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MESSAGE FROM KALANI

2015 begins on a high note as we draft bills, prepare policy and examine fiscal issues. The work is upon us and we move forward knowing that with a new governor and a new legislature, working together we can find new solutions to our problems and improve the State of Hawai'i for us all.

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SENATOR J.KALANI ENGLISH

HAWAI'I STATE SENATE 7TH DISTRICT

HĀNA, EAST AND UPCOUNTRY MAUI,
MOLOKA'I, LĀNA'I AND KAHO'OLAWÉ



ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BRIEFINGS UNDERWAY

Lawmakers are gearing up for the legislative session with marathon budget briefings. Prior to the start of the session, the Senate Ways and Means Committee and the House Finance Committee began informational briefings on proposed agency budgets. Opening Day of the legislative session is Wednesday, January 21, 2015.

Officials from departments and agencies such as the Governor's Office, the Department of Budget and Finance, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, University of Hawaii, the Department of Education, and the Council on Revenues present and defend their budget proposals before a panel of lawmakers headed by Sen. Jill Tokuda and Rep. Sylvia Luke, chairs of their respective committees.

Late December, the newly elected Governor David Ige submitted his proposed budget for the 2015-2017 biennium, which includes a \$25.77 billion operating budget over two years. Lawmakers will use this as a starting point when they take up the biennium budget next month.

Information on the informational briefings scheduled can be found on the Hawaii State Legislature's website. http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2015/hearingnotices/HEARING_FIN-WAM_2015_SUMMARY_INFO_.HTM

Each budget briefing can also be viewed on 'Olelo Community Television and online at: <http://www.olelo.org/live>



Senators Chun Oakland and English discussing budget details during the joint WAM-FIN Committee Informational Briefings at the capitol. Jan. 8, 2015

MILITARY AFFAIRS COUNCIL'S ANNUAL MEETING AND PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE

Sen. English recently attended the Military Affairs Council (MAC) of the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i's Annual Meeting and Partnership Conference. Held at the Hawai'i State Capitol on Friday January 9, 2014, this conference was an opportunity to meet with Hawai'i's military leadership and learn about the military's priorities in Hawai'i and the Pacific Region.

The U.S. Department of Defense is facing unprecedented budget challenges, including sequestration, which are impacting Hawai'i. The military represents Hawai'i's second largest economic sector, spending \$8.8 billion in Hawai'i annually, creating 97,500 jobs and \$8.7 billion in household earnings. It is critical for Hawai'i to proactively promote, preserve and protect our military presence. The most critical near term threat to Hawai'i's military presence is the Army's planned reduction in strength from 490,000 to 420,000. For Hawai'i, the Army is evaluating a scenario in which 19,800 Army personnel (soldiers and civilians) are eliminated from Fort Shafter (3,786) and Schofield Barracks (16,606). In addition, Hawai'i would lose 30,035 family members. This would have a devastating impact the communities around Schofield (i.e., Wahiawa, Waialua, Scho-

field, Mililani and Kunia) which are estimated to realize a \$1.35 billion loss as a result of the reduction in force. The ripple effect will be felt across the state in terms of impact aid funding for the Department of Education and a \$9.2 million reduction in general excise tax collections.

"The military plays a pivotal role in economic development throughout the State of Hawai'i," said Sen. English. "As the 2nd largest economic sector, it is important for us, as legislators to recognize the impact a scaled down military budget will have on our economy today and especially for our future."

Some of the events and speakers at this all day event included: a Pacific Command Overview by Lieutenant General Anthony G. Crutchfield, Deputy Commander of PACOM; Army Spotlight by General Vincent Brooks, Commanding General of U.S. Army Pacific; and the State of Hawai'i by Governor, David Ige.

For more information on the MAC visit:
<http://www.cochawaii.org/military-affairs/>



REALTORS' DAY AT THE CAPITOL

Sen. English met with members of the Maui Realtors Association to discuss their concerns and priorities for the upcoming session. Each year, the Hawai'i Association of Realtors hold a Realtors day at the Capitol, inviting realtors from across the State to meet with and initiate dialog with the various members of the Legislature.



Sen. English with members of the Maui Realtors Association at Hawai'i State Capitol. Jan. 15, 2015.

28TH LEGISLATURE LEADERSHIP AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

President: Donna Mercado Kim
Vice President: Will Espero
Majority Leader: J. Kalani English
Majority Floor Leader: Josh Green

Majority Policy Leader: Les Ihara, Jr.
Majority Caucus Leader: Gilbert Kahele
Majority Whip: Brian T. Taniguchi
Minority Leader/Floor Leader: Sam Slom

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SEN. J. KALANI ENGLISH
Senate Majority Leader

COMMITTEES

Member, Senate Committee
on Transportation

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Vice Chair, Senate
Committee on Tourism &
International Affairs

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Member, Senate
Committee on Ways & Means

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Bill Status and Documents
<http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/>

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2ND ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL POLICY FORUM

This year, the Hawai'i Farmers Union United (HFUU) in conjunction with the Chairs of the Senate and House Agriculture Committees cosponsored the Agricultural Policy Forum at the State Capitol on January 5. The all-day event included panels on the following topics: Good Agricultural Practices; Hawaii Origin Products Act: Protecting "Brand Hawai'i"; On Farm Mentoring: Growing a new generation of farmers; Hemp: Research and growth of a new industry; Ulupono Initiative Local Food Coalition's 2015 Legislative Agenda; Procurement: Amending the state procurement code; Farm to School Coordinator: Hiring a new employee in the Dept. of Agriculture; and Cottage Food Industry: Growing our rural economies.

The HFUU advocates for the right of farmers to create and sustain vibrant and prosperous agricultural communities in Hawai'i through cooperation, education and legislation. HFUU is recognized as the respected and true voice of local farmers. HFUU is a Chapter of the National Farmers Union and has chapters on Hawai'i Island, Kaua'i, Maui (MFUU) and O'ahu.

MFUU was formed in 2009 as a grassroots organization advocating for small farms and ranches on Maui. MFUU advocates for empowering island farmers to earn a prosperous living through regenerative stewardship of the land, water and communities and acts as a bridge between farmers and consumers.

"We on Maui are fortunate because we have not lost vast agricultural lands to land development," said Sen. English, "I whole heartedly support the goal of local farmers to create productive agricultural communities and markets for their products because these lands will not lie dormant but support a sustainable way of life on Maui."

For more information, please visit Hawai'i Farmers Union United: <http://hfuuhi.org> and Maui Farmers Union United: <http://www.mauifarmersunited.org>.



Sen. English with Vincent Mina, President Maui Farmers Union United and Sen. Nishihara enjoying a local fare feast at the Hawai'i State Capitol during the 2nd Annual Agricultural Policy Forum. Jan. 5, 2015.