

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

Mike Gabbard

State Senator, 19th District



August 2008

Aloha,

It's been a busy summer for me. I recently returned from the Pacific Educational Conference in American Samoa. I've also recently been appointed to the Access to Justice Commission and the Hawaii Ignition Interlock Implementation Task Force. 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. Mahalo for the privilege of serving you!

Mike

Pacific Educational Conference a Success

It was truly an honor to serve as the keynote speaker at the 25th annual Pacific Educational Conference in American Samoa on July 14th. The theme for this gathering of close to 1,000 educators from all across the Pacific Islands was "The Pacific Child: A Legacy of Community, Culture, and Art."



My speech highlighted two key educational initiatives in Kapolei which could serve as models in improving education in the Pacific Islands. I spoke about the successful Career Academies at Kapolei High School. If you're not familiar, when students at Kapolei High reach 11th grade, they must choose from one of eight Career Academies: Business, Fine Arts (Art, Drama, and Music), Health Careers, Human Services, Leadership, Learning Center for Applied Technology, Media Production (Graphic Arts and Video Production), or Professional Sciences. The students are expected to stay with a career academy for at least one year. Through the Academies, students are able to explore their career interests while they're still in high school. This makes their education more relevant to their everyday lives. It also gives them the chance to get into the mindset of giving back to the community.

The other exciting initiative that I discussed was the Malama Learning Center. This concept began in 2001 when Kapolei High School was looking to build a performing arts center and the Nature Conservancy, an environmental group, was planning on putting together a conservation learning center. These two ideas came together in a public-private partnership with Kapolei High School to build an innovative learning center on a 3-acre parcel on the campus.

The Malama Learning Center is envisioned as a living laboratory for performing arts, conservation, sustainable living, and Native Hawaiian culture. It will be a gathering place where people of all ages and walks of life come together for classes, workshops, performances, and volunteer service projects. The Malama Learning Center team is busy raising \$10.5 million for the construction of the project and plan to break ground by the end of 2009.



At the conclusion of the 25th Annual Pacific Educational Conference, Sen. Gabbard was presented with a commemorative plaque from Dr. Thomas Barlow, the President and CEO of the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning, and Dr. Claire Pomele, the Director of the American Samoa Dept of Education.



Sen. Gabbard honors the Parents for Righteousness group at their annual seminar in Waianae on July 19, 2008 for providing legal help to the needy.

[Access to Justice Commission](#)

I've been appointed to serve as the State Senate's representative on the 22-member Access to Justice Commission. Over the next several months, we will be focusing on ways to increase access to justice in civil legal matters for low and moderate income Hawaii residents. The Commission was created in response to a 2007 report which found that a disturbing level of unmet civil legal needs exist among our low-income residents. Associate Justice Simeon Acoba serves as the Chair of the Commission.

[Listen-Story](#)

I'll be hosting my next "Listen-Story" meeting at the Kamokila Community Park in Honokai Hale at 9 a.m. on Saturday, August 16, 2008. Refreshments will be served!

[Ignition Interlock Implementation Task Force](#)



I will be serving with Rep. Sharon Har on the recently created Ignition Interlock Implementation Task Force. The purpose of this task force is to make recommendations on the implementation of Act 171.

As you might remember, this new law will require the installation of an ignition interlock device on the car of a person who has been arrested for a DUI, which prevents him/her from driving a car if they've been drinking. The law is scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2010.



Jeff Pointek, the new headmaster at the Hawaii Technology Academy, accepts a Congratulatory Certificate from Senators Mike Gabbard and Norman Sakamoto, who both sit on the Senate Education Committee, at a Blessing Ceremony on July 10, 2008 at Lanikuhonua at Ko 'Olina.

[Sierra Club 2007-2008 Legislature Environmental Scorecard](#)



On July 16th, the Hawaii Sierra Club held a news conference at the State Capitol to announce their 2007-2008 Legislature Environmental Scorecard. The scorecard serves as a measure of a legislator's environmental stewardship which is shown through a combination of his/her voting record and other actions which promote sustainability. I was given an "A-" and tied with Senator Gary Hooser for second place overall in the State Senate. Key votes which were considered included bills related to greenhouse gases, invasive species, the Superferry exemption, solar power, and GMO taro.



Sen. Gabbard celebrates "May Day 2008" with Makakilo Elementary faculty, students, and families.

[Makakilo Elementary Classrooms to be Renovated](#)

I was pleased to hear Governor Lingle's July 18th announcement that she had released \$30 million for classroom renovations across the state. Makakilo Elementary is one of the schools which will benefit from this investment.

Improvements to the school will include replacement of light fixtures, windows, flooring, doors, whiteboards, tack boards, and room signage. The classrooms will also be repainted.

West Oahu Youth Graduate from National Guard Programs



Over 200 participants of the About Face!, Community All-Stars, and SMART Moves programs graduated at the Hawaii National Guard's Celebration of Accomplishments event at Kapolei High School on June 26th. Each of these programs receives funding from the Hawaii National Guard and includes students from James Campbell, Kapolei, Nanakuli, and Waianae high schools. I presented certificates from the State Senate to each of the graduates. I also sang a song I co-wrote, entitled *E Kuponome ke Aloha (Taking a stand for what's right)*, for the over 800 people who attended the graduation ceremony.



Honoring the grads are (from left) Cal Higa (Department of Defense), Tele Fuata (Boys & Girls Club), Mapuana Tector (Paxen Group), Jeffery Schaefer (About Face), Puamamo Wa'a (Boys & Girls Club), Sen. Gabbard, Monalisa Siofele (About Face), Lehua Ka'auwai-Krueger (Paxen Group), Gina Hood (About Face), Dean Blandford (Paxen Group, Oahu Program Manager), and Antonio Benavides (Forward March).

About Face! and Community All-Stars are managed by the Kalaeloa-based Paxen Group, Inc. About Face! is a 16-session after-school program which allows economically disadvantaged students, ages 13-19, to improve their life skills and their chances in the job market. During the 2 ½ hour sessions, students learn how to fill out a job application, balance a checkbook, practice job interviewing, and do meal planning. Community All-Stars is an activity-based program for 13 to 18 year olds which provides them with important employment and life skills. The 11-week instruction period is focused on lessons in computer literacy, running a business, managing a checking account, meal planning, and healthy living.

The SMART Moves program is a partnership between the Hawaii National Guard and the Boys and Girls Club of Hawaii. SMART Moves is an abstinence-based program that encourages teens to see the many benefits of not giving in to peer pressure when it comes to alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and early sexual activity.

I'm 100% in support of these programs which help our young people get on the right track to becoming responsible citizens.



Former Waikele School Librarian Debora Lum Honored By Senate

I presented Ms. Debora Lum with a commemorative certificate from the State Senate during the Librarians Assessment Workshop at the Advanced Technology and Research Office on July 1st. Debora has made a priceless contribution to education—as a teacher, librarian, leader, role model, and friend. Her commitment to being a life-long learner has effectively taught young students the importance of continuing their education throughout their lives.



In February of this year, Ms. Lum received the 2008 Golden Key Librarian Award. The award was established in 1979 to recognize individuals who have made significant professional contributions to school librarianship in Hawaii and who have given notable services to the Hawaii Association of School Librarians. Ms. Lum is a Seaview resident and worked as the Waikele Elementary School librarian from 1994 until her retirement in 2007. Described by her colleagues as a "rare gem" and a "powerhouse", Ms. Lum worked tirelessly to improve educational opportunities for her students while bettering herself through professional development activities.



New Joint Traffic Management Center Will Reduce Traffic

I recently joined Mayor Hannemann and other city and state officials on a site tour of mainland traffic management centers. During the week of June 2-7, we visited state-of-the-art facilities in Los Angeles, Austin, and Chicago.

The city and state are currently working on the Alapai Joint Traffic Management Center (AJTMC) in Honolulu. The project is in the preliminary design and planning stages and will cost roughly \$73 million in federal, state, and city resources. The new building will be located at the corner of King and Alapai streets with a planned completion date of 2011.

The purpose of our trip was to learn “best practices” from other cities so that we could incorporate these ideas into the plans for the AJTMC. Visiting the different traffic management centers reinforced for me and my colleagues the importance of having all our transportation/emergency services under one roof. Plans are to have the City’s Department of Transportation Services, the State’s Department of Transportation, the Honolulu Police Department, the Honolulu Fire Department, the Honolulu Emergency Management Services, and Oahu Civil Defense in the same building to make it easier for them to share information and resources. This will improve traffic flow and response times to crashes, and allow us to better respond to emergencies.



I was impressed with the foresight that went into the design of some of the traffic management centers we visited. For example, even though both Los Angeles and Orange County are located in areas of high seismic activity, they were able to build their traffic management centers so that the buildings can move up to 24” horizontally in any direction in the event of an earthquake. The Orange County facility is also equipped to operate for 72 hours without requiring utility services from the outside. The center in Austin was designed to withstand tornadoes and is secure against manmade threats such as explosive devices.



While all the traffic management centers we visited are among the best in the country, the one in Chicago definitely took the top prize. They have a cutting-edge display table which brings into great detail satellite images of the city, such as schools, hospitals, and other public buildings, and can be adjusted with the touch of a finger. During emergencies, the display can be used to tell firefighters where the elevators and staircases in any building are located. The display uses the same technology as the touch controlled computer in the movie, *Minority Report*.

As the Vice Chair of the Senate Transportation and International Affairs Committee, I’m committed to doing all I can to help ensure that the state dedicates the necessary funding to move the AJTMC forward. With the increasing traffic congestion that we see in West Oahu, it’s critical that we have this added tool to improve traffic flow, increase road safety, and respond to emergencies.

Senator Mike Gabbard

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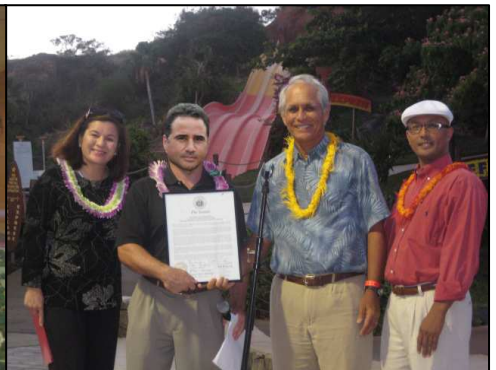
July 13, 2008

Hawaii Festival for Religious Freedom



July 11, 2008

‘Ilima at Leihano in Kapolei Site Tour



June 20, 2008

Hawaiian Waters Adventure Park