



The Senate
State of Hawaii

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
December 18, 2007

Contact: Richard Rapoza
(808) 586-6259
Cell (808) 392-0780

SENATE TRANSPORTATION CHAIR CALLS FOR INCLUSION OF HANA HARBOR IN MODERNIZATION PLAN

HONOLULU – Senator J. Kalani English, chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, today called on the State Department of Transportation to include Hana Harbor in the State Harbors Modernization Plan. Governor Linda Lingle announced the plan in a news conference today, which Senator English attended.

Senator English, whose district includes Hana, wants to see improvements to the Hana Harbor to help ensure that vital services are available to area residents. "Right now the small boat harbor is in critical need of repair and the pier has been condemned as unsafe," English said. "At the same time, bridges in the area are old and either out or failing, and our airport offers no commercial service. Without a working harbor, in the wake of a natural disaster, Hana could be completely shut off. We need to have infrastructure in place to maintain those vital links."

"When you consider that the Harbor Modernization Plan already represents an anticipated capital cost of \$842 million, I don't think the cost of making Hana Harbor safe and usable will be unreasonable," English continued.

In addition to making needed repairs and improvements, English would like to see other changes that will ensure that the harbor is properly maintained. "Hana Harbor is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, and not the Department of Transportation," he said. "We should remedy that situation. If the DOT is going to monitor the safety and usefulness of our state harbors, Hana should be a part of that effort as well."

English made it clear, though, that he supports the Harbor Improvement Plan. "It is a good plan," he said, "and clearly something that needs to be done. The Department of Transportation and the administration have been very good about consulting with legislators, and have heard our concerns. Yet I do think that the plan could be improved if we expanded it to look at all of the harbors across our state."

As an illustration of why the harbor improvements are necessary, English pointed to a recent situation at Kahului Harbor involving the Hawai'i Superferry and a Young Brothers barge. "I received a report that a Young Brothers vessel carrying goods to Maui was forced to remain outside Kahului Harbor while the Superferry was docked," English said. "I understand that was because of security measures, but we should not have to decide between serving inter-island travelers and serving our residents' daily needs. Harbor modernization will prevent these kinds of conflicts in the future."

###