

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HR 196/HCR 247 URGING CONGRESS AND THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO INCLUDE WITHIN THE DEFINITION OF "ATOMIC VETERANS" THE VETERANS INVOLVED IN THE CLEANUP OF THE UNITED STATES NUCLEAR TEST SITE ON LOJWA ISLAND FROM 1977 TO 1980 MAKING THEM ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE COMPENSATION AND HEALTH CARE BENEFITS FROM THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

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

BY

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

April 2, 2014

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 on House Resolution 196 and House Concurrent Resolution 247.

The OVS supports this resolution concerning Atomic Veterans and Veterans involved in the cleanup after a nuclear test as an issue similar to Agent Orange exposure. Those who have contracted illnesses attributable to exposure to atomic weapon radiation should receive medical care and VA benefits based on the severity of their illness.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of Hawaii's Veteran community.

Date: March 21, 2014

To: The Honorable K. Mark Takai, Chair
The Honorable Ken Ito, Vice Chair
Committee on Veterans, Military, & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts

From: Mike Golojuch, Lt Col, USAF (Ret), Chair, Advisory Board to Office of Veterans' Services

Subject: Support for HR196

As the Chair, Advisory Board to the Office of Veterans' Services, which represents over 170,000 Hawaii veterans, we fully support House Resolution 196.

It is important to urge the members of the United States Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs to include within the definition of "Atomic Veteran" the veterans involved in the cleanup of the United States nuclear test site on Lojwa Island from 1977 to 1980 making them eligible to receive compensation and health care benefits from the United States government.

Please pass the resolution in the honor of all service members, especially those who risked their lives with the unknown consequences of being involved with cleanup of residual contamination from nuclear tests. It is important to recognize these veterans so they can obtain necessary veteran benefits.

Thank you for letting me express the Board's view on this resolution.