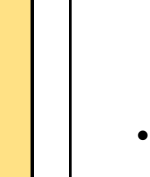




# SENATOR GILBERT KEITH-AGARAN

Hawaii State Senate District 5



## A Message From Gil

Aloha Kākou,

It is indeed a great privilege to continue serving the people of central Maui in the Hawaii State Senate. Along with my Maui colleagues in the Senate, Senator J. Kalani English and Senator Rosalyn Baker, and together with Speaker of the House Joe Souki and the five Maui House members, I will do my best to maintain the quality of life and opportunities for everyone on the Valley Isle.

I continue to seek input in particular from the people of Kahului, Wailuku, Waihe'e, Waiehu and Waikapu, and I will work hard to make sure that your concerns are reflected in meaningful and timely legislation and projects. Mahalo in advance for taking the time to contact my office at the State Capitol - our door is open, our phones are staffed, and every e-mail we receive is reviewed. It is through your input that I continue to establish priorities and policies that most effectively benefit our district.

This year in particular, food and energy sustainability, public education from pre-kindergarten through university levels, and the availability and affordability of health care on our island are just some of the critical areas being debated. As vice-chair of the Tourism Committee, I will also have the opportunity to closely examine the issues and policies that affect our state's most dominant economic activity, and I pledge to keep Maui's special attractions, cultural values, and environment in mind.

This year marks the 55th anniversary of Hawaii's statehood. In commemoration, opening day at the legislature this year honored all those members who have served before us at the state capitol. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to meet some former members for the first time, and also to reacquaint myself with many persons who continue to serve our state in different capacities. Their wisdom and experience continues to inform us as members of today's legislature, as we devote ourselves to leading Hawaii toward a more prosperous future.

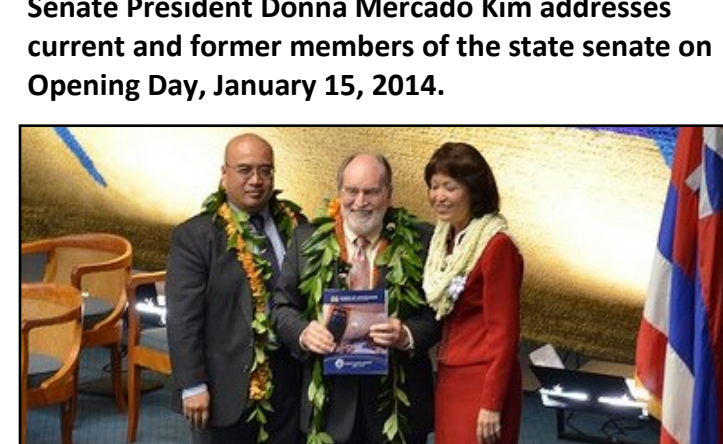
Aloha, *Gilbert Keith-Agaran*

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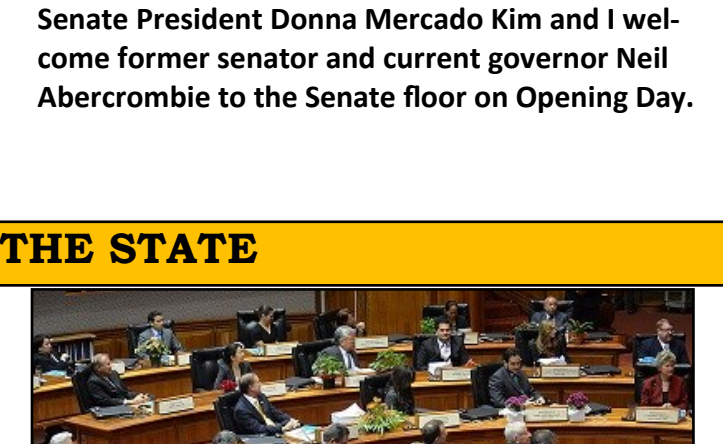
- Opening Day 2014
- State of the State
- Visitor Photos
- Senate Bills Introduced
- Make Yourself Heard!



Current and former Maui senators on Opening Day: from left, former Sen. Joe Tanaka, Sen. J. Kalani English, Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Lt. Gov. Shan Tsutsui, former Sen. Avery Chumbley, and myself.

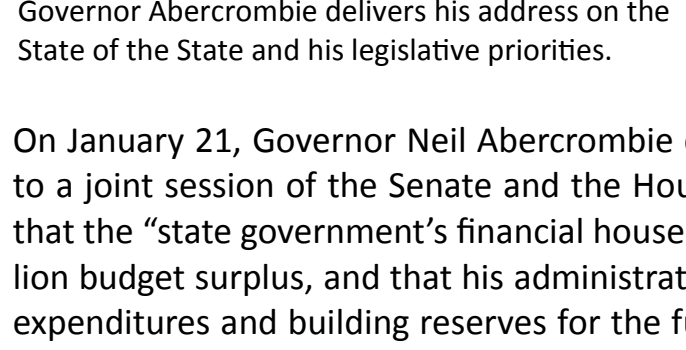


Senate President Donna Mercado Kim addresses current and former members of the state senate on Opening Day, January 15, 2014.

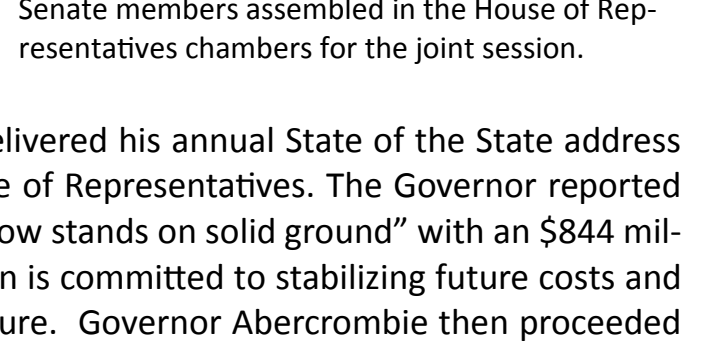


Senate President Donna Mercado Kim and I welcome former senator and current governor Neil Abercrombie to the Senate floor on Opening Day.

## STATE OF THE STATE



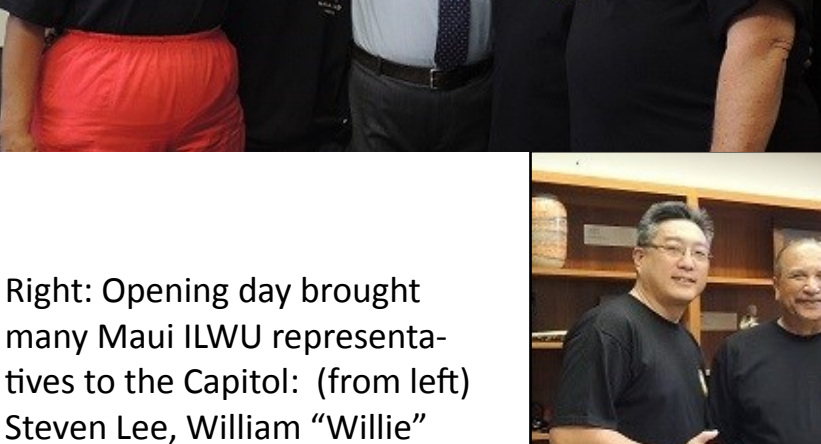
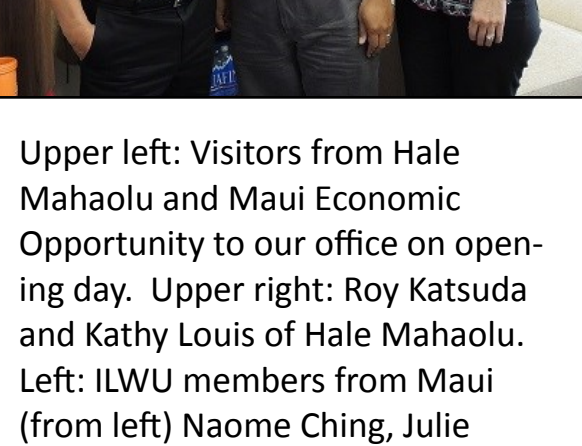
Governor Abercrombie delivers his address on the State of the State and his legislative priorities.



Senate members assembled in the House of Representatives chambers for the joint session.

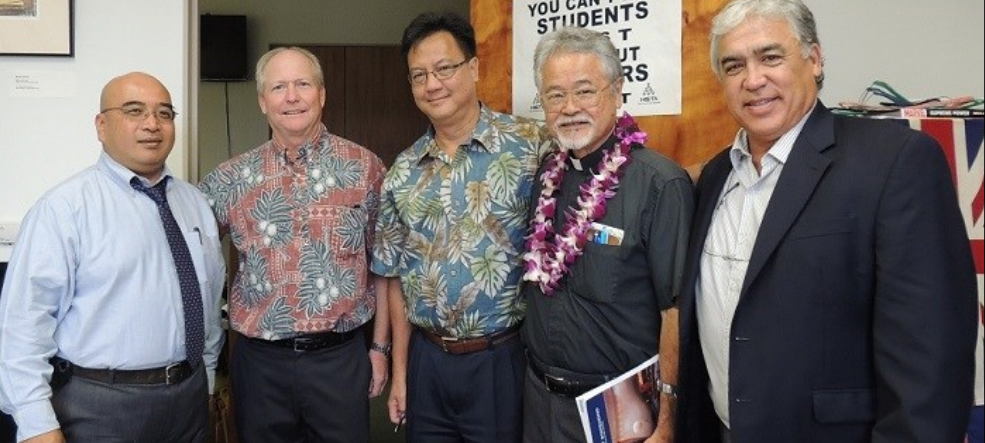
On January 21, Governor Neil Abercrombie delivered his annual State of the State address to a joint session of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Governor reported that the "state government's financial house now stands on solid ground" with an \$844 million budget surplus, and that his administration is committed to stabilizing future costs and expenditures and building reserves for the future. Governor Abercrombie then proceeded to identify several areas that his administration is particularly enthusiastic about pursuing this year: early childhood education, raising the minimum wage, and kupuna quality of life issues. The governor's plan is to build and strengthen Hawaii's mixed-delivery system of early learning programs. He reiterated his support for the proposed constitutional amendment that will be on the ballot this November that would allow use of public funds for private-sector partnerships for early childhood learning services. Next on his to-do list, the Governor proceeded to voice his strong support for raising the statewide minimum wage from the current \$7.25 per hour to at least \$8.75 per hour, and also voiced a willingness to negotiate on the issue of the allowable tip credit for employers of workers in restaurants and other tipped services. Governor Abercrombie also addressed the well-being of seniors, by proposing that the legislature consider an income tax exemption, as well as double the current refundable food/excise tax credit for certain taxpayers aged 65 or older. He also seeks to permanently fund the Kupuna Care program that delivers home services to many seniors throughout the state. In addition to the above initiatives, climate change countermeasures, sustainability and invasive species control, and the Thirty-Meter Telescope initiative on Mauna Kea also merited special mention by the Governor. For the full text of the Governor's 2014 State of the State speech, please see <http://governor.hawaii.gov/blog/2014-state-of-the-state-address/>. What are your thoughts about the Governor's speech and his priorities for 2014? Please let us know at [senkeithagaran@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:senkeithagaran@capitol.hawaii.gov)

## MAUI VISITORS AT THE CAPITOL



Upper left: Visitors from Hale Mahaolu and Maui Economic Opportunity to our office on opening day. Upper right: Roy Katsuda and Kathy Louis of Hale Mahaolu. Left: ILWU members from Maui (from left) Naome Ching, Julie Davis, and (from right) business agent Jerrybeth DeMello and Erlinda Bayaca.

Right: Opening day brought many Maui ILWU representatives to the Capitol: (from left) Steven Lee, William "Willie" Kennison, and Teddy Espeleta; (in front) Howard Takemoto; and (in rear, from left) Cyrus Kodani and Abel Kahoohanohano, Jr.



Left: Rev. Bob Nakata (second from right) and I met a team from Maui Memorial Medical Center: (second from left) R. Clay Sutherland, Maui Region board member; (center) Wesley Lo, CEO; and (far right) Tony Takitani, Maui Region board member.

Right: Visiting the Capitol from the J. Walter Cameron Center were: (from left) Tom Blackburn-Rodriguez and Anders Lyons; (center) César Gaxiola, Executive Director, and Alan Kaufman, President of the Board of Directors; (second from right) Stacy Crivello, councilmember from Moloka'i, (far right) Don S. Guzman, councilmember from Kahului.



## 2014 LEGISLATIVE MEASURES INTRODUCED BY SENATOR KEITH-AGARAN

- SB 2226** Authorizes programs to provide incentives for the creation of school and community gardens. Part of the "Keiki Caucus" group of bills.
- SB 2237** Addresses primary care physician shortages by appropriating funds for the interdisciplinary Hawaii health systems corporation primary care training program at Maui Memorial medical center.
- SB 2238** Prohibits utilities from charging interconnection study costs to consumers who seek to make an interconnection on the Hawaii electric system, when installing a photovoltaic system on a single-family residential dwelling or townhouse that the consumer owns.
- SB 2240** Permits the family court to award reasonable visitation to a grandparent if the denial of visitation would cause significant demonstrable harm to the child.
- SB 2404** Clarifies that reimbursement to crime victims includes lost wages and mental health treatment and therapy.
- SB 2461** Allows home schooled students to participate on an equal basis in extracurricular activities offered at the public school they would otherwise be required to attend.
- SB 2762** Establishes the Hawaii good agricultural practices program.



## OTHER IMPORTANT 2014 MEASURES

- SB 2343** Appropriates funds to the Hawaii Invasive Species Council for prevention, control, outreach, research, and planning.
- SB 2344** Addresses climate change adaptation by tasking the sustainability coordinator to create initial reports identifying expected climate impacts.
- SB 2346** Appropriates general funds to provide ongoing financial support to healthy aging programs and services.
- SB 2430** Allocates \$3,000,000 of the transient accommodations tax revenues to the special land and development fund for protection and improvement of natural resources and facilities associated with the visitor experience.
- SB 2768** Requires department of education and executive office on early learning to develop a statewide kindergarten readiness program.
- SB 2828** Increases the minimum hourly wage to \$8.75 on January 1, 2015, to \$9.50 on January 1, 2016, and to \$10 on January 1, 2017.
- SB 2833** Provides an income tax exemption to taxpayers over 65 years of age who have federal adjusted gross income below certain thresholds.
- SB 2834** Doubles the refundable food/excise tax credit amount for each taxpayer who is 65 years of age or older.

## MAKE YOURSELF HEARD!

Participating in the legislative process is easier than ever for neighbor island residents who are unable to visit us at the Capitol. The state legislature's website at [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov) is the place to start. There you can search for measures that are being considered this session based on keywords, the name of a House or Senate member who introduced a measure, or by subject matter committee. If you register an account using your e-mail address, you can create a clear personalized tracking list for accessing daily updated information to find out when a measure may be scheduled for hearing, and you can electronically submit public testimony for consideration by the committee conducting the hearing. If you have general questions concerning the legislative process and how a bill becomes law, please also see the website for the Public Access Room at <http://lrhawaii.org/par/> or call them toll-free from Maui at 984-2400. You can reach our office toll-free through that number as well, or you can contact or e-mail us as provided below. Mahalo for participating in our democratic process!



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