

Legislative Update from Senator Mike Gabbard



JANUARY 2012
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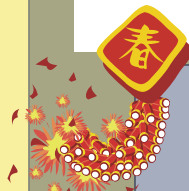
WAIKELE, VILLAGE PARK

ROYAL KUNIA, HONOKAI HALE,

WAIPAHU, AND KO 'OLINA

Aloha,

Happy New Year to you and your ohana! The 2012 Legislative Session will kick off on January 18th. This year's Opening Day will be more subdued than previous years, because of the slow rebound in our economy. I'm hopeful that we'll be able to hold the line on raising taxes and also from making any cuts to core government functions, such as our schools, road infrastructure, and "safety net" social services. Please call me at 586-6830 or email me at sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov if I can ever help you or your family in any way.



Kapolei Post Office Gets Brief Reprieve

You might have heard the news that USPS made the decision to postpone closure of 3,700 post offices around the country. USPS had planned to close the post offices in January 2012, but recently announced that they wouldn't be moving ahead until mid-May. One of the post offices that is unfortunately slated for closure is the Kapolei Post Office. We have been working closely with local USPS officials in the hopes that we could keep the Kapolei Post Office open. We've been told that may not happen. However, there is a strong possibility that USPS will be contracting with a local business or government entity to open a "contract postal unit" to keep an adequate level of service in our community. I'll keep you posted as soon as new information comes available.

Office Staffing Set for 2012 Session

This session I'll once again have my Office Manager, Rock Riggs, Committee Clerk, Carlton Saito, and Legislative Assistant, Donna Lay, on-board. I'm also hiring Chloe Dooley, as a part-time Legislative Assistant. Chloe has been accepted to UH William S. Richardson School of Law and will be using this work experience to help prepare for her first year of law school starting in the fall. Rock is the best person to talk to on any concerns or issues you'd like to bring to my attention. Donna will continue in her role as my scheduler. Carlton will be the go to guy on any topics related to the Energy and Environment Committee, which I chair.



Senator Mike Gabbard was at a press conference at the State Capitol on December 12, 2011, when Mitsubishi delivered its first iMiEV to its happy owners. Pictured left to right are: Mark Glick, State Energy Administrator, Nick Cutter, owner of Cutter Mitsubishi, Senator Gabbard, Chair of the Hawai'i State Senate's Energy and Environment committee, Bryson and Bridget Nishimura (with keys), new owners of Hawaii's first customer delivered iMiEV, Hawaii Governor Neil Abercrombie, Mitsubishi Motors Executive Vice President Masatoshi Hasegawa.

"Listen Story" Meeting

My next "listen story" meeting will be held at the Kapolei Starbucks (next to the Chevron Station) on Saturday, January 14th from 9:00am to 10:00am.

Improvements Coming for Lumiaina Street and Kamehameha Highway Intersection

For the last few years, I've been getting feedback from Waikele residents concerning delays they've experienced in making left turns from Lumiaina Street onto Kamehameha Highway. I have contacted the state Department of Transportation (DOT) on several occasions asking that they make some changes to the intersection to improve traffic flow. There have been projects planned to correct the problem, but unfortunately due to budget constraints the improvements didn't move forward. At the urging of the Waipahu Neighborhood Board, my office contacted the DOT to once again check on the status. I'm pleased to have gotten the following response that they are finally close to making this happen. Mahalo to DOT and Councilman Nestor Garcia for their efforts.

The project you are referring to is the construction of a left turn signal and a left turn storage lane for drivers traveling on Lumiaina Street turning onto Kamehameha Highway. It will include a double left from Lumiaina and a signal modification to accommodate the double left.

DOT is in the process of amending a contract to include the redesign of the intersection. The design is scheduled to start early next year and is expected to take 6 to nine months. It would then have to be approved, go out to bid, go through the permitting process, etc. Best case scenario, the project would be complete by the end of 2013.

In the meantime, we are also working on a pedestrian safety project to relocate the existing crosswalk on Kamehameha Highway from the north side of Lumiaina to the south side. This should help reduce some of the delays for motorists and make it safer for pedestrians. Construction is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2012.

Ka Makana Ali'i Moving Forward



You might have heard that the Hawaiian Homes Commission signed off on the environmental assessment for the Ka Makana Ali'i shopping center in December. The project had been stalled because of the downturn in the economy, but may be back on track to begin construction in 2012. When completed, it will be our island's third largest mall and will be located on 67-acres of Department of Hawaiian Home Lands' (DHHL) land in Kapolei at the corner of Kapolei Parkway and Kualaka'i Parkway. The first phase of the shopping center will be a 200,000 sq. ft. neighborhood and convenience center filled with businesses including a pharmacy, grocery store, bank, fitness center, pet store, and restaurants. The second phase will be 1.1 million sq. ft. and will include a major department store, a family entertainment complex, two hotels, and low-rise office buildings. The project is expected to generate 21,000 construction jobs, 7,000 permanent jobs, and more than \$140 million in lease rent during its first 25 years for DHHL.

PV Working Group Completes Its Mission

We held the final meeting of the Photovoltaic Working Group on December 12th at the State Office Tower. I was elected Chair of this working group, which was tasked with making recommendations to the Legislature before the 2012 session regarding a proposal to mandate all homes be built PV-ready. The working group was initiated by SB 181 (Act 198), a bill mandating all new homes be built PV-ready starting in 2014. In the end, we couldn't get agreement from the other working group members to forge ahead with a recommendation for a PV-ready mandate, but we were able to agree on language for a resolution to be introduced during the 2012 session to strongly encourage builders to incorporate specific design elements for PV-ready new residential homes.

Gas Company Launches Renewable Natural Gas Plant

I was honored to make a presentation at the dedication of the Gas Company's new Renewable Natural Gas Plant at Campbell Industrial Park on December 15th. The plant will have the capacity to process up to 1 million gallons of renewable fuel a year. Initially, the Gas Company will be using fish oil as its feedstock, but will also be looking at animal fats and vegetable oils. This plant was made possible in part by a \$1 million grant from the Hawai'i Renewable Energy Venture. I commend the Gas Company and their CEO, Jeff Kissel, for taking this exciting step toward more sustainable, reliable, and efficient energy for our island businesses and homes.



Senator Gabbard spoke at the Blessing Ceremony of the Gas Company's new renewable natural gas plant on December 15, 2011.



Senator Gabbard, House Speaker Calvin Say, and Rep. Sharon Har presented an Honorary Certificate from the State Legislature to Jeff Kissel, CEO of the Gas Company, at the Blessing Ceremony for their new renewable natural gas plant at Campbell Industrial Park on December 15, 2011. Pictured left to right are: Alicia Moy, Macquarie Infrastructure Company Senior Vice President; House Speaker Say; Rep. Har; Jeff Kissel; and Senator Gabbard.

Governor Releases Construction Funding for National Guard in Kalaeloa

It was great to hear Governor Abercrombie's December 30th announcement about his decision to release \$63.7 million in construction funding for high-impact projects across the state. Two of those projects would help the National Guard make infrastructure improvements in Kalaeloa:

- \$1,800,000 -- Army Guard Facilities, Oahu -- Renovation of Buildings 46 and 1784 at Kalaeloa
- \$1,400,000 -- National Guard Facilities, Statewide -- Upgrades and improvements to National Guard Emergency Operations Center, including Building 46 at Kalaeloa



Senator Gabbard gave a presentation at the Rebuild Hawai'i Consortium Quarterly Meeting on energy efficiency at the Hawai'i Convention Center on December 6, 2011. In this photo, Senator Gabbard showed off his Hawai'i Energy t-shirt.

Capital 10 District Energy Challenge

Back in June, Governor Abercrombie held his iConserve Rally at the Capitol to encourage state workers to conserve energy in the workplace. I was driving in from Kapolei for the event and was inspired. Being a former tennis pro and athlete, I thought why not have state buildings here in Hawai'i compete with each other to see who could reduce their electricity usage the most. During the past few months, I've been working with Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS), the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, and NORESO (an energy performance contracting company) on setting this up. The goal is to have the 10 Capitol District buildings reduce their combined energy consumption by \$100,000 during the next calendar year starting this month. We'll be measuring each one of the building's energy reduction using EUI – a unit of measurement that represents the energy consumed by a building relative to its size. DAGS will be posting monthly progress reports on the web at www.hawaii.gov/green

Command Sergeant Major Iuniasolua Savusa's Retirement

I presented an honorary certificate from the State Senate to Command Sergeant Major Iuniasolua Savusa at his retirement party at Ft. Shafter on December 19th. CSM Savusa began his career over 36 years ago as an Infantryman. Since then he has excelled in infantry, ranger, air assault, and airborne assignments. A gifted leader, he has been a team leader, squad leader, platoon sergeant, scout platoon sergeant, drill sergeant, senior air assault instructor, chief instructor light fighters infantry course, Reserve Officer Training Corps instructor, first sergeant, and operations sergeant major. CSM Savusa, now a Kapolei resident, is a native of American Samoa and has been stationed in destinations as far away as Kentucky, Louisiana, Italy and Germany. In support of the Global War on Terrorism, in 2002 he deployed to Afghanistan and served as the CSM, Task Force Rakkasan, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Operation Enduring Freedom I. In 2003, he deployed as the CSM, 3d Brigade, 187th Infantry Regiment (Rakkasan), 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Operation IRAQI FREEDOM I. In 2005, he again deployed with Southern European Task Force (Airborne) as the CSM, Combined Joint Task Force – 76, Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, Operation ENDURING FREEDOM VI.



Senator Mike Gabbard presented an Honorary Certificate to Command Sergeant Major Iuniasolua Savusa during his retirement ceremony at Fort Shafter's historic Palm Circle on December 19, 2011. The ceremony was highlighted by a speech from General Francis Wiercinski, Army Pacific Commander, who described the distinguished service and bravery of CSM Savusa.

CSM Savusa has earned many prestigious awards and decorations including the Legion of Merit (2nd Oak Leaf Cluster), Bronze Star Medal with "V" (2nd Oak Leaf Cluster), Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (4th Oak Leaf Cluster), and the Army Commendation Medal (2nd Oak Leaf Cluster), among many others. His commitment to excellence and his dedication to being an outstanding leader has left an indelible legacy. Fa'afetai tele lava, CSM Savusa, for your service to our country.



Senator Gabbard and Ken Kelly, of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, were interviewed by Jay Fidell for his Think Tech Hawai'i Radio Show on 760 KGU-AM on December 28th. Pictured in front (L to R) are Jay, Senator Gabbard, and Ken.

Hawai'i Youth Challenge Lokahi Award

I was humbled and honored to receive the Hawai'i Youth Challenge Academy's Lokahi Award at their graduation ceremony at Pearl City High School on December 16th. This award is given each year to thank an individual for their 'lokahi' which underscores cooperation, working together and helping others. The Academy is a very important program that offers struggling teenagers a second chance to get back on the right track and complete their high school studies. The Academy was founded in August 1994 and is administered by the Hawai'i National Guard. It has campuses in Kalaeloa on Oahu and at Kulani on Hawai'i Island. Each cycle, HYCA accepts 250 young people. Since its inception, over 3000 cadets have completed the program, with 75% of them receiving their high school diploma.



Senator Gabbard attended the Solar Commissioning Ceremony and Blessing of the Kapolei Sustainable Energy Park on December 22nd. Beside him (left to right) are John Wallenstrom, President of Forest City of Hawai'i; Senator Will Espero; Samuel 'Ohukani' 'ohi'a Gon III, Senior Scientist & Cultural Advisor to the Hawai'i field office of The Nature Conservancy; and Georgette Stevens of Grace Pacific Corporation.