

THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF HAWAII

1132 Bishop Street, Suite 402
Honolulu, HI 96813

Testimony to the House Committee on Economic Revitalization, Business, and
Military Affairs

Thursday, March 11, 2010

8:30 AM

Conference Room 312

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 2843, SD2, RELATING TO FLAGS

Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Choy, and members of the committee.

My name is Charles Ota and I am the Vice President for Military Affairs at The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii (The Chamber). I am here to state The Chamber's support of Senate Bill 2843, SD2, Relating To Flags.

The Chamber's Military Affairs Council (MAC) serves as the liaison for the state in matters relating to the US military and its civilian workforce and families, and has provided oversight for the state's multi-billion dollar defense industry since 1985.

The measure proposes to recognize and require the prisoner of war/missing in action flag to be flown with the US and Hawaii State flags on state department of defense buildings.

We believe that this measure would enhance state recognition of the thousands of brave American heroes who were officially captured and interred as prisoners of war, and the thousands of others who were officially reported as missing in action. This would be an appropriate honor and tribute to the Hawaii residents as well as the others Americans that were reported as POW/MIA.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the proposed measure be passed for further review and adoption.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

OAHU VETERANS COUNCIL

OAHU VETERANS COUNCIL
President - Fred Ballard
1st V.P. - Cecil Meadows
2nd V.P. - Jim Santos
Secretary - John Harms
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"a gathering place for veterans"
OAHU VETERANS CENTER

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March 9, 2010

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS
5th Regimental Combat Team
15th Infantry Division Assn.
Air Force Assn. - Chapter 138
Air Force Sergeants Association
American Legion Aux. Dept. of HI
American Legion - Dept. of HI
American Legion Post 32
American Veterans Empowerment &
Support Community Operations
BPOE VAVS Hawaii Dist.
China-Burma-India Veterans Assn.
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Chapter 3
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And Unit 46
Hawaii Multiple Schools Unit - Jr. ROTC
Korean War Veterans Assn -
Chapter 1
Military Officers Assn. of America -
Aloha Chapter
Military Officers Assn. of America -
Hawaii State Chapter
Military Order of the Purple Heart
Military Order of World Wars
National Assn. for Atomic Veterans
National Assn. of Uniformed Services
National Sojourners - Hawaiian # 9
National Sojourners - Honolulu # 11
National Sojourners - Kamehameha #439
Pearl Harbor Survivors Association
Radiated Veterans
Samoan Providers
Society of Military Widows -
Aloha Chapter
Sons & Daughters of
Pearl Harbor Survivors
Special Forces Assn. - Chapter VIII
State Office of Veterans Services
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Dept. of Hawaii
Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 970
Vietnam Veterans of America
Chapter 858
Waves National - Unit 131
Women Veterans of America #26

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF SENATE BILL 2843 SD2 RELATING TO FLAGS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION, BUSINESS AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

HEARING THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2010 8:30 A.M., ROOM 312

Aloha Representatives Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair, Isaac W. Choy, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee. My name is Fred Ballard, President Oahu Veterans Council. The Oahu Veterans Council is comprised of over 35 Oahu veteran organizations that in turn represent over 80,000 veterans and their families.

The Council strongly supported SB 2843 that stated "If a building is under jurisdiction of the State, including the state department of defense state headquarters building... the POW/MIA flag shall be flown under the flag of the United States of America." SB 2843 SD2 modified the bill to include only state department of defense (DoD) buildings. The Council believes that the POW/MIA flag should fly over all state buildings including DoD buildings. The Council also believes that if passed, the take effect date should be July 1, 2011, not 30 years later on 2040.

The flag is a symbol of those who have not returned. The possibility of becoming a prisoner of war, or missing in action is ever present as our troops continue to serve our country. In the words of the Pearl Harbor Survivors, "We will never forget," the same can be said for our POW's and Missing in Action. The flag is a constant reminder of their sacrifice and hope that they will come home. That flag deserves to fly on state buildings now, not 30 years from now. The Oahu Veterans Council opposes SB 2843 SD2 in its present form; however, would support it if amended to include all state building and an effective date of 2011.

Mahalo for allowing us the opportunity to testify on this very important bill.

Fred Ballard

Fred Ballard
President
Oahu Veterans Council



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Meadow Gold Dairies



Testimony by: Glenn Muranaka
SB 2843sd2, Relating to Flags
House EBM Hearing – Room 312
Thursday, March 11, 2010 – 8:30 am

Position: Support Intent, Concerns

Chair McKelvey and Members of the House EBM Committee:

My name is Glenn Muranaka, President and General Manager of Meadow Gold Dairies. Our company has been in Hawaii since 1897, providing Hawaii consumers with a variety of milk products and juices. We have withstood the test of time as Hawai'i became a U.S. territory; played a vital role in World War II; and became the 50th state. We salute the sacrifices of Hawaii's sons and daughters who fought in the Korean, Vietnam, and Gulf wars. The foundation of Meadow Gold's resiliency rests with the 350 employees that are committed to providing superior quality products.

As an organization with a long and ongoing relationship with the armed forces in Hawaii, we support the intent of measure that seeks to acknowledge appreciation for the many brave Americans that were captured and interred as Prisoner Of War or reported Missing In Action.

However, as written, SB 2843sd2 does not fulfill that intent as it limits the State's acknowledgement to only the State Department of Defense buildings.

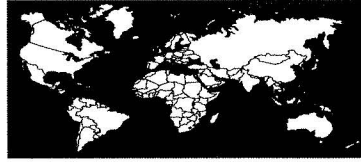
Your consideration of amending this bill to require flying the Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Flag with the United States and the State of Hawaii flags flown at State buildings respectfully communicates Hawaii's aloha for those currently serving in the Military. Moreover, it demonstrates that we will never forget the service and sacrifice of loved ones who have never returned from war.

Your support of this measure with the proposed amendment is appreciated. Please feel free to call me at 944-5911 if you have any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.

The Johnson Ohana

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Testimony to the House Committee on EBM
Thursday, March 11, 2010 8:30 AM Conference Room 312 State Capitol

Position: Support Intent, With Recommendations

RE: Senate Bill SB 2843 SD2, RELATING TO FLAGS (POW/MIA Flag)

Aloha Chairman McKelvey and Vice Chair Choy, and Members of the Committee.

The Johnson Family, Bob, Billy, Betty and Eleanor appreciate your interest and continued discussion about the requirement of flying the **POW/MIA Flag** in Hawaii. However, we **do not** support the **content** of **SB 2843, sd2** that restricts the flying of the **POW/MIA Flag** to only buildings under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Defense (DoD).

This limitation is contrary to the bill's intent to appropriately honor and give tribute to American Prisoners of War and military personnel who are Missing in Action. Hawaii is home to the Pacific Command, the front line of defense for the Asia-Pacific Region. Few or no other State can claim that it is supported by four component commands: U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. Pacific Air Forces, U.S. Army Pacific, and U.S. Marine Forces Pacific. These commands are headquartered in Hawai'i and have forces stationed and deployed throughout the region that spans the waters off the west coast of the U.S. to the western border of India, and from Antarctica to the North Pole. Hawaii's general public as well as visitors and the military community have good reason to see the **POW/MIA Flag** flown at the Hawaii State Capitol and other State buildings, and the DoD Headquarters.

Records support there is approximately 118,000+ Veterans in Hawaii; an estimated 54,528 military personnel and 59,606 military dependents for a total of 168,662 living in Hawaii. Hawaii's economy relies significantly on the military. Thousands of Hawaii's families such as ours have loved ones and friends who sacrificed their life for our Country and have never returned home.

Hawaii should be mindful and considerate of what we owe our **POW/MIAs** and their loved ones. It should be done in affirmation of our strongest belief as a people; that every life is precious. It would be heartening and respectful to those who are currently serving in our military who put their life in harm's way each day and to their families to witness the **POW/MIA Flag** flying at the Hawaii State Capitol Building and knowing that they will never be forgotten.

The **POW/MIA Flag** conveys to the World that Hawaii remembers the sacrifices and service of our loved ones and trust that they will return home. The Flag's presence is an unwavering reminder of the thousands of courageous Americans who were officially captured and interred as Prisoners of War and those who remain missing and unaccounted for and held captive against their will by our enemies of Freedom. Those brave American men and women sacrificed their freedom to defend liberty for all of us.

The **POW/MIA Flag** does not represent any State, military branch, or any other specific group. The Flag belongs to everyone; it is a meaningful symbol that powerfully reminds; "**YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN**".

Betty and Bob have been married for 61 years. Bob a former Marine; Billy a former Marine, decorated 100%DAV; Betty a former Hollywood USO Volunteer; three of Bob's brother-in-laws (all decorated) served in the Marine Corps, 2 were DAV's and 1 MIA; his only brother sustained serious combat wounds, was a decorated POW. Bob's uncle Marine Corps MIA. Betty's sister was a USO Hollywood volunteer during World War II. Betty's brother was a decorated fighter pilot (Ace) and her brother-in-law was a decorated Marine Corps DAV. In the younger generation there are 2 DAV's. The Johnson Family is proud of their military service.

The Johnson Family respectfully request that this bill be amended to reflect that the original language in **SB 2843** and **HB 2383**, which states that "if a building is under the jurisdiction of the State, including the state department of defense state headquarters building, and the Hawaiian flag is flown under the same or a separate halyard as the flag of the United States of America, the Prisoner of War/Missing In Action Flag shall be flown under the flag of the United States of America."

We can be reached at 808-672-3122 if there are any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony.

Robert A. "Bob" Johnson
William A. "Billy" Johnson
Betty L. "Peke" Johnson
Eleanor R. Johnson