
HOUSE 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
31 to Hawai'i to begin the work that Henry Obookiah had longed to
32 do; and



1
2 WHEREAS, Henry Obookiah is credited with starting Hawai'i's
3 conversion to Christianity; and
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5 WHEREAS, in 1993, Henry Obookiah's remains were returned to
6 Hawai'i from Cornwall, Connecticut and interred in a vault in
7 Napo'opo'o on the island of Hawai'i on the grounds of Kahikolu
8 Congregational Church, which was the third church established in
9 Hawai'i by missionaries inspired by Henry Obookiah; now,
10 therefore,
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12 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
13 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular
14 Session of 2008, that the Governor is requested to support a
15 permanent memorial honoring Henry Obookiah on the grounds of the
16 State Capitol by recommending a site, conducting a cost
17 analysis, and selecting an appropriate design; and
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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is requested to
20 consult with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Department of
21 Accounting and General Services, and any other appropriate
22 executive agencies to plan and implement the erection of the
23 Henry Obookiah memorial; and
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25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is requested to
26 submit a written report to the Legislature not later than twenty
27 days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2009 on
28 the status of the project; and
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30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
31 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the Chairperson of
32 the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and the Comptroller.
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OFFERED BY:

[Handwritten signatures and names]
Karen Awana
John M. Higgins
Alex M. Sore
Diana Yamamoto
Rep. H. A. ...
Diana Yamamoto

JAN 23 2008

