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MESSAGE FROM KALANI

As the Legislature embarks on another session, current financial projections temper our enthusiasm. I am hopeful and encouraged that with a new administration and many new members in the Legislature bringing new ideas, strategies and solutions, we will be able to reach consensus and meet the challenges ahead of us.

*J. Kalani English*

**SENATOR J.KALANI ENGLISH**  
 HAWAI'I STATE SENATE 7TH DISTRICT  
 HĀNA, EAST AND UPCOUNTRY MAUI,  
 MOLOKA'I, LĀNA'I AND KAHO'OLAWĒ



28TH LEGISLATURE OPENING DAY CELEBRATIONS

Opening Day, the first day of the Legislative Session, is an exciting time for all. Held on Wednesday, January 21, attendees gathered early at the Hawai'i State Capitol to get first-come, first-served seats in the Senate chamber. Filled with curiosity and anticipation, those lucky enough to obtain seats looked out over the guardrails as lawmakers, dignitaries, families and friends greeted each other with leis, hugs and photos.

The Hawai'i State Senate celebrated the opening of the 28th Legislature in a unique way by taking a trip back in time. Along with performances by Danny Kaleikini, Robert Cazimero, Marlene Sai, Debbie Nakanelua-Richards, Jeff Auhoy, Nā Leo Pilimehana, Keauhou and Hālau Ka Liko Pua o Kalaniākea, short screenings of archived footage of Hawai'i's talented musicians and kumu hula charmed the audience. The recordings complemented Senate President Donna Mercado Kim's opening remarks and report that a facility to house and preserve Hawaiian music of yesterday and today, the Center for Hawaiian Music and Dance, is on track to be constructed atop the Hawai'i Convention Center.

In her opening remarks, Senate President



*Top: The Maui Senate Delegation, Senators English, Baker and Keith-Agaran. Jan. 21, 2015.*

*Governor Ige and the First Lady Dawn Ige with Sen. English on Opening Day. Jan. 21, 2015.*

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## 28TH LEGISLATURE OPENING DAY CELEBRATIONS CONTINUED

Kim highlighted several important issues to be addressed this session including invasive species, housing and homelessness, and public hospitals.

“The biggest take away for us from this day is the encouraging sense of hopefulness and the resounding call for cooperation amongst legislative leaders and the administration,” said Sen. English. “We are all excited by this unique alignment to help improve the State of Hawai‘i.”

Find out more about the Legislature, lawmakers and how to track bills by visiting the legislative website at [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov).



*Members of the ILWU visit Sen. English at his office on Opening Day of the Hawai‘i State Legislature. Jan. 21, 2015.*



*Family, friends and supporters with Sen. English on Opening Day. Jan. 21, 2015.*



## CHIEF JUSTICE DELIVERS STATE OF THE JUDICIARY ADDRESS

Hawai'i Supreme Court Chief Justice Mark Recktenwald delivered the State of the Judiciary address at a joint session of the State Senate and House on January 28, 2015 in the Senate Chambers of the Hawai'i State Capitol.

"The mission of the Judiciary is to deliver justice for all. We do that in many different ways, both in the courtroom and in the community. We ensure that people are treated fairly, whatever their background. We uphold the rights and protections of the constitution, even when doing so may be unpopular. We provide a place where people can peacefully resolve their disputes, as well as opportunities for them to move forward from the circumstances that brought them before the courts," said Chief Justice Recktenwald.

One key focus of the State of the Judiciary address was "Access to Justice," the Judiciary's efforts to provide equal justice to all. Recktenwald thanked the Access to Justice Commission and the many attorneys who volunteer their time towards this mission, which enables the opening of self-help centers in courthouses across the State. Since the first center opened in 2011, more than 7,600 people have been assisted, at almost no cost to the public. The Judiciary is also using technology to expand its reach and accessibility. In partnership with the Legal Aid Society of Hawai'i and the Hawai'i State Public Library System, interactive software to help litigants fill out court forms, is now available on the Judiciary's website and libraries statewide.

Additional Judiciary initiatives highlighted in the address include: the recent expansion of the Veterans Treatment Court to Hawai'i Island; the First Circuit Family Court's Zero-to-Three Court, which is designed to meet the needs of infants and toddlers whose parents are suspected of abuse or neglect; the Permanency Court, which focuses on the needs of kids who are "aging out" of the foster care system; and the Courts in the Community Outreach Program, which gives high school students the opportunity to go beyond textbooks



*Sen. English and Hawai'i Supreme Court Chief Justice Mark Recktenwald. Jan. 21, 2015.*

and experience an actual Supreme Court oral argument.

Recktenwald also discussed several new initiatives, including: a HOPE Pretrial Pilot Project, designed to apply the same HOPE strategies to defendants who have been charged with crimes and released on conditions prior to their trials; the Girls Court program, which will be expanding to Kaua'i next month; and confirmed plans for an environmental court to be implemented as scheduled by July 1, 2015.

"We are very proud of Chief Justice Recktenwald, as the third branch of government, his efforts in bringing assistance to the general public and efficiency to the judicial system are impeccable," said Sen. English. "Entrusted with providing equal justice to all, Chief Justice Recktenwald, allows the legislature the comfort in knowing we provide a balanced government."



*Members of the Hawai'i Senate Leadership: Majority Whip Brian Taniguchi, WAM Chair Jill Tokuda, Majority Caucus Leader Gilbert Kahele, President Donna Mercado Kim and Majority Leader J. Kalani English. Jan. 28, 2015.*

**J. KALANI ENGLISH**  
Senate Majority Leader

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## 2015 STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS



Sen. English was joined by former governors, distinguished justices of the courts, members of both our congressional delegation and the Hawai'i State Legislature, other elected officials, honored guests as well as family and friends at Governor David Ige's State of the State Address in the State House Chambers on Jan. 26.

A customary speech, the State of the State is delivered before both houses of the legislature sitting in joint session. The speech satisfies a constitutional stipulation that a governor must report annually on the condition of a U.S. state.

Since this is the beginning of the Governor's first term in office, he set a steady course for his administration and is committed to: Maintaining state programs at current spending levels by leveraging and efficient use of funds; seeking and efficient use of federal funds; collecting taxes already on the books; maximizing investments; eliminating waste and transforming the culture of government, commitment to the success of rail; protecting open space and supporting agriculture; building affordable houses; executing universal healthcare by working together; constructing new hospitals through public-private partnerships; supporting business and industry that can grow our economy and create jobs; increasing local food production, transforming our public education system; supporting a strong university system by challenging university leaders to execute and be accountable; being proactive and aggressive in supporting the military and fulfilling obligations to native Hawaiians.

"The Governor set a measured and admirable course for his administration," said Sen. English, "balancing the interests and welfare of the people, businesses and government is going to be his greatest challenge."



Sen. English and his staff: Cissy, Sharon, Auntie Libby and Alan.

Please stay connected, informed and express your concerns throughout the Legislative session. We hope to hear from you this year.

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