- not from the State's General Fund. At Sen. English's request, the Department of Transportation's Airports Division has provided the following figures:

Hāna: \$4,215,000, Part 139 improvements (to comply with Federal Aviation Administration certification standards)

Lāna'i: \$6,642,760, General Aviation Apron, Airport Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) Station, Security Access Control System improvements

Kalaupapa: \$4,215,000, Part 139 improvements

Moloka'i: \$17,474,845, Part 139 improvements, ARFF Station, Security Access Control, pavement repairs, Taxiway lighting, barrier removal.

Moloka'i Teacher is Named District Teacher of the Year



Linda Yonemura, who has taught business education at Moloka'i High School for more than 30 years, was honored with a Senate Certificate after being named the 2006 Maui District Teacher of the Year.



In a meeting with General Manager Amber Starr and Chief Operating Officer Dan Omer of Hāna Ranch, Sen. English reviews plans for the first phase of an affordable housing project on 100 acres of land donated by the Ranch. The plans show the first 43 housing units on a parcel of just under 15 acres, separated by a landscape buffer from the highway. The project, like many other construction projects in today's Hawai'i, is facing rapidly rising infrastructure costs.

How to Reach Us

Hawaii State Capitol, Room 205
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813
phone 808-587-7225
fax 808-587-7230

From Maui, toll free
984-2400 + 77225

From Moloka'i and Lāna'i,
toll free 1-800-468-4644 + 77225

E-mail:

senenglish@capitol.hawaii.gov

To receive this newsletter by e-mail, please send your request to vandercook@capitol.hawaii.gov.