

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

Mike Gabbard

State Senator, 19th District



September 2007

Aloha! I hope you and your family are in good health and doing well. Here are a few things I'd like to share with you:

Mike

Addressing School Overcrowding

As we all know, our communities are growing at a staggering rate and our schools and roads have not kept pace. As a lifelong educator and member of the Senate's Education Committee, schools are one of my top priorities. The last several weeks I've been meeting with DOE staff, other elected officials, and community leaders to make sure we do everything we can to provide adequate educational facilities for our keiki.



On August 1st, I met with Mr. Breene Harimoto and members of the Royal Kunia Community Association Government Affairs Committee to discuss what needs to be done to get the planned Royal Kunia Elementary School back on track. One of the big issues that we discussed is school overcrowding at Kaleiopuu Elementary. This school was designed for a capacity of 650 to 700 students, but now has well over 900 students.



The Na Pa'ani Waipahu softball team was honored at the State Capitol on July 27th by Senators Gabbard, Nishihara, and Espero for winning the 2007 Hawaii ASA Championship.

Royal Kunia Elementary is a much needed school that has been delayed for a number of years due to financial troubles experienced by the developer, Halekua Development Corporation. This has resulted in the school dropping very low in the DOE's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) priority list. I was happy to learn that Halekua deeded over 12-acres of land for the Royal Kunia school site in March of this year. At this point, our focus is on getting the school higher on the DOE's CIP priority list and also appropriating the needed funds to get the school built. I'll continue working with the DOE, Rep. Sharon Har, and Rep. Jon Riki Karamatsu in the hopes that we can get this accomplished as soon as possible.

On August 13th, I sat down with Senate Education Committee Chair, Norman Sakamoto, Pastor John Honold (Hope Chapel Kapolei), Breene Harimoto, and DOE staff to discuss how Kapolei schools can keep up with our growth. There are seven planned schools which are projected to be constructed by 2017: Kapolei II Elementary (2011), East Kapolei Middle (2012), East Kapolei Elementary I (2013), East Kapolei High (2013), Kapolei West Middle (2015), Ko Olina Elementary (2016), and East Kapolei Elementary II (2017). Rep. Har and I will be doing everything we can to keep the DOE on track.



Senator Gabbard expresses his thanks to summer interns Joan Danahy of New York (left) and Ramona Roy of Makakilo (right).

QUICK UPDATES

Funding Released for Improvements to Kapolei High School

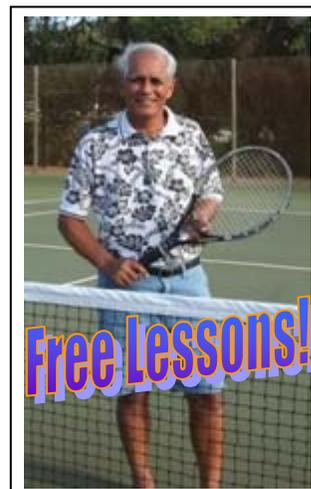


I was very pleased to learn that Governor Lingle announced on August 6th that she has released \$4,797,000 in funding for improvements to the athletic facilities at Kapolei High School. The funds will go toward constructing and equipping the announcer's booth, bleachers, concession stands, and restrooms. Construction on the project is scheduled to begin in January, 2008 and will hopefully be completed by March, 2009. I plan to work with the Governor, my colleagues at the Legislature, and Principal Al Nagasako to ensure that we get additional funding which is needed to complete the athletic complex.

Free Tennis Clinics in Kalaeloa

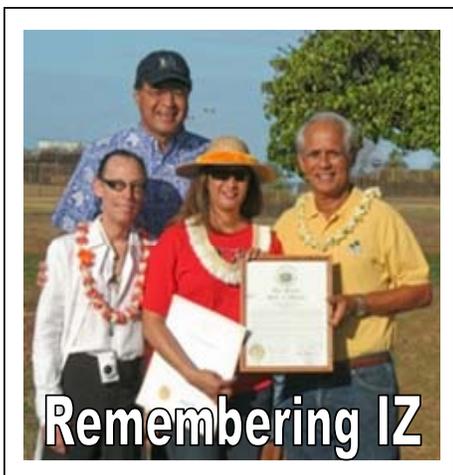
I'll be offering free beginning junior tennis clinics in September at the Kalaeloa (Barbers Point) tennis courts. Back in the 1970s I was the head tennis pro at the Kuilima Hyatt (now Turtle Bay Resort), and I also coached hundreds of juniors when we lived in American Samoa. My wife Carol and I play almost every day, and I've been noticing more and more juniors coming out and banging the ball around. So I figured why not offer some free lessons, so they can learn the game properly.

The free beginning tennis clinics are open to kids ages 7-12 and will be held from 4:30 to 6 pm on September 15, 22, and 29th at the Kalaeloa tennis courts at Saratoga and Franklin Avenues. The 3-lesson clinic will include the serve, groundstrokes, volleys and scoring. Registration is limited, so please contact me at 682-0676 or by email at mike@mikegabbard.com if you're interested. Kids need to bring a tennis racket.



Bruddah Iz Lives On

It was a privilege to attend the commemoration of the 10th Anniversary of the truck convoy to remember Bruddah Iz on August 4th. Both Mayor Mufi Hannemann and I presented Iz's widow, Marlene Kamakawiwo'ole, with honorary certificates for keeping his music and legacy alive. While I was a Honolulu City Councilman, I had the opportunity to lead the fundraising efforts to bring a bronze sculpture of Iz to Hawaii (the artist, Jan-Michelle Sawyer, created the artwork in California). When the word got out that funds were needed, donations flooded in from dedicated Iz fans from around the world. On September 19, 2003, we held a ceremony to dedicate the statue at the Waianae Neighborhood Community Center, where it can be seen today.



Grants Available for Urban Forestry Projects

I recently met with Ms. Jackie Ralya of the Department of Land and Natural Resources' Division of Forestry and Wildlife. Ms. Ralya updated me on the Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry Program which they manage in partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service. *(story continues on next page...)*

MORE UPDATES



The program has grants available for schools, churches, non-profits, and any other interested groups that would like to do education and beautification projects focusing on the planting of trees. Some groups that have recently received funds include Seagull Schools, Bishop Museum, The Outdoor Circle, and Surfrider Foundation. The next deadline to submit a proposal is November 15th. If you're interested, please contact Ms. Ralya at 672-5167 or at jralya@hawaii.rr.com.

Honoring Joan Quiba

Principal Al Nagasako joined me in presenting an honorary certificate from the State Senate to 12th grade Kapolei High student, Joan Quiba, during the school's band practice on August 14th. Joan was recognized for her outstanding writing abilities and being named a finalist in the 2007 Star Poets Contest. Joan's poem, "A Candle in Remembrance", received an honorable mention amongst the 2,800 entries that were received this year.

Listen-Story

My next listen-story community meeting will be on Saturday, September 15th at the Waikele Elementary School cafeteria at 9:00 a.m. Please come. If you can't, call or email your concerns.

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. Mahalo for the privilege of serving you!



Senator Gabbard and principal Al Nagasako join at Kapolei High on August 17th to recognize Joan Quiba for receiving Honorable Mention in the 2007 Star Poets Contest.



Senator Gabbard and Rep. Sharon Har listen to concerns of Kunia residents at their co-hosted listen-story meeting on July 28, 2007.

Special MAHALO to everyone who worked to make the 2007 Kapolei Sunset Festival a great success!!!



Event photos from Friday, August 17th: Far left - Mayor Mufi Hannemann and Senator Mike Gabbard with members of the "Sunset" steering committee; center left - Senator Gabbard singing E Kupono me ke Aloha (Taking a Stand for What's Right) to the "Sunset" audience; center right - Keiki Village directors and Kapolei Complex PCNCs Terry Bunkley, Evelyn Souza, and Sandy Munar; far right - Senator Gabbard with wife Carol and daughter Tulsi Gabbard Tamayo, taking a tour of the Barber's Point Naval Air Museums's helicopter that made a special landing just for the event!



The Volunteer Special Enforcement Officers Program Wants You!



Attention seniors, retirees, or independently wealthy folks with time on your hands! If you're bored playing golf every day, or if your "honey-do" list keeps getting longer and longer and you want to get out of the house, then there's an opportunity knocking at the door that you may not want to pass up.

How about helping our community by signing up for the new Volunteer Special Enforcement Officers Program?



In 2003, while I was a Honolulu City Councilman representing West Oahu from Ewa to the Waianae Coast, I authored and introduced legislation creating a volunteer policing program within HPD. The bill was intended to set up a volunteer force of citizens to patrol neighborhoods keeping an eye out for abandoned vehicles and parking violations.

I got the idea from speaking to Neighborhood Security Watch volunteers in my district who were fed up with crime and drug abuse that was threatening our kama'aina way of life. These folks were feeling powerless and wanted a way to plug in and take their communities back. Additionally, I saw the program as a way of freeing up our police officers so they could go after the rapists, murderers, and other violent criminals.

I researched and found out that there were nearly 30,000 Neighborhood Security Watch volunteers on the island.

We also learned about an existing program within HPD called the Volunteer Disabled Parking Enforcement Program, which at that time had 24 volunteers and was led ably by Sgt. Bart Canada. This program got started in 1998 and allowed volunteers to lend their time and efforts in assisting HPD issue citations for disabled parking violations and misused handicap parking decals. When I presented an honorary certificate to these volunteers on behalf of the City Council in December 2003, it was estimated that they were issuing roughly 3,300 citations each year and saving HPD roughly \$340,000 in operational costs!



With the support of HPD and members of the community, my bill passed the City Council unanimously on December 3, 2003 and was signed into law by the mayor that same month. I was also able to work with my colleagues on the City Council to secure \$485,000 in funding to hire 4 additional police officers to implement the program.



Well, it took a little while to get things going, but I was happy to learn recently that with little fanfare HPD launched the Volunteer Special Enforcement Officers Program (VSEOP) in March of this year. The program uses the existing Disabled Parking volunteers and gives them the added ability to issue citations for expired registrations, safety checks, parking out of stalls, and also allows them to assist with abandoned vehicle enforcement.

Sgt. Emilio Laganse runs the program with 3 other HPD officers. In order to qualify, volunteers must be a U.S. citizen, at least 21 years old, have a high school diploma or GED, have a valid driver's license, pass a background check, and complete 40-50 hours of training. HPD plans to have its first training class in September. So in the next few months, they will be working on recruiting and getting the word out about this great opportunity.

At the Waipahu Neighborhood Board meeting in July, Sgt. Laganse gave a short presentation about VSEOP. Mr. George Yakowenko, the Board's Vice-Chair, also spoke about his experiences as a volunteer in the Disabled Parking program and gave his input on how VSEOP will allow them to do even more to help HPD control the parking and abandoned vehicle problems in our neighborhoods.



You might be surprised to learn that about 2,000 police and sheriff's departments across the country currently have approximately 75,000 men and women serving in volunteer policing programs. There's also an organization called the National Association Citizens on Patrol (<http://www.nacop.org>) which is dedicated to strengthening these programs.

If you're interested in being a part of this new and exciting program, please contact Sgt. Laganse at 529-3136. I want to thank Mayor Mufi Hannemann and Chief Boisse Correa for having the vision and leadership to move this important initiative forward. I'm hopeful that HPD and the citizens of Oahu will make VSEOP an outstanding success.

Senator Mike Gabbard

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