

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 174 AND HOUSE  
RESOLUTION 146, REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF VETERANS' SERVICES TO  
STUDY HOW THE INCREASE IN BURIAL SERVICE REQUESTS HAS AFFECTED  
THE HAWAII STATE VETERANS CEMETERY

PRESENTATION TO THE  
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS & CULTURE  
AND THE ARTS

BY

MR. RONALD P. HAN, JR.  
DIRECTOR OF THE STATE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

March 22, 2018  
10:20 a.m.

Good morning Chair LoPresti and Vice Chair Fukumoto, and members of the Committee:

I am Ron Han, Director of the State Office of Veterans Services. I appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Concurrent Resolution 174 and House Resolution 146 as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

Furthermore, recommend the following amendments for HCR 174 and HR 146:

**Lines 1-4** to read: "Whereas, the Hawaii Office of Veterans Services has administrative oversight of internments at the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery in Kaneohe; and"

**Line 8:** Delete "spouses" and insert "eligible dependents"

Thank you for this opportunity to offer my comments.

**RECEIVED**  
**Date & Time**  
Mar 21, 2018, 11:26 am

**HCR-174**

Submitted on: 3/21/2018 10:24:48 AM

Testimony for VMI on 3/22/2018 10:20:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	Oahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

**RECEIVED**  
**Date & Time**  
Mar 20, 2018, 11:10 am

**HCR-174**

Submitted on: 3/20/2018 10:47:37 AM

Testimony for VMI on 3/22/2018 10:20:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**RECEIVED**  
**Date & Time**

Mar 21, 2018, 11:26 am

**HCR-174**

Submitted on: 3/20/2018 6:00:02 PM

Testimony for VMI on 3/22/2018 10:20:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mike Golojuch	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Although I support this resolution, I hope the legislators are providing the funds and staff to accomplish this task.

**RECEIVED**  
**Date & Time**  
Mar 22, 2018, 9:18 am

**HCR-174**

Submitted on: 3/21/2018 9:55:22 PM

Testimony for VMI on 3/22/2018 10:20:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
De MONT R. D. CONNER	Ho'omanapono Political Action Committee (HPAC)	Support	Yes

Comments:

We STRONGLY SUPPORT this resolution, in Honor of VIOLA GENEVIEVE MAKAKOA GALDEIRA LEWIS: Hanau - July 21, 1931; Hala - February 19, 2018. May the UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE OF DENYING OUR VETERANS & THEIR SPOUSES A PROPER & TIMELY BURIAL BECOME A SHAMEFUL THING OF THE PAST! Mahalo!

**RECEIVED**  
**Date & Time**  
Mar 22, 2018, 9:19 am

**HCR-174**

Submitted on: 3/21/2018 9:59:32 PM

Testimony for VMI on 3/22/2018 10:20:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Rachel L. Kailianu	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

in STRONG SUPPORT OF THIS BILL.

**RECEIVED**  
**Date & Time**  
Mar 22, 2018, 9:19 am

**HCR-174**

Submitted on: 3/22/2018 8:11:52 AM  
Testimony for VMI on 3/22/2018 10:20:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kuhio Lewis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I apologize that I cannot be there in person to testify in SUPPORT of this measure. In a couple of hours we will finally be laying my grandmother to rest.

On February 19th, my grandmother, Viola Lewis, slipped outside of a nail salon, fell into a coma and passed later that evening. I was with her when it happened. Grandma and I were very close; in fact, she adopted me when I was two years old. As one could imagine this experience has left me traumatized with countless nights without sleep. The only thing I look forward to is knowing that she will be returning to a better place and with my grandfather who honorably served our country.

I contacted the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery the day after she passed and discovered they had a backlog and the earliest they could schedule a burial was in April, a month and a half later.

I reached out to several cemetery officials asking for an earlier date, before going up the ladder to Col. Han and eventually the governor's office. I explained the trauma I was going through and told them my family and I needed closure and that we couldn't see our loved one sitting in a morgue for a month and a half. They were all sympathetic but offered no solutions.

My grandmothers services were on March 9th and we would have preferred to lay her to rest soon after, however, I am grateful that her services were rescheduled to March 22nd (today) instead of the April date we were initially provided.

In short, I support this resolution because through this experience, what is evident is they have no plan to address our aging veteran population. Many will not have the tenacity to question or challenge the process as I have, but through accountability and this measure, they wont need to, they have you.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this resolution.

Aloha,

Kuhio Lewis