



Aloha e Friends,

I hope you and your ‘ohana are well and enjoying some family time this summer. After a few years with family close by, once again, the Gabbard ‘ohana has become a bit spread out, but the warm memories of our times together help keep me going 🥹 Sometimes it seems with all the divisiveness in the news and in the political arena, it’s easy for some to become discouraged, or worse, apathetic. I tend to be an eternal optimist, so despite the realities of what’s going on around us, I choose to focus on what I can change and accept what I can’t.

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. I also invite you to follow me on social media: Instagram @GabbardAloha, [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Twitter](#) @SENNIKEGABBARD. Also, if you’d like to be added to my mailing list, you can send an email to sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov with “mailing list” in the subject line. *Best wishes to you and your ‘ohana.*



**COMMITTEE
CHAIR**

**AGRICULTURE &
ENVIRONMENT**

MEMBER

- ◆ Judiciary
- ◆ Government Operations

DISTRICT 21

Kapolei,
Makakilo,
Kalaeloa, and
portions of:
Fernandez
Village, Ewa

Listen Story Community Meeting

Please join me at my next Listen Story Community meeting on July 22, from 9am-10am at the Kapolei High School Teachers’ Lounge. Joining us will be Special Guest Stephanie Kendrick, Hawaiian Humane Society’s Director of Community Engagement. There will be time for Q & A. Following Director Kendrick’s presentation, I’ll give some brief community updates. You can view past recordings of Listen Story meetings on my [YouTube channel](#).

Department of Hawaiian Homelands Groundbreaking

I attended a [blessing and groundbreaking ceremony](#) on July 10 that marked the long-awaited start of development at Ka’uluokaha’i Phase II-C, Dept. of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL). It’s been surreal to watch the growth of Kapolei “the 2nd City” over the years. I was talking with Lieutenant Governor, Sylvia Luke when I first arrived at the ceremony about when I was on the City Council in 2002, representing Kapolei. At that time it seemed the “2nd City” was a faraway dream. As we were talking the Skyline train was going by, and I was thinking about UH West O’ahu just down the road, which got its first appropriation from the Legislature in 1966, and 46 years later, in 2012, opened its doors. Moments before the ceremony began, a kupuna approached me, shook my hand, then hugged me. As I tried to back *(cont. p. 2)*



On July 10, 2023, Sen. Gabbard attended a blessing and groundbreaking ceremony in East Kapolei that marks the start of development at Ka’uluokaha’i Phase II-C, Dept. of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL). Pictured L-R: Kahu Kordell Kekoa, Gerry Makjut-Hawaiian Dredging Construction Company President, Mike Kamaka-Bowers+Kubota Consulting, Sen. Mike Gabbard, Rep. Diamond Garcia-House District 42, DHHL Director Kali Watson, Patty Kahanamoku-Teruya-Hawaiian Homes Commissioner, and Lieutenant Governor Sylvia Luke.

DISTRICT 21 COMMUNITY UPDATES

(cont. from p. 1) away, she wouldn't let me. She held me tightly cheek to cheek, and I could feel her tears on my face and neck...she whispered in my ear, "Senator, it's time for justice for our people."

I'm glad that we passed ACT 279 in 2022, allocating \$600 million in general funds to provide a multi-pronged approach to reduce the 29K Hawaiians still on the DHHL Waiting List. The \$600 million will address the needs of beneficiaries on the DHHL waitlist and those still waiting to get on the land, and I'm confident our new DHHL director Kali Watson, will do all he can to spend that money wisely. The different homesteads in Kapolei are a critically important piece of our 2nd City community. And this blessing, following the start of the Phase I Ka'uluokaha'i project back in 2014, is hopefully the beginning of an accelerated attempt to truly help our Native Hawaiians get back to their 'āina .



Skyline Ride

I had a blast riding the rail (aka [Skyline](#)) on June 26 with my wife Carol and fellow legislators. The Skyline officially opened on June 30. Have you ridden the Skyline yet? Big mahalo to Sen. Lee, Senate Chair of the Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA) Committee, for organizing the Skyline preview ride!



On June 26, 2023, Sen. Gabbard rode the Skyline with his wife Carol along with fellow legislators, during a preview rail ride prior to the public rail opening on June 30 .

Free Legal Aid Clinic



VOLUNTEER LEGAL SERVICES HAWAII

FREE Pop-Up Legal Advice Clinic - Waipahu

Saturday, August 26, 2023

Do you have a legal issue and need legal advice?

Volunteer attorneys will be available to meet with you individually to provide legal advice for the following types of cases:

Family Law

Divorce, Child Custody, Child support, Guardianships, Adoptions

Estate Planning

Simple Wills, Power of Attorney, and Health Care Directives

District Court

Landlord-Tenant, Small claims, Consumer Debt Collections

Bankruptcy

Chapter 7 only

Veterans Benefits

Disability Benefits, Discharge Upgrade

WHERE IS IT?

Filipino Community Center (FILCOM)
Flores Ballroom
94-428 Mokuola Street
Waipahu, Hawaii 96797

WHEN IS IT?

Saturday, August 26, 2023
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Mask wearing is recommended but not required

This service is **FREE** to all low and moderate income individuals.

Please call by August 11th to qualify and reserve your spot: **(808) 528-7046**

Interpreter Assistance: If you need an interpreter, please indicate which language and Volunteer Legal Services will arrange for an interpreter for you.



Sponsored By: **Volunteer Legal Services Hawai'i** &



Volunteer Legal Service Hawai'i is a non-profit legal service organization

whose mission is to provide low-cost legal services to low income to moderate income individuals in the State of Hawai'i.

This event is supported by the Hawaii State Judiciary through an appropriation by the Hawaii State Legislature

FilCom Center in Waipahu is having a free legal Pop Up clinic for low-to-moderate income residents on August 26, 2023 from 9am to 12pm.

If you or someone you know may need assistance with legal services, [Volunteer Legal Services Hawai'i](#) and the [FilCom Center](#) in Waipahu will be having a free legal Pop Up clinic for low-to-moderate income residents on August 26, 2023 from 9am to 12pm. Registration must be completed by August 11 by calling 808-528-7046.

Road updates – Kalaeloa

The Kamokila Boulevard Extension, Boxer Road, and new lanes of Franklin D. Roosevelt Avenue are now scheduled to open no sooner than September 2023. Finishing touches continue to be made on the road and new striping patterns aimed at improving traffic flow are still awaiting government approvals. Copahee Avenue will remain closed through late 2023 while Hunt awaits guidance from the U.S. Department of Education. Barbers Point Elementary School will continue to be accessible through Tulagi Avenue. FDR Ave. will have 4 lanes along the entire length (cont. on p. 3)

DISTRICT 21 COMMUNITY UPDATES

(cont. from p. 2) of the project with two lanes going in each direction once completed. This new segment will have sidewalks on both sides of the road, which will increase walkability in the area. Kamokila Blvd. has been extended into Kalaeloa. The Kamokila extension will have travel lanes in both directions with bike lanes continuing on both sides of the roadway once improvements are complete. Boxer Road has been relocated and will include travel lanes in both directions. Once phase one of improvements is complete, a sidewalk will be added on the mauka side of the roadway.



Kalaeloa Construction Updates. See newsletter article for details. (image courtesy of Hunt Companies via Goodfellow Bros.)

Feds Support Hawai'i Climate Efforts

Super stoked to see the state and the City and County of Honolulu receive federal funding to the tune of \$4 million to update our climate action plan. The grant also allows the state to compete for larger federal funding to implement its strategies. Mahalo to our Congressional delegation for their support. Leah Laramée, Hawai'i's Climate Commission Coordinator, said, "The goal is to create a highly inclusive, collaborative process to build strong project proposals to access the \$4.6 billion pot of implementation funds. We are hoping to receive funding for a wide range of projects, from large scale statewide implementation to community-led mitigation actions." As the Chair of the Senate Agriculture & Environment Committee, I was appointed to sit on the [Hawai'i State Climate Commission](#), which was enacted in 2017. The Commission consists of a multi-jurisdictional effort among 20 different departments, committees, and counties. Under the DLNR (Department of Land and Natural Resources) for administrative purposes, the Climate Commission is headed jointly by the Chairperson, Dawn Chang and the Director of the State Office of Planning, Mary Alice Evans. We meet on a quarterly basis. At our recent meeting on June 22, I provided an Environmental Legislative Update. Please see marker 10:00 to 30:00 to [view the presentation](#). The goal of the Climate Commission is to provide direction, facilitation, coordination and planning among state and county agencies, federal agencies, and other partners about climate change mitigation (reduction of greenhouse gases) and climate change resiliency strategies. These include, but are not limited to, sea level rise

adaptation, water and agricultural security, and natural resource stewardship. Big mahalos also go to Governor Green for representing Hawai'i at a recent United Nations Forum on Sustainable Development on July 12 – the only U.S. state leader to do so! He shared the Aloha spirit and Hawai'i's unique contribution to the global community via remarks he made at the [Local and Regional Governments Forum](#) and the [Local2030 Coalition Special Event](#).

Governor Passes Agriculture Bills to Help Local Farmers

As Chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment (AEN) for seven years, I'm pleased to see Governor Green pass into law numerous Agriculture and Environment bills (along with several bills related to climate change and promoting clean energy) that were introduced this past session. I'm very encouraged by the positive impact these bills will have, from helping to prevent the spread of pesky little fire ants (SB1552) (anyone whose been bitten by an LFA knows it's not something you want to experience twice!), to protecting people from foodborne illnesses (Hawai'i GroupGap SB1588), and to (finally!) moving our industrial hemp industry forward! (HB1359) Hemp, Hemp Hooray! For a list of bills in (alphabetical order) and brief descriptions of each, please see the next page. For the full list of signed bills, you can click [here](#). These bills will not only help our farmers and ranchers but will also help our local economy. I'm looking forward to our 2024 session to continue supporting farmers and ag in Hawai'i.



AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT UPDATES

Agricultural Park Leases [HB307](#), (Act 213)

Allows the Department of Agriculture to extend the agricultural park lease of any lessee who holds a lease with a remaining term of fifteen years or less, if the land covered by the lease is 25 acres or less and located in a county with a population of less than five hundred thousand.

Coffee Labeling [SB746](#), (Act 211)

Expands the coffee labeling and advertising requirements to include ready-to-drink coffee beverages and the inner packages and inner wrapping labels of roasted coffee, instant coffee, and ready-to-drink coffee beverages. Requires disclosure on the label of coffee blends of the respective geographic and regional origins and percent by weight of the blended coffees. Prohibits use of the term "All Hawaiian" in labeling or advertising for roasted coffee or instant coffee not produced entirely from green coffee beans grown and processed in Hawai'i. Effective 7/1/2024.

Coffee Pest Control [SB743](#), (Act 216)

Extends the sunset date for the Coffee Berry Borer and Coffee Leaf Rust Pesticide Subsidy Program to June 30, 2025; and the program manager position, including the position's civil service and collective bargaining laws exemption, to June 30, 2026.

Food Safety [SB1588](#), (Act 212)

Appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture to establish and implement a GroupGAP food safety training and certification program to help prevent food-borne illnesses.

Hemp [HB1359](#), (Act 263)

Sets up a Hawai'i Hemp Task Force by DOA and DOH which will gather data and information to understand industry needs and inform strategies and actions that support agriculture and a robust hemp industry in the State. The Task Force will assess infrastructure needs, streamline the permitting process, eliminate duplicative rules and regulations, revise definitions that allow for the processing and selling of hemp to manufacturers, and amend the buffer zones to align with current hemp legislation.

Invasive Species [SB1552](#), (Act 217)

Appropriates funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources to support the Hawai'i Ant Lab in mitigating the effects of little fire ants in the state.

Ornamental Ginger [HB306](#), (Act 258)

Appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i for statewide research into ornamental ginger pathogens to increase production and distribution of pathogen-free ornamental ginger plants.

Pesticides [HB692](#), (Act 220)

Increases the maximum administrative and criminal penalties for violators of the Hawai'i pesticides law.

Restrictions on Agricultural Uses and Activities [HB615](#), (Act 219)

Clarifies that any provision in a private agreement contained in a conveyance of land recorded on or before July 8, 2003, that has since expired but has not been renewed and recorded in the bureau of conveyances, is prohibited from restricting bona fide agricultural uses and activities on agricultural land.

Wahiawā Irrigation System [SB833](#), (Act 218)

Allows the state to take ownership and responsibility of the Wahiawā irrigation system, Wahiawā Dam and Lake Wilson Reservoir, and the associated spillway. Given the many vital uses of these places, it's necessary for the State to take control, because if not, who knows who the buyer would be, and what it would be used for in the future?



Sen. Gabbard standing in a hemp field (wearing his hemp aloha shirt) in Waimanalo on April 28, 2018, celebrating the passing of [SB2556 \(Act 59\)](#). Senator is hempy to announce that a hemp bill he worked diligently on with colleagues and stakeholders during Session 2023 ([HB1359/Act 263](#)) passed into law July 12! Hemp, hemp, hooray!

Hawai'i has more than 1M acres of farmland and three growing seasons. **Yet, we import over 85 percent of our food at a cost of \$3B a year!** The average age of farmers in our state is 61 years old. We need to do all we can to support farmers now and on into the future. These bills seek to support local agriculture and make farming easier and less costly to encourage more people to get into and stay in farming. In all my talks to young people I tell them that farming is a noble profession, no less noble than being a doctor, lawyer or businessman. ***Mahalo Gov for showing you understand the critical role of agriculture in Hawai'i nei and for taking concrete steps to put our money where our mouth is to support local ag.***