

Waikele, Village Park, Royal Kunia, Makakilo,
Kapolei, Kalaeloa, Honokai Hale,
and portions of Ko 'Olina & Waipahu

Mike Gabbard

State Senator, 19th District



December 2007

Dear Friends,

Aloha and Mele Kalikimaka! The old cliché "time flies when you're having fun" surely applies to me. I've very much appreciated the opportunity to serve as your State Senator for the past year and look forward to working with you in the years ahead. Here are a few things I'd like to share with you.

Please contact me if I can help you in any way. My email is sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov and my phone number is 586-6830. Me ka pumehana,

Mike



Kaleiopuu Elementary Gives Back to Our Military Families

I was happy to be involved in assisting Kaleiopuu Elementary become the only school in the state to participate in the 2nd Annual Operation Caring Classroom national school initiative. Operation Caring Classroom is sponsored by the Armed Forces Foundation and has the goal of remembering and supporting military children during a week long celebration from November 5th to 9th, leading up to Veteran's Day.



December 3, 2007 – Groundbreaking ceremony for construction of Kapolei Urban Core roads.

This year the program was launched by U.S. Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings, and included one school from every state in the country. Each participating school received a school kit with patriotic items, such as flags, magnets, bookmarks, and activity books for the students. The students at Kaleiopuu made postcards for military personnel stationed in Iraq. The school also hosted a Military Appreciation Dinner for military families on November 13th. Principal Carolyn Alexander, teachers, and students at Kaleiopuu deserve a big mahalo for showing their aloha to our military families who sacrifice so much in protecting our cherished freedoms.

Island Pacific Academy Read Aloud

I had a great time participating in Island Pacific Academy's Read Aloud event on November 13th. In this age of video games, My Space, and HDTV, it's important that we do all we can to encourage the love of reading among our young people. It's clear to me that Principal Sue Miller, Read Aloud coordinator Diana Baker, and all the teachers and staff are doing a great job for keiki here in Kapolei!



Community Input on Legislation 2008



Through my “listen-story” meetings and conversations with constituents, I've gotten a lot of great ideas for bills that could benefit our community. Here are a few transportation related proposals to give you examples of what kind of things we can work together to change and improve.

Prohibiting Texting While Driving

At one of my community meetings in Kapolei this summer, a Makakilo resident told me that he was noticing more and more people sending text messages while driving. I did a little research and found out that this is becoming an increasing problem on our roads.



For example, a 2007 survey by Harris Interactive found that two-thirds of adult drivers have read text messages while driving and 57 percent of adults have admitted to sending text messages while driving. Added to this, the National Highway Safety Administration has found that 65 percent of near-crashes on our roads are due to driver inattention. So at the urging of my constituent, I've drafted a bill to prohibit drivers from sending and reading text messages or emails while driving.

Allowing Hybrid Vehicles to Use HOV Lanes



A hybrid vehicle owner from Royal Kunia contacted me a few months ago and said that he would like to see the state offer hybrid vehicle owners incentives for purchasing their cars. As an environmentalist, I support increasing hybrid vehicle ownership in Hawaii. You might not be aware that R. L. Polk and Company, a worldwide automotive research organization, has found that hybrid vehicles produce 90 percent less smog pollution than conventional engine vehicles and use significantly less fuel. With this in mind, I've written a bill that will allow hybrid vehicles to use HOV lanes, regardless of how many passengers are in the car.



Addressing Uninsured Driver Problem



I was speaking with a Waialeale resident one morning who said he was concerned about uninsured drivers putting other law-abiding citizens in jeopardy. We found out that the Insurance Research Council has reported that Hawaii has the 22nd highest percentage of uninsured drivers in the nation with 13 percent driving without insurance.

As you may know, the law currently allows an uninsured motorist to recover non-economic (pain and suffering) damages from an insured driver if they happen to be injured in an accident. However, at the same time, an insured driver would not likely be able to recover any damages from an uninsured driver. To address this problem, I plan to introduce legislation to prohibit uninsured motorists from recovering non-economic damages from insured drivers.



Photo at right: November 3, 2007 groundbreaking ceremony for the new LDS Meetinghouse in Kalaheo.



Hosting Nationally-Recognized Parenting Expert in Kapolei

My non-profit organization, Stand Up For America, hosted best-selling author and nationally syndicated columnist John Rosemond on November 6th and 8th in Kalaeloa and Kaneohe. Over 1000 people attended the events.



Trained as a family psychologist and based out of Gastonia, North Carolina, Rosemond has helped countless numbers of mothers and fathers worldwide raise respectful, responsible and resourceful children. You might have seen his column which appears in Tuesday's edition of the Honolulu Advertiser each week and teaches traditional parenting. Rosemond's newest book, "Parenting by The Book" has been on bookstore shelves for only a few months and is already in its third printing.

It was a great opportunity for everyone who got to hear John speak in person. Our plan is to keep in touch with those who attended the workshop in the coming months through my new organization, Aloha Parenting Project (APP). The idea is for APP to serve as a clearinghouse for parents who are interested in learning about and improving parenting skills and techniques. As lifelong educators, counselors, parents and grandparents, Carol and I are concerned about how our culture is losing its focus on the importance of child rearing.



I also had the privilege of presenting Mr. Rosemond with an honorary certificate from the State Senate which had this message: "John's simple, practical and no-nonsense style to childrearing has helped parents raise children who know they aren't the center of the universe, and therefore don't become menaces to society. The Hawaii State Senate hereby honors and commends John Rosemond for reaching out through his writings and seminars and reminding us that Grandma's approach was best after all."

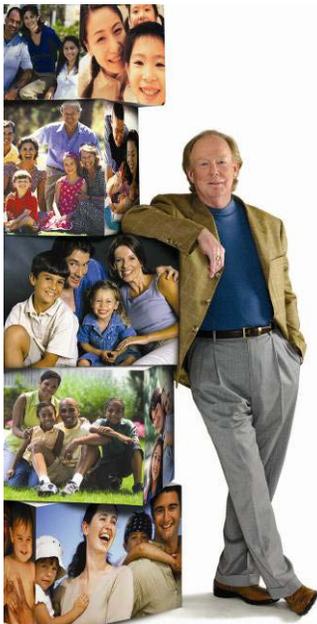


Photo at right: Senator Mike Gabbard presents an honorary certificate from the State Senate to Senior Pastor John Honold and Executive Pastor Garret Shon at Hope Chapel Kapolei's Grand Opening celebration, which took place in Kalaeloa on November 18th, soon after Mr. Rosemond was hosted there for his first Hawaii lecture.

