

Aloha e Friends,

Please mark your calendar for Saturday, **September 17, 9-10am, at the Kapolei High School Teachers' Lounge**, where I'll be hosting my first in-person Listen Story Community Meeting since the COVID shut down in March 2020. The meeting will be a hybrid, which means you can attend either in-person or via Zoom. I'm excited to welcome Special Guest, Ed Sniffen, Hawaii Department of Transportation's Deputy Director for Highways, who will provide an update on the Makakilo Drive Extension from the State's perspective, along with DOT's revenue plans for highway maintenance, and more. Following Dir. Sniffen, I'll provide community updates. There will be time for questions and answers. Please **send me an email** to **RSVP**.

My last Listen Story in August featured guest speaker Roger Morton, Director, Department of Transportation Services for the City and County of Honolulu. Visit my [YouTube page](#) to view the zoom recording. Please don't hesitate to contact me at (808) 586-6830 or sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov if I can help you or your family in any way. I also invite you to follow me on social media: [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Twitter](#). Best wishes to you and your 'ohana.

Mike

Classical Conversations Student Visit

On August 22, I had the pleasure of meeting with a group of parents and 8th graders from the Ewa Beach "Classical Conversations Home Schooling" group who came to tour the Capitol and talk story in my office. The parents and students attended *Special Session*, where Judge Annalisa Bernard Lee was confirmed by the Senate and will serve in the District Court of the Second Circuit - Maui County. Alohacongrats! The 8th graders were able to get a glimpse of some of the legislative process as part of their studies on the Constitution. I hosted a meeting in my office afterwards and answered some great questions from the students, as well as discussed valuable opportunities available through homeschooling.



On August 22, Sen. Gabbard welcomed the Ewa Beach "Classical Conversations Home Schooling" group to the Capitol.

Hawaiian Human Society Site Visit

On September 2, I kicked off Labor Day weekend with a fantastic visit to the construction site of the new West O'ahu Hawaiian Humane Society in Ewa, scheduled for completion in April 2023. As the Chair of the Senate Agriculture & Environment Committee, and Senator for the District where the new facility will be located, I was invited on the tour by President and CEO, Anna Neubauer and Director of Community Engagement, Steph Kendrick. I was stoked to see the progress they've achieved so far. Amazing facilities will be available for the community, including open air housing with kennels for animals big & small, meet-n-greet areas for pet adoptions, secure drop-off areas for lost pets or strays that will be accessible 24/7, spay and neuter centers, classroom space for volunteers to learn about animal welfare advocacy, grooming stations, and so much more. The team has truly focused on creating amazing spaces with both the staff and animals' best interests at heart. Distinctive features such as solar tubes for natural lighting, individually drained kennels to mitigate any spread of sicknesses, a spacious food preparation kitchen, and outdoor shaded areas for the animals to enjoy are just some of the special aspects of the new facility. Mahalo Anna and Steph for the tour, and mahalos (Cont. p. 2)



On Sept. 2, Sen. Gabbard toured the HHS with Dir. of Community Engagement, Steph Kendrick and President /CEO, Anna Neubauer.

COMMITTEE CHAIR

AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

MEMBER

- ◆ Judiciary
- ◆ Government Operations

DISTRICT 20

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

COMMUNITY UPDATES

(Cont. p.1) to developer of Ho’opili, D.R. Horton, who gifted the 5.5 acre-parcel of land to the Hawaiian Humane Society in 2017. I can’t wait to attend the Grand Opening!

DreamHouse Center

Currently the fastest growing public Charter School in the state, DreamHouse ‘Ewa Beach celebrated their new high school’s first Open House on Friday, September 9 in their temporary location at Kapolei Marketplace. It was wonderful to see the progress DreamHouse has made since I first visited their middle school two years ago in Kalaeloa. While the actual building that houses the new high school will be under construction for another two years, it was exciting to see how far they’ve come since I first visited and met with CEO Alex Teece, in 2020. The DreamHouse High School will be in downtown Kapolei on the corner of Kama’aha and Manawai. In partnership with Avalon Development, DREAMHOUSE CENTER, a three-story, \$33 million addition to the Kapolei community, is scheduled to open its doors July 2024.

During the Open House, I enjoyed talking with students and seeing firsthand the student learning spaces, programs, and teaching environment. They call their teachers “Coaches.” Kaden Hieger, a well-spoken and composed 9th grade student, gave me a tour of the facility and answered my questions. Students at DreamHouse engage in a non-traditional approach to teaching and learning through building and utilizing leadership skills to unlock their academic potential. Students and coaches can interact with each other on a more personal level



Grade 9 Math Coach Phillippe Fernandez-Brennan utilizing the interactive white-board tables during the DreamHouse Ewa’ Open House on September 9.

than a typical high school, through small group sizes, open communication, and features of the classroom like whiteboard tables. Yes. They literally write on their desks! As I approached the classroom, seeing this in action, I joked with Math Coach Phillippe Fernandez-Brennan that I might have to tell the principal they were drawing on their desks. 😊

The innovative approach to teaching and learning I observed at DreamHouse was both inspiring and empowering.

Daniel K. Akaka State Veterans Home (DKA SVH)

I was disappointed to learn that the DKA SVH would be delayed nearly a year due to supply shortages and shipment delays. Construction started across from Walmart in April 2021 and until recently, had been proceeding nicely. The Blessing and Groundbreaking was Memorial Day 2021. As of May 2022, it was 45 percent complete and on track for completion in April 2023. Unfortunately, the state Office of Veterans’ Services is concerned that transportation complications and key equipment component shortages may push back the opening. The facility is being built to address a shortage of beds in veterans homes. Of the roughly 118,000 military veterans in the state, approximately 85,000 live on O’ahu.



DreamHouse student Kaden Hieger, 9th grade, and Sen. Gabbard at DreamHouse Ewa’s Open House on Sep. 9. (New High school renderings in the background.)

COMMUNITY UPDATES

Night Work Along Renton Road Train Tracks

“Starting Monday, Sept. 12, through Thursday, Sept. 15, Hawaiian Electric will be performing maintenance on steel utility poles along the Renton Road train tracks between Fort Barrette and Coral Sea roads, noted in yellow on the map below. Hawaiian Electric will work on additional poles between Forrestal Avenue and Fort Barrette Road starting Monday, Sept. 19, through Thursday, Sept. 22, noted in red. This work is being done to ensure continued safe and reliable electric service to customers. The work will be performed daily between 7 p.m. and 4 a.m. Nearby residents may hear noise and notice light towers at the job site during work hours. There will be no scheduled residential power outages during this work. The westbound lane of Roosevelt Avenue will be closed during work hours on Sept. 12, 19, 20, 21 and 22, from Bougainville Street to Forrestal Avenue, noted in green. Flagmen will be present to direct traffic that will be contraflowed during this time.

Marisco New Preservation Facility

On August 26, I presented an Honorary Certificate on behalf of the Hawai'i State Legislature to owner Fred Anawati at the blessing and Grand Opening of Marisco Ltd.'s new Preservation Facility (Sandblast & Painting). Founded in 1972, Marisco, Ltd. is located at Barber's Point near Campbell Industrial Park in Kapolei. Marisco, Ltd. provides a wide range of ship repair services to government and commercial entities, including our U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and Military Sealift Command, as well as industrial sectors of Hawai'i.

Listen-Story Hybrid Meeting:

September 17, 9-10am

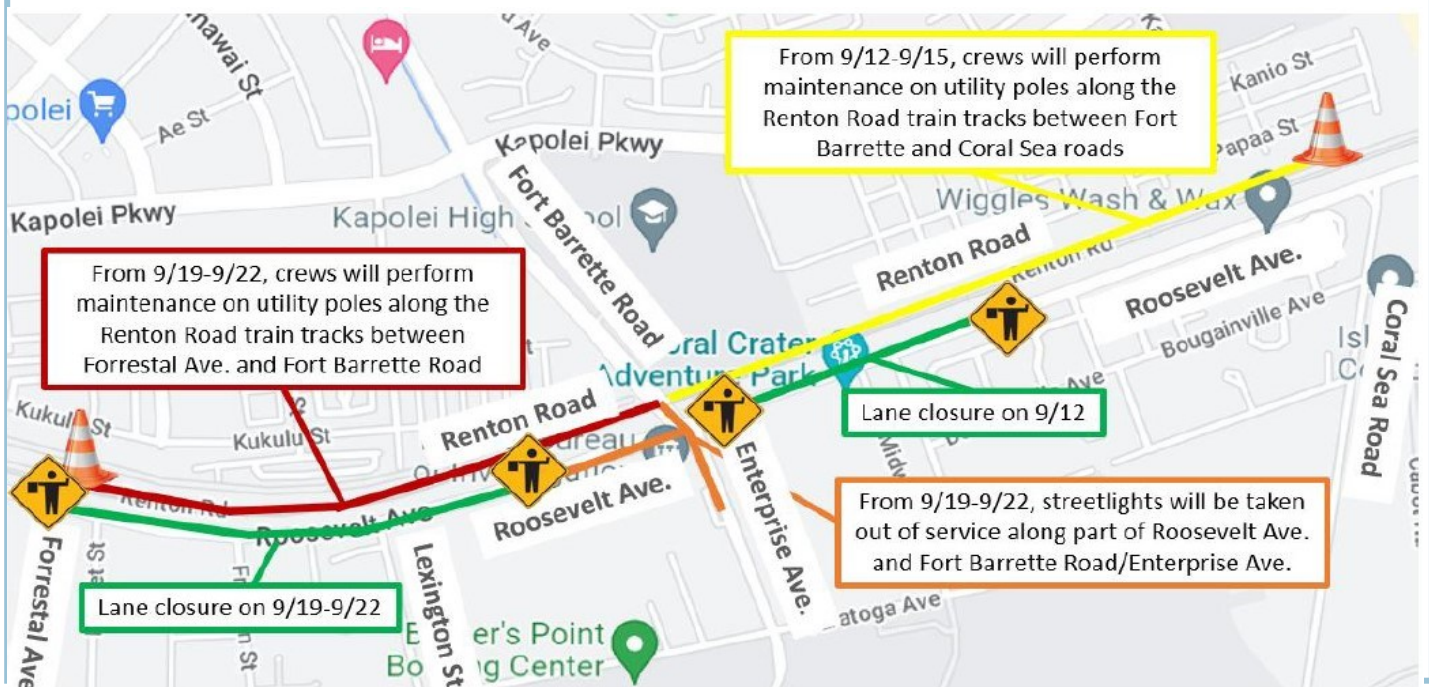
Kapolei High School Teachers' Lounge

91-5007 Kapolei Pkwy

Kapolei, HI 96707



Honorary Certificate presented by Sen. Gabbard to Fred Anawati, owner of Marisco Ltd, at the Grand Opening of Marisco Ltd.'s Preservation Facility, on August 26.



LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Scaling Up: Hawai'i's Food Future

On September 8, I was invited, along with colleagues Sen. Laura Acasio, Rep. Amy Peruso, and Rep. Mark Hashem, to host a reception for the screening of a new film on Hawai'i Agriculture: Scaling Up: Hawai'i's Food Future, made by award-winning documentary filmmaker Kimberlee Bassford. As we talked story with each other in the courtyard of the William S. Richardson School of Law at UH Manoa prior to the screening, I couldn't help but flash on how different life had suddenly become. Instead of being locked behind our screens 24/7 in Zoom world, we're actually out seeing and meeting with each other face-to-face. Here on our island paradise, this is hugely important for relationship-building and the sharing of aloha. After the 27-minute film, we were treated to the excellent moderator skills of ThinkTech Hawai'i's Jay Fidel, who led us in a thought-provoking Q&A with panel experts: Murray Clay, President of Ulupono Initiative; Kā'eo Duarte, Vice President of Community and 'Āina Resiliency at Kamehameha Schools; Haley Miyaoka, co-founder of Ahiki Acres in Waimanalo; and Janel Yamamoto, Director of GoFarm Hawai'i. Mahalo to all involved, including event sponsors: College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources, Making Waves Films, Scholars Strategy Network, ThinkTech Hawaii, UHM School of Communications & Information, and Ulupono Initiative. It was a fun and inspiring evening and a true reminder of how much I love my job as Chair of the Ag & Environment Committee.



On Sept. 9, Sen. Gabbard and his colleagues hosted a reception prior to the film *Scaling Up: Hawai'i's Food Future* at UH Manoa. (Pictured L-R: Rep. Amy Perruso, Sen. Gabbard, Sen. Laura Acasio, Rep. Mark Hashem.)

HARC's Demonstration Site Visit

On September 9, Stevie Whalen, Executive Dir. of HARC (Hawai'i Agriculture Research Center) invited me to tour their demonstration site in Mililani. HARC is experimenting with "agrivoltaic," – the combination of agriculture and solar working together on the same land. With the recent closing of the AES coal plant, coupled with the revelation of the lack of solar farms to make up the lost energy, agrivoltaics deserves serious consideration for our energy and agriculture future. Critics say ag land should be used for farming only, but why can't we do both? There's growing research that planting crops beneath solar panels can help prevent soil erosion and conserve water. Stevie said this idea is spreading among solar companies in Hawai'i: "It has been funded by Mahi Solar and are requesting other solar companies to support as well. In France the solar companies have formed an association to support and fund agriculture within their sites. Maybe Hawai'i companies could be encouraged to do the same." Inspiring developments are happening out at the Mililani Agrivoltaic Systems Research Site. It was an excellent tour. We walked among the solar panels, interspersed with test crop varieties. They're currently demonstrating the economics of various shade tolerant crops. Field days are planned to encourage farmers to take up these new crops and practices. There was taro, five high-value varieties of hydroponic lettuce, rainbow chard, and cantaloupe, as well as mushrooms, rosemary, and plenty of other seedlings. I was joined on the tour by Wren Wescoatt, of Longroad Energy, and Nicola Park, Consulting Manager of Clearway Energy Group LLC Origination.



On Sept. 9, Sen. Gabbard went on a site visit to Hawai'i Agriculture Research Center's demonstration site in Mililani. (Pictured L-R: Wren Wescoatt, Stevie Whalen, Sen. Gabbard, Nicola Park and Samuel Madrid.)