

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1102

Testimony Supporting
Senate Concurrent Resolution 20 SD1
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, & CULTURE AND THE ARTS
Ken Ito, Chair
James Kunane Tokioka, Vice Chair

April 14, 2016

Aloha Chair Ito, Vice Chair Tokioka, and members of the Veterans, Military, & International Affairs, & Culture and The Arts Committee.

I am pleased to submit this testimony in **strong support** of designating Hawaii and the state of Goa of the Republic of India sister states. Having travelled to Goa, I believe that Goa would make a perfect sister state for Hawaii, and that a sister-state relationship with Goa would greatly benefit the State of Hawaii and complement broader binational cooperation that our two national governments have undertaken.

Hawaii and Goa share more than a few similarities. Nestled along the west coast of India, the relatively small state of Goa is famous for its seascape and welcoming people. Small, tropical, and beautiful, Goa has become one of India's top tourist destinations. Last year alone, more than four million tourists travelled long distances to experience Goa's inviting coastline, excellent climate, inland mountains and protected areas, and the wonderful composite of cultures and traditions that is present-day Goa. While Goa is one of the smallest states in the Republic India, its tourism-driven economy has made it one of the most prosperous in that country.

As is true for the rest of India, Goa is composed of diverse ethnic groups, religions, and languages. However, Goa's unique mix of ancient traditions and colonial influences has fused with modern India in a way that makes Goa culturally distinct. Goa's architecture incorporates Portuguese, British, Indian, and Islamic influences. Its people speak English, Hindi, Matahi, and Konkani, and practice Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, and Jainism. About half of its population is urban, situated mostly along the coast. With Portuguese and Indian influences, Goan cuisine consists of a rich variety of fish dishes, often cooked with coconut and palm oil and local fruits vegetables. The variety that constitutes Goa is rich and interesting, as is the variety that makes Hawaii the incredible place that we know it is.

Goa belongs to a country that is undergoing rapid transformation. An ancient civilization of science and innovation, modern India today is wholly focused on economic growth and development. In fact, India has a top ten gross domestic product and is home to one of the world's fastest growing economies and one of largest middle classes in the world. An

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increasingly prosperous and open India means that in the coming decades Indians will travel more and invest more in the rest of the world – including to and in Hawaii. Considering the dramatic progress made over the past two decades, one can only speculate where India, and most of its population that is still under the age of 35, will be a decade or two from now.

As India evolves into an important economic, political, and strategic presence in Asia and the Pacific, so too is our bilateral relationship with India. President Obama's historic trip to India last year highlighted the importance that the United States places on the growing partnership with India. With Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi, our two countries launched a series of dialogues encompassing every aspect of our bilateral relationship in an effort to rapidly bring our two great countries closer together in a common bond of peace and friendship.

Both born from British colonialism, we are at once the world's oldest and largest democracies, sharing a deep belief in the rule of law and a strong constitution. It is more than coincidence that India's constitution begins with the same phrase as does ours, i.e., "We the people" – reflecting a shared, fundamental belief that ultimate power rests with the common citizen, and that democracy hinges on assuring individual liberties. We also have influenced one another in other significant ways. In the 1940s, Mahatma Gandhi led a non-violent independence movement that served as a model for Martin Luther King in forever changing American society for the better. In the 1960s, American agriculturalist Norman Borlaug brought the Green Revolution to India, an act that helped to put food on the table for millions of impoverished Indians who might otherwise have faced a Malthusian catastrophe. Both societies celebrate education and innovation, which in today's global economy has naturally drawn us closer as our businesses build high-tech hubs together that propel the information age.

It is my hope that the Committee supports the recommendation of the Hawaii Sister State Committee and establishes a sister-state relationship with the State of Goa, Republic of India. I urge your approval of SCR 20, SD1.

Thank you, Chair Ito and Vice Chair, Tokioka for holding this hearing today.

Sincerely,



TULSI GABBARD

U.S. House of Representatives (HI-2)



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
Web site: www.hawaii.gov/dbedt

Telephone: (808) 586-2355
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of
LUIS P. SALAVERIA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY,
& INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, & CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

Thursday, April 14, 2016
8:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

in consideration of
SCR20, SD1
**ESTABLISHING A SISTER STATE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
THE STATE OF HAWAII OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND THE STATE OF GOA OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA.**

Chair Ito, Vice Chair Tokioka and Members of the House Committee on Veterans,
Military & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts.

The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) supports
SCR20, SD1, which establishes a sister-state relationship between the State of Hawaii and the
State of Goa.

The Hawaii Sister-State Committee reviewed the sister-state application submitted by the
State of Goa and numerous testimonies in support of the relationship and recommended to the
State Legislature that a sister-state relationship be established between the State of Hawaii and
the State of Goa.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.

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
Unity, Equality, Aloha for all



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

Re: SCR20, SD1

ESTABLISHING A SISTER STATE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE
OF HAWAI'I OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE STATE OF
GOA OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA.

For hearing on Thursday, April 14, 2016

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

Dear legislators, please consider carefully the various hidden agendas that probably lie behind this resolution to establish a sister-state relationship between Hawaii (a State within the United States, whose statehood some activists deny) and Goa (a State within India whose status as part of India is protested by some activists).

I encourage you NOT to line up in lockstep to support this resolution merely because it is supported by Tulsi Gabbard and introduced by her father.

Goa was a colony of Portugal for more than four centuries, continuing through the period when India was a colony of Britain. In the 1950s there was great political unrest in Goa from native Goans seeking independence from Portugal. Because Goa was immediately adjacent to India, and the newly independent India was feeling a desire for a robust and expansive foreign policy and wanted to push out Portugal, India provided economic and military assistance to the independence movement in Goa. In 1961 India staged a massive armed invasion of Goa by land and air, pushing out Portugal and then annexing Goa to become a part of India. There was strong international condemnation of India for its actions in Goa, including a resolution in the United Nations offered by U.S. Ambassador Adlai Stevenson, and a resolution in the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. I was a college student at the time and recall campus protests by the same left-leaning activists who protested Israel's existence, protested CIA involvement and military advisers in Viet Nam, and protested domestic civil rights injustices against Negroes (as they called themselves back then).

To this day there are claims that India's annexation of Goa was illegal under international law, and Goa should be recognized as an independent nation. Does that sound familiar? Have you heard that rhetoric somewhere in relation to Hawaii?

Today the same people who protest against China's invasion and continuing occupation of Tibet also protest against India's invasion and continuing occupation of Goa; and they also protest against the so-called U.S. "armed invasion" of Hawaii during the 1893 overthrow of the monarchy, and the continuing U.S. "belligerent military occupation of Hawaii." The analogy to Hawaii is historically and morally incorrect; but the activists nevertheless love to assert it.

Among the factors you should consider is that the primary sponsor of this resolution in the Senate last year was the father of U.S. Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard, who had made a highly publicized trip to India and gave her strong support to the newly elected Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whose alleged oppression of minorities is a controversial issue in India's politics.

Why would this legislature wish to embroil itself in the internal politics of India, and the even more obscure internal politics of the Goa region?

If the Legislature of the State of Hawaii wants to establish a sister-state relationship with one of the states in India, I urge you to choose a different Indian state whose status as part of India is beyond dispute and has never been a part of international controversy (and stay away from Punjab and Kashmir too!).