

TESTIMONY

L A T E

In favor of SCR 208; SR 122

My name is Glenn Harada, and I am testifying in favor of SCR 208 and SR 122. Paul Harada, who died on January 4, 2008, is my brother. He was diagnosed with having Hansen's disease at the age of 15, in 1941. Since 1945, he has been a resident of Kalaupapa.

In a letter dated February 21, 1978, written in the midst of the Hale Mohalu, Pearl City, struggle, my wrote:

“...for I do not wish anyone to suffer any of the effects of leprosy—even you all (talking About the Harada Family) can't begin to realize how I feel when I am among you! It is not A comfortable feeling, I assure you...”

When I read those words, their effect on me was mind-blowing. We are a very close and caring family, and to think that one of us was struggling with feelings of uncomfortableness when we were together was a very difficult thing to hear.

But then, in reflection, I began to appreciate his words. The first time that I could remember becoming aware of the reality that I had another brother was in the early 1950's. Paul was going to come home to be with our family in Lumahai valley on Kauai. There were arrangements that had to be made, all the children could not live in the same house. So when he came to be with my parents in Lumahai, all of us children had to go to my brother's home in Wainiha. And when he lived with my brother in Wainiha, all of my nieces and nephews had to come and live with us in the valley. The other rules was that we could not touch him, and we had to keep a distance from him when we talked, which I think was six feet; and that all his clothes and beddings had to be washed separately in Lysol...and until today, I can still remember the smell of Lysol throughout the house. He was a great fisherman and his stories of diving and fishing made him a hero...but an untouchable hero which to a very young person was somewhat bewildering. He was so easy to talk to, but there seemed to be something terribly wrong and unacceptable about him. These were my initial feelings about Paul and I now wonder how difficult it must have been for him. It was good to be with family, but because of all the precautions, everyone was aware that he was different!

In the same letter, Paul expressed his feelings regarding the State's stewardship of health delivery.

“We are grateful! (For all that the State does for us) We count our Blessings everyday. What about the public!?!?”

Paul has always felt that, in retrospect, the quarantine of those who had leprosy, was appropriate given the information that was available at the time that it happened. Knowing what he had experienced with

the disease, where it got so bad that he knew that by 1950, he was going to be dead from the disease, he did not want to see anyone suffer what those that were in Kalaupapa had experienced. However, one of the issues that was a consistent theme for him was that there was no public acknowledgement, no "thank you" for the sacrifices made by the patients and their families. Interestingly enough, at times Paul would indicate that he thought that a public "Thank You!" was more meaningful than having a monument in Kalaupapa!

I do not think that there is any argument that a tremendous debt is owed to this very special group of people, living and dead, for the freedoms sacrificed for the welfare of the society at large. At one point I sought to find out how many of Hawaii's citizens had died in service of our country during WWI, WWII, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam War. There were somewhere about 1500+ persons who were killed in the various conflicts and I know that number has since increased. Many of these were eulogized and buried with honor, and rightfully so. But those who died of leprosy in Kalaupapa, also for the assumed "protection" of Hawaii's citizens, what honors have we given them. There were no eulogies of appreciation, gifts of medals or flags of remembrances. Many, many times, they were buried without their families present, except for the family of fellow patients. It is very possible that many times, families really did not care.

On February 9, 2008, the Harada family held a Celebration of Life Service to honor the life of my brother Paul, here in Honolulu. We all felt a need to say "Thank You!" and we realized that there were many others who also felt that need, since the funeral service in Kalaupapa was held the day after he died and few could make the arrangements to get there in time. About two hundred fifty people attended. And it was a beautiful service. It felt good, and yet there is a tinge of sadness, for me. It made me realize that what happened for Paul, is the exception not the rule. I will be the officiant at a funeral service tomorrow, and there is expected that about 250 – 300 people will come to pay their respects. For many of the patients who died in Kalaupapa, except for the people in the settlement, the person dies and is buried in anonymity. There is a sadness tied to that reality.

As much as Paul's name has been mentioned, this resolution is not about Paul. It is about society being able to be accountable, from a perspective of just common courtesy. When someone does something meaningful for us, we say "Thank You!" I would encourage our State to extend a well deserved "Thank You!" to all those that suffered for our sakes. And, let us do it at a time when there are patients who are still alive, who can represent all those who have died, and can hear us say "Thank You!" It would be tragic if we, as the Aloha State, refuse to say, "Thank You!"

I would encourage this Legislature to adopt this Resolution to honor all those that have sacrificed so much, with so little acknowledgement.

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



L A T E

CHIYOME LEINAALA FUKINO, M.D.  
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STATE OF HAWAII  
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In reply, please refer to:  
File:

**Senate Committee on Health and Judiciary and Labor**

**SCR 208/SR122, Recognizing and Acknowledging the People of Kalaupapa and Their Families For Their Sacrifices, and Apologizing to the People of Kalaupapa and Their Families For Any Harsh Restrictions That Caused Them Undue Pain as the Result of Government Policies Surrounding Leprosy**

**Testimony of Chiyome Leinaala Fukino, M.D.  
Director of Health**

March 28, 2008, 1:30 p.m.

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health must oppose this resolution as written because of  
2 the potential litigation against the State and because of future limitations this resolution could place on  
3 the Department's ability to respond to public health crises.

4 **Fiscal Implications:** Unknown but significant potential litigation.

5 **Purpose and Justification:** There is no doubt that the residents of Kalaupapa and their families made  
6 great sacrifices to protect the public's health. Recognizing and expressing our gratitude for their  
7 sacrifices honors those who have given so much.

8 The Department proposes the attached amendments which lessen the potential unintended  
9 consequences resulting from this resolution.

10 Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 208 - REVISED

RECOGNIZING AND ACKNOWLEDGING THE PEOPLE OF KALAUPAPA AND THEIR FAMILIES FOR THEIR GREAT SACRIFICES AS A RESULT OF THEIR FORCED ISOLATION TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC'S HEALTH, ~~AND APOLOGIZING TO THE PEOPLE OF KALAUPAPA AND THEIR FAMILIES FOR ANY HARSH RESTRICTIONS THAT CAUSED THEM UNDUE PAIN AS THE RESULT OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES SURROUNDING LEPROSY].~~

WHEREAS, ~~[from 1866 to 1969, an estimated 8,000 citizens of Hawai'i were forced to leave their families and to be isolated, most often on the Kalaupapa peninsula, because of society's fear of leprosy (also known as Hansen's disease)]~~ in 1866, the only known means to prevent the spread of Hansen's Disease (also known as leprosy) was isolation, this resulted in a policy of forced relocation of an estimated 8,000 citizens of Hawaii, most often to the Kalaupapa peninsula, between 1886 and 1969.

WHEREAS, these individuals were mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters who were separated at all ages, from very young to very old; and

WHEREAS, for many of these residents, the separation was permanent, yet because they felt they were protecting the general public from a disease that was not curable until the 1940s, most people diagnosed with leprosy willingly made this greatest of sacrifices; and

WHEREAS, these sacrifices were made because these heroic individuals did not want anyone else to experience this disease, which was not only physically painful, but also emotionally difficult to bear; and

WHEREAS, despite being exiled by their own government and suffering great deprivations ~~[and injustices]~~ throughout much of their lives, the people of Kalaupapa have been remarkably resilient and have responded to their situations with kindness, generosity, and forgiveness rather than anger, bitterness, and despair; and

WHEREAS, the families of those sent to Kalaupapa also suffered unimaginable pain; and

WHEREAS, fathers and mothers were forced to take their unsuspecting children diagnosed with leprosy to a designated facility and leave them there, resulting in farewells of agony and sorrow; and

WHEREAS, those same parents would later watch from the docks as their children were loaded onto the ships destined for Kalaupapa, possibly the last time they would see one another; and

WHEREAS, children born to the people of Kalaupapa were immediately taken away at birth and grew up with other relatives or in orphanages, and, if they were fortunate, would eventually get to know their parents, but not until they were nearly adults or older; and

WHEREAS, relationships between parents and children could be difficult to establish and maintain because of the forced separation; and

WHEREAS, the Kalaupapa residents and their families have mostly accepted their circumstances throughout the years and put their lives back together as best they could; and

~~[WHEREAS, even after the medicine to control leprosy was introduced in 1946, the government was still slow to end the isolation laws which were not abolished until 1969, allowing anyone diagnosed with leprosy to be treated at home with no fear of separation; and]~~

WHEREAS, the government has maintained Kalaupapa for the last remaining residents as long as they choose to remain there, and provides for their medical, food and housing needs; and

WHEREAS, this resolution does not confer any cause of action or any legal rights, remedies, relief, restitution, or reparations on any person.

WHEREAS, there has never been an official acknowledgement to the people of Kalaupapa for all that they did and the exemplary manner in how they have lived their lives now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2008, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Legislature recognizes and acknowledges the people of Kalaupapa and their families for their great sacrifices, for thinking more of the public than of themselves, for giving up freedoms and opportunities the rest of society takes for granted, for rebuilding their lives with pride and dignity, for overcoming prejudice and discrimination, and for consistently reaching out to others in need; and

~~[BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature, on behalf of past governments of Hawaii, apologizes to the people of Kalaupapa and their families for any harsh restrictions that caused them undue pain as the result of government policies surrounding leprosy; and]~~

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this overdue action be issued with the utmost respect and admiration for those remaining Kalaupapa residents, the descendents of those who have died and family members who all have endured separation from loved ones and the anguish that came with it; and ~~[with the hope that such severe measures of separation and injustice are never imposed upon people with a disease ever again; and]~~

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to all the residents of Kalaupapa, Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa, the Governor, the Director of Health, and the Superintendent of Kalaupapa National Historical Park.

L A T E

Jacqueline M L Shirai  
P O Box 601  
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Hearing Notice  
Friday, March 28, 2008  
1:30PM  
State Capitol Conference Room 016

Senate Committee on Health  
Senator David Ige, *Chair*

Senate Committee on Judiciary & Labor  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, *Chair*

**RE: Testimony of Support for SCR 208 & SR 122 (Recognizing & Acknowledging The People & Their Families For Their Sacrifices, And Apologizing To The People Of Kalaupapa And Their Families For Any Harsh Restrictions That Caused Them Undue Pain As The Result Of Government Policies Surround Leprosy.)**

Aloha Chair's Ige, Taniguchi and Committee Members,

I am providing **testimony of support** for SCR 208 & SR 122. My Great-Great Grandmother *Pelekila Nicholas (1843 – 1893)* was a patient at *Kalaupapa*. These patients and residence of *Kalaupapa Settlement* faced social and psychological discrimination from communities and this is one of the reasons why some stayed.

Both SCR 208 & SR 122 is long overdue and is well deserved just like HR 3332 regarding the *Kalaupapa Monument passed in the United States Congress*. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony supporting SCR 208 & SR 122. *Malama Pono*.

*Jacqueline M L Shirai*