

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HCR 137/HR 118
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL
SERVICES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO MAINTAIN AND
CLEAN THE KOREAN AND VIETNAM MEMORIAL ON THE GROUNDS OF
THE HAWAII STATE CAPITOL

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS

MARCH 20, 2008

BY

OFFICE OF VETERANS' SERVICES

Good morning Chair Evans, Vice Chair Har, and members of the Committee.

I am Mark Moses, Director for the Office of Veterans' Services (OVS), and regret I cannot be here in person to testify on this measure. We support the intent of HCR 137/HR 118, as long as it does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget Request.

Our Veterans continue to take great pride in cleaning the Korean and Vietnam War Memorials on the State Capitol grounds as they have for many years. However, we found that these veterans, many of whom are in their 60's to 80's found it increasingly difficult to rake and bag leaves, and to drag the hose to wash down the area surrounding the Memorials. Many times the veterans had to remove human defecation left by the homeless. Additionally, hypodermic needles have been found in the area, and of course it is dangerous for the veterans to try to pick up and dispose of them especially as they lack the training, protection, and dexterity to do so.

Consequently I discussed these issues with our Comptroller, Russ Saito, at the beginning of this month, and we are happy to inform this body that as of

Tuesday, March 18, 2008, DAGS has begun to have contractors clean the granite slabs and the groundskeepers will police the area and maintain the landscaping.

We share this Legislature's interest in having the Memorials area closely watched by the Department of Public Safety (DPS), Sheriffs Division.

After discussion with Department of Public Safety, Deputy Director for Law Enforcement, James Propotnick, I found that Sheriffs do patrol the Memorials on a staggered time schedule, but the area could better be monitored if it were well lighted and a closed circuit TV camera were installed.

I will further pursue this initiative with DAGS and DPS.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit testimony.