

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

Mike Gabbard

State Senator, 19th District



February 2008

Aloha,

I hope you and your family are well! 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!

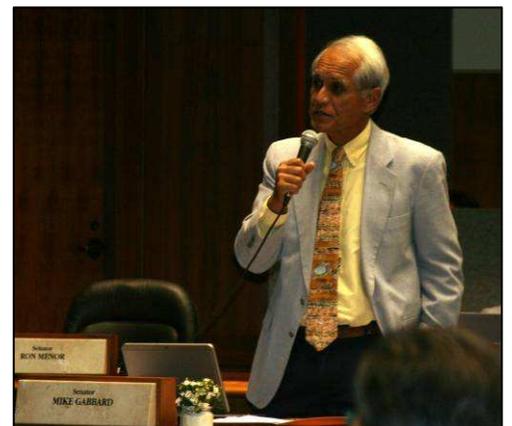
Mike



Legislation Moving Forward

I have several bills that I introduced this session which are moving forward at the Capitol. All of them have passed the first round of committee hearings with a unanimous vote. One of the bills, SB 2365, has already been passed unanimously by the full Senate and now will be considered by the House. Please contact me if you're interested in weighing in on any of these bills or other legislation.

- SB 2363** would better protect mentally handicapped individuals by holding sexual predators "strictly liable" for their crimes.
- SB 2364** would authorize the issuance of special purpose revenue bonds of up to \$30 million for construction of educational facilities at Island Pacific Academy in Kapolei.
- SB 2367** would prohibit uninsured motorists and drunk drivers from receiving non-economic damages "pain and suffering" when they're involved in a car accident.
- SB 2373** would require retailers to maintain an electronic log of pseudoephedrine sales – a primary ingredient in making "ice".
- SB 2924** would appropriate additional funding to UH's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to hire additional staff to support organic agriculture.
- SB 2925** would set up a State Organic Program under the Department of Agriculture to develop and expand the organic agriculture industry.
- SB 2926** would increase penalties for driving ATVs and other vehicles on our beaches and public lands.
- SB 2365** would allow hybrid and other alternative fuel vehicles to use HOV lanes regardless of the number of passengers in the vehicle.
- SB 2366** would prohibit texting or emailing using a wireless communication device while driving.
- SB 3234** would require an ignition interlock device to be installed in the cars of drunk drivers.



Coordinating Fundraising Efforts for the Hawaii Food Bank

I was happy to be chosen by Senate President Colleen Hanabusa to head up the Senate's efforts in the Hawaii Foodbank 2008 Food Drive. Our goal is to raise \$5,000 in monetary donations and collect 1,500 lbs of food to support this important cause. This year we'll be competing with our colleagues in the House, which should be interesting. Please contact me if you'd like to donate any canned food items or rice. Also, let me know if you'd like to purchase a Hawaii Foodbank T-Shirt (\$12) or an Aloha Diners Book (\$12 – lots of great coupons.)



Target's Kapolei Store Opening Soon

It was a pleasure to present Mr. Bryan Berg, Senior Vice President, of Target Co. an honorary certificate from the State Senate in recognition of the Groundbreaking Ceremony for their Kapolei Commons Store (located mauka of Honolulu Advertiser building) on January 24th. I welcomed Target because they have a national reputation for their commitment to the communities they serve. I also support their goal of using environmentally-friendly solar panel systems to supply electricity to the store. Plans are to have the store, which will be the first in Hawaii, open by March 2009.

Honoring Malcolm Ching

I was honored to present a certificate from the State Senate to Mr. Malcolm Ching on the floor of the Senate Chambers on February 13th. Mr. Ching is the General Manager of the Waikele Community Association and was recently selected by representatives from *Business Management Hawaii* magazine and six industry associations as the first ever Property Manager of the Year.



He originally earned statewide recognition and media attention for his role in forming Hawaii's first fast response graffiti team called Taking Action Against Graffiti (TAAG). In March of 2004, he formed TAAG with just 5 Waikele homeowners and a few buckets of donated paint. Now the TAAG team has more than 40 members who have made it their mission to keep their neighborhoods graffiti-free. TAAG has cleaned up over 700 graffiti damaged areas in Waikele and Waipahu.

Mr. Ching has been asked to speak to other anti-graffiti groups about his success. He also meets with community leaders to discuss tougher sentences for convicted taggers and works with the Honolulu Police Department to more effectively fight back against graffiti.



Honoring a True Hero

It was a privilege to recognize Kapolei resident and hero Christopher Ulu on behalf of the Hawaii State Senate at a special family luncheon on February 7th. Mr. Ulu rescued a woman who was being attacked while entering her vehicle in the Don Quijote parking lot in Waipahu on December 13, 2007. The male assailant forced her door open and attempted to shove her into the passenger's seat. Christopher, without any hesitation, rescued the victim from an unknown fate of torment, suffering, and conceivably an early demise.

Caring for others is the core of Hawaii's famed 'Aloha Spirit.' It takes a strong person like Chris who possesses both empathy and compassion to help a complete stranger. Christopher's wife Francine organized the surprise celebration at Dave & Busters at Ward Center in Honolulu so that many family and friends could join me in honoring Chris.



Organic Bills Good for Our Bodies and the Environment

You may have noticed that more and more of our supermarkets are carrying organic foods. You might be surprised to learn that over the past decade, sales of organic products have shown an annual increase of at least 20% - making organics the fastest growing sector of agriculture. For example, in 2005 retail sales of organic foods and beverages was \$12.8 billion in the U.S.



My family and I have been eating organic foods for many years. We appreciate the benefit of eating healthy foods that are free of toxic substances, such as conventional pesticides. We also like the idea of supporting organic farmers whose agricultural methods promote sustainability, enhance soil health, and preserve our natural environment.



You might not be aware, but all the organic foods on supermarket shelves that bear the organic label have to meet USDA certification standards which were established in 2002. Hawaii's principal certifier for organic farms is the Hawaii Organic Farmers Association (HOFA).

In 2004, while I was a member of the Honolulu City Council, I authored legislation which put the City on record in support of organic agriculture. Hawaii has a strong history of organic farming. Today, we have close to 200 organic farms located on five islands: Hawaii, Kauai, Maui, Molokai, and Oahu. Our organic farms range in size from 1-acre to 1,725-acres. Some of their principal products include coffee, macadamia nuts, banana, pineapple, ginger, mango, avocado, and salad greens. It's estimated that Hawaii's organic agriculture is a \$5-\$10 million a year industry.

Right now, there's an increasing demand for organic foods that exceeds our local supply. In order to meet this demand, supermarkets are importing organic foods from the mainland and other countries. However, this situation leaves us vulnerable to bringing in invasive species which have the potential to harm our environment. By expanding our local organic industry, Hawaii has a great opportunity to prevent this problem and also allow us to become more sustainable by growing our own food.



In consultation with HOFA and the Hawaii Cooperative of Organic Farmers, I've introduced two bills this legislative session to help strengthen and grow organic agriculture in our state. The first bill, SB 2925, establishes a State Organic Program under the direction of the Department of Agriculture. The bill would also require the Department of Agriculture to come up with and implement a plan to develop and expand the local organic agricultural industry.

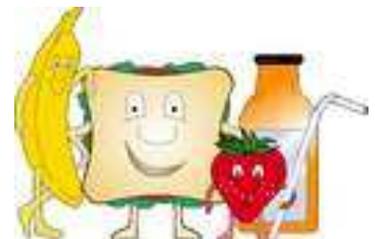


The second bill, SB 2924, appropriates funding and directs the UH College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to hire additional researchers and specialists to support organic agriculture research and teaching programs.

I'll be working with my colleagues in the House and Senate over the next several months to get this important legislation passed. So next time you're shopping, think about buying some of our locally grown organic produce.

If you're interested in learning more about this legislation, please contact my office at 586-6830.

Support Local Farmers!
Think Organic!



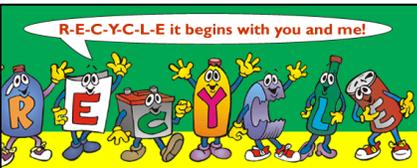
Community Happenings

Free Tax Service

The Waipahu Community Association will be offering free tax assistance every Friday from 9am – 4pm - February 8th to April 11th at their office, located at 94-340 Waipahu Depot Street. Please keep in mind that you may qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which is a refundable credit which assists working families. Call 677-6939, ext. 25 for more information or to make an appointment.



Recycling Community Clean-Up



There will be a recycling community clean-up at Waipahu Intermediate School (94-455 Farrington Highway) on March 1st, 8am-2pm. The proceeds raised at the recycling event will go toward helping Waipahu schools. Please call Rene Mansho at 306-1876 for more information.

"Listen-Story"

I'll be hosting my next "listen-story" meeting at Kapolei Starbucks (outside seating, near the Chevron Station) at 9:00am on Saturday, March 15th. Please come. If you can't make it, call or email your concerns.

2008 Legislative

Timetable

- January
- 16th Opening Day
- 18th Non-Administrative Bill Package Cutoff
- 21st Holiday: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 22nd State-of-the-State Address & Administrative Bill Package Cutoff
- 23rd Bill Intro Cutoff: last day to introduce bills
- 31st Grants/Subsidies Cutoff
- February
- 15th First Lateral (bills)
- 18th Holiday: Presidents' Day
- 21st Mandatory 5-Day Recess
- 27th
- 29th First Decking: last day to file non-budget bills
- March
- 6th First Crossover (bills)
- 10th Budget Decking
- 12th Budget Crossover
- 12th Last day to introduce Substantive Resolutions
- 20th Second Lateral (bills)
- 21st Holiday: Good Friday
- 26th Holiday: Kuhio Day
- April
- 1st First Lateral for Concurrent Resolutions
- 4th Second Decking (bills): last day to file bills in non-originating body
- 10th Second Crossover (bills) & last day to disagree
- 11th First Crossover for Concurrent Resolutions
- 18th Constitutional Amendments: deadline for final form
- 21st Second Crossover for Concurrent Resolutions
- 24th Last day to file Non-Fiscal bills to deck for Final Reading
- 25th Last day to file Fiscal bills to deck for Final Reading
- May
- 1st Adjournment Sine Die

..... At the Capitol



Sen. Gabbard with Kulsoom Abbas, an exchange student from Pakistan completing her junior year at Kapolei High School, who shadowed the senator's activities at the Capitol on Jan. 25th.



Sen. Gabbard & Pastor John Honold of Hope Chapel Kapolei, who was invited by the senator to deliver the invocation to start the Senate Session in the Senate Chambers on Jan. 30th.

SENATOR GABBARD'S STAFF *at your service!*
The Gabbard Team from left to right →

Roberta Fellezs, Administrative Assistant
 Alan Texeira, Committee Clerk
 Erika Moon, Community Liaison
 Rock Riggs, Chief of Staff

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