

Mary Philpotts McGrath
40 South School Street, #110
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

February 5, 2014

TO: Committee on House Veterans, Military, & International Affairs & Culture
and the Arts Committee (VMI)

Chair: Mark Takai
Vice-Chair: Ken Ito
Conference Room 312

RE: House Bill #2440

Sirs and Madams:

This letter will serve as testimony and support of House Bill #2440.

I strongly support the following:

- "Special District" designation of the Hawai'i State Capitol grounds to include the entire length of Beretania Street fronting the Capitol.
- Designation of the makai walkway between the State Capitol and 'Iolani Palace as the Memorial Mall to focus on the military service and sacrifices of our men and women in a "united tribute." The first step would be to relocate the "Eternal Flame" to the location of Queen Lili'uokalani statue's current location.
- Portray our Hawaiian Ali'i in perpetuity by relocating the Queen Lili'uokalani statue to the Eternal Flame current location on Beretania Street. To also install a curved wall framing at the Queen's statue to create a place of honor for our Ali'i of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

I strongly believe in the adoption of the proposed bill, and stands with other organizations that represent and perpetuate the legacies of our Ali'i and to honor them in this permanent memorial.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Philpotts McGrath". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Philpotts McGrath

In opposition to HB2440 & SB2505

Her Majesty Lili'uokalani began her reign as the Queen of the Hawaiian Islands after the tragic death of her brother, King Kalākaua in 1891. In 1893, a provisional government unseated her as Queen, and overthrew her kingdom. Two years later, she was imprisoned in the very Palace her brother built as a symbol of Hawai'i's seat at the international table of brotherhood; then the unjust annexation of the Kingdom of Hawai'i, to the United States of America.

Hawai'i State House Bill 2440 and Senate Bill 2505 seek to honor the men and women of the United States Armed Forces that defended our country in various conflicts. While I am in complete support of honoring their valor and commitment, I am not in support of unseating our Queen, once again.

While the bronze statue of Queen Lili'uokalani is neither a living nor breathing object, and her royal remains are safely entombed at Mauna'ala, it represents *her* valor and commitment to and for the country *she* so cherished and fought to defend.

And while she may have been born near the current site of the Queen's Hospital, and lived at Washington Place, she *RULED* from the 'Iolani Palace. A move to the ma kai side of Beretania Street would further disconnect her from the primary symbol of the Hawaiian Kingdom, the Palace.

In addition to disconnecting her from the Palace, a move that far would disconnect her from the people who pay homage to her memory – kūpuna who come to leave flowers; a school group on a field trip to the Capitol; politicians and aides on their way to and from lunch. A reminder to all that pass through that mall that Hawai'i was and in the hearts of many, will always be her kingdom. Plus hundreds gather at her statue to celebrate her birth every September 2nd. How inconvenient if she is alone, facing the building that represents the government that evolved from the 1893 provisional government that overthrew hers and her ancestors kingdom.

Finally, the cost of moving such large monuments and erecting a third will be astronomical. As an active member of a Hawaiian royal society, I understand royal protocol and sentiment more than most. Yet I can only imagine the financial burden it will cause our state, through tax dollars to make such a move. Monies that could be used towards education, homelessness, infrastructure and any number of state improvement projects.

At the very least, if the statue of our last reigning Queen is meant to be moved, consider relocating it to the grounds of the 'Iolani Palace, where her spirit and memory and more closely attached than anywhere else in our Hawai'i nei.

Mahalo,



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