
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO SUPPORT A PERMANENT MEMORIAL HONORING
HENRY OBOOKIAH ON THE GROUNDS OF THE STATE CAPITOL.

1 WHEREAS, the United Churches of Christ have designated the
2 third Sunday of February as "Henry Obookiah Day" as a day of
3 national remembrance for Henry Obookiah, also known as Henry
4 Opukahaia, who was the first Native Hawaiian to convert to
5 Christianity in 1815; and

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7 WHEREAS, Henry Obookiah was born in Ka'u on the island of
8 Hawai'i in 1792 and, as a teenager left the islands on a whaling
9 ship that sailed to Alaska, China, the Cape of Good Hope and
10 debarked in New York, where Henry Obookiah eventually settled
11 and lived in New Haven, Connecticut; and

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13 WHEREAS, he learned to read and write, embraced
14 Christianity and developed a commitment to its ideals and
15 principles, and helped other Native Hawaiians who came from
16 Hawai'i to seek a Christian education; and

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18 WHEREAS, Henry Obookiah was taken under the wing of
19 Dr. Timothy Wright, president of Yale College, enrolled in the
20 Foreign Mission School, and became involved with plans to send
21 missionaries to Hawai'i to teach the Hawaiian people about
22 Christianity; and

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24 WHEREAS, in 1818 Henry Obookiah contracted typhus fever and
25 died at the age of twenty-six, never fulfilling his desire to
26 witness Native Hawaiians become Christians; and

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28 WHEREAS, a year after his death, a missionary team
29 comprised of both Americans and Native Hawaiians, among them the
30 Reverend Hiram Bingham and Reverend Asa Thurston, was dispatched



1 to Hawai'i to begin the work that Henry Obookiah had longed to
2 do; and

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4 WHEREAS, Henry Obookiah is credited with starting Hawai'i's
5 conversion to Christianity; and

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7 WHEREAS, in 1993, Henry Obookiah's remains were returned to
8 Hawai'i from Cornwall, Connecticut and interred in a vault in
9 Napo'opo'o on the island of Hawai'i on the grounds of Kahikolu
10 Congregational Church, which was the third church established in
11 Hawai'i by missionaries inspired by Henry Obookiah; now,
12 therefore,

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14 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
15 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular
16 Session of 2008, the Senate concurring, that the Governor is
17 requested to support a permanent memorial honoring Henry
18 Obookiah on the grounds of the State Capitol by recommending a
19 site, conducting a cost analysis, and selecting an appropriate
20 design; and

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22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is requested to
23 consult with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Department of
24 Accounting and General Services, and any other appropriate
25 executive agencies to plan and implement the erection of the
26 Henry Obookiah memorial; and

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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is requested to
29 submit a written report to the Legislature not later than twenty
30 days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2009 on
31 the status of the project; and

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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
34 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the
35 Chairperson of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and the
36 Comptroller.

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39 OFFERED BY: Kaew Awarua
John M. ...
Mele Canoe ...
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JAN 23 2008

