

MAR 11 2016

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## SENATE RESOLUTION

COMMEMORATING AND HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBERT WILLIAM  
KALANIHIAPO WILCOX, AN ENDURING PATRIOT AND ADVOCATE FOR  
THE RIGHTS OF NATIVE HAWAIIANS, WHO SERVED AS HAWAII'S  
FIRST ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS.

1           WHEREAS, Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox was born on  
2 February 15, 1855, on the island of Maui to Captain William  
3 Slocum Wilcox, a native of Newport, Rhode Island, and Kalua of  
4 Maui, whose parents were both born of chiefly ancestors on  
5 Hawaii and Maui; and  
6

7           WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox attended Haleakala Boarding School in  
8 Makawao, Maui, taught school on Maui, and was elected to the  
9 Royal Legislature in 1880 to serve the citizens of Wailuku and  
10 its neighboring Maui towns; and  
11

12           WHEREAS, in 1881, King Kalakaua selected Mr. Wilcox to  
13 study at the Royal Military Academy in Italy where he excelled  
14 and was selected by Italian officers to attend the Royal  
15 Application School for Engineer and Artillery Officers where he  
16 remained until the end of 1887; and  
17

18           WHEREAS, in 1887, just prior to Mr. Wilcox's return to  
19 Hawaii, the Reform Party of Hawaii, in concert with the Honolulu  
20 Rifles militia unit, imposed the Bayonet Constitution on King  
21 Kalakaua; and  
22

23           WHEREAS, the Bayonet Constitution limited the powers of the  
24 monarchy and imposed income and property ownership requirements  
25 for voting, which allowed wealthy Europeans and Americans to  
26 vote even though they were not citizens of the Kingdom of  
27 Hawaii, but disenfranchised many Native Hawaiians; and  
28

29           WHEREAS, upon Mr. Wilcox's return to Hawaii in late 1887,  
30 he organized against the Reform Party of Hawaii; and  
31

32           WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox continued to advocate revocation of the  
33 Bayonet Constitution of 1887, and in 1889 was confronted by the



1 Honolulu Rifles, who engaged Mr. Wilcox and those in his party  
2 in an armed battle; and  
3

4 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox eventually surrendered to the Honolulu  
5 Rifles and was charged with treason, but he was acquitted by a  
6 jury to the acclaim and approval of many Native Hawaiians; and  
7

8 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox helped establish the National Reform  
9 Party, which advocated restoring power to the monarchy and to  
10 Native Hawaiian citizens; and  
11

12 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox ran for and was elected to the Royal  
13 Legislature, where he served from 1890 through 1894 from the  
14 island of Oahu; and  
15

16 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox founded a newspaper in 1892 called "The  
17 Liberal", which advocated positions on behalf of Native Hawaiian  
18 citizens in favor of adopting good government policies and  
19 protecting the Hawaiian Kingdom from commercial and political  
20 exploitation by foreign powers; and  
21

22 WHEREAS, Queen Liliuokalani, having succeeded to the  
23 leadership of the Kingdom of Hawaii in 1891 after the untimely  
24 death of her brother King Kalakaua, and realizing that the  
25 Bayonet Constitution placed too much power in the hands of  
26 westerners, limited the powers of the monarchy, and  
27 disenfranchised Native Hawaiians, attempted on January 14, 1893,  
28 to address the concern of foreign political power by revoking  
29 the Bayonet Constitution and issuing a new constitution that  
30 would restore power to the monarchy and limit the influence of  
31 foreigners; and  
32

33 WHEREAS, Queen Liliuokalani, realizing that her authority  
34 and power as the reigning monarch of the Kingdom of Hawaii were  
35 in jeopardy from American and European business interests who  
36 were plotting against her plan to adopt a new constitution,  
37 recruited Mr. Wilcox to command the field artillery unit of the  
38 Royal Guard to defend the Queen and the Kingdom of Hawaii from  
39 the influence and control of foreign interests; and  
40

41 WHEREAS, on January 16, 1893, John L. Stevens, United  
42 States Minister to Hawaii and an advocate of the United States'



1 annexation of the Kingdom of Hawaii, ordered United States  
2 marines to land in Honolulu; and

3  
4 WHEREAS, on January 17, 1893, the Committee of Safety, a  
5 group of European and American businessmen who favored the  
6 United States' annexation of the Kingdom of Hawaii, with the  
7 support of United States Marines ordered ashore by Minister  
8 Stevens and the Honolulu Rifles militia, seized control of  
9 Iolani Palace, declared the Hawaiian monarchy abolished, and  
10 proclaimed the existence of a provisional government until  
11 annexation by the United States could be negotiated; and

12  
13 WHEREAS, on January 17, 1893, Queen Liliuokalani, realizing  
14 the futility of resisting American forces and in order to  
15 prevent bloodshed, surrendered and relinquished her authority  
16 over the Hawaiian Kingdom to the United States; and

17  
18 WHEREAS, on February 1, 1893, Minister Stevens placed the  
19 provisional government under the protection of the United States  
20 pending annexation negotiations, landed American troops, and  
21 hoisted the American flag over Hawaii; and

22  
23 WHEREAS, on July 4, 1894, the Republic of Hawaii declared  
24 its existence, adopted a new constitution, and declared Sanford  
25 Dole its president; and

26  
27 WHEREAS, in the latter part of 1894, Mr. Wilcox and other  
28 Royalists loyal to Queen Liliuokalani planned a counter-  
29 revolution to regain control of the Hawaiian government from  
30 foreign (United States) interests, and restore Queen  
31 Liliuokalani to the throne; and

32  
33 WHEREAS, for two weeks in January of 1895, the armed forces  
34 of the Republic of Hawaii clashed with the Royalists in an armed  
35 conflict in Honolulu, concluding with the Republic of Hawaii  
36 defeating the Royalists; and

37  
38 WHEREAS, as a result of the January 1895 conflict, two  
39 hundred Royalists, including Mr. Wilcox and Queen Liliuokalani,  
40 were arrested and charged with treason against the Republic of  
41 Hawaii; and

42



1           WHEREAS, on February 23, 1895, Mr. Wilcox was convicted of  
2 treason by the Republic of Hawaii and was sentenced to death,  
3 but his sentence was commuted to a prison term of thirty-five  
4 years; and  
5

6           WHEREAS, Queen Liliuokalani was placed under house arrest  
7 at Iolani Palace after the conflict and signed a document  
8 formally abdicating and relinquishing all claims to the throne--  
9 an action she later explained that she took to prevent her  
10 Royalist supporters from being executed and punished for treason  
11 by the Republic of Hawaii; and  
12

13           WHEREAS, on January 1, 1898, Republic of Hawaii President  
14 Sanford Dole pardoned Mr. Wilcox after Queen Liliuokalani  
15 formally renounced her right to the throne; and  
16

17           WHEREAS, after the United States' annexation of Hawaii  
18 through the Newland's Resolution in 1898 and the passage of the  
19 Organic Act by Congress in 1900, Mr. Wilcox began organizing  
20 anti-annexation Native Hawaiians into the Hawaiian Independent  
21 Party, which was later called the Home Rule Party of Hawaii, and  
22 Mr. Wilcox launched his candidacy for a seat in the Fifty-  
23 seventh United States Congress, which he later won; and  
24

25           WHEREAS, from November 6, 1900, to March 3, 1903, Mr.  
26 Wilcox served in the Fifty-seventh Congress as Hawaii's first  
27 Congressman and distinguished himself as a representative who  
28 fought for the rights of Native Hawaiian citizens; and  
29

30           WHEREAS, upon returning to Hawaii after his term in  
31 Congress ended in 1903, Mr. Wilcox ran for High Sherriff of  
32 Honolulu but passed away during his campaign for that office;  
33 and  
34

35           WHEREAS, in 1993, the United States Congress adopted Public  
36 Law 103-50, often referred to as the "Apology Resolution", in  
37 which the United States Congress and President of the United  
38 States acknowledged the participation of the United States in  
39 the wrongful overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii on January 17,  
40 1893, apologized for these actions and the suppression of the  
41 inherent sovereignty and self-determination of the Native



1 Hawaiian people, and called for reconciliation between Native  
2 Hawaiians and the United States; and

3  
4 WHEREAS, this body has similarly acknowledged these  
5 wrongful actions of the United States and has supported, through  
6 state legislation, the right to sovereignty and self-  
7 determination by and for Native Hawaiians; and

8  
9 WHEREAS, in 1993, a bronze statue commemorating the life  
10 and accomplishments of Mr. Wilcox was erected in Wilcox Park  
11 located on the Fort Street Mall located in downtown Honolulu;  
12 now, therefore,

13  
14 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth  
15 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2016,  
16 that Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox be remembered and  
17 celebrated as a patriot and advocate for a Hawaiian government  
18 that was being overrun by powerful Western interests; and

19  
20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body honors the life of  
21 Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox and his willingness to risk  
22 his life and personal safety to resist the influence and  
23 subsequent overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii by the United  
24 States; and

25  
26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body acknowledges,  
27 remembers, and celebrates Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox's  
28 abiding support and advocacy for the rights of Native Hawaiian  
29 citizens to vote and fully participate in their Hawaiian  
30 government regardless of whether it was organized as a monarchy,  
31 a provisional government, a republic, or a territory of the  
32 United States; and

33  
34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body expresses its  
35 continuing support for the self-determination efforts of Native  
36 Hawaiians as they continue to seek justice and reconciliation  
37 for the actions which occurred in 1893; and

38  
39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
40 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Chairperson of the  
41 Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Chief  
42 Executive Officer of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Association



1 of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and members of Hawaii's congressional  
2 delegation.  
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OFFERED BY:

*B*

*A. Kela'i Eglish*

*Matt*

*Anna Inoué*

*Daniel A. ...*  
*Muhle Kela'i*

