

**VIA FACSIMILE CARE OF SENATE SGT-AT-ARMS 586-6401**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS:**

**Senator David Y. Ige, Chair; Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair; and members of  
the Committee on Ways and Means**

**TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB 2583 SD1 RELATING TO THE NATIONAL  
GUARD**

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2012  
Time: 09:00 AM  
Place: Conference Room 211  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Copies: 30

Chairman David Ige, Vice Chairperson Michelle Kidani and members of the Senate  
Committee on Ways and Means.

I am James Kuroiwa, Vice President of the Go For Broke Association at P.O. Box 88234  
Honolulu, HI 96830. I also serve as the National Director, representing the Go For Broke  
Association, as one of 23 organizations of the National Veterans Network (NVN) associated  
with the WWII 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team, Military  
Intelligence Service, and in Hawaii the 1399<sup>th</sup> Engineer Construction Battalion. The NVN  
jointly with the Go For Broke Association presented the Hawaii event awarding the United  
States Congressional Gold Medal to the WWII veterans.

We are testifying in strong opposition to SB 2583 SD1 and its basic intent to amend the  
qualifications under HRS §121-7 for the Adjutant General of the State of Hawaii Department  
of Defense. The proposed amended qualification for the Hawaii's Adjutant General is that to  
become qualified, the applicant must serve or have served in the Hawaii Army or Air National  
Guard for five years. The amended words in SB 2583 SD1 is to amend HRS §121-7 by  
adding; "*...of which at least five years shall have been served as an active commissioned  
officer in the Hawaii National Guard of either the army, air or both.*" The proposed  
amendment disqualifies all the men and women of the United States Military and specifically  
all who served in the Army Reserve's 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion/442d Infantry Regiment (100<sup>th</sup> Bn/442d  
Inf) from appointment as Hawaii's Adjutant General.

The current law, in our opinion, does not require any changes and it reads as follows; HRS  
§121-7: Adjutant general; appointment. The adjutant general shall be the executive head of  
the department of defense and commanding general of the militia of the State. The adjutant  
general shall be appointed and be subject to removal as set forth in section 26-31. The  
adjutant general shall serve for the term as set forth in section 6; article V, of the Constitution.  
*No person shall be eligible for appointment as adjutant general unless the person holds or  
has held a commission of at least a field grade officer, federally recognized as such, or its*

*equivalent in the national guard, state defense force, or other branch of the armed forces of this or any other state or territory of the United States, or in the armed forces of the United States or a reserve component thereof and has served as a commissioned officer in one or more of the armed services for at least ten years.* [L 1967, c 196, pt of §1; HRS §121-7; gen ch 1985; am L 1987, c 28, §1; am L 1988, c 135, §1]

The responsibilities of the State Adjutant General has expanded from the executive head of the Department of Defense and Commanding General of the Militia of the State (the Army and Air National Guard), to include the State Civil Defense, compliance with Homeland Security for Hawaii, the Office of Veterans Affairs, and the Youth Challenge Academy. The Home Land Security responsibility includes management of the National Incident Management Systems coordinating all the activities within the State of Hawaii.

Historically, the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn/442d Inf Army Reserve unit has been attached to the Hawaii Army National Guard's 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade on three separate deployments. The first mobilization was on May 13, 1968 to Schofield Barracks, where men from both the Army Reserve and National Guard were levied for duty in Vietnam. The second mobilization occurred on August 14, 2004 and the third on August 19, 2008 for service in Iraq and Kuwait.

In the 1968 mobilization, I had served for four years as an Army Reservist in the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn/442d Inf and received orders for duty in Vietnam in December of 1968. I arrived in Vietnam on February 25, 1969 and was assigned to the 81 mm mortars of Co. E, 1/502d (Ambl) 101<sup>st</sup> Abn Div at LZ Sally following seven days of processing at Bien Hoa. From LZ Sally on March 12, 1969, Charlie Company began their air assault into the A Shau valley and into a hot FSB Veghel losing a number of men.

On March 25, 1969, while on FSB Veghel, I notice a local soldier getting off the Huey helicopter on the helipad and went to talk to him. I received okay from his 1SG for Shibata to join me for dinner. Dinner was field served on paper plates and we sat on a fallen tree trunk looking out over the valley and into the rain forest, just like a picnic in Hawaii. He asked me about mail from home and I explain that normally within a week now that he has a permanent assignment, mail from home would catch up to him. I also find out he was from Kona. The next morning he leaves with the 1SG on a helicopter with three other replacements towards Dong A Tay to join Charlie Company.

March 29, 1969, the 1SG calls me on the radio to inform me that Shibata was killed in action (KIA). I come home from my tour nearly a year later and find out Glenn Shibata was with the Hawaii Army National Guard. In Vietnam, we were American soldiers from Hawaii, I a staff sergeant and he a private first class. It did not matter if he was with the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade or me from the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn/442d Inf. Each year, I visit his burial site at Punchbowl to remember him and others that were killed in Vietnam.

The Hawaii Army National Guard has always been a part of the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn/442d Inf. The WWII 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion were comprised of the men from the 298 (Oahu) and 299 (Neighbor Islands) Infantry Battalions from the Hawaii Army National Guard.

For some reason, the Hawaii Legislature continues with attempts to separate the special relationship that existed between the Hawaii Army National Guard and the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn/442d Inf prior to WWII.

Senate Bill 2583 is a selective legislation that is political and personal to only benefit the field grade officers who serve or have served in the Hawaii Army or Air National Guard for at least five years and disqualifies all others who are very qualified from all the other military services of the United States including the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn/442d Inf Army Reserve. I pray you and your committee defer this legislation for the entire session.

Sincerely,

JAMES I. KUROIWA, JR.  
Director  
The National Veterans Network



26 February 2012

Senator David Ige  
Chairman, Ways and Means Committee  
Hawaii State Senate  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Ige and committee members,

Mr. Chairman and committee members, I strongly oppose Senate Bill 2583 S. D. 1 for the following reasons:

First, the current language in the State Constitution and Hawaii Revised Statutes is sufficient. We should not change legislation that will reduce the pool of qualified candidates for this very important position. We would be going against the national trend where more states are conducting nationwide searches to fill the position of Adjutant General. The State of Rhode Island is a recent example.

Second, our Soldier and Airmen of the Hawaii National Guard have served with distinction when mobilized and deployed to combat zones such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa since 2003. Our Hawaii National Guard leaders and units have commanded active duty and reserve Soldiers and Airmen and on occasions served under active duty or reserve forces. This is possible because we all adhere to a common set of military standards and training that applies to the Active, Reserve or National Guard force. Former Hawaii National Guard members who retired before 2003 do not understand the Hawaii National Guard today. It is very much different from the Guard they served with. The National Guard currently has equality with the Active and Reserve forces and senior leaders in the Armed Forces of the United States acknowledge this. This equality will surely be destroyed if the Hawaii State Legislature passes this bill which really states: "only National Guard members are good enough."

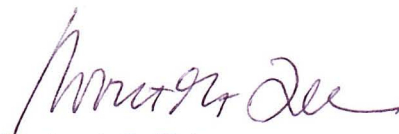
Since 1968, the 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 442d Infantry from the Army Reserve has served under the command and control of the 29<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the Hawaii Army National Guard. They joined the 29<sup>th</sup> Brigade for combat in Vietnam and most recently in Iraq (twice). Do we want to tell the citizen soldiers of the famed 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 442<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment (Senator Inouye's Regiment) that it is ok to serve with

and go to war with the Hawaii Army National Guard but you cannot serve at the highest levels in the Hawaii National Guard?

Third, I feel that the State of Hawaii needs to have the very best military leader for the position of Adjutant General. If a future Governor should desire a General with a rank of 3 star or higher to serve as the State's Adjutant General, it would be ludicrous to think someone with credentials like General Eric Shinseki or General David Petraus could not serve because they lacked the proper "membership" to be Adjutant General. Selecting someone like General Shinseki is not out of the question because Governor John Burns appointed General Webster, a retired Air Force 3 star general, to serve as his Adjutant General. What worked during the early years of Statehood has stood the test of time.

I recommended a list of currently serving Hawaii National Guard Generals for the position of Adjutant General to Governor Abercrombie. I am elated that he selected Major General Darryll Wong. General Wong was a very capable commander of the Hawaii Air National Guard and respected in the US Air Force. The recently concluded APEC security organization had the Hawaii National Guard commanding Active Duty units with much success. General Wong's leadership is what makes him a good Adjutant General, not his 5 years of membership in the Hawaii National Guard..

Therefore, Senate Bill 2583 S.D. 1 is not necessary.



Robert G.F. Lee  
Major General, US Army (Ret)