



HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

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February 24, 2012
9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 211

To: The Honorable David Ige, Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Linda Hamilton Krieger, Chair
and Commissioners of the Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission

Re: S.B. No. 2678, S.D.1

The Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission (HCRC) has enforcement jurisdiction over state laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and access to state and state-funded services. The HCRC carries out the Hawai‘i constitutional mandate that "no person shall be discriminated against in the exercise of their civil rights because of race, religion, sex or ancestry". Art. I, Sec. 5.

The HCRC supports S.B. 2678, S.D.1, which requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to establish a Honouliuli Park Site Project Advisory group to develop recommendations for funding to preserve and develop an education center at the Honouliuli internment camp site. During WWII, over one thousand Japanese Americans in Hawaii were initially detained because of their Japanese ancestry. While most of the detainees were later sent to mainland camps, approximately 300 people were interned in Honouliuli for the duration of the war, without being officially charged for any acts of espionage or sabotage. The Honouliuli internment camp site is thus an important reminder of a time when fear and prejudice overrode the civil rights of a minority group, and the HCRC supports efforts towards its preservation so that present and future generations of Americans can avoid repeating such mistakes.

HISTORIC HAWAII FOUNDATION

To: Sen. David Y. Ige, Chair
Sen. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

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

Committee Date: Friday, February 24, 2012
9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 211

Subject: **SB2678 SD1, Relating to Honouliuli**

On behalf of Historic Hawai'i Foundation (HHF), I am writing in **support of SB2678 SD1, Relating to Honouliuli**. The bill would appropriate funding to be expended by the department of land and natural resources to preserve and develop the historic internment camp site in Honouliuli. SD1 would require the department of land and natural resources to convene a project advisory group to develop recommendations to leverage country, state, federal and private funding for an educational resource center at the Honouliuli site. Funding would be appropriated to the historic preservation special fund for the collection, preservation and organization of resources related to the World War II internment experience in Hawai'i.

Since 1974, Historic Hawai'i Foundation has been a statewide leader for historic preservation. HHF's 850 members and numerous additional supporters work to preserve Hawaii's unique architectural and cultural heritage and believe that historic preservation is an important element in the present and future quality of life, economic viability and environmental sustainability of the state.

The historic, cultural and natural resources of Hawai'i are a great legacy and irreplaceable treasures. HHF strongly supports measures that lead to investments in Hawaii's historic places and that help keep their stories alive for present and future generations.

The proposed measure would add State funding to leverage federal funds and local efforts that have been underway for several years to evaluate and preserve the historic sites and stories of Japanese-Americans who were interned during WW II. These efforts include a feasibility study by the National Park Service (NPS) to evaluate alternatives and preferred actions for preserving Honouliuli and related sites across the state. In 2009, U.S. Senators Daniel K. Inouye and Daniel K. Akaka introduced a bill to determine if World War II internment campsites in Hawai'i may be eligible for listing as "units of the National Park System."

Historic Hawai'i Foundation

680 Iwilei Road, Suite 690 • Honolulu, HI 96817 • Tel: 808-523-2900 • FAX: 808-523-0800 • www.historichawaii.org

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.

Until just a few years ago little was known about the location of World War II Japanese Internment camps in Hawai'i. Many people were unaware that any internment camp sites remained in Hawaii. The Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i (JCCH) began researching these sites in an effort to determine where these camps were located and what, if any, evidence of them remains. Various archaeological surveys determined the location, significance, historic properties and area boundary of the Honouliuli site. JCCH nominated Honouliuli to the Hawai'i Register of Historic Places after conducting an archaeological survey of the former internment camp site. The site was designated on the Hawai'i Register of Historic Places in 2009.

JCCH has been working with various organizations including Historic Hawai'i Foundation, the University of Hawai'i, the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD), the National Park Service and others to identify, preserve and interpret the Japanese internment camp experience in Hawai'i. Their work has resulted in the identification of internment sites of various sizes on all of the Hawaiian islands. This work has unveiled an important piece of history from the recent past that had until recently been largely unexplored.

NPS awarded grant money to Hawai'i-based organizations to fund work to preserve and interpret Japanese internment camp sites throughout the state, including projects such as Administration Building and Fire House Existing Condition Analysis Report at Honouliuli Internment Camp; Hawai'i Confinement Sites Project Traveling Exhibit for multiple sites and counties in Hawai'i; Multidisciplinary Research and Education at Honouliuli Internment Camp; and Oral Histories of Hawaii-Born Nisei for multiple sites and counties.

These efforts would be expanded with additional leadership and support from the State of Hawai'i. While the internment story is a difficult and painful chapter in both U.S. and Hawai'i history, these sites are important reminder of that history for both residents and visitors, and add to the education and understanding of Hawaii's history and inspiration for the future. We support the effort to identify additional funding sources to help preserve, restore and enhance these resources.

Therefore, HHF recommends that SB2678 SD1 be approved.

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