
HOUSE RESOLUTION

ACKNOWLEDGING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA COLLEGE OF
TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES HISTORIC COSTUME
COLLECTION AS A STATE TREASURE OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE AND
ENCOURAGING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MUSEUM FOR ITS
PRESERVATION

1 WHEREAS, the University of Hawaii at Manoa College of
2 Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources Historic Costume
3 Collection is a world class, hidden treasure; and
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5 WHEREAS, the Historic Costume Collection contains
6 approximately sixteen thousand items of well-documented
7 Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, Pacific Rim, Asian, and Western
8 costumes, textiles, accessories, and dolls that preserve the
9 historic legacy of these cultures through clothing and apparel
10 artifacts; and
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12 WHEREAS, expert Dr. Linda Arthur, Professor and Curator at
13 Washington State University, examined the College of Tropical
14 Agriculture and Human Resources' Historic Costume Collection and
15 stated that it is one of the most significant collections in an
16 American university because it is the largest collection of
17 Asian, ethnic, and Hawaiian textiles and garments, dating as far
18 back as the early 1800s; and
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20 WHEREAS, many items in the collection are worth thousands
21 of dollars and are unique, rare, and irreplaceable; and
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23 WHEREAS, donations of these precious items are made to the
24 University of Hawaii with the understanding that the gifts will
25 be preserved and protected for as long as possible; and
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27 WHEREAS, although this large and valuable collection should
28 be shared with the academic world and the general public, its
29 integrity and prominence are severely limited by the absence of
30 three important factors: a permanent and secure museum display
31 space; a full-time curator to manage the collection; and a
32 sufficient financial base to support its legacy for future
33 generations; and



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2 WHEREAS, because of the University of Hawaii's inability to
3 offer a permanent display area, the collection lost a
4 significant part of Hawaii's plantation history when valuable
5 costumes that documented that era were donated to the Japanese
6 American National Museum in Los Angeles in 1993; and

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8 WHEREAS, the designation of a curator, whose primary job is
9 to manage the costume collection, is critical for the proper
10 oversight and preservation of the collection; and

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12 WHEREAS, this priceless collection also needs proper
13 organization and identification to preserve and connect the
14 historical documentary record with the corresponding garments;
15 and

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17 WHEREAS, the storage of the garments poses a high risk of
18 damage caused by inadequate storage space, the use of lining
19 paper with acid content and wire hangers instead of padded
20 plastic hangers, lack of archival storage boxes and adequate
21 shelving, and improper handling of materials; and

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23 WHEREAS, the absence of a museum presents security
24 problems, with too many people entering the collection's storage
25 room, thereby posing the risk of disorganization, theft, and
26 lack of control in tracking items; and

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28 WHEREAS, insects have damaged some of the textiles and the
29 extent of that damage is not known; and

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31 WHEREAS, the absence of a proper display and lack of
32 storage space poses environmental threats to the collection;
33 now, therefore,

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35 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
36 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
37 of 2009, that this body acknowledges the University of Hawaii at
38 Manoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
39 Historic Costume Collection as a world class collection of
40 historic and national quality, integrity, and significance; and

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42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body encourages the
43 University of Hawaii to find and secure a permanent home to



1 properly manage, display, preserve, and promote this cultural
2 and academic treasure; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
5 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of
6 Regents and the President of the University of Hawaii.

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OFFERED BY: *Sam W. King*

MAR 13 2009

