

# **SB 1363**

RELATING TO THE STATE INSTRUMENT.

Establishes and designates the `ukulele as the official `auana musical instrument of the State. Establishes and designates the pahu as the official kahiko musical instrument of the State.

Center for Hawaiian Sovereignty Studies  
46-255 Kahuhipa St. Suite 1205  
Kane'ohe, HI 96744  
Tel/Fax (808) 247-7942  
Kenneth R. Conklin, Ph.D. Executive Director  
e-mail [Ken\\_Conklin@yahoo.com](mailto:Ken_Conklin@yahoo.com)  
Unity, Equality, Aloha for all



To: SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
and  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, & INTERNATIONAL  
AFFAIRS, & CULTURE AND THE ARTS

For hearings Thursday, February 26, 2015

Re: SB1363 and HB1275  
RELATING TO THE STATE INSTRUMENT.

Establishes and designates the 'ukulele as the official 'auana musical instrument of the State. Establishes and designates the pahu as the official kahiko musical instrument of the State.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

There's no doubt that the 'ukulele is the instrument which local residents, and the whole world, recognize as most distinctively Hawaiian. If we follow the custom of naming a single item to be "THE state instrument" it would be the 'ukulele.

Some folks complain that the 'ukulele was not created entirely in Hawaii but is an adaptation of an instrument brought from Portugal. But that's no reason to deny the label of "state instrument" to the 'ukulele.

Everything in Hawaii except the land itself -- all plants, animals, and people -- came here from elsewhere. Over time, after centuries of inbreeding due to lack of contact with outsiders, distinctive varieties evolved, now called endemic, indigenous or "maoli". Indeed, all people known as "Native Hawaiians" (including those with 100% native blood) have genomes adapted from ancestors who came from Asia, Europe, or America on voyaging canoes, ships, or airplanes. They did not spring forth from the 'aina like goddess Venus on Sandro Botticelli's scallop shell.

Some Hawaiian sovereignty activists insist that the only things that are truly or distinctively "Hawaiian" were here already before Captain Cook arrived in 1778. So when it became clear that the 'ukulele had overwhelming support to be named as the state instrument, Hawaiian activists felt a need to stop that from happening by bifurcating the title "THE state instrument" into two categories of ancient and modern, and of course using Hawaiian language words "kahiko" and "'auana" to designate the two categories.

So be it. It's a reasonable compromise and (in accord with their Asian ancestry) saves face for the Hawaiian activists. The billions of people throughout the world who know and love the 'ukulele will be pleased to learn that it has been officially designated as the state instrument. And a few thousand who know the word "pahu" can take pride that it has been called "the official kahiko musical instrument of the State" -- even though the sovereignty activists deny that there is any State. How wonderful is that!

### **Testimony in favor of SB 1363**

**I am writing to urge passage of this bill establishing the Ukulele as the official 'auana musical instrument of the State and the Pahu as the official kahiko musical instrument of the State.**

1. Anywhere in the world that the ukulele is known it is accepted to be the instrument of Hawaii.
2. As early as 1879 the original 5-stringed Braguinha was introduced to Hawaii by Portuguese immigrants.
3. Hawaiians nicknamed the braguinha 'ukulele (pronounced oo-koo-lay lay) translated as "jumping flea", because of the movement of the player's fingers.
4. Manuel Nunes and his brother Octavio first brought the instrument from Madeira where Octavio was the most famous luthier at the time.
5. It was first played publicly by a Portuguese immigrant named Joao Fernandez a virtuoso on the instrument who was soon performing command performances for the Ali'i, including King Kalakaua, Queen Emma, and the future queen, Liliuokalani.
6. One of the most important factors in establishing the ukulele in Hawaiian music and culture was the ardent support and promotion of the instrument by King Kalākaua. A patron of the arts, he incorporated it into performances at royal gatherings.
7. Hawaii's first commercial 'ukulele maker was Manuel Nunes, a furniture maker who scrapped his furniture business to produce 'ukuleles exclusively somewhere on King St. In 1916 (which at the time cost about \$5).
8. The ukulele has played a prominent role in Hawaii from the introduction of western melody and harmony by missionaries to our Hawaiian Music renaissance of the 1970 and 80's.
9. Eventually, mainland companies cashed in on the Ukulele linking it to the romance of the islands, Hawaii's swaying palm trees, luaus, Hula, and moonlit beaches.
10. In the early 1900's The Honolulu Ad Club patented the 'ukulele, making it Hawaii's very own.
11. Today, ukuleles built by local luthiers using many of the indigenous woods of Hawaii are in great demand worldwide.
12. The Ukulele's popularity is worldwide and Hawaii is its undisputed birthplace.
13. For its' rich island history and its' beloved acceptance as an integral part of our island heritage it is only right that the Ukulele should be recognized by our State, as it is by the rest of the world as the auana musical instrument of Hawaii.

Submitted by Gordon W. Morris

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [GVO Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [mendezj@hawaii.edu](mailto:mendezj@hawaii.edu)  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB1363 on Feb 26, 2015 13:20PM\*  
**Date:** Friday, February 20, 2015 5:21:02 PM

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**SB1363**

Submitted on: 2/20/2015

Testimony for GVO on Feb 26, 2015 13:20PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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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**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [GVO Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [lindacoble@mac.com](mailto:lindacoble@mac.com)  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB1363 on Feb 26, 2015 13:20PM  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 11:59:58 AM

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**SB1363**

Submitted on: 2/25/2015

Testimony for GVO on Feb 26, 2015 13:20PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Linda	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I heartily support SB1363. In the 2014 WeVoteHawaii on-line election for students statewide, 83,241 students voted for the ukulele as the asana State Musical Instrument, and 33,923 students cast votes for the Pahu Drum. The designation of these musical instruments not only will express appreciation for the significance of music in Hawaiian culture...it adds an exclamation point to the WeVoteHawaii civic education opportunity for students statewide to log in and have their voices heard. Mahalo, Linda Coble, WeVoteHawaii Board of Directors.

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