

**‘ONI LIKE KĀKOU
MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER**

Governor David Y. Ige

December 3, 2018

Good morning and aloha.

First, I would like to thank the people of Hawai‘i for electing me to another term as your governor.

I find myself eager and excited about the prospect of tackling all that is before us.

And I look forward to working with all of you.

I know it sounds like a given—that we all work together.

But that is often easier said than done.

Moreover, without that collaboration—as we’ve seen in our nation’s capital—it can easily lead to gridlock.

And so, let us move forward, together.

‘Oni like kākou.

Events such as today’s normally begin with the formal acknowledgement of the dignitaries present.

But with their indulgence, I would like to begin this morning with an introduction of a different sort.

Four years ago, these three individuals were unable to make my first inauguration because they were attending college.

But I am happy to say they are here with us this morning. Please give a warm welcome to my three children: Lauren, Amy and Matthew.

And I am also happy to report that they all graduated and, much to our delight, are currently pursuing their careers.

I suspect I've committed the unforgivable sin of embarrassing them again and I will probably never hear the end of it.

But you know, in so many ways, this inauguration is really about their generation.

Like my parents before me, and their parents before them, it has always been about the children.

Our parents' vision for a better Hawai'i was all about:

A place where their children would have the opportunity to prosper and fulfill their dreams;

A place where the playing field remains level no matter where you came from or how much money you make; and

A place where our respect for each other drives our behavior toward each other.

That is the Hawai'i they worked so hard to create. And they created it by banding together, whether it was to seek better working conditions, higher wages, or health care for all.

Together, they accomplished amazing things. That is their legacy to all of us.

But what will be our legacy to our children?

A little more than 50 years ago, Hawaii's leaders were tasked with finding new economic resources to replace an exhausted farm-based economy.

They determined that the visitor industry offered the greatest opportunity for growth, job creation and broad prosperity.

And for more than a half century, it served and continues to serve us well.

Today, however, we find ourselves in a situation very similar to where we were more than half a century ago.

Our challenge today is to find ways to make all of our existing industries sustainable.

At the same time, we need to nurture other means of economic growth—means that do not strain our resources, do not damage our environment, or lower our quality of life.

I believe the next great economic transition for Hawai'i will be driven by innovations enabled by technology.

In fact, we are already seeing this transition today.

Technology has not only created new industries, but also infused new life into more traditional local businesses, such as food production and fashion.

Moreover, it is transforming almost every corner of our lives.

In the past, our geographic isolation has been the greatest limitation to our ability to grow and prosper.

But today, technology is changing all of that.

Our geographic isolation is no longer a deal breaker.

However, success in the new global marketplace belongs to those who act boldly and who can aggressively innovate and create their own opportunities.

That's why I believe our legacy will rest on how well we meet the challenges of the 21st century, and how well we begin to transform our economy.

It will rest on how well we prepare our children now for that technology-driven future.

It will rest on how well we meet the housing needs of our new workforce.

And it will rest on how well we put this state on a sound path toward self-sufficiency and sustainability.

More importantly, it will rest on how well we're able to work collectively and collaboratively.

Together, I know we can do great things.

Education

How do we prepare our children for the future?

The previous generation created a statewide department of education, the first and still only one of its kind in the nation.

Their primary goal was to ensure that every school was provided with the same level of financial support.

For all intents and purposes, they largely succeeded.

But today we face different challenges in giving our children the knowledge and skills they will need for the future.

In a changing world, we need more than a one-size-fits-all model.

That's why we are implementing a new blueprint for public education, empowering schools and investing in educational leaders who can transform the way they teach their students.

As we all know that is not an easy task.

But together, I know we can do transformative things.

Housing

If we are to succeed in transforming our economy, we will also need to provide homes to retain our workforce.

In my first term, I set a goal of 10,000 new housing units statewide by 2020. And we are on track to exceed that goal.

But no matter how many homes we build, it may never be enough.

And I understand the frustration, because we are not just talking about numbers.

We're talking about someone's son or daughter who decides to move to the mainland because they can't afford a home here.

We have made real progress and laid the foundation for long-term housing development via a transit-oriented blueprint.

But the solution to our housing needs also lies in innovative ideas and new technologies to help us create more affordable homes for our families.

That is the greater challenge.

But together, I know we can do innovative things.

Sustainability and Self Sufficiency

If growth was the desired economic end in the 20th century, sustainable growth has become the mantra for the 21st century.

In addition, that growth must include a high degree of self-sufficiency, whether we are talking about food or energy production.

That's why we established the nation's most aggressive clean energy goals and are on track to exceed our 2020 objectives.

In that regard, we are leading the nation in meeting our clean energy needs.

But, while the *'āina* provides us with an abundance of natural resources, it also comes with a responsibility to protect it for future generations.

This sacred stewardship is at the heart of our strategy for sustainability and self-sufficiency.

Creating a self-sufficient Hawai'i is one of our most challenging tasks—one that will overlap many administrations.

That's why this goal needs to be driven by a clear and unwavering vision of our desired future—one that can be enabled by technology.

Together, I know we can create a vision for a sustainable Hawai'i.

Having said all of this, we have so much more to do, and our journey is far from over.

These broad areas are all interconnected, and influence our initiatives on so many other areas, including social services, Native Hawaiian issues, kupuna care, health care, and our infrastructure.

They are the threads that bind our social fabric here in the islands.

At times, the challenges in any one area can feel overwhelming.

But we have a number of ideas, which I will elaborate on during my State of the State address.

They are goal specific, but not fixed in stone.

Because we want input from all players and from all of our people.

Because, no matter how great the ideas, neither you nor I can realize them alone.

I am not asking for anyone's blind support, but a willingness to keep an open mind, to leave personal agendas outside the door, and to commit to an unyielding determination to work together.

I am asking that we debate openly and, yes, passionately, but with respect for each other.

Real leadership does not emanate from just one individual, but from many hands joining together.

It's really about each of us embracing the responsibility for our own fate and for our collective future.

These are exciting times full of wonderful changes and great opportunities.

But they are also dangerous times—not just for Hawai'i, but for our nation and the principles upon which this country was founded.

There are some who talk about making America great again, but who do not understand the source of its greatness: its broad and diverse peoples.

We are a nation of immigrants, and Hawai'i is one of its brightest examples of what is possible when we work together—when we celebrate our differences and our common heritage.

Our immigrant past offers a compelling lesson to those who believe that diversity weakens us as a nation.

The decisions and policies coming from our nation's capital today threaten the very core of our values here in the islands.

When did it become ok to tear gas women and children for wanting a better future for themselves?

Hawai'i offers a better alternative to the direction being set by our leaders in Washington.

That's why I believe our legacy will also rest on how we respond to these unsettling and troubling times.

And so, I reach out to those who love these islands, our way of life, and the home that we've all helped to build—to come together as one state, one community, one 'ohana—to continue our work toward a common goal.

My friends, our differences are not greater than what we hold in common.

Our differences will not prevent us from achieving our goals but, rather, they will help us to reach them.

Our differences are our greatest strength.

I look forward to working with all of you over the next four years.

A great big mahalo and aloha.