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# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS TO CONVENE A STUDY GROUP TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LEGISLATURE ON AN APPROPRIATE MEANS TO HONOR ROBERT WILLIAM KALANIHIAPO WILCOX, HAWAII'S FIRST ELECTED DELEGATE 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 England by way of Newport, Rhode  
4 Island, and Kalua Makoleokalani of Maui, whose mother descended  
5 directly from Pi'ilani, ancient ruler of Maui Nui, and whose  
6 father descended directly from Umi, ancient ruler of Hawai'i; and  
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8           WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox attended Haleakalā Boarding School in  
9 Makawao, Maui, and in 1875 was selected by the Kingdom of Hawai'i  
10 to teach school on Maui at Keawekapu, Makena and later at  
11 Ulupalakua, and was elected to the Royal Legislature in 1880 to  
12 serve the citizens of Wailuku and its neighboring Maui towns;  
13 and  
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15           WHEREAS, in 1880, King Kalākaua selected Mr. Wilcox to  
16 study at the Royal Military Academy in Turin, Italy, where he  
17 excelled and was selected by Italian officers to attend the  
18 Royal Application School for Engineer and Artillery Officers,  
19 where he remained until the end of 1887; and  
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21           WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox graduated with commendations and  
22 received a commission from the Italian Minister of War as a  
23 Lieutenant of Artillery, which was signed by the king of Italy;  
24 and  
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26           WHEREAS, in 1887, just prior to Mr. Wilcox's return to  
27 Hawai'i, the Reform Party of Hawai'i, in concert with the



1 Honolulu Rifles militia unit, imposed the Bayonet Constitution  
2 on King Kalākaua; and  
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4 WHEREAS, the Bayonet Constitution limited the powers of the  
5 monarchy and imposed income and property ownership requirements  
6 for voting, which allowed wealthy Europeans and Americans to  
7 vote even though they were not citizens of the Kingdom of  
8 Hawai'i, while at the same time disenfranchising Native Hawaiian  
9 citizens; and  
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11 WHEREAS, when Mr. Wilcox return to Hawai'i in late 1887, he  
12 organized against the Reform Party of Hawai'i by advocating for  
13 the revocation of the Bayonet Constitution of 1887; and  
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15 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox along with other loyalists founded the  
16 Kamehameha Rifles Association with members loyal to the Kingdom  
17 of Hawai'i who held similar views; and  
18

19 WHEREAS, on July 30, 1889, the Kamehameha Rifles  
20 Association was confronted in an armed battle by the Honolulu  
21 Rifles militia unit, which was aided by a large American  
22 military force from the American warship "Adam" moored in  
23 Honolulu Harbor; and  
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25 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox eventually surrendered to the Honolulu  
26 Rifles and was charged with treason, but eventually was  
27 acquitted by a jury to the acclaim and approval of many Native  
28 Hawaiian citizens; and  
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30 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox helped establish the National Reform  
31 Party ('Ao'ao Lahui), which advocated restoring power to the  
32 monarchy; and  
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34 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox ran for and was elected from the  
35 island of O'ahu to serve on the Royal Legislature, where he  
36 served from 1890 through 1894; and  
37

38 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox founded a newspaper in 1892, The  
39 Liberal, which advocated positions on behalf of Native Hawaiian  
40 citizens in favor of adopting good government policies and



1 protecting the Hawaiian Kingdom from commercial and political  
2 exploitation by foreign powers; and  
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4 WHEREAS, Queen Lili'uokalani, having succeeded to the  
5 leadership of the Kingdom of Hawai'i in 1891 after the untimely  
6 death of her brother King Kalākaua, realized that the Bayonet  
7 Constitution placed too much power in the hands of foreigners,  
8 limited the powers of the monarchy, and disenfranchised Native  
9 Hawaiians, and attempted on January 14, 1893, to revoke the  
10 Bayonet Constitution and to issue a new constitution to restore  
11 power to the monarchy and limit the influence of foreigners; and  
12

13 WHEREAS, Queen Lili'uokalani realized that her authority and  
14 power as the reigning monarch of the Kingdom of Hawai'i were in  
15 jeopardy from American and European business interests who were  
16 plotting against her plan to adopt a new constitution; and  
17

18 WHEREAS, the Queen recruited Mr. Wilcox to command the  
19 field artillery unit of the Royal Guard to protect and defend  
20 her and the Kingdom of Hawai'i from the influence and control of  
21 these foreign interests; and  
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23 WHEREAS, on January 16, 1893, John L. Stevens, United  
24 States Minister to Hawai'i and an advocate of the United States'  
25 annexation of the Kingdom of Hawai'i, ordered United States  
26 marines to land in Honolulu; and  
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28 WHEREAS, on January 17, 1893, a group of European and  
29 American businessmen who favored the United States' annexation  
30 of the Kingdom of Hawai'i formed the Committee on Safety; and  
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32 WHEREAS, the Committee on Safety, with the support of  
33 United States Marines, Minister Stevens, and the Honolulu Rifles  
34 militia unit, seized control of 'Iolani Palace, imprisoned Queen  
35 Lili'uokalani, declared the Hawaiian monarchy abolished, and  
36 proclaimed themselves the provisional government of Hawai'i until  
37 annexation by the United States could be accomplished; and  
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39 WHEREAS, on January 17, 1893, Queen Lili'uokalani realized  
40 the futility of resisting American forces and reasonably  
41 believed that the Kingdom of Hawai'i would be restored by



1 America, just as the British had restored the Hawaiian Kingdom  
2 during the reign of Kamehameha III; and  
3

4 WHEREAS, the Queen, in order to prevent bloodshed,  
5 surrendered and relinquished to the United States her authority  
6 over the Hawaiian Kingdom; and  
7

8 WHEREAS, on February 1, 1893, Minister Stevens landed  
9 American troops on Hawai'i soil, placed the provisional  
10 government under the protection of the United States pending  
11 annexation negotiations, and hoisted the American flag over  
12 Hawai'i; and  
13

14 WHEREAS, on July 4, 1894, the Republic of Hawai'i (the  
15 former provisional government) declared its existence, adopted a  
16 new constitution, and announced Sanford Dole as its president;  
17 and  
18

19 WHEREAS, in the latter part of 1894, Mr. Wilcox and other  
20 loyalists loyal to Queen Lili'uokalani planned a counter-  
21 revolution to regain control of the Hawaiian government from  
22 foreign (United States) interests, and to restore Queen  
23 Lili'uokalani to the throne; and  
24

25 WHEREAS, for two weeks in January of 1895, the armed forces  
26 of the newly formed Republic of Hawai'i inevitably defeated the  
27 loyalists from the Kamehameha Rifles Association in armed  
28 conflict, in concert with many more additional armed troops from  
29 American naval ships moored in Honolulu Harbor; and  
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31 WHEREAS, as a result of the January 1895 conflict, two  
32 hundred loyalists, including Mr. Wilcox and Queen Lili'uokalani,  
33 were arrested and charged with treason against the Republic of  
34 Hawai'i; and  
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36 WHEREAS, on February 23, 1895, Mr. Wilcox was convicted of  
37 treason by the Republic of Hawai'i and was sentenced to death,  
38 though his sentence was eventually reduced to a prison term of  
39 thirty-five years; and  
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1 WHEREAS, Queen Lili'uokalani was placed under house arrest  
2 at 'Iolani Palace and was forced to sign under duress a document  
3 formally abdicating and relinquishing all of her claims to the  
4 throne--an action she later explained was necessary to prevent  
5 her loyalist supporters from being punished for treason and  
6 executed by the Republic of Hawai'i; and  
7

8 WHEREAS, on January 1, 1898, Republic of Hawai'i President  
9 Sanford Dole pardoned Mr. Wilcox after Queen Lili'uokalani  
10 formally renounced her right to the throne; and  
11

12 WHEREAS, after the United States' annexation of Hawai'i  
13 through the Newland's Resolution in 1898 and to ensure that  
14 Native Hawaiian interests were adequately represented in the  
15 Territory of Hawai'i government, Mr. Wilcox zealously and  
16 successfully lobbied the United States Congress to grant  
17 universal voting rights for men in the legislation that would  
18 later become the 1900 Hawaiian Organic Act; and  
19

20 WHEREAS, after the passage of the Hawaiian Organic Act by  
21 Congress in 1900, Mr. Wilcox organized Native Hawaiians who had  
22 been anti-annexation into the Hawaiian Independent Party, which  
23 was later called the Home Rule Party of Hawai'i, and with that  
24 Mr. Wilcox launched his candidacy for a seat in the Fifty-  
25 seventh United States Congress, which he later won; and  
26

27 WHEREAS, from November 6, 1900, to March 3, 1903, Mr.  
28 Wilcox served in the Fifty-seventh Congress as Hawai'i's first  
29 Congressman and distinguished himself as a representative who  
30 fought for the rights of citizens; and  
31

32 WHEREAS, realizing that as a United States territory,  
33 Hawai'i could send only non-voting representatives to Congress  
34 and that Hawai'i's territorial governors would be appointed by  
35 the United States President and not elected by territorial  
36 residents, Mr. Wilcox and other prominent Native Hawaiians  
37 supported Hawai'i becoming a state of the Union to ensure greater  
38 local control of Hawaii's government by the people; and  
39

40 WHEREAS, upon returning to Hawai'i after his term in  
41 Congress ended in 1903, Mr. Wilcox ran for High Sherriff of



1 Honolulu but passed away during his campaign for that office;  
2 and  
3

4 WHEREAS, in 1993, the United States Congress adopted Public  
5 Law 103-50, often referred to as the "Apology Resolution", in  
6 which the United States Congress and President of the United  
7 States acknowledged the participation of the United States in  
8 the wrongful overthrow on January 17, 1893, of the Kingdom of  
9 Hawai'i, apologized for these actions and the suppression of the  
10 inherent sovereignty of the Native Hawaiian people, and called  
11 for reconciliation between Native Hawaiians and the United  
12 States; and  
13

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox was an instrumental and critically  
15 important figure in the struggles of Hawai'i from monarchy to  
16 statehood; and  
17

18 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox should be remembered for his abiding  
19 support and advocacy for the rights of citizens to vote and  
20 fully participate in their government regardless of whether it  
21 was organized as a monarchy, a provisional government, a  
22 republic, or a territory of the United States; now, therefore,  
23

24 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth  
25 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2017, the  
26 House of Representatives concurring, that the Office of Hawaiian  
27 Affairs is requested to convene a study group to make  
28 recommendations to the Legislature on an appropriate means to  
29 honor Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox, Hawaii's first elected  
30 delegate to the United States Congress; and  
31

32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study group:  
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34 (1) Be comprised of the Chairperson of the Board of  
35 Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, or the  
36 Chairperson's designee, Director of Lāhui Hawaii  
37 Research Center of the University of Hawai'i, or the  
38 Director's designee, a representative of Hawai'inuiākea  
39 School of Hawaiian Knowledge of the University of  
40 Hawai'i, a representative of the Association of  
41 Hawaiian Civic Clubs, the Superintendent of Education



1 or the Superintendent's designee, and a member of the  
2 immediate family of Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox;

3  
4 (2) Consider and make recommendations to the Legislature  
5 on an appropriate means to honor Robert William  
6 Kalanihiapo Wilcox's legacy of achievement, such as  
7 through the dedication or naming of a public facility,  
8 a public road, or other public structure in his honor  
9 as the study group shall recommend;

10  
11 (3) Consider and suggest methods that may be undertaken by  
12 the Department of Education to develop public school  
13 curriculum and other materials to inform, educate, and  
14 increase awareness of public school students and the  
15 general public about Robert William Kalanihiapo  
16 Wilcox's life and accomplishments;

17  
18 (4) Report its recommendations, including proposed  
19 legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty  
20 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of  
21 2018; and

22  
23 (5) Be dissolved on June 30, 2018; and

24  
25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
26 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the  
27 Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs,  
28 Superintendent of Education, Director of Lāhui Hawai'i Research  
29 Center of the University of Hawai'i, Dean of the Hawai'inuiākea  
30 School of Hawaiian Knowledge of the University of Hawai'i, Chair  
31 of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and immediate family  
32 of Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox.

