



Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs

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To: Sen. Maile Shimabukuro, Chair and Sen. Brickwood Galuteria, Vice Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

From: Annelle Amaral, President, Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs

Re: Testimony in Support of SCR 85/SR 33 Requesting the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to Convene a Task Force of Hawaiian Leaders, Legal Scholars, and a Broad Representation of Members of the Hawaiian Community to Review and Consider Whether its Fiduciary Duty to Better the Conditions of Hawaiians and Manage its Resources to Meet the Needs of Hawaiian Beneficiaries would be Better Served by Having Trustees Appointed Rather than Elected.

Aloha, Sen. Shimakukuro and Sen. Galuteria and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs. I am Annelle Amaral, President of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (AHCC), an organization whose first club was founded in 1918 by Delegate to Congress Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole. Hawaiian Civic Clubs have thrived and there are now sixty-three active clubs in Hawaii and on the North American continent. We are here today to testify in support of SCR 85 and SR 33.

Although the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs has not taken a position on the appointment of OHA Trustees, I believe this is a good concept to explore and discuss among Hawaiian community leaders and so, I am submitting testimony in support of this measure.

I agree that the OHA Trustees function as political office holders and less as trustees, charged with exercising the highest fiduciary duty at law. And as political office holders, we see less highly qualified people run for office as campaigning statewide requires name recognition, campaign financing, and political horse-trading versus skill, expertise and good judgment.

I disagree with your lamentation on "blank votes" as indicative as something negative...in fact, we in the Hawaiian community see blank votes as the non-Hawaiian community showing their support for Hawaiians picking their leaders, not non-Hawaiians. In fact, as I examined the number of votes for OHA Trustees, I saw that Trustee Bobby Lindsey got more votes than Colleen Hanabusa...with Trustee Lindsey getting 194,524 and Colleen getting 145,417. So voting was quite active in the OHA election.

However, I think the time has come where we must examine another mechanism for picking our OHA Trustees and assuring that they have the skills and expertise needed to grow this agency to its best potential. Exploring too who the best appointing authority should be is also an important consideration, so I am heartened that this will also be part of the discussion. Holomua! Mahalo.