



April 20, 2023

Aloha!

Aloha Friend,

I want to first thank the hundreds of my constituents, including many Board members, who joined one (and sometimes more) of my six Talk Story community meetings in April, for me the first in-person districtwide meetings in three years. [Here](#) is a video of one of my Talk Stories with my report and a bunch of great community questions and comments.

In the same spirit, it has always been a priority for me to keep in touch with all of the Neighborhood Boards I represent throughout my district. Here is another report to you in which I summarize some of my activities as this 118th Congress completes our first stretch in Washington, DC.

Appropriations Funding

Most important for me and my service has been reappointment to the House Committee on Appropriations, responsible for overseeing and funding all parts of our federal government. I also assumed new responsibilities on two critical Appropriations subcommittees:

Defense has the most expansive worldwide portfolio of any of Appropriations' twelve subcommittees, with responsibility for not only our armed services but our intelligence community. With funding at \$797

billion out of a total \$1.7 trillion in the current fiscal year, Defense is critical to not only our country's efforts in Ukraine but to our own Indo-Pacific and Hawai'i including the defueling and closure of Red Hill.

Homeland Security, also with one of the largest budgets of our twelve subcommittees, touches all of our lives in many ways, ranging from counterterrorism and cybersecurity to aviation security, border security, port security, maritime security, administration and enforcement of immigration and customs laws, protection of national leaders, protection of critical infrastructure, protection against chemical, biological and nuclear threats to the homeland, as well as responses to disasters (FEMA). We also oversee and fund the U.S. Coast Guard, an increasingly critical part of our Indo-Pacific world.

Stay tuned to my future E-Newsletters - sign up [here](#) - as I update you on my work on these two Committees, as well as my other efforts on behalf of our world, our country and our Hawai'i.

Problem Solvers Caucus Leadership

Amidst ongoing division and polarization, we Americans can agree on one thing: we just want our government to solve our problems. The House Problem Solvers Caucus [here](#) is a unique Member organization, by its rules equally divided between Democrats and Republicans, that seeks common ground on our toughest issues. We were at the center, for example, of successful passage last Congress of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which was almost brought down by hyper partisanship. In this Congress I was honored [here](#) to be chosen as one of four Democratic Vice Chairs and one of eight Executive Council members on the now-64 member Caucus, and am devoting effort to solving tough problems like the debt ceiling and immigration reform. Most recently, I have been involved with the Problems Solvers' adoption of a framework to avoid defaulting on the national debt and advancing a sustainable federal budget. More [here](#).

Expediting the defueling of Red Hill and securing a tax break

I have been working along with my colleagues in the Hawai'i Congressional delegation for the safe and expeditious defueling of the millions of gallons of fuel from the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage facility. I

recently sent a letter to Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas urging to grant an advance waiver from the Jones Act and military cargo preference requirements to provide for the safe, cost-effective, dependable and expedited execution of the defueling process. See my letter to Secretary Mayorkas [here](#).

Over one hundred million gallons of bulk fuel now stored in the Red Hill tanks must be removed and distributed to other storage facilities under a plan supervised by the Environmental Protection Agency and Hawai'i Department of Health. In order for the plan to work optimally, we will need to have the waiver so that the fuel can be moved as quickly and safely as possible. I will keep you updated on the Secretary's decision.

Good news regarding Red Hill is always welcome and I applauded the decision by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to not tax emergency assistance given to an estimated 1,700 resident families temporarily relocated from their homes due to the fuel crisis last year. The IRS decision came after the Hawai'i Congressional delegation sent a letter to the IRS Acting Commissioner Douglas O'Donnell [here](#). I knew it was straight-out wrong to tax families displaced from their homes through no fault of their own.

And it is very good news that the Department of Defense has now provided an avenue for families to access services at the Red Hill Clinic, which is fully available (by appointment as with others), and is fully staffed and resourced to conduct a professional health assessment for permanent residents of military housing or workers on the Navy water system who suffered symptoms associated with the Red Hill spill.

Since the immediate Red Hill crisis in November 2021, I have been highlighting and pursuing not just the expeditious and safe defueling and closure of Red Hill but the fullest possible identification and treatment of health consequences for the thousands exposed to tainted water. In last year's Fiscal Year (FY) National Defense Authorization Act, I obtained a directive to the Department of Defense to track the long-term health implications of fuel leaks from Red Hill in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Hawai'i State Department of Health.

I have also met several times with DoD leadership to assure them that they are fully authorized and funded to address health concerns for both

military and civilians alike. The Red Hill Clinic at Makalapa, which I personally visited in January of this year, was initially set up to service only active military or otherwise with TRICARE coverage. I have urged that that access be expanded to include non-TRICARE civilian families. The DoD recently announced that it will evaluate civilian Red Hill families at its Red Hill clinic. Details [here](#).

President Biden Answers My Calls For A Marine Sanctuary

In March, I applauded President Biden's direction to the Secretary of Commerce to initiate consideration of designation of the waters of the U.S. Pacific Remote Islands as a National Marine Sanctuary.

The action follows my calls, commencing in May 2022 in partnership with the Pacific Remote Islands Coalition and others, for maximum protection of U.S.-owned and controlled waters surrounding the U.S. Pacific Remote Islands, including the Central Pacific atolls and reefs of Baker, Howland, and Jarvis Island; Johnston, Wake, and Palmyra Atoll; and Kingman Reef. See my attached letters to the President of May 31 and October 31, 2022, and March 10, 2023 [here](#).

These waters are among the last pristine marine environments on our Earth, and the most fragile. As a member of the U.S. House Natural Resources Committee's Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries, I also advocated successfully for creation of today's Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument during my prior service in Congress from 2002 to 2007. Our world's oceans are at mortal risk, a breaking point precipitated by the unsustainable overfishing and other resource extraction, debris and land-based pollution, exacerbated and compounded by the devastating and pervasive marine effects of climate change. These two actions are helping to save our oceans.

Coast Guard To Increase Presence in Hawai'i

Also in March, I welcomed the announcement by the United States Coast Guard that it will deploy the *Harriet Lane*, a 270-foot Cutter with a 100-person crew, to Hawai'i. The Coast Guard plans to use the Medium Endurance Cutter as an addition to a Hawai'i-based fleet for responsibilities in Hawai'i waters as well as an increasing Coast Guard presence throughout the Indo-Pacific. The ship is especially suited for

longer-range six-to-eight week joint operational and training patrols in the Pacific, taking pressure off shorter range Hawai'i-based ships more suited to service closer to home port.

The deployment of the *Harriet Lane* signals our country's stepped-up interest in the Indo-Pacific, the most dynamic and consequential region in the world, to include two of the world's largest economies (China and the United States), nine of the ten busiest seaports and 60 percent of global maritime trade. I can continue to support the Coast Guard's mission in the region as a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security, which has jurisdiction over the Coast Guard.

The announcement of the *Harriet Lane*'s deployment came on the heels of my recent Congressional delegation visit to Japan, Taiwan and Korea with several of my colleagues with the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. Hawai'i is at the center of the Indo-Pacific's future, and the Coast Guard is a critical part of our country's efforts in maritime security, humanitarian and other region-wide engagement.

The Coast Guard intends to initially berth the Cutter in Hawai'i for several years to ensure the asset meets the operational needs and has proper shoreside support. More [here](#).

Working Again For Safe And Quiet Skies

I have worked closely with our Neighborhood Boards for several years now to address the severe safety and community disruption impacts of tour helicopter and small aircraft operations. These have not just disrupted the peace and quiet of our neighborhoods, national parks and national cemeteries, but have proven fatal to way too many. In February, I reintroduced my Safe and Quiet Skies legislation [here](#) and this time, I was able to line up a couple of powerful allies among my colleagues in the House. And in April, I was joined by my colleagues in the Hawai'i Congressional Delegation with the introduction of two measures with one to protect passengers on air tours [here](#) and the other to reduce the noise triggered by air tours [here](#).

Winners Of My Congressional App Challenge

Although most of my time is on Capitol Hill, I always enjoy being home meeting with my constituents, and it is always especially heartening to

talk story with young people. At a recent reception at the Entrepreneurs Sandbox in Kaka‘ako, I had the pleasure of announcing the winners of my 2022 Congressional App Challenge for my First Congressional District.

The Challenge is a great opportunity for our local students to focus their skills and creativity on developing, testing and analyzing new applications for real-world use. Congratulating the winners at the Sandbox, described as “Hawaii’s community hub to inspire creativity, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship” will hopefully also open the students’ minds to possibilities beyond their imagination.

Results of this year’s Challenge prove once again that they have the skill set, imagination and resolve to compete against the best of our young people nationwide in science, technology, engineering and math, along with the potential to lead the next generations of computer science and technology.

The winners:

1st Place – **Syreena Fortuno and Cabien Nelson** of DreamHouse ‘Ewa Beach, a public charter school

Grade: 8

Instructor: Coach Cerina Livaudais

App: ‘Imi Loa

Video: <https://youtu.be/YC7fOTpZ1XM>

2nd Place – **Chase Graham** of ‘Iolani School

Grade: 11

Instructor: n/a

App: Giveback Hawai‘i

Video: <https://youtu.be/9J2ziEV87SQ>

3rd Place – **Joshua Tom, Desmond Adams, and Owen Gostage** of Ewa Makai Middle School

Grade: 8

Instructor: Ms. Miki Cacace

App: myGlucose

Video: <https://vimeo.com/764284475>

As always, I deeply appreciate your consideration and assistance as we all work to find the best way forward for our country and Hawai‘i.

For more information on my efforts, and how we can help you, please visit my website at case.house.gov. If I can help you and yours with your own questions and needs, email us at ed.case@mail.house.gov, or call us at (808) 650-6688.

Be safe and be well.

*Mahalo nui loa,
Ed Case*

P.S. Please sign up for my regular e-newsletter [here](#).

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