



Aloha e Friends,

Happy New Year to you and your 'ohana. Opening Day of the 2020 legislative session is on January 15 (which just happens to also be <ahem> my 72nd birthday). I invite you to stop by my office at 11:30am that day for refreshments. I continue to chair the Senate Agriculture & Environment Committee (AEN) with a focus on increasing local food production and dedicating more resources to protecting our environment. Carol and I joyfully celebrated our 51st wedding anniversary on December 27. We hope you and your families are well and that you have an awesome 2020 and beyond! As always, please feel free to contact me at 808-586-6830 or sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov if I

can help you or your family in any way. You can also follow me on Twitter @senmikegabbard, Instagram @sengabbard, or Facebook www.facebook.com/senmikegabbard.

**COMMITTEE
CHAIR**

**AGRICULTURE &
ENVIRONMENT**

MEMBER

- ◆ Judiciary
- ◆ Labor, Culture & the Arts

DISTRICT 20

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

At Your Service...

My staffing is set for the 2020 legislative session. My Office Manager will be Meg Turner, who will oversee the overall operations of my office and will be my scheduler. Former teacher, Tonya Miller, will assist Meg with office duties and constituent services. Rock Riggs will shift over from the Office Manager role to Committee Clerk to help me run the Agriculture & Environment (AEN) Committee. Recent UH Manoa graduate, Sydney Williams, will serve as a legislative aide and assistant Committee Clerk. We'll also have the help of two interns: Skylar Geasey, a junior studying political science at UH Manoa, and Jamilyn Chapman, a sophomore studying Foreign Policy and Security Practice at HPU.

- ◆ February 28 (First Decking)
- ◆ March 5 (First Crossover)
- ◆ March 6 (Resolution introduction deadline)
- ◆ March 20 (Second Lateral)
- ◆ April 3 (Second Decking)
- ◆ April 30 (Final Decking)
- ◆ May 7 (Sine Die – session concludes)

Get Involved in the 2020 Legislative Session

As the Legislative Session gets underway, I hope you'll take the time to weigh in with testimony on legislation that you think is important to you and your family and to the future of our state. The first step is to visit the State Capitol website --capitol.hawaii.gov, where you can get signed up to "submit testimony", "hearing notifications" and "measure tracking."

Here are some key dates for the session:

- ◆ January 23 (Bill Introduction deadline)
- ◆ February 14 (First Lateral)



LEGISLATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS

My 2020 Legislation

I'll be introducing many bills/resolutions in 2020. Here's a quick rundown of some of that legislation. Please be aware that these bills won't be numbered until later in the month. So stay tuned!

Agricultural Appraisers - there are currently no certified agricultural appraisers in the state. Commercial appraisers lack the specialized knowledge required to accurately appraise agricultural properties, which can result in appraisals for private agricultural lands that are far higher than their actual value. This bill would appropriate \$118,540 to the Department of Agriculture to establish one full-time equivalent agricultural appraiser position.

Animal Fur Ban - more than 100 million animals are



violently killed each year solely for their fur. Existing laws provide relatively little oversight of the fur farming and fur trade industries. This bill would prohibit the manufacture, sale, or distribution of animal fur products in the state. There are exemptions for a fur product by a nonprofit organization, a used fur product, a fur product required for use in the practice of a religion, a fur product used by a member of a recognized Native American tribe, and a fur product where the activity is expressly authorized by federal law.

Bottling Water in Aluminum Cans - this bill was inspired by a visit to the Ball Corporation in Campbell Industrial Park. The basic issue is that existing state law expressly prohibits carbonated soft drink, juice, and beer operations from using the same equipment to can noncarbonated bottled water. This is a problem because



Sen. Gabbard at Ball Corporation, Campbell Industrial Park, Kapolei June 5, 2019. (L-R: Jeff Matthijssen-Ball Corporation Kapolei Plant Manager, Senator Kurt Fevella, Sen. Gabbard, and Simi Leo-Ball Corporation Kapolei Plant Logistics.)

companies like Ball could be selling bottled water in aluminum cans which could reduce the use of plastic bottles. Unlike plastic bottles, 100% of the aluminum can is recycled. This bill would repeal the requirement that noncarbonated bottled water be bottled in or through lines or equipment through which only water is passed.

Invasive Species Rapid Response – this bill would establish an invasive species rapid response trust fund with a \$1 million appropriation to be administered by the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) to mitigate and eradicate invasive species threats. If HISC determined that a new invasive species poses a substantial threat to the agriculture, commerce, economy, environment, or public health of the state, then they would submit a request to the Governor to declare an invasive species emergency. Once this action is taken, then HISC could take action and expend moneys from the trust fund.



Sen. Gabbard pre-flight with the OISC field crew supervisor and the Airborne Aviation pilot. (Courtesy O'ahu Invasive Species Committee, May 2013)

LEGISLATIVE & COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility - this resolution urges the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Health to reject the approval of a single wall tank upgrade alternative option for the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility and support the secondary containment tank upgrade alternative option, or, if secondary containment is determined to be infeasible, the relocation of the fuel tanks away from the aquifer.

Beach Restoration - according to a 2012 study by UH and the United States Geological Survey, 70% of beaches in Hawai'i are eroding. Burdensome regulations and permit requirements for the beach restoration and maintenance projects discourage and prevent individuals, community organizations, and government agencies from initiating beach restoration projects. This bill would waive the section 401 water quality certification requirement for small scale beach restoration permit applicants that have met the conditions of the small-scale beach restoration regulations and qualifying criteria and have received notice of authorization to proceed from the Department of Land and Natural Resources.



Courtesy Waikiki Improvement Association

Informational Briefing on Department of Agriculture Budget Coming Up

As the AEN Committee Chair, I'll be co-hosting an informational briefing with Ways and Means Committee Chair, Donovan Dela Cruz, on January 16 at 9:30am in Conference Room 211 at the Capitol on the Department of Agriculture's budget. This info briefing will give me and other legislators an opportunity to hear from the DOA on their budgetary priorities for the upcoming 2020-2021 Fiscal Year, which is from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. The DOA's share of the state budget is currently only 0.4%. This



Sen. Gabbard gave the Keynote Address for Youth Challenge Academy Class 46 on June 15, 2017 at Pearl City Cultural Center Auditorium.

is woefully inadequate given the pressing need for our state to increase local food production so that we can be more sustainable.

Youth Challenge Academy Graduation

I honored the graduates of Class 51 of the Youth Challenge Academy's Kalaeloa program with Honorary Certificates from the State Senate in recognition of their graduation at the Pearl City Cultural Center on December 12. While I wasn't able to be there in person for the cadets' graduation, I recorded a short video that was presented during the ceremony. This year, Tristin Thompkins, was chosen from the 70 graduates of the Kalaeloa program as the \$500 "Mike Gabbard Scholarship" recipient. Congrats Class 51!

Grant Application Released

Each year, the State Legislature awards funding to non-profit organizations that are doing good work in our community. During the 2020 legislative session, the Legislature will provide funding for Fiscal Year 2021 (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021). In order to be eligible, the non-profit will need to fill out the application form in its entirety, which can be accessed at the State Legislature homepage (capitol.hawaii.gov) under the "Legislative Information" tab. A completed original of the application would need to be submitted to both the House Finance Committee and the Senate Ways and Means Committee. The deadline to submit the application is January 17, 2020 at 4:30pm. For more information, contact the House Finance Committee at 586-6200 and/or the Senate Ways and Means Committee at 586-6800.

COMMUNITY EVENTS



Dementia-Related Workshops

Catholic Charities Hawai'i will be hosting a free dementia workshop at the Catholic Charities Hawai'i Community Hall (1822 Keeaumoku Street) on January 10 from 4:30pm-6:30pm, directed at caregivers of persons with memory loss. The topics will include presentations on "Health Brain Aging and Dementia" by Dr. Kamal Masaki and "Dementia, Depression, and Delirium: Knowing the Difference" by Dr. Aida Wen. There will be light refreshments and parking instructions will be provided to registrants. To register, please click [here](#) or contact Jody Mishan at 295-2624 or jmishan@hawaii.rr.com.

Honouliuli Educational Fair

There will be a free Honouliuli Educational Fair at Island Pacific Academy (909 Haumea Street) in Kapolei on January 11 from 9am to 11am. This event will feature educational resources for Native Hawaiian 'ohana in Ewa and Kapolei. Educational workshops and resources will be provided by Kamehameha Schools, INPEACE, PATCH, Keiki O Ka Aina, and Ulu A'e Learning Center. IPA will host an open house and will share scholarship opportunities. There will also be free health screenings to identify developmental, hearing, and vision screenings in young learners.

808 Cleanups at Nimitz Beach

808 Cleanups will have its first monthly stewardship of 2020 at Nimitz Beach on December 7th from 9am to 11am. Nimitz Beach is located on Coral Sea Road, where the Coast Guard comes closest to the ocean. They'll focus on removing illegal dumping and litter and removal of invasive species. This event is kid-friendly and open to the public. All cleanup supplies and tools will be provided. In order to



participate, you'll need to sign the online waiver form here: 808cleanups.org/waiver. Park along the concrete barricades on the ocean side when you arrive.

Take the Plant Slant! Healthy Cooking Class

Blue Zones Kapolei-Ewa will be holding a healthy cooking demonstration to teach people how to prepare ono, plant-based recipes on January 6 from 10am-11:30am at Keahumoa Place (91-1451 Keahumoa Parkway #3801) in Ewa Beach. One to three recipes will be demonstrated by a chef, cook, or registered dietician. Participants will be offered a sample and recipe card for each of the prepared recipes. Please register here: facebook.com/pg/bzpkapoleiewa/events/. As a 47-year vegetarian and now vegan, I can vouch for the benefits of a plant-based diet. By the way, during the 2020 legislative session, I'll be introducing a resolution to request the Department of Education to adopt a "Meatless Mondays" school lunch program to promote environmental conscious and healthy plant-based eating.

