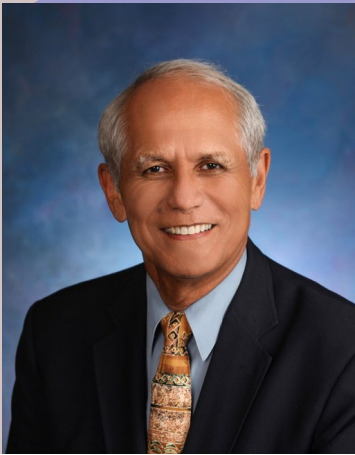


Senator Mike Gabbard



Aloha e Friends,

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to you and your ohana! Hope you're taking the time to kick back and relax with your family and friends. Our 2015 Legislative Session begins on January 21st. This will be my 7th session as Chair of the Energy and Environment Committee. I'll also continue as a member of the Judiciary & Labor Committee. My new committee assignments will be the Health, and Higher Education & the Arts committees. Let me know if you have any ideas for bills that you think could improve our community and state. As always, please contact me at 586-6830 or sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov if I can help you or your family in any way. Follow me on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/senmikegabbard> :)



COMMITTEE CHAIR

Energy & Environment

MEMBER

Health

Judiciary & Labor

Higher Education & the Arts

District 20

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

Kapolei Region Growing Rapidly

Kapolei Magazine recently updated projected growth numbers and demographics for the Kapolei Region. They obtained the data from Plasch Econ Pacific LLC and the U.S. Census. The Kapolei Region is comprised of the 96706 and 96707 zip codes, which include: Ewa Beach, Kapolei, Ko Olina, Makakilo, Kalaeloa, and Campbell Industrial Park.

"Listen Story" Meeting

My next "Listen Story" meeting will be held January 24th at the Ewa Mahiko District Park meeting room from 9am to 10am.

Here are some highlights:

- **Population:** In 2015 the population will be 112,440 and in 2035 it will be 168,940.
- **Demographics:** Average Household Size is 3.43; Median Age is 31.9; Nearly 62% have some college; Ethnicity - 26.8 Filipino, 18.6% White, 9.3% Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, and 5.7% Japanese); and Median Household Income is \$83,000.
- **Housing:** In 2015 the number of homes will be 34,910 and in 2035 there will be 58,110.
- **Jobs:** In 2015 there will be 62,660 and in 2035 there will be 103,430 jobs.



Community-Based Solar Key to Our Clean Energy Future

I'll be reintroducing a bill to establish a community-based solar program, which would direct the electric utilities to develop a community-based renewable energy contract for their customers. Last session, I introduced SB 2934. While close to the finish line, unfortunately, the bill didn't make it.

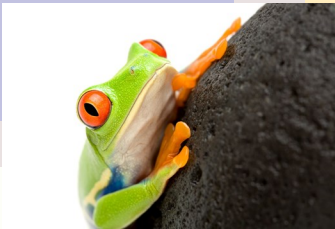
This legislation would have allowed utility customers, such as homeowners, renters, businesses, and non-profits to collectively own or lease a solar array where they generate electricity, and in return they would get a credit on their electricity bill. These projects make it easier for the utilities to interconnect to the grid, and they allow anyone to more easily benefit from solar power. This is great for folks in condos that don't have adequate roof space, or people who have shaded roofs, or who live on saturated circuits. You may know, UH Manoa is facing a deficit of over \$30 million. Community solar is a viable option that they are now looking at to greatly reduce their electricity costs.

An added plus: in a community solar program, PV panels are installed at an off-site location that could be many miles from where a person lives. This allows us all to help with circuit saturation by focusing new PV on the least-used circuits. One example of this program in action is an 858 kW system near the Garfield County Airport in Rifle Colorado – where 3,575 panels are owned by Jimmy's Pizza, Montessori School, and various families and individuals.

Kapolei Fairgrounds Slated for Development

Looks like the Kapolei Fairgrounds is slated to be developed. The Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation has selected OliverMcMillan Inc. to move forward with the project on the 27-acre parcel of land located across from Kapolei WalMart.

The developer's \$143 million conceptual plan includes 414 homes, of which 210 are affordable housing. There will be 154,000 sq. ft. of commercial space, including a grocery store, drug store, shops, and restaurants. A 1.2 acre village green is also part of the plan. Hunt Companies and Urban Housing Communities LLC will be developing the affordable housing portion of the project. Construction will begin in late 2016 and it should be completed by 2019.



who currently can't afford clean energy systems. The bond funding can also be directed to grid modernization projects, which will help solve the interconnection problems people have been having across the state when they've tried to get HECO's approval to hook up PV systems to the grid.

GEMS will continue to be funded by a surcharge that is currently tacked onto ratepayer bills. The surcharge is tied to the current public benefit fee surcharge and will have little to no impact on customer bills going forward. If you're interested in looking into GEMS, you can fill out their online questionnaire at www.energy.hawaii.gov.

Keeping the Focus on Invasive Species



This upcoming session I'll be working to make sure we keep the focus on invasive species. Whether it's little fire ants, coconut rhinoceros beetles, coqui frogs, or albizia, these pests are negatively impacting communities around the state.

A 2007 study by Gutrich et al. estimated that the establishment of red imported fire ants in Hawai'i would cost us \$211 million. A 2010 study by Shwiff et al. estimated that if brown tree snakes became established in Hawai'i, the cost to the state could range from \$593 million to \$2.14 billion.

Last session, we dedicated \$5 million to the Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) for the detection, prevention, control, outreach, and research of invasive species. This session I'll introduce legislation to direct additional funding to the Department of Agriculture and the HISC so they can continue this fight. The bill would also provide funding to the Legislative Research Bureau (LRB) to update the "Filling the Gaps in the Fight Against Invasive Species" study to provide a current assessment and recommendations related to invasive species in our state. LRB estimated in 2002 that the annual cost to address invasive species in Hawai'i would be \$50 million .



GEMS Program Roll Out by End of the Year

You might have heard about the Green Energy Market Securitization (GEMS) program. GEMS is an innovative bond financing mechanism that will provide low interest loans to low income folks, non-profits, and renters for solar PV and energy efficiency systems.

The program was created by the Legislature in 2013 and is backed by \$150 million in bond financing, which will be loaned out to people

2014 Live and Let Live/ Drive Safe 4 Ewa Campaign

I participated in the kick-off of the Live and Let Live/ Drive Safe 4 Ewa Campaign on November 15th at the Kapolei High School. This is a month-long campaign dedicated to encouraging safe driving around the Christmas Holidays, a time when crashes, drunk driving, and road fatalities are at their peak.

As part of our efforts, I help to organize a poster contest each year, which involves West O'ahu high schools. This year's winners were: 1st place winner Jazmin Balacy (a junior at Campbell High School); 2nd place winner Jamie Valdez (a junior at Kapolei High School); and 3rd place winner Kaitapu Pulesala (a junior at Nanakuli High & Intermediate School). There will be sign-waving in the coming weeks to bring more attention to driving safely, leading up to New Year's Day. *Here are the dates and times in my district:*

12/09 Parkway fronting Kapolei High School

12/12 Fort Weaver Rd. fronting Queen's Medical Center – West



Courtesy PVT Land Co.

PVT Launches New Recycling Facility

I presented an honorary certificate from the State Senate to the PVT Land Company at the dedication and blessing ceremony of their facility in Nanakuli on November 19th. It happens to be one of the most efficient integrated waste management facilities in the country. In summer 2014, the new recycling system increased their capacity by 300%. PVT can now process up to 1,775 tons of debris daily and divert up to 80 percent of that (1,420 tons) for reuse and recycling rather than add it to the landfill. The recycling system can also process up to 900 tons of feedstock a day to fuel energy production. Feedstock can be wood, plastic, paper, or cloth. These materials are transformed into a fuel that can be burned to create steam to drive turbines. PVT has signed an agreement to supply feedstock to a gasification facility in development called Honua Power LLC.



Senator Gabbard presented Honorary Certificates to the winners of the "Live and Let Live" Safe Driving Contest on November 15, 2014 at the Honolulu Police Department in Kapolei. (Pictured L-R: Kaitapu Pulesala - Nanakuli High - 3rd Place winner; Jazmin Balacy - Campbell High – 1st Place winner; and Jamie Valdez - Kapolei High - 2nd Place winner.)

Upcoming Free Events

- AARP – will host a free event called, "Your Real Possibilities for a Safe and Secure Future Mini Conference" on December 4th from 8:30am to noon at the Hawai'i Okinawa Center in Waipio. It will include a session about AARP activities and a free bento breakfast, followed by break-out topics on home modification, senior living options, improving balance to avoid falling, and Medicaid. You can register via their website: www.aarp.cvent.com
- Kapolei Public Library – will have a free concert by Melemai Kapu'uwaimai on December 9th at 6:30pm. The vocal ensemble, led by Marilyn Kim, will perform holiday songs and dances.



Senator Gabbard presented an Honorary Certificate from the Hawai'i State Senate to (Left) Albert Shigemura, President of the PVT Land Co. and (Right) Stephen Joseph, Vice President and General Manager, at the dedication and blessing ceremony for their new recycling operation in Nanakuli on November 19th.



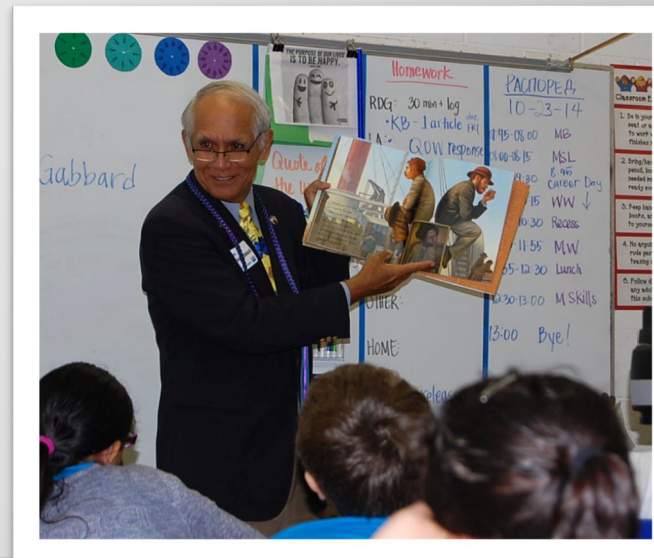
Honoring Father Aleksy

I surprised Father Alexander "Aleksy" Santos with an honorary certificate from the State Senate at St. Michael the Archangel Parish on November 2nd. Father Aleksy was born in Hana, Maui in 1936 to Mary Fukunaga and Bernard Santos. He attended Mid-Pac Institute for two years before becoming a student at Saint Stephen's Seminary.

Upon completion of his studies at the Eastern Catholic Holy Trinity Seminary, he was ordained as Father Aleksy in 1996. Father Aleksy is the Assistant Pastor of Saint Michael the Archangel Parish and the Saint Thomas Mission in Waipahu.

He is also a retired nurse, previously dedicating himself to the challenging and rewarding work as a full-time nurse in a local hospital. He volunteered once a month for ten years to serve the staff and patients at the Leeward Nursing Home in Makaha, as well as helping with Lanakila Meals on Wheels. For a decade, he enjoyed taking meals to elderly home bound citizens on O'ahu. Father Aleksy continues to volunteer as a chaplain at the Pali Momi Medical Center in Aiea and as a hospice volunteer at the Ka Punawai Ola hospital.

Father Aleksy is a very humble and caring person who not only serves the needs of the parishioners at Saint Michael the Archangel Parish and the Saint Thomas



Mission, but also volunteers his free time to serve the medical, spiritual and psychological needs of patients and senior citizens in our Leeward hospitals. I wish him many more successful years ahead!

Senator Gabbard spent the morning with Ms. Deborah Eveland's class of fifth graders at Kapolei Elementary School for their Annual Career Day and Read-a-Loud on October 23rd, organized by Literacy Coordinator, Ms. Laurie Meyer.

Senator Gabbard spoke at the U.S. Vets 6th Annual Job Fair on October 24th, at Barber's point, and participated in the ribbon cutting. (Picture L-R: Dimples Harris, Workforce Coordinator; Sen. Gabbard; and Dr. Kim Cook, U.S.VETS Executive Director)



Kapolei Lights

West Oahu's Electric Light Parade begins at 6 p.m. Dec. 13th at Kapolei fair-grounds, moving to Kapolei Hale for tree-lighting ceremonies and a block party. For more information, call Ross Sasamura at 768-3343.