

Legislative Update from...

# Senator Mike Gabbard



2014

*Aloha e friends,*

In last month's newsletter, I included an article about how the Environmental Assessment for Kapolei II Elementary School had been completed. I'm stoked to inform you that I just received an invitation for the April 2<sup>nd</sup> groundbreaking of the school, which will open at the intersection of Ft. Barrette Road and Kunehi Street in Kapolei in the Fall 2015. Is that cool, or what?

Please let me know if I can ever help you or your family in any way. I can be reached at 586-6830 or [sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov).



### COMMITTEE CHAIR

\* Energy and Environment

### MEMBER

\* Judiciary and Labor

\* Transportation and International Affairs

\* Education

### District 20

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



### Listen-Story Meeting

My next "Listen Story" meeting, a legislative session wrap-up, will be held at the Kapolei Starbucks (next to the Chevron Station) at 9am on Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. If you can't make it, send me an email, and I'll send you a summary of the meeting.



### Queens Medical Center West O'ahu Opening Soon

Great news! The Queen's Medical Center West O'ahu will open on May 20<sup>th</sup>. I'm very pleased that our community will once again have a hospital. The facility will open with 80 acute care beds, but that number will increase to 135 in the future. It will feature 23 emergency room bays, 4 operating rooms, and 2 procedure rooms. There will be approximately 470 employees working at the hospital. Queens has invested \$70 million to make this hospital a reality for our community. You can learn more about this state-of-the-art facility by checking out their website here: <http://queensmedicalcenter.org/queen-s-medical-center-west-oahu>

### Pulse Oximetry Bill Still Alive

At the request of a constituent, I introduced SB 2194 this session to require all birthing facilities in the state in perform a pulse oximetry screening on every newborn prior to discharge. I authored this bill in collaboration with the Hawai'i chapter of the American Heart Association. A pulse oximetry test is a non-invasive test that costs about \$1 and measures the blood oxygen saturation levels of newborns. Pulse oximetry is effective at detecting critical, life-threatening congenital heart defects, which otherwise can go undetected by current screening methods. Already more than 30 states around the country make the pulse oximetry test a requirement. This test is just common sense. What I've been told is this test is easy to administer and can be easily done along with other standard tests on newborns. I'm aware of cases where parents didn't find out their kids had heart defects, until it was almost too late. This is a good thing to do to ensure that newborns born with heart defects get the emergency care they need as quickly as possible. SB 2194 is still alive and I'm hopeful it becomes law in 2014.

## Mauka Lani Teacher Honored at the Capitol

I honored Bryan Rankie with a Senate floor presentation as part of Education Week at the Capitol on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Bryan is a resident of Ewa Beach and has been a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Mauka Lani Elementary in Makakilo since 2011. He's the National Milken Educators of Hawai'i's 2013 Teacher of Promise. The Hawai'i Milken Group was formed in 1996 to promote and enhance the quality of teaching and the education profession. He became the coach of the school basketball team and track team during his first year at the school. He holds the position of School Community Council Co-chair and is also the fundraising Chair for the Parent Teacher Ohana. Mauka Lani Principal Shelley Ferrara had this to say about him: "Bryan has an excellent rapport with everyone within our school, especially the students. He has an innate ability to connect with students through their academic strengths and interests." I commend Bryan for all his hard work and dedication to the education of our keiki.



## Prison is not Right Fit for Kalaeloa

I was surprised as you probably were to read the February 20<sup>th</sup> *Star Advertiser* article, "10 prison pitches include new facility in West O'ahu". In the article Public Safety Director, Ted Sakai, was quoted as saying that Kalaeloa would "possibly" be the site for a new prison. The article also stated that the prison would be "built on land a developer owns." Shortly, after reading this article, I sent a letter to both Mr. Sakai and Steve Colon, the President of Hunt Companies, Inc.'s Hawai'i Region. Hunt happens to control 500-acres of land in Kalaeloa and its affiliate, CGL, develops prisons. In the letter, I requested a briefing and also let them know that I was getting feedback from the community and was greatly concerned about these prison rumors. I also pointed out to both of them that the Administrative Rules for the Kalaeloa Community Development District (Chapter 15-200) do not allow for a prison according to the Land Use Table. I have since met with both Mr. Sakai and Mr. Colon. Both assured me that they would keep me and the community apprised if the discussion about a prison progresses. I, as State Senator for Kalaeloa, am strongly opposed to a prison in our community.

## Testimony in Support of Kalaeloa Water Company

I submitted testimony to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) on March 14<sup>th</sup> in support of Kalaeloa Water Co.'s application to provide potable water and wastewater service in Kalaeloa. Kalaeloa Water Company is an affiliate of Pural Water Company, which is based in Maui and has been working the past few years to take over Kalaeloa's aging water system. Here's what I had to say to the PUC:

*"As the State Senator for the Kalaeloa district for the past 7 ½ years, I've personally witnessed the deterioration of the Kalaeloa potable water system which greatly impacts both residents and businesses in that community. As you are aware, the Navy is no longer making the necessary investments in the water system to keep it in proper working condition. While I do have concerns about the fact that Kalaeloa Water Co. does plan to raise the water rates, my understanding is that the proposed rates will still be below that of the Board of Water Supply. Given the fact that the Navy could potentially stop providing water service for the community, it's critical that we act as quickly as possible to ensure that the system is being operated according to the best modern practices. There have been on-going discussions with the Board of Water Supply requesting that they take over the water system, but they have repeatedly declined that responsibility. Therefore, it makes sense that Kalaeloa Water Co.'s proposal be seriously considered because they are willing to make that commitment to the Kalaeloa community."*

## UH West O'ahu Chancellor Rockne Freitas Honored

A big congratulations to UH West O'ahu Chancellor Rockne Freitas for being chosen by Oregon State University as the recipient of this year's E.B. Lemon Distinguished Alumni. This is the highest alumni honor bestowed by that university. Chancellor Freitas played football at OSU and graduated in 1968 with a bachelor's degree in animal science. He also enjoyed a successful career in the NFL, before starting a career in higher education administration.



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## Kalaeloa Heritage and Legacy Foundation Preserving Hawaiian History and Culture

It was a privilege to recognize the officers and Board of Directors of the Kalaeloa Heritage and Legacy Foundation with a Senate floor presentation on March 12<sup>th</sup>. To give you some history, the Ahahui Siwila Hawai'i O Kapolei (Kapolei Hawaiian Civic Club) works in partnership with the Hawai'i Community Development Authority to identify, preserve, and protect Native Hawaiian historical sites, native plants and fauna in Kalaeloa. This process led to the discovery of a parcel of roughly 77-acres of land abundant with rare historical sites. This area was named the Kalaeloa Heritage Park. The Kalaeloa Heritage and Legacy Foundation (KHLF), a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization, was created to lead the stewardship of the Kalaeloa Heritage Park. The KHLF has forged partnerships with over 50 community organizations, including schools and businesses, since its inception 4 years ago. KHLF members and volunteers have logged almost 13,000 volunteer hours and, along with its partners, cleared about 2.5 acres of overgrown kiawe bush to reveal a cluster of significant archeological sites, which include sink holes, habitation structures, a religious altar, and a trail that is being used as an educational site. The goal of KHLF is to build a multi-purpose educational community and visitor center where the mo'olelo (stories) of Kalaeloa can be shared, where cultural practitioners can display their art, and where the community can embrace their heritage. A big mahalo to all the organizations and individuals who have dedicated themselves to preserving this cultural treasure and making the vision of Kalaeloa as a Wahi Ho'okela (Center of Excellence) become reality.



Senator Gabbard met with the officers and Board members of the Kalaeloa Heritage and Legacy Foundation (KHLF) at his State Capitol office on March 12th. KHLF is a non-profit organization that has worked to establish the Kalaeloa Heritage Park. Pictured (L to R) are Valerie Kane (Secretary/Treasurer and Board member), Dan Lyman (Board member), Melissa Lyman (President and Board Member), Senator Gabbard, Lance Holden (Board member), Eric Matanane (Vice President and Board member), and Shad Kane (Board member).

## Leeward Bikeway Project Back on Track

The state Department of Transportation held a public meeting on the Leeward Bikeway project at Ewa Elementary School on March 20<sup>th</sup>. I'm very happy its moving forward, as this will improve the quality of life for thousands of bicyclists and pedestrians who are likely to take advantage of this community amenity. The project is back on track after being delayed for a number years due to historical preservation issues. Plans are to extend the 14-mile bikeway from Waipio Pt. Access Road in the Pearl Harbor area to Lualualei Naval Road in Nanakuli. For much of the route, the bike path will follow alongside the existing OR & L railway and be 8 to 10 feet wide. The total cost: \$23 million with 80% of those funds coming from the federal government and 20% from the state. Design for the project is underway. Construction is expected to begin in the first quarter of 2015 and it should be completed by third quarter 2016.



## Governor Releases Funding for District 20 Schools

I was recently notified by Governor Abercrombie that he released \$4.3 million in state funding for several school projects in District 20. This funding will help improve the education of the keiki in our community.

Here's a quick rundown of those projects:

- ◆ East Kapolei Middle School, New School - \$3,000,000
- ◆ Mauka Lani Elementary, Electrical Upgrade - \$700,000
- ◆ Barbers Point Elementary School, Campus Wide Heat Abatement - \$500,000
- ◆ Kapolei High School, Po'okela Special Day Program Portables - \$100,000



Senator Gabbard, Chair of the Senate Energy and Environment Committee, and his fellow Co-Chairs heard testimony from the U.S. Navy at an informational Briefing regarding the Red Hill Fuel Leak at the State Capitol on March 7th. Legislators pictured (L to R) are: Rep. K. Mark Takai (Chair of Veterans and Military Affairs Committee), Rep. Chris Lee (Chair of the House Energy and Environmental Protection Committee), Senator Gabbard, and Senator Will Espero (Chair of the Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs Committee).



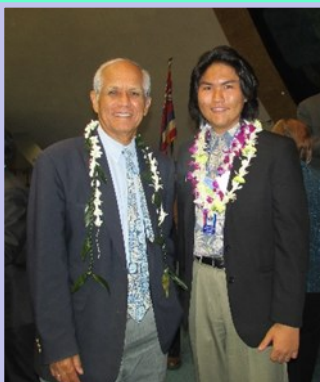
Senator Gabbard checked out the lower tunnel next to the fuel pipe system during a tour of the underground fuel tanks at the Navy's Red Hill Fuel Site on March 5th 2014. From left to right: Lt. Commander Angela Watson, Captain Mark Wheeler, Senator Will Espero, Senator Josh Green, Carlton Saito (Senator Gabbard's Committee Clerk), Gary Gill (Deputy Director of the Department of Health), and Senator Gabbard.



The State Senate honored the Hokule'a and her crew with a floor presentation at the State Capitol on March 10th. Pictured are Nainoa Thompson (crew member of the Hokule'a) and Senator Gabbard .



Senator Gabbard and his wife Carol attended the Nanakuli High and Intermediate School Performing Arts Center production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" on March 21st. Pictured (L to R) are Deja Ceruti, Dorian Ingram-Tavares, Bailey Barnes, Mrs. Gabbard, Senator Gabbard, Director Robin Kitsu, Danell Casuga, and Daphnei Hussein.



Senator Gabbard introduced Noah Eckart, an intern from Kapolei High School, to fellow Senators and teachers during Education Week at the State Capitol on March 19th.

Senator Gabbard spoke to the students of TeenPact at the Judiciary History Center in Honolulu on March 19th. TeenPact is a dynamic, hands-on leadership school for Christian students ages 13 to 17.

