

Senator Michelle Kidani

(D) Senate District 18— Serving Mililani Town, Waipio Gentry, Waikele, Village Park, Royal Kunia



Aloha, and Happy New Year!

As we begin 2013, I hope that you and your families are in good health and eager for opportunities that may come your way in the months ahead.

My last newsletter was published in November, and the several weeks that have passed since then have been eventful and even historic for our state. In these pages, you will find information and photos to recap some of those events, the activities of the legislature even before we officially went into our current session, and a look at some of the community events in which I was pleased to participate.

I must note that we will soon welcome the **Year of the Snake** in the Asian lunar calendar cycle. According to tradition, those born under this sign are insightful, influential and motivated. It is said also that the year should be a period of prosperity and peace. These are all positive indicators, and I take them as encouraging signs that we will have a productive legislative session with a minimum of dissension

Again this year, I will be at our Neighborhood Board and other community meetings and always look forward to joining you in the many special events that celebrate our successes and strengthen our shared traditions. The legislative process can only be meaningful if we lawmakers hear from you about how we can best serve your needs. I welcome your calls and emails with comments and suggestions; my staff and I are ready to help in any way we can.



2013—Year of the Snake

Me ke Aloha,

Honoring Senator Daniel K. Akaka ~ ~ First Recipient of the Aloha Order of Merit



The State Legislature in 1993 created the Aloha Order of Merit to recognize those individuals who have served the state with distinction. First recipient is U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka. The medal (close up below) is made of *koa* wood and engraved for the specific recipient.

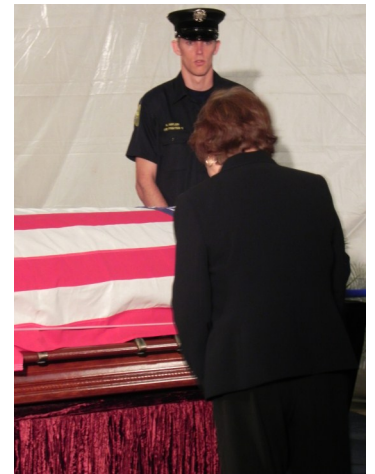


Governor Abercrombie presented the medal at a joint gathering of the State Senate and House of Representatives.

Prior to the presentation ceremony, I spent a moment with Senator Akaka, and was pleased to be able to introduce him to my sister, Leilani Sakai, visiting from the mainland.



A State memorial for U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye, one of a few distinguished Hawaii citizens so honored at the State Capitol.



December 22, 2012



I last met with Senator Inouye at a social event in mid-August (above). Nearly everyone has a personal memory of the Senator.

One of my favorites is recalling that he was the speaker at my Farrington High School Commencement.



At left, U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid was one of several members of Congress to travel in an official delegation to Senator Inouye's funeral at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific.

President Obama also attended to pay his respects.

Legislative work has been under way at the State Capitol for several weeks



My 2013 office staff, includes from left: Legislative Aides Trevor Nagamine and Gerri Kaneshiro, Office Manager Park Kaleiwahea, Legislative Aide Joan Manke, Senate Ways and Means Committee Staff Assistant Will Kane. Not pictured is Legislative Aide Jim Manke.

Legislative informational briefings have been underway for some time now - some joint hearings to hear from economists about the context in which we will formulate the state budget (*top left, a hearing in the Capitol auditorium to hear from the Council on Revenues*) and single committee hearings (*top right, Committee on Ways and Means*) in which we have heard from virtually all state agencies about their needs and priorities for the next two years. January 16 began the 60-day session during which we will act on the budget and debate and vote on bills with anticipated adjournment on May 2.



A remarkable series of events was triggered by the sudden passing of Hawaii's senior U.S. Senator Dan Inouye. In late December, Governor Abercrombie appointed Lt. Governor Brian Schatz to succeed Senator Inouye, and, in accordance with the state constitutional succession procedure, Senate President Shan Tsutsui of Maui moved up to the Lt. Governor's Office. At left, a handful of Senate colleagues bade farewell to President Tsutsui - sad to lose him as our leader, but wishing him well in his new responsibilities. We acted quickly to select Senate Vice President Donna Kim to move up to the Presidency. The Governor appointed Maui Representative Gilbert Keith-Agaran to Senator Tsutsui's vacated seat, and then Maui businessman Justin Woodson to fill Keith-Agaran's House seat. The process moved quickly and smoothly according to law, and the work of the Legislature is proceeding with minimal disruption.

Earlier this month, on behalf of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, we scheduled a site visit to the **Coconut Island facilities of the University of Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology in Kaneohe Bay** where world class research is conducted on marine life from *limu* to sharks and dolphins. In the last two years, the Legislature has appropriated \$4.2 million for demolition of aging facilities and improvements to piers, the island's sewage system, renewable energy development and other infrastructure. We learned of the need for further work on the protective seawall and other projects on a list of repair and maintenance work. Below right, the visit also gave me the opportunity to make a new friend - **Hina**. Arrangements for the visit were coordinated by **Mililani resident Jim Lakey**, Marine Lab Supervisor at HIMB.



OPENING DAY - TWENTY-SEVENTH



Opening Day is largely a ceremonial event, but it follows several weeks of legislative hearings during which lawmakers explore the performance of State agencies during the past year and learn of priorities that will be the focus of our budget deliberations over the next few weeks.



HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE



At left, our day began with heartfelt prayer offered by **Danny Kaleikini** and an address from our new **Senate President Donna Mercado Kim**. Behind President Kim is former Senate President **Shan Tsutsui**, who is now Hawaii's Lieutenant Governor, and former Lieutenant Governor **Brian Schatz**, now Hawaii's senior U.S. Senator.

Above, special guests, including my sister **Leilani Sakai** (in the white jacket), and my sister **Cindy Asuncion** and her husband **Frank**, also in the front row, joined me on the floor of the Senate. I proudly took the oath of office (at right) to begin my third term as a member of the Senate.

It is an honor and a privilege to have been elected, and I pledge my best efforts and full attention to addressing the needs of the State and the 18th Senatorial District.



Dozens of friends, supporters and well-wishers stopped by my office during the day. I was so pleased to be able to visit with the several **Principals from the Waipahu Complex** of public schools that so many youngsters from District 18 are attending.

My Capitol office (room 228) is always open to visitors, and I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to learn of your concerns.

Please to not hesitate to call or stop by to chat.



In our Mililani and Waipahu Communities . . .

The Mililani Christmas Parade is a “can’t miss” opportunity to celebrate, and I had grandkids along with me (below) in December to lend a hand. And I always try to make it to Mililani Seniors events during the year, but made a special point to join their holiday festivities (right).



Television producer Bernadette Baraquio invited me to sit for a TV interview to support the *Read Aloud America* program to promote reading skills among our youngsters. Each year I visit schools to read to second and third graders. At right above, with Bernadette and *Read Aloud America* Founder Jed Gaines.



Mililani Neighborhood Board Honors Representative Lee, Mililani Girls Soccer Champs



At its meeting in November, the Mililani Neighborhood Board honored outgoing Representative Marilyn Lee, to recognize her many years of service to our community. With Rep. Lee, from left, NB Chair Richard Poirier presented a certificate on behalf of the Board. I represented the State Senate with a certificate, and State Representative Ryan Yamane prepared a House certificate. Will Kane was on hand as President of the Mililani Town Association. Rep. Lee has now filled a vacant seat on this Neighborhood Board to continue her service to the people of Mililani.

Several members of the Lanakila Girls U-14 Soccer Team of Mililani were on hand at the Board meeting to receive recognition for having won the AYSO Nationals for their age group over the summer of 2012. Front row from left, assistant coach Rose Yu, team members, and head coach Dunstan Canne.

Behind them, Senator Kidani and Mililani NB Chair Dick Poirier.





Army issues aircraft noise advisory and asks for patience during Macomb Gate traffic improvement project



U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii is asking for drivers' patience and cooperation during an upcoming traffic improvement project. Schofield Barracks' Macomb Gate, on Wilikina Drive, will temporarily close to inbound traffic beginning February 2. The gate will be closed for approximately five months as the existing intersection fronting the Tropic Lightning Museum will be replaced with a roundabout intersection to improve traffic safety and traffic flow into and out of Macomb Gate.

In addition, the 25th Infantry Division says central and south central O'ahu residents may experience an increase in noise through the end of January, as aircraft assigned to the Division arrive back on the island following the unit's year-long deployment to Afghanistan. As many as 60 aircraft will fly a route from Pearl Harbor's West Loch, heading north along Kunia Road toward Wheeler Army Airfield. Aircraft operations will only occur during daylight hours and may continue until January 29.



Leeward Community College Chancellor Manuel Cabral (left) and LCC Vice Chancellor for Administration Mark Lane visited my office at the Capitol this month with a special gift - the o'o stick I used during groundbreaking ceremonies for the new LCC teacher education building. We all look forward to dedicating the new facility later this year.

Congratulations to the **450 Waipahu High School math students** who participated in the DimensionU House Cup Championship Tournament as profiled in the *Honolulu Star Advertiser* last month. We are grateful to **math coach Amelia Cook** for her work to mentor the young math students, and to the WHS math teachers who have encouraged them to get involved in this STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) initiative.



Central O'ahu lawmakers welcomed 80 tenth grade students from **Waipahu High School** to the Capitol earlier this month. They were on tour as part of their U.S. history project to learn about how bills become laws. The project will culminate at the end of the school year with a mock legislative session during which they will introduce, debate and vote on bills they have drafted to address concerns about graffiti, health related issues and several other topics they are researching in their classes. Seated at the table from left are Senator Kidani, Representative Ty Cullen, Senator Clarence Nishihara, and Representatives Ryan Yamane and Henry Aquino.

FREE TAX HELP AND CLAIM VALUABLE TAX CREDITS

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a tax benefit for people who worked full or part-time. Calculate your potential credit below:

If you are:	and you earn LESS than:	Then you may qualify for a credit/refund up to:
Married couple w/ 3 or more qualifying children	\$50,270	\$5,891
Unmarried couple w/ 3 or more qualifying children	\$45,060	\$5,891
Married couple w/ 2 qualifying children	\$47,162	\$5,236
Unmarried couple w/ 2 qualifying children	\$41,952	\$5,236
Married couple w/ 1 qualifying child	\$42,130	\$3,169
Unmarried couple w/ 1 qualifying child	\$36,920	\$3,169
Married couple w/ no qualifying child	\$19,190	\$475
Unmarried w/ no qualifying child	\$13,980	\$475

For more information about the Hawaii State Capitol Tax Site or other free tax preparation sites across the state:

Visit: www.hawaiiitaxhelp.org

Call: 2-1-1 (AUW's toll-free helpline)

Email: info@hawaiiitaxhelp.org

Thanks to trained and IRS-certified volunteers, you can have your state and federal tax returns prepared for free at this special clinic:

Hawaii State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street, Third Floor

Saturday, January 26 ONLY

9:00am–2:00pm (last return accepted at 1pm)

Call (808) 381-0881 for an appointment to this site

WALK-INS ACCEPTED, FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVED BASIS

Thank you to the following legislators who are sponsoring this important community event:

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland

Senator Brickwood Galuteria

Senator Michelle Kidani

Senator Laura H. Thielen

Speaker Calvin Say

Representative Della Au Belatti

Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto

Representative Karl Rhoads

Representative Sylvia Luke

Representative Tom Brower

Representative Scott K. Saiki

Representative Takashi Ohno

Earn it. Claim it. Save it.

Family and Individual Self-Sufficiency Program

HACBED Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development

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JOB OPPORTUNITY

The Hawai'i State Judiciary is seeking court interpreters in all languages

Do you speak English and another language?

Willing to work as needed?

You can earn \$25 to \$55 per hour with a 2-hour base minimum!

Are you:

- ✓ Bilingual
- ✓ 18 years or older?
- ✓ Eligible to work in U.S.?



Do you

- ✓ Need additional income?
- ✓ Want to help your community?

Applicants must meet these minimum requirements:

1. **SUBMIT** Court Interpreter Certification Program Application (available online)

2. **ATTEND** a two-day Basic Orientation Workshop
Registration fee: \$75 includes 2-day training and interpreter resource binder.

O'ahu 1: February 2-3, 2013 (Sat./Sun.)
Kaua'i: February 7-8, 2013 (Thu./Fri.)
Kona: February 14-15, 2013 (Thu./Fri.)
Maui: February 20-21, 2013 (Wed./Thu.)
Hilo: February 28-March 1, 2013 (Thu./Fri.)
O'ahu 2: March 9-10, 2013 (Sat./Sun.)

➤ Additional requirements: Applicants must pass Written English and Ethics Exams and clear a criminal background check to be placed on court interpreter registry.

THIS IS A ONCE A YEAR OPPORTUNITY!

FOR MORE INFORMATION & APPLICATION, CONTACT:

Hawai'i State Judiciary, Office on Equality and Access to the Courts
(808) 539-4860 ♦ oeac@courts.hawaii.gov ♦ www.courts.state.hi.us/courtinterpreting

Senator Michelle Kidani 2013 Senate Assignments

Vice Chair, Committee on Ways & Means
- with Senate leadership responsibility for overseeing all state funded construction projects

Vice Chair, Committee on Education

Member, Committee on Higher Education

Member, Committee on Human Services

Member, Committee on Tourism and Hawaiian Affairs

Assistant Majority Leader

Please contact me . . .

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