

# Legislative Update from Senator Mike Gabbard

May 2009

SENATOR MIKE GABBARD

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Senator Gabbard talked story with cadets from Kalaeloa's Youth Challenge National Guard squad at the State Capitol on April 30th. He spoke to the young men and women (who joined the program as "at risk" youth) about his own life story, dealing with ups & downs, and the gratification that comes with being a public servant.



## Aloha Friends,

The 2009 Legislative Session came to a close on May 8th. As you know, it has been a tough year for our economy, but there have been some bright spots for our district.

I was very pleased that we were able to secure \$3.5 million in funding for the design of the much-anticipated Kapolei II Elementary School. The school will be located across Ft. Barrette Road from Kapolei High and is targeted to be completed by 2012.

We were also fortunate to have \$55 million appropriated for the PM Contraflow lane, which will allow carpoolers to use a zipper lane from Radford Drive to Waikele Road in the afternoons.

This was also my first session to Chair the Senate's Energy and Environment Committee. We were able to pass many landmark bills that will move us in the direction of a "clean energy" powered economy. The legislation sets our goals of meeting 70% of our energy needs through renewable energy and energy

efficiency savings by 2030. It will set up the necessary infrastructure to make electric vehicles a major player by 2015. We'll also have a dedicated source of funding that will go toward weaning us off fossil fuels and toward a more sustainable future.

I've prepared a wrap-up of the session and other things I'd like to share with you. Please feel free to contact me if I can ever help you or family in any way. My phone number is 586-6830 and my email is [sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov).

Me ka pumehana,

Senator Mike Gabbard  
19th District



### Listen-Story

**My next community meeting is at the Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf in Makakilo on Saturday, June 13th at 9:00am. Hope to see you there!**



#### CHAIR

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

#### VICE CHAIR

TRANSPORTATION, INTERNATIONAL  
AFFAIRS AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

#### MEMBER

PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY  
AFFAIRS  
JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT  
OPERATIONS

#### SENATE DISTRICT 19

MAKAKILO, KAPOLEI, KALAELOA  
WAIKELE, VILLAGE PARK  
ROYAL KUNIA, HONOKAI HALE,  
WAIPAHU, AND KO 'OLINA

## Mahalo for visiting!



April 22, 2009

Dave Moncrief of Sun Carrier, a photovoltaic company, and his 2 colleagues visiting from Germany, Walter Kunerth and Gunter Harz, discussed building a photovoltaic power plant on Oahu.



April 27, 2009

Suzanne Frazer and Dean Otsuki from Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i (BEACH) presented a petition to Senator Gabbard with over 10,000 signatures from residents concerned about Hawaii's marine life.



April 29, 2009

Manuel Pajela, Raymond Ma'ae, and Marty Brookes met with Senator Gabbard to discuss their ideas on electricity efficiency.

*Come again soon!*

Senator Gabbard speaks in support of clean energy at the State Capitol Rotunda on April 27th.



### Energy and Environment Legislative Accomplishments

I was happy to see five of the bills I authored pass the Legislature this session. Here's a short summary of each of them.

SB 464 – would help many more Hawaii homeowners and businesses take advantage of the federal incentives for solar and in the process increase our state's energy security and reduce our carbon emissions.

SB 1065 – would allow the Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority (NELHA) to sell electricity to its tenants and Keahole

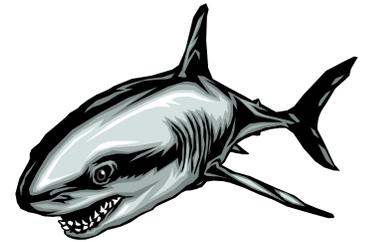
Airport without being considered a mini-utility. This will greatly reduce their electricity bills.

SB 1066 – would increase the number of NELHA Board of Directors to 13, by adding two tenant representative directors.

SB 1259 – would protect innocent property buyers or neighboring property owners from being held liable for environmental contamination they didn't cause.

SB 1260 – would make it so polluters who produce more than 4,000 tons of air pollution emissions a year would no longer be exempt from paying additional fees. Governor Lingle allowed this bill to become law without her signature on May 5, 2009.

briefing at the Capitol on May 14th to hear from experts about shark feeding in relation to commercial tours.



Many people from the community attended the hearing. With the recent controversy on this issue out in Hawai'i Kai, we wanted to bring some of the key stakeholders together to see if further legislative action is needed to protect public health and our environment.

Presentations were made by the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, Hawaii Shark Encounters, Surfrider Foundation, Save Our Surf, the Royal Order of Kamehameha, the Department of Land and Natural Resources - Aquatic Resources Division, the U.S. Coast Guard, and NOAA Fisheries Service.

-  **SB 464**
-  **SB 1065**
-  **SB 1066**
-  **SB 1259**
-  **SB 1260**

### Informational Briefing on Shark Tours a Success

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair of the Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs Committee, and I hosted an informational

# Construction Funding for Senate District 19



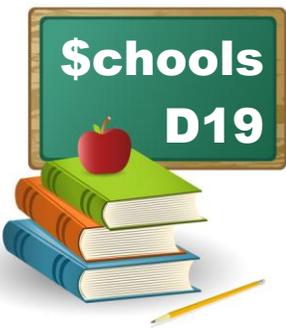
## *Celebrating Keiki*



May 15, 2009

Sen. Gabbard brought his hanai granddaughter, Nadia Riggs, to watch Barbers Point Elementary School students sing and dance to celebrate May Day.

Given our difficult budgetary situation, Senate District 19 was very fortunate to have received a total of \$120,303,000 in appropriations from the Legislature in the 2009-2011 budget for our schools, roads, non-profits, and many other construction projects. A big mahalo to Ways and Means Chair, Senator Donna Mercado Kim, House Finance Chair, Marcus Oshiro, and my other colleagues at the Capitol for their hard work in balancing the budget! Here's a list of those projects:



- Barbers Point Elementary School – Electrical Upgrades - \$1 million
- Barbers Point Elementary School – Playground Fencing - \$26,000
- Kaleiopuu Elementary School – Second Ramp for Campus Evacuation - \$450,000
- Kaleiopuu Elementary School – Covered Walkway - \$100,000
- Kapolei II Elementary – Design of New School - \$3,520,000
- Mauka Lani Elementary School – Evacuation Route Ramp - \$450,000
- Waikele Elementary School – Faculty Parking Lot - \$100,000

## *Honoring Moms*



May 10, 2009

Sen. Gabbard made a surprise presentation to all the mothers at a special Mothers Day service at the Hawai'i First Samoan Assembly of God Church at Kapalama. With him is Pastor Lafaale and his wife Francis.

## Roads/Transportation Improvements

- H-1 Kunia Interchange Improvements - \$780,000
- North South Road Extension to Kalaeloa - \$15 million
- PM Contraflow Lane (Radford to Waikele) - \$55 million
- Kalaeloa Development
- Kalaeloa Airport Improvements – \$22.5 million
- Kalaeloa Building 19 Restoration for National Guard - \$5.9 million
- Kalaeloa Harbor Basin and Channel Modifications - \$1.5 million
- Kalaeloa Mail Distribution Center for National Guard - \$1,175,000



## Judiciary

Kapolei Judiciary Complex - \$230,000

## Grants-in Aid to Non-Profits

- Easter Seals - \$275,000
- Kipuka INPEACE - \$1.5 million

## Agriculture

- Waiahole Ditch Irrigation System Improvements - \$6,295,000
- Multipurpose Research and Development Facility for Agricultural Products in Kunia - \$4,502,000



## *For our Kupuna*



May 6, 2009

Phase 1 of the new Senior Residence at Kapolei along Namahoe Street was dedicated and Phase 2 has begun. With Sen. Gabbard is Marvin Awaya from the Pacific Housing Assistance Corporation.

## Swine Flu: HAWAII'S NEW THEATER OF BATTLE

By Senator Mike Gabbard (*Honolulu Star Bulletin* - May 20, 2009)

We're in a war with a nasty virus, the swine flu, but look out for other viruses that may be popping their head up in the near future. As in all wars, every theater or front requires a different strategy. Hawai'i, an island state, is completely different from the mainland with its large land mass that includes over 6000 miles of border with Canada and Mexico. Therefore, we require a different strategy than what the Centers for Disease Control is recommending. What we should be doing is learning from and emulating what other island states/nations are doing, like Australia, Japan, and Hong Kong who are taking aggressive, proactive screening measures at their points of entry.

Unfortunately, Hawai'i is not following the successful example of these island nations. Instead, our leaders have chosen to follow a "passive" surveillance program at our domestic and international points of entry. What this means is that if airline personnel see obvious flu-like symptoms, they report it to the State health authorities at the airport. The flaws in this passive surveillance protocol are clear.

What we should be doing is exactly what other island states are successfully doing by stepping up our vigilance at our entry points. This would include: 1) Prior to landing, flight attendants would announce that if anyone has symptoms to notify them or someone at the terminal. Additionally, information sheets and health declaration questionnaires would be distributed at the same time as customs/agriculture forms. 2) After landing, quick, non-invasive temperature readings would be taken. It's quick and efficient and takes less than a few seconds per passenger.

**"Our leaders have chosen to follow a 'passive' surveillance program at our domestic and international points of entry."**

The price tag for implementing these procedures would be minimal compared to what a pandemic in Hawai'i would cost—and that's not even taking into account the cost in human suffering. Visitors will greatly appreciate these precautions because it will give them confidence that Hawai'i is doing everything it possibly can to protect the

health of their families. Residents will also feel more confident in our leadership.

Comparing our tourist industry, the lifeblood of Hawai'i's economy, with other island states/countries tells an interesting story. Our visitors numbered 7.4 million in 2007, while Japan had 8.35 million. In 2006, Hong Kong had 25.25 million and Australia had 5.5 million visitors. If these island states are able to efficiently and effectively process the millions of visitors they have every year, then Hawaii is certainly capable of doing the same.

If the State plans to follow a policy of containment for swine flu victims and their families to prevent them from spreading the virus to the wider community, then this policy will be complemented by the aggressive screening at the ports that I am advocating. If, however, the State plans to have a containment policy for people already in the State, but continue to leave the ports of entry relatively wide open, then it will be impossible for the State's containment strategy to succeed. After all, there will be little value in trying to contain local outbreaks of swine flu or any other virus if an endless number of new cases are allowed to enter. The only way that the State's present policy at the

airports and seaports can be considered logical or consistent would be if the State does not plan to contain potential local outbreaks. In other words, if the State plans to treat the swine flu or other potential

**"We should always hope for the best and prepare for the worst."**



deadly pandemics in the same way that they treat the seasonal flu, then their passive strategy at the ports makes sense.

So our leadership needs to make clear to the public which strategy they are following. Are they following a special strategy of containment in connection with the swine flu or other potentially pandemic viruses or are they going to take the laissez-faire strategy that we follow with the common cold and seasonal flu?

Our governor and her administration should open up an honest discussion about this issue. Let's consider the reasonableness of the strategies—namely should we be following the example of island states in a similar situation to our own, or should we be blindly following the CDC strategy for the mainland even though we are in completely different circumstances?

Currently, there are a handful of confirmed cases of the virus on Oahu. Now that Hawai'i has officially joined the growing number of states with swine flu, we need to apply every known strategy to prevent further introduction and spread. Like on any battlefield, we can do our best fighting to ward off the enemy when we are using all available defenses and when we have strong leadership, willing to take aggressive action to win the war.

SARS and the swine flu are just the first of many health crises that our people will be facing in the near future. We should always hope for the best and prepare for the worst. Whether the public health threat of swine flu continues to grow or if it declines and ultimately fades away, we should have an ironclad process in place that is tailored to the uniqueness of Hawai'i as an island state so we are ready to go to war when the next enemy virus heads our way.



Senator Gabbard called a press conference at the State Capitol on April 28, 2009 to demand a more aggressive approach in protecting Hawai'i from the swine flu.