



Senator English Meets With Federal EPA Administrator as State Building Earns Energy Star Award



US Environmental Protection Agency Regional Administrator Wayne Nastri and EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson (center) congratulate Sen. English for his efforts to promote energy efficiency in State facilities.

The head of the US Environmental Protection Agency came to Hawai'i Feb. 22 to present the administration with an Energy Star Award for the new Kapolei State Building. The Energy Star is a government-backed program helping businesses and individuals protect the environment through superior energy efficiency. Sen. English has introduced several bills over the years aimed at mandating energy efficient standards for construction of State facilities. At the presentation, Gov. Lingle thanked Sen. English for his "collaboration [with the administration] to keep this issue before the public."

"State government has an obligation to set an example in energy efficiency," Sen. English said. "This operation of this new state building will set a standard of cost-effectiveness and energy savings that can serve as an example for other government facilities and businesses alike. Whenever government makes a commitment to energy efficiency, it sends a strong message: energy reform is good business."



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



A Message From Kalani

Aloha,

We are at midpoint in this year's legislative session, with a number of significant measures under consideration. This is a time when citizen input is especially valuable. My staff and I hope you will take full advantage of the opportunity to make your feelings known through public testimony. We're standing by to help.

Please feel free to get in touch.

J. Kalani English



Energy Independence: a Matter of Security

by Sen. J. Kalani English
Chair, Senate Committee on
Energy, Environment, and International Affairs

The effort to build a self-reliant Hawai'i, freed from forces beyond our control, is growing. We are vulnerable. Here on the world's most isolated island chain, we need to import practically everything we use. To take control of our future, we need to understand the need for energy independence, and understand the way energy issues affect the well-being of our entire society. Perhaps, if we look at energy independence as a security issue, we can better understand its urgency, and take the necessary steps toward reform.

A number of bills before the Legislature this session are aimed at reducing our dependence on imported fuels and non-renewable energy sources. The measures include provisions for the construction of energy-efficient buildings, the development of renewable energy sources, and the production of alternative fuels – all of them important steps toward self-reliance.

But there's more to be gained from energy reform than economic benefits. It's a question of security. Energy reform is essential to the security of our economic system: our health care, our food supply, and our transportation. Too often, we look at energy reform and security as separate areas of concern. It's time to revise our view, and understand that true security for Hawai'i can only come through an overhaul of the ways we import, consume, and produce energy.

Currently, 77 percent of Hawaii's electricity comes from imported oil. No other state gets so much of its energy from oil, and no other state has costs as high as ours. Should our energy dependence cripple us – or should it inspire us to lead the nation in energy self-reliance?

As Chair of the Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment, and International Affairs, I have spent years on the effort to reform Hawaii's energy policies. This year, due in large part to the support of the Administration, energy reform has renewed momentum. In addition to the bills I have introduced on the Senate side, the Administration, the Majority Caucus, and the Minority all have submitted measures for consideration.



One key goal: to encourage alternative energy production. We have untapped resources in biomass, hydroelectric, wave energy, solar, and wind power to draw upon. Another: designing and building energy-efficient buildings, with the state stepping up to set the example. The Renewable Portfolio Standard commits the State to a strict timeline to move away from our dependence on fossil fuels. Renewable energy tax credits encourage businesses and individuals to make the change to renewables.

We're at a time in history when security is on everyone's mind. As we begin to understand the way the issues we face are interrelated, we come to know that energy reform is essential to a secure future.





High school students from around the state came to the Capitol to speak to their elected representatives about the Healthy Hawai'i Initiative, the Department of Health's public education campaign. Funded through the Tobacco Settlement funds, this campaign is a state-wide, multimedia educational campaign—with partnerships in both the private and public sectors— designed to provide the people of Hawai'i with information on how to start living healthy. If you're a smoker, quitting smoking is a very good place to start! The Web address is www.healthyhawaii.com/. (Click on the URL to view the site.)



Jackie Hariguchi and Tom Cook of the Maui Contractors Association spent a day "shadowing" Sen. English on Feb. 15, attending meetings, a Judiciary Committee hearing, and the Senate floor session. "It taught me a lot," Jackie said. "It was very worth the trip; we both got a lot out of it in terms of how government works, from the bottom to the top." The Maui Contractors Association is an industry support group that began in 1962. It works with government officials, offers safety training and business seminars, and sponsors an annual Home Show. The website is www.mauicontractors.org.



As Chair of the Energy, Environment, and International Affairs Committee, Sen. English meets with dignitaries from around the world throughout the year. Here, he addresses an ad hoc committee that is traveling to the United States and Japan on behalf of the Thai government. A government website says that despite its 700-year monarchy, "Thailand has become one of Asia's strongest democracies in a relatively short period of time. It has a check-and-balance system similar to that of any Western democracy, with a Prime Minister as the head of government."



Rep. Hermina Morita, Chair of the House Environmental Protection Committee, and Sen. English met with Paula DiPerna, Executive Vice President for Corporate Recruitment and Public Policy of the Chicago Climate Exchange. Ms. DiPerna made a presentation to the House and Senate Environment chairs about the Exchange, the world's first voluntary, legally binding multi-sector market for reducing and trading greenhouse gas emissions. Sen. English has sponsored a bill to make Hawai'i the first state to join the Exchange. Its website is www.chicagoclimatex.com/.

Sen. English Applauds Review of Kamehameha Schools Decision

On Feb. 22, the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals announced that it would hold another hearing on its ruling on the Kamehameha Schools admissions policy. The decision was applauded by Senator J. Kalani English, a graduate of the Kamehameha Schools, who is one of two Native Hawaiian members of the State Senate.

"I am glad the Ninth Circuit judges have decided to review their August 2 decision," Sen. English said today. "An en banc review of the decision by a panel of 15 judges will provide a framework for a comprehensive review of a decision that affects everyone in Hawai'i.

"It was a mistake for the court to place a narrow construction on the Kamehameha School admissions policy. I am confident that the appeals judges will recognize the importance of protecting the school's unique legacy. This is about honoring the wishes of the last member of the Kamehameha Dynasty and understanding her goals for the children of Hawai'i. By deciding to review their August decision, the judges have shown an understanding that this is a complex issue – and that the legacy of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, and her goals for the children of Hawaii, are worthy of careful consideration."



Sen. English, Rep. Dennis Arakaki (D-Kalihi Valley, Kamehameha Heights, Moanalua, Fort Shafter) and Rep. Mele Carroll (D-Kaho'olawe, Molokini, Lāna'i, Moloka'i, Keanae, Wailua, Nahiku, Hāna), traveled to Lāna'i and Moloka'i during the Legislature's mandatory five-day recess for a round of community meetings.

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