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Senator English Appointed to Hawai'i Invasive Species Council

A Message From Kalani



Aloha,

This legislative interim has been a valuable time for our office. Whether it's a close-up view of invasive species eradication programs or a community meeting in the district, it's an opportunity to gather information and exchange ideas.

As always, my staff and I encourage you to get in touch with our Capitol office for any help we can offer.

Sen. English took part in a July 12 helicopter inspection of Miconia eradication efforts near his Hāna home with (l. to r.) Jim Hobbs of Windward Aviation; Perry Bednarz, National Parks Service (NPS) Helibase Manager; Dr. Alic McClay, NPS Biological Control Consultant; and Jeremy Gooding, NPS Exotic Plant Management Team.

Senator J. Kalani English has been appointed to the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC), representing Maui County. The Council operates under the banner of the State's Department of Land and Natural Resources. Sen. English, who sponsored the original legislation that created the HISC, said "I am proud to serve on this important organization. It is important for the State and the public to recognize the importance of a coordinated policy to eliminate the species that threaten our environment and our economy."

A Growing Threat

The HISC was created to halt the spread of new invasive species and work to eliminate such species as the Coqui frog, *Salvinia molesta*, *Miconia calvenscens*, and dengue fever. It is responsible for the coordination of prevention, control, research, and public information programs. Sen. English said, "Invasive species have caused millions of dollars in damage to crops, led to the elimination of indigenous species, and spread disease. We will need to work hard to undo the mistakes that have been made in the past and ensure that they are not repeated."



Sen. English Addresses International Small Island Studies Association's 2006 Conference



On July 31, Sen. English spoke to the International Small Islands Studies Association's 2006 Conference at Maui Community College on the topic: "Small Islands -- Big Issues." The non-profit International Small Islands Studies Association (ISISA) is made up of scholars and researchers from around the world. According to its website, its objectives are "to study islands on their own terms, and to encourage free scholarly discussion on small island related matters such as islandness, smallness, insularity, dependency, resource management and environment, and the nature of island life." (For more information, visit www.geol.utas.edu.au/isisa.) The following is an excerpt from his speech.

It's vital that we recognize the special challenges that islands face. It's equally important to recognize that those challenges have already been met, long ago. Island societies have moved away from self-sufficiency. Today, our challenge is getting back there. Sustainability is an imperative for island societies: in energy, in agriculture, in economic development. But for us, sustainability is not a trendy new idea; it's an essential part of our cultural heritage.

Lessons of History

The basic unit land division in ancient Hawaii is the *ahupua'a*: an area of land which extends from the mountains to the sea. It is a classic example of human society in harmony with nature: enough for everyone – enough space, enough food, enough water, and a population in balance. I am fortunate enough to have been raised in the old ways of Hawai'i in a place that, because of its geographical isolation, has remained relatively unspoiled. I have worked to make Hawai'i into a model for Small Island Developing States. I would like to see island governments turn liabilities – such as small size and isolation – into advantages. Our small size means we have a manageable unit to work with. Our isolation reminds us that self-reliance is a necessity.

Energy Costs a Matter of Security

The high cost of non-renewable energy is everyone's concern. During this past legislative session, the Administration and the energy utility finally bought in to the idea of sustainability. What has changed? The price of fuel at the pump is the most obvious answer -- and we have the highest fuel prices in the nation. There is also a growing recognition that dependence on non-renewable, imported fuel for energy is a security issue.

Toward a Greater Unity of Purpose

Going forward, I would hope to see greater unity among our supporters, coupled with a greater understanding of the process. Ironically, some environmental extremists in Hawai'i today act as obstacles to progress by complaining loudly and publicly that not enough has been done. I hope we can foster a greater understanding of the way government works. I hope we can gain greater support for the step-by-step nature of legislative progress and enhance public understanding of the time-honored art of compromise. Someday I believe we will look back on the struggle for energy self-reliance and wonder why it took so long. We will shake our heads at the human tendency to resist cultural change – and at the difficulty of struggling against entrenched economic interests. But I also believe we are going to return to the concept of the *ahupua'a* – that self-contained community of long ago – in a new, 21st-Century version. Islands, driven by their special circumstances, will lead the way.

Sen. English Speaks to Maui Drug Court Program Graduates

Since August of 2000, the Maui Drug Court Program has provided intensive supervision and treatment to 422 non-violent offenders. The 2005 Legislature appropriated funding for expanded drug and alcohol treatment programs, which will allow the Maui Drug Court to expand its present program capacity. Currently, the Drug Court has the capacity for 90 people in outpatient treatment. That number will be expanded to 120.

Sen. English spoke at the Fifteenth Commencement Ceremony on July 27, 2006. From left to right: Sen. English; the Honorable Shackley F. Raffetto; the Honorable Joseph E. Cardoza; the Honorable Joel E. August, Circuit Court Judge; and Attorney Phil Lowenthal.



Excerpts from Sen. English's remarks:

Today you have new hope and new opportunity. The Maui Drug Court represents an approach to criminal justice that many people have worked hard to create: an approach based on belief in the goodness of all people -- and a belief in their capacity to change. Many of the people who worked so hard are here in this room today: legislators, judges, law enforcement officials at all levels... individuals who believed that we cannot just throw people away when they make a mistake.

The Hawaiian Way

I don't believe you should condemn those in need of help. Today, that may be a minority perspective. I hope not. I was raised in the Hawaiian way -- with reverence for the value of all human life. With belief in the value of 'ohana. The members of today's graduating class know about these things, too. Their successful completion of this program, over long months, has shown their ability to help each other. Just a few months ago, I attended my hanai brother's graduation from a program like this one. We grew up together. I was never more proud of him than I was that day. So I know how you -- the family members here today -- must feel. And I hope you know how important you are to your loved ones' recovery.

A History of Success

The Maui Drug Court Program has a remarkable success rate: five-percent felony convictions, three-percent misdemeanor convictions, among all graduates to date. This is testimony to the strength of the graduates themselves and to the people who worked for years to make the program a reality. I'm confident that the success of this program will inspire further expansion -- and set the stage for further success stories to come.

We need to stem the tide of condemnation of those in need. That philosophy benefits no one. If you give up on people, you are giving up on society's capacity to take care of its own. In an 'ohana, we gain strength from one another, and we learn who we can turn to in difficult times.

The Gift of Hope

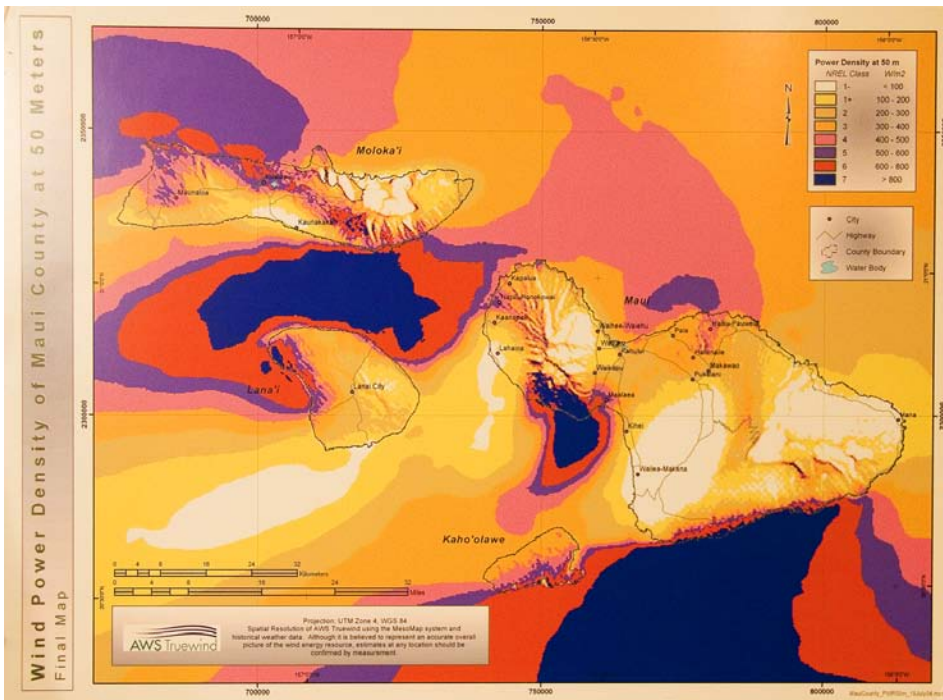
For today's graduates: as you go forward, you will need to distinguish between those people who are willing to reach out to you and those who would condemn you. You have to surround yourself with positive energy... and, as a citizen, you will want to work toward a more compassionate society. You are part of society. You can help shape your world by helping out in your community... by giving back some of that positive energy. The greatest gift you can offer a person is the gift of hope. I'm sure many of you, today's graduates, had wondered of you would ever get another chance. You may have wondered of you would ever again have reason to hope. Well, that day is here. I urge you to make the most of it.

Wind Farm Project Projected to Meet 20 Percent of Maui's Energy Needs

Senator J. Kalani English says that Shell WindEnergy Inc.'s plans to invest more than \$200 million in a wind farm at 'Ulupalakua Ranch "are a welcome sign that the State, the private sector, and energy providers are coming together to take State energy policy in an important new direction – with an emphasis on renewable sources and a goal of energy self-sufficiency." The Senator added, "we will have to be sensitive to any cultural impacts the project may have and balance those with the tremendous benefits it offers." Shell and 'Ulupalakua Ranch are partners in the project, which is projected to meet 20 percent of Maui's demand for electricity. "This project could move us closer to a better future for everyone in Hawai'i," Sen. English said.



From left to right: John Hofmeister, President, Shell Oil Company; Sen. English; Mike May, President and CEO of Hawaiian Electric Company, parent company of Renewable Hawai'i, Inc.; and Sumner Erdman, President of 'Ulupalakua Ranch, Inc. The Auwahi Wind Project will be built in a remote area of the 20,000-acre ranch that was chosen by project planners for its strong winds and its "minimal visual impact." The project was announced at a State Capitol news conference June 30, 2006.



Sen. English said, "Shell has made good use of the state wind map that was made a few years ago with the specific goal of identifying suitable sites for wind energy generation." The Senator also said he was gratified to hear that the project may combine wind and hydroelectric power.

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