

HISTORIC HAWAII FOUNDATION

VIA WEB: www.capitol.hawaii.gov/emailtestimony

To: Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
Rep. Marilyn B. Lee, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

From: Kiersten Faulkner
Executive Director, Historic Hawai'i Foundation

Committee Date: Thursday, February 24, 2011
10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 308

Subject: **HB1622, Related to Historic Preservation**

On behalf of Historic Hawai'i Foundation (HHF), I am writing in opposition to HB1622, which directs that a new memorial be constructed on the grounds of the state capitol.

The Hawai'i State Capitol is designated on both the State and National Registers of Historic Places. In addition, the entire civic center area is recognized as a historic district. The significance of the capitol goes beyond its architecture and embraces the entire landscape, setting and context.

Because many groups and associations petition for a community memorial or other recognition on the capitol grounds, the impact on the overall setting could be immense should all of them be approved and built. Rather than respond case by case, HHF recommends that DLNR develop and adopt a comprehensive plan for the state capitol, including a policy for design and location related to new memorials, art, or permanent installations. This approach has been used on the National Mall in Washington D.C. to great effect. The result is a consistent and fair treatment for all those who wish to memorialize events or persons important to a community's history, but in a way that does not compromise the integrity of an important historic site through random or haphazard installations.

Any proposal to change or add to the capitol grounds should first begin with an understanding of the cultural landscape, including character-defining features that contribute to its historic significance. The state should undertake a master plan for the entire capitol compound, including the building, the landscape and existing memorials. The master plan should integrate the historic features with any proposals for changes or additions.

Therefore, HHF recommends that the bill be amended to delete the direction to construct a memorial, and instead direct the department of land and natural resources to develop a management plan for the state capitol to include a comprehensive policy about the design and construction of memorials.

Historic Hawai'i Foundation

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Historic Hawai'i Foundation was established in 1974 to encourage the preservation of historic buildings, sites and communities on all the islands of Hawai'i. As the statewide leader for historic preservation, HHF works to preserve Hawai'i's unique architectural and cultural heritage and believes that historic preservation is an important element in the present and future quality of life, environmental sustainability and economic viability of the state.