



6th District
 HANA, EAST & UPCOUNTRY MAUI,
 MOLOKA'I, LĀNA'I & KAHO`OLAWĒ

Chair, Committee on Energy,
 Environment,
 and International Affairs
 Committee Memberships:
 Intergovernmental Affairs;
 Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs;
 Media, Arts, Science, and Technology;
 Water, Land, and Agriculture;
 Ways and Means

Hawai'i's Energy Needs Outlined in Capitol Briefing

Hawai'i is in the grip of a "hidden energy crisis," and the move toward renewable energy needs to be accelerated: that's just one of the conclusions of an informational briefing held on January 20 at the State Capitol. Sen. J. Kalani English, Chair of the Senate Energy, Environment, and International Affairs Committee and Rep. Hermina M. Morita, Chair of the House Energy and Environmental Protection Committee, hosted the briefing. Testimony from a wide range of experts in the field examined Hawai'i's energy future in detail and looked at the ways improved transportation efficiency can lower the state's dependence on fossil fuels.



Mike Hamnett of the Hawai'i Energy Policy Forum told the legislators at the briefing that worldwide petroleum use is increasing as the supply of crude oil is declining, and cautioned that much of its supply comes from politically unstable parts of the world.

"Hawai'i is especially vulnerable to rising fuel costs," Sen. English said. "Not only do we use fossil fuels to power our cars, we also use it to generate electricity – far more than any other state. That means prices can only go up as long as we depend on fossil fuels for our basic needs. We know fossil fuels are harmful to the environment; we need to understand their economic impact as well. This briefing was a dramatic illustration of the need for a strong renewable energy policy in Hawai'i."

The price of oil is going up worldwide, and competition to buy it is increasing. Much of the world's oil comes from politically unstable regions. Almost 77 percent of Hawai'i's electricity comes from oil, versus three percent on the U.S. Mainland. The result: Hawai'i's energy costs are the highest in the nation.

What solutions are available? Dr. John Tantlinger of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism outlined an "integrated energy strategy" that included improving transportation efficiency, moving toward renewable energy, and using such alternate ground transportation fuels as ethanol and biodiesel.

All of these are pivotal issues for Sen. English and the committee he chairs in the upcoming legislative session. One of Senator English's top priorities is correcting the language of the Renewable Portfolio Standards Act passed in 2004, a measure designed to encourage Hawaii's utilities to increase their development and use of renewable energy sources. Currently, the measure does not exclude fossil fuels from its list of renewable sources, and its wording needs to be amended. Sen. English said, "This bill is intended to reduce our dependency on fossil fuels, which are not a renewable energy source, and stabilize energy costs."



Sen. J. Kalani English (at right) with House Energy and Environment Protection Committee members (from right to left), Rep. Tommy Waters, Rep. Cindy Evans, and Committee Chair Hermina M. Morita.

A Message From Kalani

I would like to thank the people of the 6th Senate District for their support this past year. It was good to see so many folks from the district stop by the Capitol office on Opening Day; it was a reminder of what a privilege it is to represent you.

This year's legislative effort will have a theme of sustainability and concern for the environment. I serve as Chair of the Committee on Energy, the Environment, and International Affairs, and am a member of five other committees. In all our areas of concern, we need to create programs, policies, and laws that are self-supporting. These areas include fuel consumption, renewable energy, care for the environment, and issues related to development and economic growth.

I look forward to working with you in the exciting and productive year ahead.

Aloha,
J. Kalani English



Future Leaders "Shadow" Senators



On January 21, the Senate Committee on Energy, Environment, and International Affairs coordinated a day-long internship at the Capitol for the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) program. FLEX participants are gifted high school students from the countries of the former Soviet Union who spend an academic year in the U.S., studying at a high school and living with an American family. The students spent a day at the Legislature as "shadows" for the Senator from the districts where they are visiting. Shown above with their student "shadows" (from right to left) are Senators Russell Kokobun, Fred Hemmings, Norman Sakamoto, Shan Tsutsui, and Gary L. Hooser.

Meet Our Capitol Staff

Jennifer Chow, Office Manager

Jennifer is a graduate of the University of California at Santa Cruz with a B.A. in History. This is the beginning of her second year at the Capitol; she was Sen. English's Committee Clerk for the 2004 Legislative Session. Jennifer keeps track of the details of each busy work day, maintaining the daily schedule and keeping the work flow moving.

Libby Kimball, Receptionist

Libby is the heart and soul of the office, bringing an endless supply of energy and good cheer. She was born and raised on Moloka'i, and is in her seventh year working at the Capitol.

En Young, Committee Clerk

En was born and raised on the island of Hawa'i and studied both Environmental Engineering and Communications at the University of Hawa'i's Hilo campus, where he earned a degree in Philosophy. He brings a wealth of expertise and experience to his position.



From left to right: Libby Kimball, Chris Vandercook, Jennifer Chow, Craig Fleetham, En Young.

Chris Vandercook, Communications Director

Chris is a former Executive Producer of KGMB News and Director of the Governor's Office of Information who has an extensive background in news media, television production, and government. He will draft news releases, edit this newsletter, and work with media throughout the session.

Craig Fleetham, Legislative Intern

Craig is a student at the University of Hawai'i's Mānoa campus, where he studies Political Science and Philosophy. His internship gives him an opportunity to learn about the legislative process at first hand. Upon graduation, Craig plans to attend law school in Europe.

2005

Legislative Session Begins

Friends Gather at Capitol on Opening Day

Opening Day of the 2005 Legislature, January 19, was an opportunity for visitors from all over the 6th District to come by the office (Room 205 at the Capitol), talk story with Kalani, meet the staff, and look ahead to a productive legislative session.



From left to right above: Fred Nomura, Leona Nomura, Lance Collins, Sen. English, Jonathan Starr, Lathen Walker, Kepano Lono, Elizabeth Ayson, Louis Zajac, and Marian Zajac.



On Opening Day, Sen. English dropped by the office of longtime friend Rep. Kameo Tanaka, who represents the 10th House District: Lahaina, Kaanapali, Kapalua, Maalaea, and Kihei.

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