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February 28, 2012

Committee on Ways and Means
Senate Bill 2583 SD1
Relating to the National Guard

I am here to testify against Senate Bill 2583 SD1. Since 1968 the 100th Bn. / 442nd Inf. Has been called to active duty as part of the 29th Brigade and in almost every call up we were asked to give up our patch which we hold very sacred. This brought about heated discussion's and at times so I have heard. Every soldier in our battalion knows the long and proud history of the 100th battalion. With 21 Congressional Medal of Honor recipients and seven Presidential Citations. The soldiers of the 100th battalion knew what they had to live up too.

This bill discriminates against the soldiers of the 100th battalion. For all these years the 29th Brigade has asked us to serve with them, to fight with them and at times to give the ultimate sacrifice, to died. During the era I served with the 100th battalion (Vietnam) seven of my fellow soldiers lost their life in Vietnam.

It would be a disservices to these soldiers and future soldiers to pass a bill that discriminates against them to service as the Adjutant General of the National Guard (TAG).

Major General Bob Lee, who served as the Adjutant General of the Hawaii National Guard for eight years with great distinction came from the 100th battalion. If this bill had been passed back then he would not qualify to be the Adjutant General of the National Guard.

We need to get the best person for the job. We should not be exclusive in our choices by putting up more roadblocks.

I ask for your vote to defeat this legislation.

George Waialeale

Colonel Michael Peters
Task Force White Eagle
Fire Base Vulcan, Ghazni, Afghanistan

February 28, 2012

Chairman Senator David Ige
Vice Chair Senator Michelle Kidani
Testimony to the Committee on Ways and Means
Senate Bill 2583 SD1
Relating to the National Guard

RE: Testimony **against** the Amendment to the Hawaii Revised Statute Section 121-7

Dear Chairman Ige and members of the Committee on Ways and Means, thank you for considering my testimony against this amendment and the proposed changes regarding the appointment of the Adjutant General and Deputy Adjutant General of the State of Hawaii.

This position is the cornerstone of military response for all the State Forces and should have the most qualified person leading the organization. Creating restrictions when selecting the best qualified candidates leaves you with a narrow group of professionals who may not be the best qualified. The process of selecting a qualified professional already is in place and has produced excellent leaders over the past decades of leadership. Although there are excellent leaders in the Hawaii Guard and no doubt a great candidate can be selected from this officer source, limiting the field creates a discriminatory system against highly qualified candidates.

BG Robert Lee served expertly as the TAG for Hawaii and he did not have five years of active duty in the Hawaii Army National Guard, yet anyone would be hard pressed to say he was not successful during his tenure. In fact his service demonstrates this artificial requirement is more of a political focus than functional.

I served 16 years in the 100th Battalion, 442D REGT, and during that time was considered a member of the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. In addition I commanded the battalion during combat operations as part of the 29th Brigade Combat Team and have an excellent operational knowledge and base of experience. Yet this amendment would exclude a combat veteran such as me, with a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience, from even being considered for this position. There is no place for an amendment which is intended to narrow a list of candidates in order to serve a political agenda. Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

COL Michael Peeters
Ghazni, Afghanistan