

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 540 (SSCR 765)
RELATING TO VETERANS

PRESENTATION TO THE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, & INTERNATIONAL
AFFAIRS, & CULTURE AND THE ARTS

BY

MR. RONALD P. HAN
DIRECTOR OF THE STATE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

March 20, 2013

Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito and Committee members:

I'm Ron Han, Director of the State Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony in support of the concepts in Senate Bill 540 (SSCR 765).

This measure ensures Hawaii's eligibility requirements for the burial of members of the United States Armed Forces and their dependents conforms to the criteria established by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regarding eligibility for burial in a national or state cemetery. Without approval of this Bill and subsequent amendment to the Hawaii Revised Statute, VA National Cemetery Administrators could preclude providing matching federal dollars for future Capital Improvement Projects or improvements for our aging cemeteries. Furthermore, VA could request restitution of funding previously provided for these programs if the residency requirement is enacted or enforced.

The OVS supports the concepts and intent of this bill as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Years 2013-2015.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Hawaii's Veterans and their families in support of SB 540, (SSCR 765).

The Service Member's Voice in Government
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR UNIFORMED SERVICES
Hawaii Chapter (HI-1)

March 18, 2013

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 540
RELATING TO VETERANS.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, AND INTERNATIONAL
AFFAIRS AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS

HEARING ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20TH AT 8:30 AM, IN CONFERENCE
ROOM 312

Aloha Chair Takai and Vice Chair Ito: Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony regarding HB 540. The National Association for Uniformed Services (NAUS) is honored to be recognized as "The Service Member's Voice in Government." Here, in the great State of Hawaii, NAUS Hawaii Chapter's (HI-1) 519 members serve proudly as a component part of our nation's largest per-capita uniformed service community.

NAUS Hawaii Chapter (HI-1) members sincerely appreciate your efforts to amend Act 307, Session Laws of Hawaii 2012, Section 4 making permanent provisions relating to residency requirements for the burial in veterans cemeteries of armed service members and their dependents.

Providing this legislative protection in State Law is extremely important to the surviving families and loved ones of our veterans and military personnel who served and sacrificed so selflessly.

NAUS Hawaii Chapter (HI-1) respectfully encourages your committee to consider passing SB 540 as written.

D Egge

Dennis Egge; Chapter President



1298 Kukila Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96818
Naushawaii1@yahoo.com; 808-382-5833



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

March 14, 2013

**Testimony in Support of SENATE BILL 540
Relating to Veterans
Before the
Senate Committee on Veterans, Military, & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts
Hearing On Wednesday, March 20, 2013, 8:30 A.M.
In Conference Room 312**

Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, 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.

S.B. 540 Makes permanent provisions relating to residency requirements for the burial in veterans cemeteries of armed service members and their dependents.

Act 307, Session of 2012, amended Section 363-5 H.R.S. to remove the residency requirement for burial in veterans cemeteries; amended the eligibility requirements of Section 363-5 in accordance with current Veterans Affairs and National Cemeteries Administration Regulations; and repealed Section 363-7 H.R.S. that had given county councils discretion on whether to allow burial of nonresident servicemen and dependents. Act 307 was effective “*upon its approval provided that on June 30, 2015, this Act shall be repealed, and section 363-5 [H.R.S.] shall be reenacted in the form in which it read on the day prior to the effective date of [Act 307].*” S.B.540 would delete this proviso, thereby making permanent NO residency requirements for burial in veterans cemeteries on all islands of the State of Hawaii.

VFW Hawaii members fully support this measure that will completely repeal the pending reenactment of provisions to permit only resident service members, veteran and dependent to be buried in State veterans cemeteries.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 540.

Lawrence M.G. Enomoto

Lawrence M.G. Enomoto
VFW Hawaii State Legislative Liaison

vmitestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2013 7:25 AM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: hspoehr@papaolalokahi.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB540 on Mar 20, 2013 08:30AM

SB540

Submitted on: 3/19/2013

Testimony for VMI on Mar 20, 2013 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hardy Spoehr	Papa Ola Lokahi	Support	No

Comments: Aloha. Papa Ola LOkahi strongly supports this legislation. We would only add that we would hope that the state's policy on the burial of a surviving spouse who wishes to be buried with his/her veteran spouse be the same as that developed for veterans at federal c emetaries; i.e. the cost be assumed by the public. Thank you for this opportunity.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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vmitestimony

From: Dale Wilson [docdale6@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2013 6:44 PM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: espero2 - Venus
Subject: Support for SB 540 - Relating to Veterans

To: COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS, Sen. Will Espero, Chair
Re: SB 540 - Relating to Veterans

Aloha, Senator Espero and Committee Members:

Mahalo for this opportunity to submit written testimony strongly supporting SB 540 Relating to Hawaii's Veterans. I am a retired army officer whose career started in the enlisted ranks as an infantryman and included service in Vietnam as a 19- to 20-year-old grenadier and rifleman, as well as combat correspondent/photographer.

Today, I am a 100-percent disabled combat-wounded veteran who has lived in Mountain View, Hawai'i, for the past 13 years. The passage of SB 540 will provide much-needed peace of mind to Hawai'i veterans, armed services members and their families by removing any doubts they may have that they will eventually rest in a place they know and love. Making permanent the provisions of residency should not wait!

Please show your kokua for our servicemen and women, veterans and their family members by voting yes on SB 540.

Me ka `oia`i`o,

dale

Dale E. Wilson, Ph.D.
Major, U.S. Army (Ret.)

He who knows nothing is closer to the truth than he whose mind is filled with falsehoods and errors.

--Thomas Jefferson



<http://army.togetherweserved.com/sbv/DaleWilson>