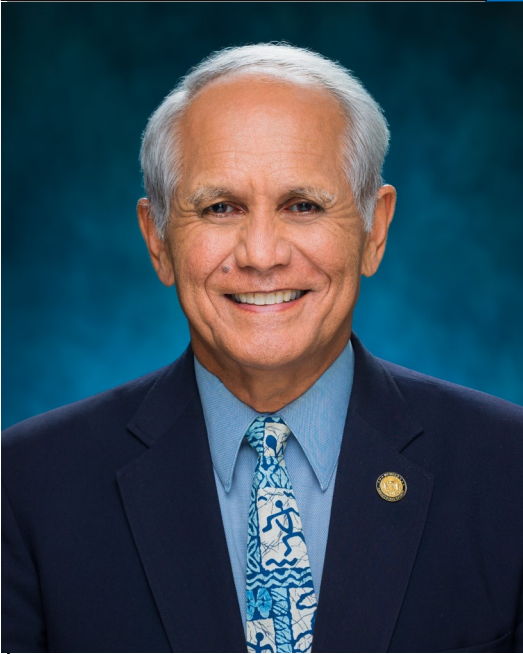




The Senate
STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII

Senator Mike Gabbard

October 2020 Vol. 14 Issue 10



Aloha e Friends,

I hope you and your 'ohana are safe and doing well amid the current COVID-19 pandemic. The Governor recently announced that starting October 15 incoming transpacific travelers can bypass the current 14-day quarantine if they're tested for COVID-19 before arriving to our state.

It's been a very positive thing that the COVID-19 infections have gone down and on September 24 Mayor Caldwell allowed our parks, beaches, and trails to be open for groups of 5 or less and many of our businesses to open back up again. Both of these decisions will help get our economy moving.

Carol and I have been battling each other daily playing ping pong on our lanai...and we're both looking forward to some golf and tennis to get more exercise!

As always, please contact me at 808-586-6830 or sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov if I can help you or your family in any way. Also follow me on [Twitter @senmikegabbard](https://twitter.com/senmikegabbard), or Facebook at facebook.com/senmikegabbard.

**COMMITTEE
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ENVIRONMENT**

MEMBER

- ◆ Judiciary
- ◆ Labor, Culture & the Arts

DISTRICT 20

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

First Special Session

On October 5-6, the State Senate will convene the First Special Session of 2020 to consider the appointment of 8 judges to the Intermediate Court of Appeals, District Court, and Family Court. There will be a public hearing of the Judiciary Committee, which I'll participate in as a committee member, on the judicial appointees on October 1 at 1pm and the Committee will vote at a decision-making hearing on October 5 at 10:30am.

There will be live remote public testimony via videoconference, as the Capitol building remains closed to the public due to COVID-19. This remote testimony option will also allow neighbor island residents to testify without traveling to Honolulu. Members of the public who wish to testify via videoconference should use the Legislature's website (capitol.hawaii.gov) to submit their written testimony and select "yes" when asked if they will be testifying remotely for the hearing. Written testimony is required to participate via videoconference and must be submitted at least 24 hours before the hearing. Additional information and details will be on the hearing notice and capitol website. The Senate will convene in a floor session on October 5 at 10:00 a.m. Final Senate votes on the appointments are expected on Tuesday, October 6 at 11:30 a.m.



DISTRICT 20 NEWS

Farrington Highway Improvements Project Moving Forward

The City is moving forward with improvements to Farrington Highway for a 3-mile segment between the Kapolei Golf Course and Ft. Weaver Road. This past session the Legislature appropriated \$100 million to fund the construction of the project.

The Environmental Assessment for the project was completed in September 2020. The project will include widening this section of Farrington Highway from 2 to 4 lanes with new sidewalks, bike lanes, a 44-foot landscaped median strip, new bridges, culverts, and major utility relocation. Construction is expected to begin in May 2021.

West Loch Munitions Annex Plans Raise Concerns

I represent the West Loch Fairways area, which is close to the Navy's proposed expansion of the Army's West Loch Ordnance Facilities. I got an email from Ewa Neighborhood Board Member and current West Loch Fairways resident John Rogers on August 30 expressing his concerns about how the West Loch Munitions Annex project would go beyond the existing footprint and requesting that I intervene to see if the Navy could hold a public hearing to better inform area residents.

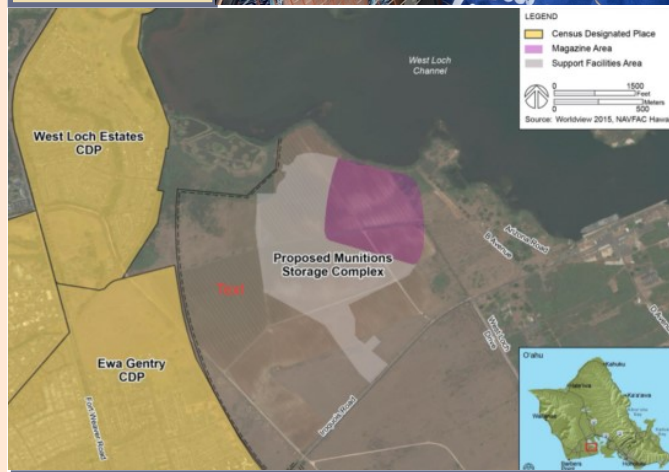
The military's plan is to relocate the existing Army munitions operations at Lualualei Annex in Wai'anae and also build 24 new box magazines for storage of Navy ordnance. The project is supposed to be completed by September 2022. My office contacted the Navy on September 1 and got a response back from CAPT Gordie Meyer, the new NAVFAC Hawai'i Commander, on September 3 who explained that the public can submit public comments, but gave no further evidence that they would hold a public hearing. On September 15, I sent out an email to over 3,000 of my constituents, including some living in Ewa Beach, alerting them to the close of the public comment period on September 18 on the Environmental Assessment on the project and urging them to get their comments in.

I wrote CAPT Meyer on September 16 asking for the Navy to reconsider their position and to hold a public hearing to provide info to the public and to allow them to ask questions, but I haven't gotten any feedback yet. With COVID-19 happening, it'd be easy for them to do a Zoom meeting. What brings even more public concern... (cont. p.4)



Sen. Gabbard presented an Honorary Certificate to Dr. Raj Kumar, Pres. Gandhi International Institute of Peace at Mahatma Gandhi's 149th birthday on Oct. 2, 2018, at the Gandhi statue, at the Honolulu Zoo beachside.

When the mayor lifted the Covid ban on tennis Sept. 24, Sen. and Carol Gabbard rushed out to hit some balls on the nearby courts.



U.S. Army West Loch Ordnance Facilities—
Draft Environmental Assessment

Figure 3-3: Census Designated Places
Near West Loch Annex

COVID-19 AND MORE

Rental Assistance Available

On September 8, 2020, Governor Ige announced the launch of a new program that will provide federal assistance for Hawai'i renters at risk of eviction for non-payment of rent because of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The State of Hawai'i Rent Relief and Housing Assistance Program (RRHAP) assists Hawai'i residents who are unable to pay their rent because they're unemployed or have had a reduction in income due to the pandemic. Funded by \$100 million in federal CARES Act appropriations, the program provides renters at risk of eviction with assistance in making monthly rent as well as financial counseling. Applications are currently being accepted for housing payments due between August 1, 2020 and December 28, 2020.

The program is administered by non-profit partners Catholic Charities Hawai'i and Aloha United Way. To apply, go to hihousinghelp.com

COVID-19 Household Hardship Relief Fund Program

Mayor Caldwell announced on September 23 that the City still has more than \$20 million to assist O'ahu residents under the COVID-19 Hardship Relief Program. This program uses federal CARES Act funds to offer quick financial relief to O'ahu households impacted by the pandemic. The maximum benefit per household is up to \$2,000 per month and up to \$500 additional per month for childcare services. Eligible payments may include rent, mortgage, certain utilities, childcare providers recognized by Department of Human Services, and other emergency expenses. Payments will be made directly to the vendor.

You can apply through either one of the City's partners:

- ◆ Aloha United Way: 2-1-1/auw.org
- ◆ Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement: 596-8155/hawaiiancouncil.org

These are the criteria to qualify:

- ◆ Applicants must reside in the City and County of Honolulu
- ◆ Applicants must demonstrate economic hardship due to COVID-19 or related business closures
- ◆ Applicants should be prepared to provide copies of tax returns, pay stubs, and other income related forms/documents

New Taro Chip Product

As Chair of the Agriculture and Environment Committee, I often meet with farmers about new agricultural products that are being considered. On August 27, I had



On August 31, Sen. Gabbard met with Peter Kam, project facilitator at Spihcorat Corp, a Waipahu-based company that's proposing to use cloned taro to produce taro chips.

a phone meeting with Peter Kam, the project facilitator at Spihcorat Corp, a Waipahu-based company that's proposing to use cloned taro to produce taro chips.

Spihcorat Corp proposes to transform the landscape of Hawai'i's agriculture with a replacement crop for sugar cane and pineapple, with the creation of widely accepted value-added products from dry land taro. Their first product will be a salty snack, a chip which looks like a potato chip and with similar texture, but healthier than a potato chip. I wrote a letter of support for Spihcorat Corp. on September 14 stating:

"I'm writing this letter of support for Spihcorat Corp. and their vision to make large scale agriculture feasible again in Hawai'i. I fully support their noble cause and efforts which would help preserve our local lifestyle, and potentially promote agriculture once again as an economic engine in our economy. I've sampled one of their products, a chip made from taro. Yummy! I believe this product has the potential to create a new industry in Hawai'i, more jobs for farmers, as well as jobs in the manufacturing and distribution industries."

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NON-VIOLENCE AND MAHATMA GANDHI DAY CELEBRATION

I'll be a featured speaker at the International Day of Non-Violence and Mahatma Gandhi Day Celebration via Zoom on October 2. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, also known as "Mahatma," was born on October 2, 1869. He became the leader of Indian nationalism in British-ruled India and led

culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence."

The International Day is an occasion to "disseminate the message of non-violence through education and public awareness." In Hawai'i, the Gandhi International Institute for Peace was founded by Dr. Raj Kumar, Ph.D., with a mission to provide information, consultation, education, and training to resolve conflict in a non-violent manner. An initial effort to promote public awareness was a request to the State Legislature to commemorate the inspiration, tolerance, and enduring legacy of Mohandas Gandhi on the date of his birth.

During the 2015 session, the Legislature unanimously adopted Senate Bill 332 proposing to designate October 2 of each year as "Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi Day" as a day of recognition and observance. On April 9, 2015, Governor David Ige signed the bill into law as Act 5--making Hawai'i the first state in the Union to honor Gandhi. October 2, 2020 marks the 151st birthday of Mohandas Gandhi, the 15th annual observation of the International Day of Non-Violence, and the sixth celebration of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi Day in Hawai'i. The celebration of the 15th International Day of Non-Violence and Mahatma Gandhi Day Celebration will be hosted by Honolulu's Still & Moving Center.

You can participate in the event via this link:

[facebook.com/StillandMovingCenter](https://www.facebook.com/StillandMovingCenter).

(West Loch Munitions Annex Plans Raise Concerns, cont. from p. 2)

...to this issue is the fact that in 1944 a munitions accident triggered an explosion that rocked West Loch, leaving 163 men dead and nearly 400 wounded in what is considered Pearl Harbor's second-worst disaster in terms of fatalities. And this disaster was covered up by the Navy for several years.

Obviously, the nearby residents of Ewa Beach and Waipahu are wary of another possible munitions explosion and deserve a public hearing to get some answers. The Navy should show some respect to their hosts here on O'ahu and provide this opportunity. Why else do they have a Public Affairs Office?

International Day of Non-Violence and 15th Mahatma Gandhi Day Celebration

FREE WEBINAR

Friday, October 2, 2020, 2 PM to 6 PM (HST)

Presented by **Gandhi International Institute for Peace and Still & Moving Center**

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Dr. Arun Gandhi, New York
Grandson of Mahatma Gandhi

Amb. Anwarul Chowdhury
Former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations

FEATURED SPEAKERS:

Dr. Raj Kumar, President GIIP
Senator Mike Gabbard, *Hawai'i*
Dr. N Radhakrishnan, *India*
Dr. Terry Shintani, *Hawai'i*
Dr. Andrea Malji, *Hawai'i*
Renee Tillotson, *Hawai'i*
Kumu Malia Helela, *Hawai'i*

Lt. Governor Josh Green, Hawai'i
Pramod Sawant, *CM -Goa, India*
Major Rakesh Bharadwaj, *Canada*
Dr. Krishna Reddy, *California*
Judith Jenya, *Esq., Mexico*
Dr. Kahu Kaleo Patterson, *Hawai'i*
Sooriya Kumar, *Hawai'i*

Event includes: Spiritual invocation, chanting mantra, music and dance.
Performances by: Yash Nagpaul, Sequoia Carr-Brown, Willow Chang, Zeny Ogrisseg, Tara Pandeya, Roger Sinha, Akari Ueoka

Sign up through Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/117349133417>
To make a donation to GIIP: <http://www.gandhianpeace.org/donate.html>

For more information:
www.stillandmovingcenter.com | www.gandhianpeace.org

Sponsors: Still & Moving Center, Indian-American Friendship Council, The Matsunaga Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Pacific Justice and Reconciliation Center, Iolani Peace Institute, UNA Hawaii, Interfaith Alliances of Hawaii, Hawaii Health Foundation, Vegetarian Society of Hawaii, Padam and Madhu Dhakad, Open Space Yoga, Down to Earth Organic & Natural, Center for Attitudinal Healing, Hawaii Forgiveness Project, Maitreya Institute, Global Media Productions, Knights of St. John Hawaii, Empty Hands Music, Mouna Farms and Hawaii Health Guide.

GIIP is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations are welcome.

India to independence through the pioneering use of nonviolent civil disobedience and passive resistance, inspiring various political leaders and civil rights movements across the world to the present day.

Gandhi is commemorated annually on October 2 with a national holiday in India and with the International Day of Non-Violence worldwide, established by the United Nations General Assembly on June 15, 2007 by the adoption of resolution A/RES/61/271.

The resolution reaffirms "the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence" and the desire "to secure a