
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS TO WORK WITH THE HAWAI'INUIĀKEA SCHOOL OF HAWAIIAN KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO DEVELOP A KUPUNA HONORARY DEGREE PROGRAM.

1 WHEREAS, the Nobel prize was first awarded in 1901 and is
2 widely regarded as the most prestigious award an individual may
3 receive in various fields; and
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5 WHEREAS, the Nobel prize is a prize that is awarded based
6 on purely western standards; and
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8 WHEREAS, Hawaiian kupuna worldwide are also deserving of
9 recognition for their contributions, but based entirely on
10 Hawaiian standards; and
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12 WHEREAS, Hawaiian kupuna have made many significant
13 contributions to all Hawaiians and to the world; and
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15 WHEREAS, the concept of the kupuna honorary degree program
16 originated with Kumu Hula Keli'i Tau'a; and
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18 WHEREAS, it is proper for a process to be established to
19 appropriately recognize and honor eligible kupuna in a manner
20 and on a level similar to the Nobel prize, but based on Hawaiian
21 standards; now, therefore,
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23 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
24 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
25 of 2009, that the Office of Hawaiian Affairs is requested to
26 work with the Hawai'inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge of the
27 University of Hawaii to develop a kupuna honorary degree
28 program, which shall award the pohaku degree, intended to be the
29 Hawaii equivalent to the Nobel prizes, to eligible Hawaiian
30 kupuna; and
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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of Hawaiian Affairs,
33 working with the Hawai'inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge, is



1 requested to consider including in any kupuna honorary degree
2 program it develops the following categories of the honorary
3 pohaku degree, according to varying minimum age requirements:

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- 5 (1) Religion;
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- 7 (2) Health;
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- 9 (3) Agriculture;
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- 11 (4) Fishing;
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- 13 (5) Crafts and weaving;
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- 15 (6) Celestial navigation;
- 16
- 17 (7) Education;
- 18
- 19 (8) Government;
- 20
- 21 (9) Business;
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- 23 (10) Performing arts, including hula and chant;
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- 25 (11) Fine arts; and
- 26
- 27 (12) Music; and

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29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of Hawaiian Affairs
30 is requested to work with the Hawai'inuiākea School of Hawaiian
31 Knowledge to establish the kupuna komike, which shall establish
32 standards for award of the degree, and to consider including at
33 least the following criteria:

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- 35 (1) Contributions to the community; and
- 36
- 37 (2) Qualifying age for varying categories of degrees; and
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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the kupuna komike, when
40 established, is requested to award the pohaku degree to eligible
41 Hawaiian kupuna; and

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43 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of Hawaiian Affairs,
44 working with the Hawai'inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge in



1 developing the program, is requested not to restrict the award
2 of the pohaku degree to persons within the State of Hawaii but
3 to award the degree to individuals worldwide; and
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of Hawaiian Affairs,
6 working with the Hawai'inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge, is
7 further requested to consider providing a financial prize of
8 some kind to each pohaku degree recipient; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
11 Resolution be transmitted to Kumu Hula Keli'i Tau'a, the
12 Director of the Hawai'inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge of
13 the University of Hawaii, and the Chairperson of the Board of
14 Trustees and the Administrator of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs
15 who, in turn, is requested to distribute copies to all
16 appropriate Hawaiian entities within and outside the State.
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OFFERED BY:

Mele Carroll

Frank [unclear]

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Dennis Coffin

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