



20 South Vineyard Blvd, Honolulu, HI 96813 808-779-3606

"Promoting the positive healing role of religion in public life by encouraging dialogue and community building".

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 212
 TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE, 2008
 House Committee on Tourism and Culture (TAC)

Aloha TAC Chair Rep. Ryan Yamane, Vice Chair Rep. Joey Manahan, and members of the House Committee on Tourism and Culture (TAC):

The Interfaith Open Table strongly support this resolution. We are particularly pleased that the steering committee and the international conference will be inclusive and open to all religions. It will build upon the Council for a Parliament of World's Religions being held in Sydney, Australia in December of 2009.

Hawaii as the Aloha State is an ideal place to host such an event. Hawaii is an example of where diverse religions and races come together in harmony and promote open channels of communication. Perhaps we can be helpful in reducing much of the violence in the world.

For your information The Interfaith Open Table meets the First Wednesday of every month at 7 am. Our participants come from all churches and religions with an email list of nearly 300. Our usual format is sharing "our faith journey", respecting our diversity without taking political positions. We find that when people speak from the heart others can hear and resonate. We are also firm believers in the separation of church and state.

Your support of this resolution will be greatly appreciated.

Cordially,


 Rev. Sam Cox,
 Open Table Coordinator
SamCox@hawaii.rr.com

MEMORANDUM

ARCHITECTURE
UNLIMITED, INC.
architecture value-engineering
planning construction consulting

1638A Kalakaua Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96826-2423
Phone: (808) 955-2522
Fax: (808) 955-2511

DATE: 29 MARCH 2008

TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM AND CULTURE (TAC)

ATTN: REP RYAN YAMANE, CHAIR
REP JOEY MANAHAN, VICE CHAIR

FROM: MERRITT I SAKATA

RE: WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 212
TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE, 2008

HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

I regret that business obligations do not permit me to attend your hearing on the above matter to deliver my testimony in person.

I have been a participant in the activities of the All-Believers Network since summer 2005, when I first learned of its existence while helping plan an Interfaith Weekend for World Peace. This activity was sponsored by Seicho-No-Ie Hawaii, a non-denominational religious movement dedicated to fostering enlightenment and world peace founded on the understanding that despite any seemingly unique or even apparently conflicting characteristics "all faiths/religions" emanate from a single universal truth that "all mankind (or for that matter, all that exists) have a common spiritual origin or foundation" in "divinity".

And while my expressions and testimony are that of a "practitioner" and not a "representative" of that organization, I believe the implementation of the proposed initiative will provide an opportunity to achieve long-lasting and far-reaching impacts that will further those same ends.

While the kind of harmony we all seek will not arise simply by convening of committees. It is not likely to be attained at all without such opportunities that invite if not mandate people of goodwill from backgrounds of all types and in particular the various systems of ethics and morality to work on joint projects requiring interaction, discourse and cooperation.

We see in the world around our islands, a "warlike" mentality being condoned if not encouraged by well-intentioned but typically yet imperfect persons and sometimes institutions of ethics and faith. While such has been the case for almost all of recorded history, we must conclude that such patterns once seen as virtue and loyalty in past eras and generations to perceived threats from "foreign barbarian" cultures coveting land, resources, fealty by the populace and other temporal concerns were understandable if not necessarily justified. However as has been experienced here, such can no longer be relied upon. In these times when universal prosperity and harmony are almost completely linked to intercultural and inter-religious respect, interchange and even inter-marriage between enemies of former eras, our shared world needs another pattern to be demonstrated and considered.

While the residue from injustices perpetrated sometimes in the guise of faith in past eras continue to be manifest among the peoples of Hawaii, there are few if any places in the world where the degree of transcendence so far attained here has been experienced or duplicated.

Certainly, much more must yet be accomplished by and among our own populace for us to be considered the kind of perfect example that we might prefer, but that does not diminish the fact that we the myriad peoples of Hawaii may be doing the world to observe us in that continuing process.

For that reason alone, independent of any economic benefits that may yet derive from such efforts, it seems that the implementation of the initiative proposed by the resolution should be adopted.

I may be reached at my office or cellphone: 284-0009, in the unlikely event that these comments require further clarification.

Thank you!