



2006 Session Brings Historic Advance in State Energy Policy



With the passage of two omnibus energy package bills in the Hawai'i State Legislature, the 2006 Session is being viewed as the beginning of real energy reform for Hawai'i – a state that imports more fossil fuel than any other. The two bills complete a package of energy-related measures that signals a historic turnaround in the way the state of Hawaii deals with the issue of renewable energy. Senator J. Kalani English, Chair of the Senate Committee on Energy, Environment, and International Affairs, said, "These

measures create a clear framework to move Hawai'i toward the long-term goal of energy self-sufficiency. By setting benchmarks for energy efficiency and conservation, offering tax credits, and requiring the State to set an example through its purchasing practices, we are sending a clear message that Hawai'i is ready to move away from its crippling dependence on fossil fuels."

A number of energy reform bills were introduced this session, with their major provisions ending up in the language of the two omnibus bills. Sen. English added, "The bills, one on the House side and the other in the Senate, are the product of a new bipartisan attitude toward energy reform in the Legislature. We are all stakeholders in State energy policy; it affects our economy, our security, and our environment. There's no turning back from the course we are on now – and that's good news for all of us."

(continued on page 2)

**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,

The 2006 Legislative Session was a productive one for the state and the people of Hawai'i's 6th District. In the area of energy reform, this year's session has given us a blueprint for change, with a renewed commitment from the administration, public utilities, and the business community. We are still a long way from where we need to be, but, with the progress made this year, we are on our way.

J. Kalani English



Energy Reform Measures Highlight 2006 Session



Joint House-Senate conference committees, which meet in the final weeks of the session, make the final decisions about the content of bills to be voted on in the House and Senate. In the photo at left, Sen. English reviews the energy omnibus bills before they are passed in conference. His Senate colleagues at the meeting are (from left to right) Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Sen. Shan S. Tsutsui, and Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland.

(continued from page one)

The Senate measure, **SB 2957, SD2, HD2, CD1**, includes the following provisions:
an increase in renewable energy tax credits for solar thermal, wind-powered, and photovoltaic energy systems and the removal of the tax credits' Jan. 1, 2008 sunset date;
the establishment of a biofuel preference in Hawai'i's procurement law;
State support for an alternate fuel standard – with ten percent of highway fuel demand to be provided by alternate fuels by 2010;
the establishment of a Hawai'i Renewable Hydrogen Program and a Hydrogen Investment Capital Special Fund; and
a “pay as you save” pilot program, to be implemented by the Public Utilities Commission, to help residents purchase energy-efficient solar hot water heater systems.

The House bill, **HB2175, HD2, SD2, CD1**, includes:
a pilot project to install photovoltaic systems in public schools;

the establishment of energy-efficient standards for construction of state facilities, the purchase of energy-efficient vehicles and products by the State, and the use of energy-efficient fuels in State vehicles (along with an appropriation for those initiatives); and

priority processing of County building permits for facilities that incorporate energy-efficient design standards, such as the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) building standard.

The first major component of the energy reform package to pass the Legislature was **SB 3185 SD2, HD2, CD1**, “A Bill for an Act Relating to Energy”, a bill that creates a framework for consumers and the electric utility to share in the cost of fluctuating oil prices – instead of simply passing those costs through to the consumer.

Sen. English said, “Energy reform is a goal that won't be met overnight, but the bills passed this session mean a comprehensive change in state energy policy. They reflect a clear understanding on the part of Hawai'i's lawmakers that we cannot go on the way we have. With the passage of these bills, Hawai'i is poised to become the nation's leader in energy reform.”

2006 Budget Includes Grants-in-Aid, Capital Improvements, Operating Funds for 6th District

Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa Receives Grant-in-Aid Funding

An operating grant-in-aid of \$105,000 for Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa has been included in the State Budget for 2006. Sen. English is a board member of the organization, which was established in August of 2003.

The International Society for Integration, Dignity, and Economic Advancement (IDEA) says the non-profit 'Ohana is "dedicated to promoting the value and dignity of every individual who was exiled to the Kalaupapa peninsula, beginning in 1866. Its members include the permanent residents, most of whom have lived on the remote peninsula for more than half a century and have chosen to live out their lives there; family members; interested citizens; state legislators; and representatives of non-profit organizations that have had a long-standing interest in the future of Kalaupapa and her residents.

"As the population of Kalaupapa decreases and watches similar facilities around the world being closed, it was deemed of vital importance to bring together people who would support and help do what is necessary to ensure that the remaining residents of Kalaupapa will be able to live out their lives in this, their home, and have the assurance that their history will be preserved and interpreted for the education and inspiration of present and future generations."

Editor's Note

This issue of the 6th District newsletter is the last bi-weekly edition until the beginning of next year's legislative session. The newsletter will be published monthly until then, with a new edition on the 15th of each month.

Funds Allocated for Harbor, Schools, Medical Facilities

Key facilities around the 6th District have been allocated funding for construction, capital improvements, and operating expenses. The Legislature has granted the funds pending the Governor's approval.

Hāna Wharf and Small Boat Harbor: \$100,000 for design, \$3,200,000 for construction.

Moloka'i General Hospital: \$1,600,000 for capital improvements, \$500,000 grant-in-aid for operating costs. Another \$500,000 has been allocated "for the provision of comprehensive medical and health care services on the island of Moloka'i for health resources administration."

Lāna'i High & Elementary School: \$616,000 to design additional classrooms.

Hāna Health: a grant-in-aid of \$500,000 for operating expenses.

King Kekaulike School: \$650,000 in planning and design funds for a new auditorium.



The Hawai'i State Senate's Maui delegation: Sen. Shan S. Tsutsui (D-4th, Wailuku, Waihee, Kahului, Paia, Lower Paia) Sen. Rosalyn H. Baker (D-5th, Kapalua, Kaanapali, Lahaina, Maalaea, Kihei, Makena) and Sen. English.

Senator English to Meet with Pacific Island Legislators

After the close of the 2006 Legislative Session, Sen. English will travel to Tahiti for a series of meetings on government and cultural affairs. Among the matters he will discuss:

1) the upcoming Association of Pacific Island Legislatures (APIL) General Assembly Conference, which will meet in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands from June 5 to June 7 of this year. The Senator will meet with the leadership of Tahiti's Territorial Assembly and discuss their participation in the conference. The APIL is a regional organization, formed in 1981, that is composed of legislative representatives from 12 island governments. The organization meets regularly "to consider matters in areas where regional cooperation, coordination, exchange and assistance may help governments achieve their goals through collective action."

2) Senate Concurrent Resolution 83, "Recognizing the importance of a cultural exchange between the people of Hawai'i and the island of Ra'iatea and requesting Ke Ala `Olinu Native Cultural Center to convene a task force to help facilitate a cultural exchange," which was adopted by the 2006 Hawai'i State Legislature. Ka'uhane Lee, Director of the Ke Ala `Olinu Native Cultural Center, and her colleague, Makalapua Kanuha, will join the Senator in discussing the resolution with the Mayor of Taputapuataea.

3) The group also will be discussing the upcoming Maohi Native Cultural Festival, to be held in Tahiti in November of this year, with the Minister of Culture and other civic organizations. Ka'uhane Lee is the principal organizer of the Festival.



Senator English and 2006 session staff gathered for a "team photo" on the last day of the legislative session. From left to right: Sydney Iaukea, Research Analyst; Auntie Libby Kimball, Receptionist; Chris Vandercook, Communications Director; Sharon Lum Ho, Committee Clerk; Sen. English; Elisha Kemp, Research Assistant; and Ainoa Naniolo, Office Manager.

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