

# **HB 1282, HD1**

**Measure Title:**

RELATING TO MILITARY SERVICE.

**Description:**

Expands the scope of eligibility requirements for the Hawaii Medal of Honor to include additional service members. (HB1282 HD1)



Headquarters: Department of State of Hawaii  
438 Hobron Lane, Suite 407  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815

March 13, 2013

**Testimony in Support of HOUSE BILL 1282, HD 1  
Relating to Military Service  
Before the  
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs  
Hearing On Thursday, March 14, 2013, 2:55 P.M.  
In Conference Room 224**

Senator Espero, Chair, Senator Baker, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

The Department of Hawaii, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW), represents more than 3,800 members in 20 Posts located throughout the State of Hawaii. VFW is a federally chartered national association of soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen who have served the United States of America in wars, campaigns, and expeditions on foreign soil or in hostile waters.

H.B. 1282, H.D. 1 expands the scope of eligibility requirements for the Hawaii Medal of Honor to include additional service members.

The Hawaii Medal of Honor has been awarded most recently only to families of those Hawaii service members, who were killed in Afghanistan from hostile action or from non-hostile action other than suicide. The original bill would have provided recognition by our State of Hawaii to families of those Hawaii service members whose self-inflicted deaths in Afghanistan have resulted from unbearable mental and emotional stresses they encountered in combat. However, H.D. 1 deleted this provision, but expanded eligibility to individuals who were killed in action while: (A) Serving in direct support of military operations in a combat zone if that service was designated as such by the United States Department of Defense; and (B) Performing duty subject to hostile fire or imminent danger if that duty qualifies the individual for special military pay as determined by the United States Department of Defense.

VFW Hawaii members regret that part of H.D. 1, as amended by the House Committee on Veterans, Military, & International Affairs, which continues to exclude Hawaii service members who committed suicide on the battlefield or when deployed, but support that part of H.D. 1 which added two categories of service members who are now eligible to receive the Hawaii Medal of Honor.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 1282, H.D. 1.

*Lawrence M.G. Enomoto*

Lawrence M.G. Enomoto  
VFW Hawaii State Legislative Liaison