

ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS
Testimony of President Soulee Stroud

Senate Bill 2, SD2
Relating to Public Land

Before the Joint House
COMMITTEES ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
And CULTURE AND THE ARTS
Wednesday, March 23, 2011, 8:30 a., Room 329

Aloha Madam Chair Hanohano of the Committee on Hawaiian Affairs, and Madam Chair Wooley of the Committee on Culture and the Arts. I am Soulee Stroud, here to testify in support of **SB2SD2 Relating to Public Land**.

The first civic club was founded in 1918 and we continue to thrive with clubs on all islands of the State of Hawaii, 11 states on the continent and the District of Columbia. We now have sixty component clubs participating in those activities that our founders envisioned – historic preservation, education of Native Hawaiian students, protection of traditional culture and advocacy for Hawaiian Home Lands.

We have also been very active in the support and protection of the public land trust that was created with the annexation of Hawai'i by the United States in 1898. These lands, were the original public, government and crown lands of the Kingdom of Hawai'i. Upon annexation, they were taken and held in a federal trust and later with the admission of Hawai'i as a State, in a State public land trust for the benefit of the people of Hawai'i in general and the native Hawaiian people, in particular.

An accurate inventory of the public land trust is essential to the continued provision of projects and programs to their beneficiaries by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

It should also be pointed out that although SB 2 speaks to the 5 (f) responsibility of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs for the benefit of native Hawaiians, 80% of the public land trust provides for all the people of Hawai'i. Section 5(f) of the Admission Act speaks to five public purposes, one of which is the betterment of conditions to native Hawaiians, but the other public purposes include, schools and educational institutions, agriculture and farming, housing, as well as general public use.

For the State to still not have descriptions of the parcels that comprise the public land trust, the lands being held by State and County governments, parcel locations, lands acquired after Statehood, is a disservice to the class of native Hawaiians and their proper entitlements, but also to the people of Hawai'i for whom these lands should provide greater public service and use.

We believe SB 2 is long overdue. We support this measure and hope that finally, we shall move forward to provide the accurate inventory necessary to carry out a sacred promise made a very long time ago.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony. We urge your support of this measure.

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