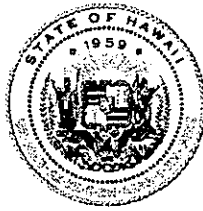
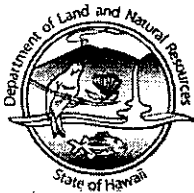


NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of  
WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
FINANCE**

**Wednesday, April 13, 2011  
10:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 163/HOUSE RESOLUTION 142 -  
REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO SET ASIDE AND TRANSFER SIXTY ACRES OF  
LAND TO SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WEST HAWAII MULTI-  
PURPOSE AND INTERGENERATIONAL  
VETERANS CENTER**

House Concurrent Resolution 163/House Resolution 142 requests the Governor to set aside by executive order 60 acres of state lands in North Kona, Hawaii to an entity to be known as the West Hawaii Veterans Council. The Department of Land and Natural Resources ("Department") offers the following background information and comments.

House Concurrent Resolution 163/House Resolution 142 states that the desired location of the 60 acres is near the existing West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery in Maniniowali and Awakii, North Kona. The Department confirms that there are state lands in the vicinity of the Cemetery that may be available for such use. However, an executive order may not be the appropriate vehicle for the disposition. Under Section 171-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), executive orders are used to set aside public lands to state, county or federal agencies. These resolutions explain that the West Hawaii Veterans Council (Council) will be a non-profit corporation, in contrast to a government agency. The appropriate form of disposition to a non-profit corporation is generally by way of a long-term lease of up to 65 years.

In addition, there are statutory restrictions under Chapter 171, HRS, on the direct negotiation of leases. In general, the Board of Land and Natural Resources (Land Board) can only issue direct leases to eleemosynary or charitable organizations. Not all non-profit corporations are charitable organizations. The Council should obtain a charitable or tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service, such as an Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3) designation, to qualify for direct

WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

GUY H. KAULUKUKUI  
FIRST DEPUTY

WILLIAM M. TAM  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

lease negotiation. Alternatively, a set-aside could be made to an appropriate state, county or federal agency and that agency could enter into a management agreement with the Council. The lease or set-aside applicant who requests the land disposition will be responsible for complying with all environmental and land use issues relating to the proposed project. In this regard, the Department notes that desired location appears to be in the State Land Use Conservation District on land zoned Open under County of Hawaii zoning. To the extent conservation lands are involved, the applicant would need to consult with the Department's Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands that regulates uses within the Conservation District on whether a Conservation District Use Application must be filed and processed. In addition, development in this area is likely going to require, at applicant's expense, at least compliance with Chapter 343, HRS, and possibly a land use boundary amendment from the State Land Use Commission, a change in the applicable county zoning or a plan approval, county subdivision approval, and a set-aside or lease approved by the Land Board. Applicants seeking new dispositions are also advised to seek the concurrence of any existing permittee currently occupying the land to the surrender of 60 acres from the revocable permit prior to requesting any formal Land Board action.<sup>1</sup> The applicant would also need to show that project would fully utilize the land area requested.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments.

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<sup>1</sup> The existing permittee is WB Kukio Resorts, LLC who holds a revocable permit for pasture purposes on approximately 2,500 acres in the area.

STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES  
TESTIMONY ON HCR 163/HR 142 REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO SET ASIDE  
SIXTY ACRES OF LAND FOR MULTI-PURPOSE AND INTERGENERATIONAL WEST  
HAWAII VETERANS CENTER .

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

April 13, 2011

Good morning Chair Marcus Oshiro, Vice Chair Marilyn Lee, and members of the House Committee on Finance.

I am Gregory Jackson, Director of the Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate the opportunity to support the establishment of a multi-purpose intergenerational West Hawaii Veterans Center.

I defer to the expertise of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) as to whether the Governor should set aside 60 acres of state lands, or whether this land can be provided through some other disposition. Similarly, I defer to DLNR as to the appropriate tract size and tract location given the land restrictions and scarcity of infrastructure in the area. No doubt, all of these factors must ultimately be considered in cost of the project.

As noted in HCR 163/HR 142, veterans on Hawaii number approximately 16,000. Currently, the Office of Veterans Services (OVS) has one veterans services counselor for the entire County of Hawaii. This counselor is located in Hilo and travels to West Hawaii often to provide services to clients there. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has been most generous in providing office space for counseling purposes at its community based Vet Center. This intergovernmental cooperation allows our counselor to service West Hawaii more efficiently in a way that might not otherwise be possible under the State's current fiscal constraints.

The veterans in West Hawaii have proven themselves extremely capable in their grassroots support of the West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery. This cemetery has received national recognition for attaining such a high standard of appearance. The County of Hawaii, Department of Parks and Recreation, must also be recognized for its effort in maintaining this cemetery. Our West Hawaii veterans are goal-oriented. They are focused, and their community involvement needs to be recognized, commended and encouraged. Moreover, with their track record, the West Hawaii veteran community appears disciplined enough to accomplish its goal of a self-sustaining intergenerational veterans center facility that offers a valuable service to the entire West Hawaii community.

Co-locating VA and OVS facilities allows the State to wisely leverage federal dollars and create efficiencies that will ultimately better serve our veterans. Additionally, co-locating

VA and OVS facilities produces unseen value, such as OVS counselor access to VA computer records systems, which further enables more effective services to the veteran population. This efficient service model can result in improved medical services to the veteran or in higher disability compensation ratings for the veteran—which eventually translates into steady revenue for the state. In short, parallel and complimentary needs can be achieved and cost-effectively enabled by co-location of other programs and services in what this resolution refers to as a "Veterans Center Complex."

Because of our unique island geography, these multi-use community based facilities become even more appropriate for cost-effective and timely delivery of services. Efforts at various planning stages are seriously underway for similar multi-use facilities on Kauai and on Maui. Veteran populations in those counties are estimated at approximately 6,000 and 12,000 respectively.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this resolution. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

**KAUAI VETERAN COUNCIL  
3215 KAPULE HIGHWAY  
LIHUE, HI 96766**

Tuesday, April 12, 2011

To: Chair Marcus Oshiro and Finance Committee members:

HR142/HCR163 West Hawaii Veteran Center resolution

FIN hearing on Wednesday, 04-13-11 10:00 AM in conference room 308.

The Kauai Veterans Council thru its experience is in total support of West Hawaii veterans initiative in constructing a Veterans Center on the island of Hawaii. A 'one stop' service center for our veterans is a marvelous idea; it would save a lot of time and effort on part of our aging veterans population and their families.

On Kauai, our Veterans Center has been opened for almost twenty years and has been a focal point for all veteran activities. Our council consists of fourteen veterans organization; their meetings are held at our center each month. Also located at the center is the Office of Veterans Services, an important office that disseminates latest veterans information and provide services to the needy veterans and their family. To perpetuate the memory of the Kauai veterans for their service to our country and state, the center has a museum in honor of our veterans that is visited daily.

It is my firm belief, that a Veterans Center or Complex is needed on each island. It is for the veterans, their families, and the community where they can meet, have meaningful activities, be informed of the latest benefits or services being offered to the veterans and their family. I do believe in the 'one stop' service center for the veterans that includes the Veterans Administration CBOC. Vet Center and the State OVS office. The benefit of having a Veterans Center out weigh the cost of not having one. If we believe in our veterans and the service they have provided us then it is time to recognize them and support the West Hawaii veterans and their initiative to build a Veterans Center.

/s/

William T. Honjiyo  
President

**Joseph D Pluta**  
**PO Box 12278**  
**Lahaina, HI 96761**  
**(808) 661-7990 FAX (808) 661-7992**

**RE: Testimony to Support HCR 163**

Please consider the following:

The Big Island does not have a Veterans Center, like the other islands, and one is needed.

-The West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery Association has done outstanding work -- the cemetery achieved shrine status, one of just three state-owned veteran's cemeteries nationwide to have that distinction.

-These same West Hawaii Veterans will effectively manage this Veterans Center.

-Petitions with over 485 names in support of this resolution, gathered by the West Hawaii Veterans in approximately a 1 month timeframe, show there is strong interest for a Veterans Center in West Hawaii.

-Parallel and complimentary needs can be achieved and cost-effectively enabled by collocation of other programs and services in what can become a "Veterans Center Complex".

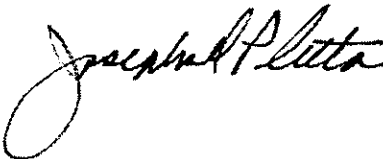
-Collocation is an opportunity to optimize services for all West Hawaii veterans, National Guard, Reserve, active duty, other military members and their families and the community.

-\$300-\$500K is needed for the planning and assessment phase of this project.

**-This is a very worthy and viable project, in a growing community, and the time is right to start the process.**

Warm Regards,

Joseph D. Pluta



To whom it may concern:

My name is Tracey Seki Matsuyama, 1LT. Civil Air Patrol, daughter on Don N. Seki, Veteran of 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT, and proud mother of Evan Seki Matsuyama- recent appointee to the U.S. Air Force Academy- cadet in the class of 2015.

I am writing in support of a Veterans Center in West Hawaii. I've been involved with our Veterans since the 60's and continue to volunteer for the veterans whether for my father, the 100<sup>th</sup>/ 442<sup>nd</sup> Veterans, our cemetery, Civil Air Patrol, JROTC, Pohukuloa Training Area, or in the future for my son joining our military.

I feel a center in West Hawaii is past due!

The Big Island does not have a Veterans Center, like the other islands, and one is needed.

-The West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery Association has done outstanding work -- the cemetery achieved shrine status, one of just three state-owned veterans cemeteries nationwide to have that distinction.

-These same West Hawaii Veterans will effectively manage this Veterans Center.

-Petitions with over 485 names in support of this resolution, gathered by the West Hawai'i Veterans in approximately a 1 month timeframe, show there is strong interest for a Veterans Center in West Hawaii.

-Parallel and complimentary needs can be achieved and cost-effectively enabled by co-location of other programs and services in what can become a "Veterans Center Complex".

-Co-location is an opportunity to optimize services for all West Hawaii veterans, National Guard, Reserve, active duty, other military members and their families and the community.

-\$300-\$500K is needed for the planning and assessment phase of this project.

**-This is a very worthy and viable project, in a growing community, and the time is right to start the process.**

Very Respectfully,  
Tracey Seki Matsuyama

## FINTestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 12, 2011 4:31 PM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** rosemifsud@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HCR163 on 4/13/2011 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for FIN 4/13/2011 10:00:00 AM HCR163

Conference room: 308  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: John Grogan  
Organization: West Hawaii Veterans' Cemetery Development and Expansion Association  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [rosemifsud@aol.com](mailto:rosemifsud@aol.com)  
Submitted on: 4/12/2011

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Members of the Finance Committee:

As a matter of introduction, I am a six year U.S. Navy veteran with Vietnam service. The purpose of my testimony is to ask for the Committee's favorable consideration of our Veterans Association's request that sixty (60) acres of State land be set aside for the construction of a West Hawaii Veterans' Center such as that which the State provided the islands of Oahu, Kauai, and Maui. In addition to the land, and with the knowledge the Committee must be very judicious with regard to such requests, we are also requesting the Committee's favorable consideration of appropriating funds for the initial planning of the Veterans' Center.

The State Department of Veterans Services has advised our organization that 17,000 veterans like me live on the island of Hawaii. Arguably, half that number live in West Hawaii - from Hawi to South Point. HCR 163 (HR142) proposes that a centralized Veterans' Center be built midway along the main north - south bus corridor - about five miles north of the Kona Airport.

There is widespread West Hawaii community support for the construction of a centralized Veterans' Center as is evidenced by more than 500 citizens who, during a seven day period in March, signed Petitions approving the rationale for the Veterans' Center. Ms. Virginia Isbell will appear in person before the Finance Committee to represent West Hawaii veterans and will provide the Petitions to the Committee so I will not waste the Committee's time by restating the page full of rationale in this written testimony but I do request the Committee consider the rationale in its deliberations.

As the lead 501(c)(3) organization requesting the State's consideration of setting aside the land and initial funds for a Veterans' Center, please be advised that our Association consists of representatives of all the major active veterans' organizations in West Hawaii and that our By-Laws do permit our involvement in veterans' issues such as the construction of a Veterans' Center. Our main focus, however, is being the unofficial caretaker of the West Hawaii Veterans' Cemetery. Although our organization is currently at the point in the effort to construct a Veterans' Center, representatives of the major veterans' organizations in West Hawaii came together recently to establish a new organization to focus on Veterans' Center issues. The organization, West Hawaii Veterans' Council (WHVC), has adopted Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws. Officers and directors have been elected. WHVC is now in the



process of obtaining State recognition and obtaining 501(c)(3) status from the IRS. Once WHVC is recognized by the State and IRS, it will become the lead 501(c)(3) organization supporting the Veterans' Center.

It is our understanding that once the Veterans' Center has been established, it must be self-sustaining. We are prepared to achieve that requirement by offering the facility for rent to West Hawaii community organizations and for individual purposes such as funerals and weddings. The proposed Veterans' Center site is at the intersection of Hwy 19 and the entrance road of the West Hawaii Veterans' Cemetery.

The Veterans' Center will be well managed because we veterans will be responsible for seeing to it. That we are good at what we do has been recognized at the federal level by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs having recently designated the West Hawaii Veterans' Cemetery as achieving "Shrine" status - one of only three State Veterans' Cemeteries in America so designated.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration of our request.

John Grogan  
President  
West Hawaii Veterans' Cemetery Development and Expansion Association

President  
West Hawaii Veterans' Council

## **FINTestimony**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 12, 2011 1:31 PM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** strmiller@msn.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HCR163 on 4/13/2011 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for FIN 4/13/2011 10:00:00 AM HCR163

Conference room: 308  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Steven Miller  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [strmiller@msn.com](mailto:strmiller@msn.com)  
Submitted on: 4/12/2011

**Comments:**

I am a member of American Legion Post 20 in Kona, and believe that the Veterans Center is the solution to a problem in the community here in West Hawaii; the lack of centralized, comprehensive Veterans Services with adequate parking.

## FINTestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 12, 2011 12:37 PM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** mauilaub@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HCR163 on 4/13/2011 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for FIN 4/13/2011 10:00:00 AM HCR163

Conference room: 308  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Paul Laub  
Organization: Maui County Veterans Council  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [mauilaub@aol.com](mailto:mauilaub@aol.com)  
Submitted on: 4/12/2011

Comments:  
Maui County Veterans Council strongly supports the West Hawaii Veterans Center. Please fund this very important project. We here in Maui County greatly appreciate your support of these Veterans projects!

## FINTestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 12, 2011 7:50 AM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** jsn@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HCR163 on 4/13/2011 10:00:00 AM  
**Attachments:** Support for HCR163.doc

Testimony for FIN 4/13/2011 10:00:00 AM HCR163

Conference room: 308  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Joseph Nimori  
Organization: West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery Deve;opment & Expansion Association  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [jsn@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:jsn@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 4/12/2011

Comments:  
Your support will dedicate sixty acres of state land for a West Hawaii Veterans adjacent to the West Hawaii Veterans' Cemetery along Queen Kaahumanu Highway.

The Big Island does not have a Veterans Center, like the other islands, and one is needed.

-The West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery Development and Expansion Association has done outstanding work -- the cemetery achieved shrine status, one of just three state-owned veterans cemeteries nationwide to have that distinction.

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-Collocation is an opportunity to optimize services for all West Hawaii veterans, National Guard, Reserve, active duty, other military members and their families and the community.

**-This is a very worthy and viable project, in a growing community, and the time is right to start the process.**