
HOUSE RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE SISTERS OF SAINT FRANCIS FOR THEIR
NUMEROUS AND OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS AND THE TREMENDOUS
ALOHA AND CARE THEY HAVE SHOWN TO THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII OVER
THE PAST 125 YEARS.

1 WHEREAS, the people of the State of Hawaii are proud to
2 recognize those special individuals who selflessly utilize their
3 God-given talents to faithfully serve the community and
4 disseminate friendship, goodwill, and care giving to the people
5 of Hawaii; and

6
7 WHEREAS, although King David Kalakaua and church officials
8 sent pleas throughout the United States and Canada for
9 assistance in 1883 when leprosy was ravishing the Kingdom of
10 Hawaii, no one came to the rescue of Hawaii's people, with more
11 than 50 religious orders having already refused to help by the
12 time a letter made its way to Mother Marianne Cope of the
13 Sisters of the Third Franciscan Order in Syracuse, New York, who
14 was so moved by the plight of the outcast lepers, she believed
15 it was God's will to answer the call; and

16
17 WHEREAS, the SISTERS OF SAINT FRANCIS were willing to
18 sacrifice their lives to come to Hawaii and care for the
19 suffering people who were stricken with the devastating
20 affliction; and

21
22 WHEREAS, Mother Marianne departed Syracuse with six
23 Sisters, chosen from among the 35 who volunteered, first by
24 train to San Francisco, then by ship to Hawaii arriving in
25 Honolulu Harbor aboard the *Mariposa* on November 8, 1883, which
26 marked the beginning of the Sister's rich legacy of caring and
27 daring for the sake of Hawaii's people - a legacy that touches
28 the lives of island residents even today; and
29



1 WHEREAS, soon after their arrival, the Sisters were
2 assigned to the Government Branch Hospital, a receiving station
3 in Kakaako for leprosy patients that was noted for being
4 severely overcrowded and containing vermin infested mattresses,
5 blood-stained walls and rotting flesh, doing what was needed to
6 clean up the facilities including bandaging of the patients'
7 sores; and

8
9 WHEREAS, in 1885, Kapiolani Home, an institution for the
10 healthy daughters of patients with leprosy who had no place to
11 live and one of the first of its kind anywhere, was established
12 by the SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS; and

13
14 WHEREAS, accomplishing such a monumental task of bringing
15 hope and dignity back into the lives of leprosy patients in so
16 short a time, Mother Marianne was awarded the medal of the *Royal*
17 *Order of Kapiolani*; and

18
19 WHEREAS, the tenacity and fearlessness of the SISTERS OF
20 SAINT FRANCIS prepared them for their next major assignment of
21 being sent to the colony of Kalaupapa on the island of Molokai
22 in 1888, where more than a thousand people with Hansen's disease
23 were exiled because the restrictive access afforded the area by
24 the steep cliffs and rough ocean created a natural prison; and

25
26 WHEREAS, at Kalaupapa, Mother Marianne and two Sisters took
27 charge of Bishop Home, a home for women and girls, restoring
28 dignity and beauty to their lives, sewing dresses in the latest
29 fashions for these individuals, and planting flower gardens and
30 fruit trees bringing hope to the seemingly God-forsaken colony
31 and its people; and

32
33 WHEREAS, when Father Joseph Damien De Veuster died from
34 Hansen's disease in 1889, Mother Marianne succeeded him in
35 running the home for boys at Kalawao, eventually building the
36 Baldwin Home for boys in 1893; and

37
38 WHEREAS, Mother Marianne never returned to Syracuse and
39 spent the last 30 years of her life at Kalaupapa, and when one
40 wonders how the Sisters were able to do so much for so many
41 people, one only need look at the life of Mother Marianne, a



1 life dedicated to her faith in God and the sharing of God's love
2 for people who suffer that was immortalized in her words, "My
3 God and my all"; and
4

5 WHEREAS, following the footsteps of Mother Marianne, the
6 SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS have always responded to the needs of the
7 community, in the Franciscan way of "itinerancy" - going where
8 the needs are and moving on as new needs arise; and
9

10 WHEREAS the fulfillment of this motto can be found in the
11 many accomplishments of the SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS, including
12 the opening of Malulani Hospital, a badly needed general
13 hospital on the island of Maui in 1884; the opening of Hilo
14 County Memorial Hospital in 1915; the opening of Saint Francis
15 Hospital in 1927 to care for sick individuals, many of whom were
16 in dire financial need, an institution which over the years
17 would pioneer services including: kidney dialysis; kidney, bone
18 marrow, heart, liver and pancreas transplants; a center for
19 emotionally disturbed children; an alcoholic treatment center
20 for women; and more; and the opening of Saint Francis Medical
21 Center-West in 1990 to meet the medical needs of the people in
22 Leeward Oahu; and
23

24 WHEREAS, the accomplishments of the SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS
25 go beyond the provision of just healthcare and include home care
26 for the terminally ill and other programs geared to seniors,
27 programs that continue throughout the Saint Francis Healthcare
28 System; the establishment of Our Lady of Kea'au which provides
29 outreach services to the homeless in Waianae; and the opening of
30 the Franciscan Adult Day Center, formally known as the Sister
31 Maureen Intergenerational Learning Environment in 1996 to
32 improve the quality of life of frail elders and also to provide
33 respite to family caregivers; and
34

35 WHEREAS, over the years, the SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS have
36 also administered, operated, or taught at more than a dozen
37 schools throughout the islands, educating and guiding thousands
38 of Hawaii's youth to love and serve God, beginning with the
39 first English speaking school on Maui - Saint Anthony School for
40 Girls, which was opened in 1884, and including Saint Joseph
41 School in Hilo, which was opened in 1900 and today is the only



1 Catholic school on the Island of Hawaii and Saint Francis School
 2 on Oahu, which was opened in 1924 as a convent school to prepare
 3 young women for religious life and to continue to the work with
 4 Hansen's disease patients; and

5
 6 WHEREAS, other schools where the SISTERS OF SAINT FRANCIS
 7 still have a presence today include Our Lady of Perpetual Help,
 8 Saint Michael's School, and Saint Theresa School on Oahu and in
 9 the past the SISTERS OF SAINT FRANCIS have also ministered as
 10 educators at Sacred Hearts School and Saint Theresa's Parish on
 11 Maui; and Our Lady of Good Counsel and Parish, Our Lady of
 12 Sorrows and Our Lady of the Mount on Oahu; and

13
 14 WHEREAS, the present SISTERS OF SAINT FRANCIS, as well as
 15 those who have come before, consider it an honor and a privilege
 16 to follow the Lord's work and minister to the health, education,
 17 and social needs of the people of our aloha state; and

18
 19 WHEREAS, the SISTERS OF SAINT FRANCIS have begun a year-
 20 long anniversary celebration that includes activities on the
 21 islands of Oahu, Kauai, Maui, Molokai and Hawaii, culminating on
 22 November 8, 2008 when the Sisters will reenact their arrival,
 23 complete with the royal welcome and a horse-drawn carriage
 24 through downtown Honolulu to the Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace
 25 for the closing liturgy; now, therefore

26
 27 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
 28 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
 29 Session of 2008, that this body hereby commends and applauds THE
 30 SISTERS OF SAINT FRANCIS for their outstanding achievements and
 31 expresses to them its warmest aloha and best wishes for
 32 continued success in all future endeavors.

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 _____ OFFERED BY:
Mike Carroll
John Karamita

Michael Y. Meyerson
John M. ...
Capt ...
Ken ...

