

Legislative Update from...

# Senator Mike Gabbard

Summer  
2015

*Aloha e Friends,*

I completed my 9th session as your State Senator on May 7th. Some of the big news from the session is that we passed legislation: to extend the general excise tax for the rail project, to create dispensaries for medical marijuana, and to allow for the preservation of 665-acres of land at Turtle Bay.

Congratulations to the 2015 graduates of Kapolei High, James Campbell High, Waipahu High, Island Pacific Academy, and American Renaissance Academy. Also, a big congratulations to the players and coaches of the James Campbell High School boys baseball and girls softball teams for both winning the Hawai'i State High School Championship! As always, please feel free to contact me at 586-6830 or email [sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov) if I can help you or your family in any way. You can also follow me on Twitter [@senmikegabbard](https://twitter.com/senmikegabbard), Instagram [@sengabbard](https://www.instagram.com/sengabbard), and Facebook at [facebook.com/senmikegabbard](https://facebook.com/senmikegabbard).

## COMMITTEE CHAIR

Water, Land & Agriculture

## MEMBER

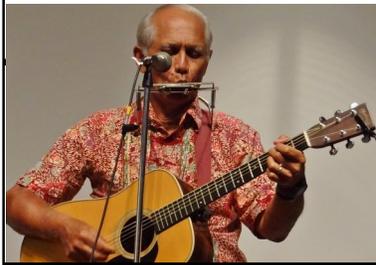
Transportation & Energy

Judiciary and Labor

Higher Education and the Arts

## District 20

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



Sen. Gabbard took 1st place with his acoustic 60s medley during the "Capitol Idol" Hawai'i Food-bank fundraiser April 20, 2015.

## "Listen Story" Meeting

My next Listen-Story meeting will be at the Ewa Mahiko District Park Meeting Room on **Saturday, June 20th, from 9am to 10am.**

## Senate Reorganization

As you may have seen on the news, there was a shake-up in the Senate Leadership at the end of session. Sen. Ron Kouchi of Kaua'i replaced Sen. Donna Kim as Sen. President. I'm now the Chair of the newly-created Water, Land, and Agriculture Committee. At least for now, the responsibilities of this committee include those programs relating to coastal zone management; forest management and reserve; land and water management; land reclamation; management areas, including ocean recreation management areas and small boat harbors; programs relating to transit-oriented development as it relates to land use; state planning; naturally occurring fisheries; ocean resources; state parks and beaches; sustainability; and programs relating to agriculture and aquaculture, including mariculture. I'll also be Vice Chair of the Transportation and Energy Committee, which will be chaired by Sen. Lorrain Inouye.

Sen. Mike and Carol Gabbard attended Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard's keynote honoring our service members at the War Memorial Natatorium in Waikiki on May 24, 2015.



Sen. Gabbard met with students from Waipahu Intermediate School who visited his office on February 11, 2015.



## 2015 Legislative Session Overview

There was a total of 2,894 bills introduced during the 2015 legislative session (1,515 in the House and 1,379 in the Senate). Of those, 252 were passed by the Legislature. The Governor has three choices: he can sign the bills into law, allow the bills to become law without his signature, or veto the bills. Here are the next major deadlines:

**June 29th** – Deadline for the Governor to notify the Legislature if he intends to veto any of those bills.

**July 14th** – Deadline for Governor to veto bills and for the Legislator to come back into Special Session to override those vetoes.

Please let the Governor know how you feel about the different legislation by calling him at 586-0034 or filling out the "Contact Us" form here: <http://governor.hawaii.gov/>.



Sen. Gabbard enjoyed meeting with this awesome group at his "Listen Story" community meeting at the Barbers Point Bowling Center March 28, 2015.

### Key Energy & Environment Committee Legislation

This was my 7th session as the Chair of the Energy and Environment Committee (ENE). Here's a quick overview of some of the key bills I championed that passed the Legislature:

**HB 623** – requires the state to get 100% of its electricity from renewable sources by 2045. This is a first in the nation law and makes us the most populated set of islands in the world with an independent grid to establish this goal.

**SB 1050** – requires our electric utilities to apply with the Public Utilities Commission by October 1, 2015 to establish a community-based renewables program. This will allow people to hui up, find a piece of land, and purchase or lease however many PV panels they want and then get a credit on their electricity bill for the energy they produce. This will benefit our renters and those without roof space, because they too can now lower their electricity bills and do something good for our environment.

**SB 349** – establishes a tax credit of up to \$3 million per year through 2020 for the production of renewable fuels, such as methanol, ethanol, hydrogen, biodiesel, and biogas, at a local facility. These renewable fuels can be made from feedstocks, such as algae, jatropha, palm oil, solid waste, and used cooking oil.

**SB 359** – expands the existing barrel tax on petroleum to also include coal and liquid natural gas to help fund energy & food security and emergency environmental clean ups.

**SB 717** – repeals the existing law that requires gasoline sold in the state to include 10% ethanol. This makes sense given that we are importing 45 million gallons of the ethanol from the mainland each year, which doesn't benefit our economy.



Sen. Gabbard met with 7th graders from Island Pacific Academy (IPA) from Kapolei, including 13 exchange students who are here from IPA's sister school, Instituto Thomas Jefferson, in Queretaro, Mexico. The school has a very high level of education and promotes international mindedness in their curriculum, and part of the exchange program is to give the students the opportunity to practice their second language and to learn about the culture and life in Hawai'i nei.

### State Budget Overview

For the Fiscal Year 2015-2017, we have a \$ 26.2 billion operating budget and a \$1.5 billion construction (CIP) budget. Major components of the operating budget are Human Services (24%); Education (15%); Other Departments (15%); Health (13%); UH (8%), Transportation (7%); Retirement Benefits (6%); Health Premium Benefits (6%); and Debt Service (6%).

**HB 1150** – establishes a tax credit of up to \$10,000 so that people with cesspools can upgrade to a septic system. This is a good idea because our state has close to 90,000 cesspools, which have a negative impact on our environment.

**HB 1509** - establishes a goal that UH become net zero as it relates to its energy use – this means they would produce as much electricity as they use. This will be huge for reducing their deficit, because right now the UH System's electricity bill is over \$40 million a year.

## Construction Funding for Senate District 20

There was \$90,445,000 in construction funding included in the 2015-2017 state budget for Senate District 20. Here's a breakdown of those projects:

### **UH West O'ahu**

(Administration and Allied Health Facility) - \$24 million

### **H-1 Makakilo to Palalailai Interchange**

(Improvements) - \$7 million

### **Kapolei Middle School**

(New Bus Lanes and Drop Off) - \$1.8 million

### **Kapolei Middle School**

(Additional Parking) - \$100,000

### **Makakilo Elementary School**

(ADA Compliance) - \$1.045 million

### **Kalaeloa Barbers Point Harbor**

(Fuel Pier Improvements) - \$54 million

### **Kapolei Community Development Corporation**

(Grant-in-Aid for Heritage Center) - \$500,000

### **National Kidney Foundation**

(Grant-in-Aid for Program Development Center) - \$2 million

## Ho'okele Elementary to Open Next Month

Great news! A new school, Ho'okele Elementary will be opening on July 29th for class. The school is located at the intersection of Ft. Barrette Rd. and Kunehi Street, across from Kapolei High, next to the Mehana subdivision. It will serve students in grades K – 5 with an expected enrollment of 750. The school will have Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification and will promote sustainability by minimizing energy consumption, incorporating renewable energy sources, providing daylighting, and reducing water usage. Ms. Lauren Dunn is the school's principal.



Sen. Gabbard and Senate President Donna Mercado Kim presented 2014 Miss America Nina Davuluri with an Honorary Certificate from the Hawai'i State Legislature on February 27, 2015.



Sen. Gabbard sang at Tulsi & Abraham's Wedding on April 9, 2015, at Kala'u Fishpond, in Kaneohe.



Sen. Gabbard met with a group of Youth Challenge Academy Cadets in his office on March 23, 2015. They stopped by during their tour of the Capitol. The Senator answered their questions and told them he would be there for their graduation. Their program, based in Kalaeloa, gives teens another chance to get back on track and complete their high school studies.

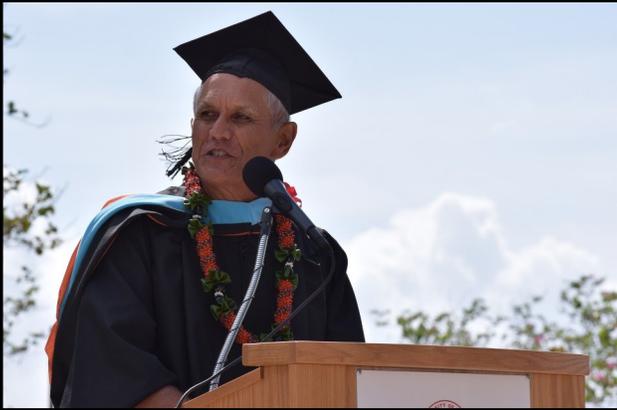


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Sen. Gabbard surprised Saiona Nifae Faumuina, a Junior at Kapolei High School, with an Honorary Certificate from the State Senate in recognition of his achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. (L-R: Paueli V. Faumuina, Jr., Saiona Nifae Faumuina-Eagle Scout, Vaoiva Faumuina, and Sen. Gabbard.)



Sen. Gabbard gave the keynote speech at the Spring Graduation at UH West O'ahu on May 9, 2015.



Sen. Gabbard was invited to a press conference on March 31, 2015 at the Hawaiian Humane Society, where they announced the location of the new West Oahu campus, which will be at Ho'opili. (L-R: Rep. Matt LoPresti; Rick Zwern, chairman of the board, Hawai'ian Humane Society; Pamela Burns, CEO, Hawai'ian Humane Society; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Cameron Nekota, vice president, D.R. Horton - Schuler Homes; and Bob Bruhl, president of D.R. Horton - Schuler Homes.)

### Honoring Eagle Scout Saiona Nifae Faumuina

I surprised Saiona Nifae Faumuina with an Honorary Certificate from the State Senate in recognition of his achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. The ceremony took place at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Kapolei on May 6th. Saiona is a 16-year old Junior at Kapolei High School. He's the oldest son of Paueli V. Faumuina, Jr. and Vaoiva Faumuina and an active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, serving in various leadership roles such as Deacon Quorum Secretary and President. Saiona's Eagle Project was improving the Pu'u Heleakala Recreation Center Playground in Nanakuli. Working with Disney Aulani, Kaboom, and Valley of Rainbows, Saiona constructed an amazing playground that will be appreciated by keiki and their parents for many years.

Outside of scouts and church, Saiona participates in basketball with the PAL league and football in the Halo League. He currently plays volleyball for Kapolei High and has intentions of entering the Kapolei High School Basketball Summer League. Congratulations to Saiona Nifae Faumuina for his determination and dedication to the Scouts. I wish him much success in life!



Sen. Gabbard honored the American Heritage Girls, Hawai'i Troop 1 and Troop 50 on March 6, 2015, on the Senate floor, with an Honorary Certificate from the State Senate. (L-R: Jamie Wood-Leader of Troop HI50, Summer Lindsey, Savannah Lindsey, Taylor Berge, Sen. Gabbard, Ella Bartholomew, Maria Victoria "Marivic" Lopez Benson, Danielle Long and Regina Leonardi-Leader of troop HI1).