


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

Mike Gabbard

State Senator, 19th District



July 2007

Aloha! I hope your summer is going well. Things are getting busy again at the Legislature. On June 25th, Governor Lingle notified the Legislature that she's considering vetoing 33 of the bills we passed during the 2007 Session. During the next several days, we'll be reviewing her concerns about the bills. The Governor has until July 10, 2007 to make a final decision on whether to sign the bills into law, let the bills become law, or veto them. That same day, the Legislature must decide whether we'll hold a Special Session with the intention of overriding her vetoes. You can check out the 33 bills that the Governor may veto by going to the Capitol website at www.capitol.hawaii.gov. If you'd like to weigh in, now is the time to let the Governor know by emailing her at governor.lingle@hawaii.gov or calling 586-0034.

Key Transportation Projects Moving Forward

I'm very pleased that many key transportation projects are moving forward. This year the Legislature appropriated \$55 million for the North-South Road. As many of you know, the North-South Road has been a dream for over 30 years. Recently, I had the opportunity to drive out to the site between Ewa and Kapolei and saw with my own eyes that the construction is underway.

Even better, I went up in a small plane and got a great aerial view. The North-South Road will be a six-lane divided road from Kapolei Parkway to the H-1 Freeway.

The entire project is scheduled for completion at the end of 2009. Once this road is open, traffic will be reduced on Fort Barrette Road and Fort Weaver Road in Ewa.

We also appropriated \$20.2 million for the widening of Fort Barrette Road this session. The road will be widened from 2-lanes to 4-lanes with construction scheduled for 2009.

This project will greatly improve the traffic between Kapolei and Kalaeloa.

Aerial View of the North-South Road





QUICK UPDATES

National Conference of State Legislatures' Forum a Great Learning Experience

I attended NCSL's Forum – "Opportunities for Working Families" in Denver from June 10 – 13th. The Hawaii Delegation also included Senators Chun Oakland and Hooser and Reps. Awana, Rhodes and Mizuno. The focus of the forum was to come up with a state action plan to give greater opportunities to low-income working families. I was especially surprised to learn there are approximately 27,000 taxpayers in Hawaii who are currently not taking advantage of the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). When we consider that the average EITC refundable tax credit is \$1,672, this translates into roughly \$45 million that low-income residents in Hawaii are entitled to, but are not receiving from the federal government each year. We need to do more to make sure this money comes home and during the coming months, we'll be looking at this and other strategies to help make things a little easier for working families.

New Signage for Kapolei Public Library

Rep. Sharon Har and I recently received a request to help find a solution for a Kailua resident who had difficulties in locating the Kapolei Public Library. The constituent was concerned about the absence of street signs to let people know where the library is located. We contacted Mr. Richard Burns, the Branch Manager for the Kapolei Public Library, to get his input. We then contacted the Department of Transportation Services (DTS) asking if it would be possible for them to put up these signs. I was happy to hear back from DTS that it would be "no problem" and that they'll be putting up two brown markers in each direction along Kamokila Boulevard fronting Manawai Street next month.

Recreational Opportunities for Our Community

As a former tennis pro and coach, I feel it's very important that our growing community have adequate recreational facilities for our families. Recently, I was contacted by a Makakilo resident who was very concerned about the worsening condition of the tennis courts at Makakilo Community Park. I went there myself and took some photos of the dilapidated tennis/volleyball/basketball courts. I contacted the City's Department of Parks and Recreation about the problem and was told that they've put the courts on their reconstruction project priority list. While I don't have a specific date for their repair, it's good to hear that the City considers the courts a priority.

You might also be aware of the tennis courts off Saratoga Avenue in Kalaheo. This was a great facility left over by the Navy, but recently the windscreens and 6 of the nets have been stolen. I'm now working with the City in the hopes that they'll take over the tennis courts and get them back in good condition. Otherwise, Kapolei residents will continue having to make the drive to Mililani or the Central Oahu Regional Park to participate in leagues or other organized tennis activities.

Listen-Story

My next listen-story will be co-hosted with Rep. Karen Awana (Nanakuli, Ko Olina, Honokai Hale) and will be held at the Kamokila Community Park meeting room on Saturday, July 14th at 9am. This will be my first listen-story held in the Honokai Hale/Ko Olina communities. Please come. If you can't, call or email your concerns.

July 2007



Honoring Freedom Writers Success Story

Recently, Carol and I saw an inspiring movie called Freedom Writers. As a lifelong teacher/educator, I was moved by this wonderful success story, starring Oscar-winning actress, Hilary Swank. It reminded me of a group of high school students I taught in American Samoa in the early 70s. The movie tells the real-life events of California teacher, Erin Gruwell, who transforms the lives of tough, inner city youth through her innovative teaching methods focused on journal writing and getting students to open up and express themselves.



After seeing the film, I found online that Erin started the Freedom Writers Foundation (freedomwritersfoundation.org) to train teachers how to help "at-risk" students get out of the cycle of failure and give them hope. I also came across an article about Marcia Nelson, a teacher at Crossroads Alternative High School in Coon Rapids, Minnesota. Marcia participated in Erin's pilot Freedom Writers Teacher Training Program and was a 2007 Minnesota Teacher of the Year Finalist.

Coincidentally, when I phoned Marcia, I found out she, 4 other teachers and their 18 students would be in Hawaii from June 9-19th. When they arrived, Carol and I greeted them at the airport with plumeria lei. They spent the next 5 nights camping at Volcanoes National Park, then returned to Oahu where they explored Oahu, while staying at the dorms at UH Manoa. On June 19, the day they left, I had the pleasure of presenting all the students and teachers with an honorary certificate from the State Senate for their outstanding accomplishments.

We've got many teachers like Marcia here in Hawaii who are willing to give "at-risk" students a second chance at getting on the right track. We also have many innovative public school programs, charter schools, and private schools. I'm hoping the Freedom Writer concept will be incorporated into our school system to help students who may be falling through the cracks.



Crossroads Teachers & Students from Minnesota visit the Capitol on 6/19/07.

Helpful Contacts



SENATOR GABBARD'S STAFF

We're at your service!

Rock Riggs, Chief of Staff
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HELPFUL ONLINE SERVICES:

Legislative Info:
www.capitol.hawaii.gov

City Services:
www.honolulu.gov

Your Elected Officials:

U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka.....	522-8970
U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye	541-2542
U.S. Representative Neil Abercrombie	541-2570
U.S. Representative Mazie K. Hirono	541-1986
Governor Linda Lingle	586-0034
Lieutenant Governor James "Duke" Aiona...	586-0255
Senator Mike Gabbard	586-6830
Representative Sharon Har	586-8500
Representative Karen Awana	586-8465
Mayor Mufi Hannemann	523-4141
Councilman Nestor Garcia	547-7009
Councilman Todd Apo	547-7001

Frequently Needed Numbers:

AARP	843-1906
Abandoned Vehicles	733-2530
Better Business Bureau	536-6956
Board of Water Supply.....	748-5000
Bulky Trash Items/ Deceased Animal Pickup	455-8502
Bus Schedule & Routes	848-5555
City & County Facility/Maintenance (potholes).....	527-6006
City & County Mayors Complaint Office	523-4381
City & County Missing Street Signs	455-1725
City & County Street Light Maintenance	564-6113
City & County Tree Maintenance	971-7151
Crime Stoppers	955-8300
Domestic Violence Hotline	531-3771
Drug Buster Hotline	586-1328
Graffiti Hotline	548-7311
Hawaiian Humane Society	946-2187
Kapolei Fire Station	682-0533
Kapolei High School	692-8200
Kapolei Middle School	693-7025
Kapolei Police Station	692-4262
Kapolei Satellite City Hall	692-5400
Poison Control Center	941-4411
Refuse Collection	455-9644
Sex Offender Registry	587-3100