

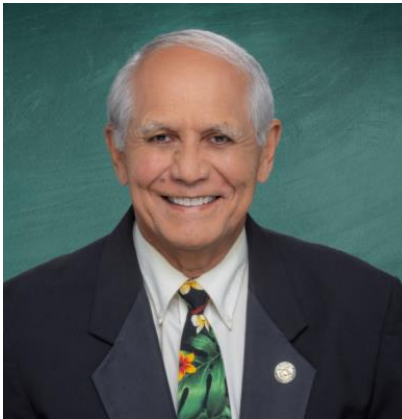


Senator Mike Gabbard

July Newsletter

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Agriculture and Environment Committee, Chair
Judiciary Committee, Vice Chair
Government Operations Committee, Vice Chair





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Agriculture & Environment Committee, Chair

District 21: Kapolei, Makakilo, Kalaeloa, and portions of Fernandez Village and Ewa

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Celebrating International Yoga Day with Aloha and Awareness



Senator Gabbard presenting an Honorary Certificate to the founder of GIIP, Dr. Raj Kumar at the Waikiki Bandstand for the 7th Annual International Yoga Day, June 22, 2025.

On Sunday, June 22, I was the Guest of Honor at the Gandhi International Institute for Peace (GIIP) [7th Annual International Yoga Day, at Kapiolani Park at the Waikiki Bandstand](#). The theme this year was “Yoga for Health and Peace,” and I gotta say—it was a beautiful morning filled with sunshine, good vibes, and people from all walks of life coming together in the spirit of wellness and unity.

We opened with a powerful spiritual blessing from Veda Das, followed by remarks by Dr. Raj Kumar, Founder of Gandhi International Institute for Peace (GIIP) in Hawai'i and President of the Indian-American Friendship Council Hawai'i Chapter; Rakesh Adlakha, Deputy Consul General from San Francisco; and myself. There

was a graceful Indian dance, healing sound bowls, and a series of yoga asanas led by [Sun Yoga](#) founder, [Michele Santos](#), right there on stage. It was one of those moments where you look around and just feel grateful—grateful for community, for health, and for the peaceful energy yoga brings into our lives.

I had the privilege of presenting a proclamation on behalf of Governor Green and an Honorary Certificate on behalf of the Hawai'i State Senate to Dr. Raj Kumar, the founder of GIIP. Along with GIIP President Harendra Panalal, these gentlemen have spent decades promoting peace and nonviolence here in Hawai'i, and I mahalo them for keeping this movement alive.

In 2019, I collaborated with Dr. Kumar to introduce the Senate version of the bill which became law as [Act 102](#), making Hawai'i the first state in the country to establish June 21 of each year in Hawai'i, as *International Yoga Day*—big moment! And now here we are, seven years later, still going strong.

Yoga isn't just about stretching or holding poses—it's about focusing on our spiritual essence in relationship with the Supreme—tuning into what really matters, and finding balance in a world that's often off-kilter. That's something we can all use a little more of these days.

Mahalo, Dr. Raj Kumar, founder of the Gandhi International Institute for Peace, and Harendra Panalal, President, for your efforts since 2006 to promote peace, nonviolence, and a yoga lifestyle for the highest well-being of all. And a special mahalo as well to all of the talented artists, volunteers, and attendees who made the morning truly special. As we carry this spirit forward, I hope we each find ways to weave health and peace into our daily routines.



Senator Gabbard and the founder of GIIP, Dr. Raj Kumar, at the Waikiki Bandstand for the 7th Annual International Yoga Day, June 22, 2025.



Senator Gabbard with L-R: Founder of Gandhi International Institute for Peace (GIIP) in Hawai'i and President of the Indian-American Friendship Council Hawai'i Chapter, Dr. Raj Kumar; Deputy Consul General from San Francisco and Chief Guest, Rakesh Adlakha; President of GIIP, Harendra Panalal.

