

MAR 10 2017

SENATE 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
14

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
28 Honolulu Rifles militia unit, imposed the Bayonet Constitution
29 on King Kalākaua; and
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31 WHEREAS, the Bayonet Constitution limited the powers of the
32 monarchy and imposed income and property ownership requirements



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1 for voting, which allowed wealthy Europeans and Americans to
2 vote even though they were not citizens of the Kingdom of
3 Hawai'i, while at the same time disenfranchising Native Hawaiian
4 citizens; and
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6 WHEREAS, when Mr. Wilcox return to Hawai'i in late 1887, he
7 organized against the Reform Party of Hawai'i by advocating for
8 the revocation of the Bayonet Constitution of 1887; and
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10 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox along with other loyalists founded the
11 Kamehameha Rifles Association with members loyal to the Kingdom
12 of Hawai'i who held similar views; and
13

14 WHEREAS, on July 30, 1889, the Kamehameha Rifles
15 Association was confronted in an armed battle by the Honolulu
16 Rifles militia unit, which was aided by a large American
17 military force from the American warship "Adam" moored in
18 Honolulu Harbor; and
19

20 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox eventually surrendered to the Honolulu
21 Rifles and was charged with treason, but eventually was
22 acquitted by a jury to the acclaim and approval of many Native
23 Hawaiian citizens; and
24

25 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox helped establish the National Reform
26 Party ('Ao'ao Lahui), which advocated restoring power to the
27 monarchy; and
28

29 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox ran for and was elected from the
30 island of O'ahu to serve on the Royal Legislature, where he
31 served from 1890 through 1894; and
32

33 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox founded a newspaper in 1892, The
34 Liberal, which advocated positions on behalf of Native Hawaiian
35 citizens in favor of adopting good government policies and
36 protecting the Hawaiian Kingdom from commercial and political
37 exploitation by foreign powers; and
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39 WHEREAS, Queen Lili'uokalani, having succeeded to the
40 leadership of the Kingdom of Hawai'i in 1891 after the untimely
41 death of her brother King Kalākaua, realized that the Bayonet



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1 Constitution placed too much power in the hands of foreigners,
2 limited the powers of the monarchy, and disenfranchised Native
3 Hawaiians, and attempted on January 14, 1893, to revoke the
4 Bayonet Constitution and to issue a new constitution to restore
5 power to the monarchy and limit the influence of foreigners; and
6

7 WHEREAS, Queen Lili'uokalani realized that her authority and
8 power as the reigning monarch of the Kingdom of Hawai'i were in
9 jeopardy from American and European business interests who were
10 plotting against her plan to adopt a new constitution; and
11

12 WHEREAS, the Queen recruited Mr. Wilcox to command the
13 field artillery unit of the Royal Guard to protect and defend
14 her and the Kingdom of Hawai'i from the influence and control of
15 these foreign interests; and
16

17 WHEREAS, on January 16, 1893, John L. Stevens, United
18 States Minister to Hawai'i and an advocate of the United States'
19 annexation of the Kingdom of Hawai'i, ordered United States
20 marines to land in Honolulu; and
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22 WHEREAS, on January 17, 1893, a group of European and
23 American businessmen who favored the United States' annexation
24 of the Kingdom of Hawai'i formed the Committee on Safety; and
25

26 WHEREAS, the Committee on Safety, with the support of
27 United States Marines, Minister Stevens, and the Honolulu Rifles
28 militia unit, seized control of 'Iolani Palace, imprisoned Queen
29 Lili'uokalani, declared the Hawaiian monarchy abolished, and
30 proclaimed themselves the provisional government of Hawai'i until
31 annexation by the United States could be accomplished; and
32

33 WHEREAS, on January 17, 1893, Queen Lili'uokalani realized
34 the futility of resisting American forces and reasonably
35 believed that the Kingdom of Hawai'i would be restored by
36 America, just as the British had restored the Hawaiian Kingdom
37 during the reign of Kamehameha III; and
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39 WHEREAS, the Queen, in order to prevent bloodshed,
40 surrendered and relinquished to the United States her authority
41 over the Hawaiian Kingdom; and



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1
2 WHEREAS, on February 1, 1893, Minister Stevens landed
3 American troops on Hawai'i soil, placed the provisional
4 government under the protection of the United States pending
5 annexation negotiations, and hoisted the American flag over
6 Hawai'i; and

7
8 WHEREAS, on July 4, 1894, the Republic of Hawai'i (the
9 former provisional government) declared its existence, adopted a
10 new constitution, and announced Sanford Dole as its president;
11 and

12
13 WHEREAS, in the latter part of 1894, Mr. Wilcox and other
14 loyalists loyal to Queen Lili'uokalani planned a counter-
15 revolution to regain control of the Hawaiian government from
16 foreign (United States) interests, and to restore Queen
17 Lili'uokalani to the throne; and

18
19 WHEREAS, for two weeks in January of 1895, the armed forces
20 of the newly formed Republic of Hawai'i inevitably defeated the
21 loyalists from the Kamehameha Rifles Association in armed
22 conflict, in concert with many more additional armed troops from
23 American naval ships moored in Honolulu Harbor; and

24
25 WHEREAS, as a result of the January 1895 conflict, two
26 hundred loyalists, including Mr. Wilcox and Queen Lili'uokalani,
27 were arrested and charged with treason against the Republic of
28 Hawai'i; and

29
30 WHEREAS, on February 23, 1895, Mr. Wilcox was convicted of
31 treason by the Republic of Hawai'i and was sentenced to death,
32 though his sentence was eventually reduced to a prison term of
33 thirty-five years; and

34
35 WHEREAS, Queen Lili'uokalani was placed under house arrest
36 at 'Iolani Palace and was forced to sign under duress a document
37 formally abdicating and relinquishing all of her claims to the
38 throne--an action she later explained was necessary to prevent
39 her loyalist supporters from being punished for treason and
40 executed by the Republic of Hawai'i; and

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1 WHEREAS, on January 1, 1898, Republic of Hawai'i President
2 Sanford Dole pardoned Mr. Wilcox after Queen Lili'uokalani
3 formally renounced her right to the throne; and
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5 WHEREAS, after the United States' annexation of Hawai'i
6 through the Newland's Resolution in 1898 and to ensure that
7 Native Hawaiian interests were adequately represented in the
8 Territory of Hawai'i government, Mr. Wilcox zealously and
9 successfully lobbied the United States Congress to grant
10 universal voting rights for men in the legislation that would
11 later become the 1900 Hawaiian Organic Act; and
12

13 WHEREAS, after the passage of the Hawaiian Organic Act by
14 Congress in 1900, Mr. Wilcox organized Native Hawaiians who had
15 been anti-annexation into the Hawaiian Independent Party, which
16 was later called the Home Rule Party of Hawai'i, and with that
17 Mr. Wilcox launched his candidacy for a seat in the Fifty-
18 seventh United States Congress, which he later won; and
19

20 WHEREAS, from November 6, 1900, to March 3, 1903, Mr.
21 Wilcox served in the Fifty-seventh Congress as Hawai'i's first
22 Congressman and distinguished himself as a representative who
23 fought for the rights of citizens; and
24

25 WHEREAS, realizing that as a United States territory,
26 Hawai'i could send only non-voting representatives to Congress
27 and that Hawai'i's territorial governors would be appointed by
28 the United States President and not elected by territorial
29 residents, Mr. Wilcox and other prominent Native Hawaiians
30 supported Hawai'i becoming a state of the Union to ensure greater
31 local control of Hawaii's government by the people; and
32

33 WHEREAS, upon returning to Hawai'i after his term in
34 Congress ended in 1903, Mr. Wilcox ran for High Sherriff of
35 Honolulu but passed away during his campaign for that office;
36 and
37

38 WHEREAS, in 1993, the United States Congress adopted Public
39 Law 103-50, often referred to as the "Apology Resolution", in
40 which the United States Congress and President of the United
41 States acknowledged the participation of the United States in



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1 the wrongful overthrow on January 17, 1893, of the Kingdom of
 2 Hawai'i, apologized for these actions and the suppression of the
 3 inherent sovereignty of the Native Hawaiian people, and called
 4 for reconciliation between Native Hawaiians and the United
 5 States; and

6
 7 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox was an instrumental and critically
 8 important figure in the struggles of Hawai'i from monarchy to
 9 statehood; and

10
 11 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilcox should be remembered for his abiding
 12 support and advocacy for the rights of citizens to vote and
 13 fully participate in their government regardless of whether it
 14 was organized as a monarchy, a provisional government, a
 15 republic, or a territory of the United States; now, therefore,
 16

17 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth
 18 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2017,
 19 that the Office of Hawaiian Affairs is requested to convene a
 20 study group to make recommendations to the Legislature on an
 21 appropriate means to honor Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox,
 22 Hawaii's first elected delegate to the United States Congress;
 23 and

24
 25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study group:

26
 27 (1) Be comprised of the Chairperson of the Board of
 28 Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, or the
 29 Chairperson's designee, a representative of the
 30 Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, the
 31 Superintendent of Education or the Superintendent's
 32 designee, and a member of the immediate family of
 33 Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox;

34
 35 (2) Consider and make recommendations to the Legislature
 36 on an appropriate means to honor Robert William
 37 Kalanihiapo Wilcox's legacy of achievement, such as
 38 through the dedication or naming of a public facility,
 39 a public road, or other public structure in his honor
 40 as the study group shall recommend;

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- 1 (3) Consider and suggest methods that may be undertaken by
- 2 the Department of Education to develop public school
- 3 curriculum and other materials to inform, educate, and
- 4 increase awareness of public school students and the
- 5 general public about Robert William Kalanihiapo
- 6 Wilcox's life and accomplishments;
- 7
- 8 (4) Report its recommendations, including proposed
- 9 legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty
- 10 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
- 11 2018; and
- 12
- 13 (5) Be dissolved on June 30, 2018; and
- 14

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 16 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of
 17 Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Superintendent of
 18 Education, Chair of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and
 19 immediate family of Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox.

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 21
 22

OFFERED BY: 


