

SR-15-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2018 9:26:50 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2018 10:20:00 AM

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

Comments:

JOHN P. DELLERA
Honolulu, Hawaii
jdellera@hawaii.rr.com

THE SENATE
THE TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2018
Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, April 3, 2018, 10:20 a.m., Conference Room 211

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO S.R. 15, S.D. 1
REQUESTING THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS
TO COMMISSION A MONUMENT TO PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

Date: March 29, 2018

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

There are two objections to this resolution:

First, while most citizens of Hawaii may be proud that Barack Obama served as President of the United States, and while those who opposed his candidacy may have shared in the excitement of his frequent visits to the Islands, the Obama presidency divided the nation, and Mr. Obama remains a divisive figure in national politics. Given American distaste for the “cult of personality” displayed in statues in other countries that spring up like mushrooms after a spring rain, public funds should be sparingly used for true national heroes, of which Mr. Obama is surely not one.

Second, the resolution distorts results of the Obama presidency and overlooks others:

1. The U.S. economy stagnated during the Obama years; deficits were cut largely because military spending was slashed to an extent that endangers the national defense;
2. The national debt increased to \$20 trillion during the Obama years, more than twice the debt accumulated during the presidencies of all prior presidents combined;
3. The unemployment rate declined because unprecedented numbers of workers dropped out of the workforce due to the lack of employment opportunities;
4. Obamacare did not “allow” 16 million Americans to “have affordable” health care, it **forced** 16 million people to buy overpriced private health insurance they did not need or want;
5. Issues the resolution overlooks:

- a. Fast and Furious – the unlawful provision of guns to Mexican drug cartels;
- b. Discrimination by the IRS against conservative tax exempt organizations;
- c. Cover-up of the State Department’s negligence leading to the attack on our consulate and murder of the U.S. Ambassador in Benghazi, Libya;
- d. Dereliction of duty in the Veteran’s Administration;
- e. Political corruption in the FBI and DOJ, including misleading the FISA court to spy on American citizens for political reasons;
- f. DOJ’s failure to prosecute Secretary of State Clinton for destruction of evidence and obstruction of justice and a corrupt meeting at the Phoenix airport between Attorney General Lynch and Bill Clinton;
- g. Failure to investigate the Clinton Foundation for unlawful use of public office for private gain, including the sale to Russia of U.S. uranium reserves;
- h. Allowing drug trafficking by Hezbollah to facilitate nuclear arms agreement with Iran;
- i. Contempt of Congress by Attorney General Eric Holder;
- j. Failure to address weapons and ICBM development by North Korea;
- k. Failure to curb growth of ISIS in Syria and Iraq;
- l. Weakening of support for Israel;
- m. Manipulation of election results by failure to enforce immigration laws and allowing voting in federal elections by illegal aliens.

President Obama was born in Hawaii and, with millions others, vacations here, but he moved to Illinois after childhood and selected that state as the site of his presidential library. Given his record in office, the use of State funds to apotheosize him would be offensive, inappropriate, and a magnet for future controversy and division among the people of our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.