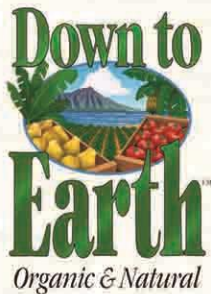


Love Life!



HB 349 RELATING TO INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY  
House Committee on Tourism and International Affairs  
February 7, 2019, 9:00am State Capitol

Aloha Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Chair, Rep. Daniel Holt, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

**Down to Earth Organic and Natural testifies in support of HB 349.**

Down to Earth *Organic and Natural* has six locations on Oahu and Maui. Since we opened in 1977, we have supported healthy lifestyles and preservation of the environment by selling local, fresh, organic and natural food, and by promoting a vegetarian lifestyle.

We support HB 349 in recognition of International Yoga Day in Hawaii. Yoga is not only an excellent form of exercise that promotes flexibility and strength, it also provides mental clarity, calmness, and inner peace which in turn creates more peaceful families, places of work, and communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.

Alison Riggs  
Public Policy & Government Relations Manager  
Down to Earth

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**HB-349**

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 1:21:01 AM

Testimony for TIA on 2/7/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Wallen Ellingson	Gandhi International Institute for Peace	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I would like to express my support for having an International Yoga Day in Hawaii. I am 73 years old, born and raised in Hawaii, and have been a practicing yogi for 50 years. I remember giving a speech about Yoga in my speech class many years ago at the University of Hawaii. At that time yoga practice was scarce and thought of as some mysterious mind or body bending exercise practiced in far away places like India. Since then yoga practice has grown exponentially and is now appreciated worldwide as a valuable discipline of holistic health—thanks to globalization and the sharing of cultural values.

Yoga studios are now everywhere throughout the state, and informal classes are held virtually every morning and evening on some of our beaches and parks. Please acknowledge the importance of yoga to our citizens by passing SB 349!

Mahalo Nui,

Wallen Ellingson

**HB-349**

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 8:06:10 AM

Testimony for TIA on 2/7/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Veda Das	The Hari Nama Mission	Support	No

## Comments:

Yoga has become an intrinsic part of Hawaiian society with yoga studios and practitioners engaging throughout our Islands. Yoga is also very much linked with eco-tourism which is the fastest growing segment within the tourist industry and why Hawaii should embrace the science.

**HB-349**

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 8:40:40 AM

Testimony for TIA on 2/7/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Renée Tillotson	Still & Moving Center	Support	No

Comments:

International Yoga Day Testimonial

As the owner of a mindful movement studio, Still & Moving Center, offering regular Yoga classes for nearly 8 years, I can attest to the positive impact of Yoga on thousands of people's lives in our studio, including those of students, teachers and teacher trainers. I therefore urge you to support Bill HR349. Let Hawaii be a beacon of health by being the first state in the Union to establish an International Yoga Day.

The yoga practice affords great benefits to physical health, including: elongating and giving mobility to the spine, relieving back and neck pain; restoring balance; augmenting the deep breathing and oxygenating the brain; increasing heart health; and improving both flexibility and strength.

Yoga also tends to increase practitioners' mental clarity and emotional stability. The steady practice of slowing down, concentrating on performing either complex or simple stabilizing poses, helps to steady the mind. The focus on breathing calms the nervous system, reducing stress and its compounding ill-effects. Practicing yoga can improve people's sleep.

I watch busy, intense people arrive for Yoga class every day, and leave class with a relaxed walk, better posture, smooth brow, broad smile, and a general air of enjoyment of life.

Done regularly with good teachers and proper technique, Yoga adds significantly to the quality of a person's day. Let's recognize Yoga's contribution to a good life by officially celebrating International Yoga Day here in our health-conscious state, Hawaii.

- Renee Tillotson, Owner & Director

**HB-349**

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 8:47:18 AM

Testimony for TIA on 2/7/2019 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Measure title: Relating to International Yoga Day

Testimony in support of HB 349

Hearing: Room 312 on 2/7/2019 at 9 am

Aloha TIA members,

I support Senate Bill HB 349 to establish International Yoga Day in Hawaii.

Yoga is a total mind-body workout that combines strengthening and stretching poses with deep breathing and meditation or relaxation.

The relaxation techniques incorporated in **yoga** can lessen chronic pain, such as lower back pain, arthritis, headaches and carpal tunnel syndrome. **Yoga** can also lower blood pressure and reduce insomnia. Other benefits include increased flexibility.

Therefore, I strongly support this bill.

Thanks.

Sarika Notani.

**Measure title: Relating to International Yoga Day**

**Hearing: Room 312 on 2/7/2019 at 9 am**

Respected TIA members,

I strongly support House Bill HB 349 to establish International Yoga Day in Hawaii.

Yoga is a systematic practice of physical [exercise](#), breath control, relaxation, [diet](#) control, and positive thinking and meditation aimed at developing harmony in the body, mind, and environment.

In the health fields, yoga techniques are being applied in health promotion programs, [substance abuse](#) treatment programs, and as complementary treatment for diseases such as [anxiety](#) disorders, [depression](#), coronary [heart disease](#), cancers, and [HIV/AIDS](#). Yoga is a low-cost self-help approach to well-being.

It will encourage people in Hawaii to incorporate yoga in their daily routine. Hence, I support this bill.

Mahalo.

Asha Bedford.

**HB-349**

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 3:16:25 PM

Testimony for TIA on 2/7/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Harendra Panalal	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hon. Representatives:

I wholeheartedly SUPPORT HB349

I have lived in Honolulu since 1971.

In fact, I suggest that we introduce basic yoga in all schools as part of physical education.

With medical costs skyrocketing, medicare for all may be a reality in ten years.

Since medical technology is improving every year, most people may be living well beyond 80 years.

By practicing even basic yoga, our seniors will be enjoying their lives with better health and mobility than otherwise.

Mahalo

Harendra Panalal, MSE, PE, RME

Off 792-0455

Home 538-6202

harenp2009@hotmail.com



**HB-349**

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 3:22:04 PM

Testimony for TIA on 2/7/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jerald Ulmer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a strong supporter of HB349, International Yoga Day. It will spread awareness about the benefits of yoga on physical, emotional, and spritiual levels and how to create a balance.

Mahalo,

Jerald Ulmer, Jr.

**HB-349**

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 2:00:41 PM

Testimony for TIA on 2/7/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dawn Wakukawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a strong supporter of HB 349- international yoga day.

This bill will help the people of Hawaii to learn the benefit of yoga as this will help to create a balance at a spiritual, emotional, physical and mental level.

I have been practicing it for years to stay fit and for stress relief.

**HB-349**

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 3:45:50 PM

Testimony for TIA on 2/7/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Aneesh remaniravi	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I am a strong supporter of HB 349 international yoga day. I believe this will help the people of Hawaii to understand the importance of the benefit of yoga. It will help the individuals to emotionally control their mind, be physically fit and also help to reduce the physical and emotional stress that they experience in their day to day life.

**HB-349**

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 3:47:14 PM

Testimony for TIA on 2/7/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Debbie Young	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Yoga and this bill will be a great benifit for all ages young to old to increase all around Health.

This will reduce Medical bills in the future.

Good time to bond with one another and connection of mind,body ,and soul.

Aloha,

Debbie Young

808-228-0661 debbyoung@gmail.com

**HB-349**

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 7:33:33 PM

Testimony for TIA on 2/7/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Pradeep Arora	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

Yoga is a not means to destree but also gives spiritual guidance and helps people with aging and medical problems. It should be impalmented to help those in need such guidlence and so forth.

**HB-349**

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 11:00:34 PM

Testimony for TIA on 2/7/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Craig Shull	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

Yoga is a centuries old practice that has been shown to benefit people from all age groups. The practice of Yoga minimizes stress and contributes to the overall health and well being of individuals who embrace its use. Passing HB349, will increase a greater interest and awareness in Yoga, most likely resulting in more people positively impacting their lives by putting it into practice.

## **Aloha TIA Committee**

**RE: HB 349 to Establish June 21 as International Yoga Day**

**Hearing Date: February 7, 2019**

On behalf of Gandhi International Institute for Peace, I strongly support bill HB 349 to establish June 21 of each year as International Yoga Day.

The development of yoga can be traced back to over 5,000 years ago. Yoga means a union of self with the divine and the universe. Yoga creates a balance at the physical, mental/emotional and spiritual level.

The United Nations adopted a resolution on December 11, 2014, proclaiming June 21 as the International Day of Yoga. One hundred seventy-five countries co-sponsored this resolution.

Yoga is now recommended for managing stress. Some asanas (postures) and breathing exercises are ideal for stress reduction. Yoga studios have become the spiritual center of a community because of the peace one experiences through yoga practice. Orthopedic doctors are recommending their patients to practice yoga instead of being dependent on pain medications.

Practicing yoga regularly lowers stress, reduces health problems and promotes healthy living among children, adults and the elderly population.

As for my personal experience- After my major heart surgery in 1996 and a spine surgery in 2015, I healed myself through Yoga, breathing exercises, meditation and healthy diet. I also published a book on Yoga- “The Secrets of Health and Healing” in 2005.

Since then I am raising awareness about benefits of Yoga in Hawaii and giving out free books and yoga chart to the libraries, schools, Yoga studios and health educators.

According to a study done by the [National Center of Complementary and Integrative Health](#), a division of the National Institutes of Health, adult yoga practitioners rose from 5.1% in 2002 to 6.1% in 2007 and 9.5% in 2012. Yoga is also being taught in schools in California. Yoga is also being taught in the prison of Hawaii. There are several yoga studios in Honolulu and on neighbor islands.

Passing this bill will raise awareness about the benefits of practicing yoga and would be beneficial for the health of the people of Hawaii. Yoga is a way of life and Hawaii is a perfect place to teach and practice yoga.

Hence I strongly support this bill for the above-mentioned reasons.

Raj Kumar, Ph.D., President  
Gandhi International Institute for Peace



**HB-349**

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 3:56:19 AM

Testimony for TIA on 2/7/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ted Bohlen	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

Yoga practice is healthy for body and mind. The number of practitioners is growing rapidly in the US and Hawaii. Please pass this bill to help spread awareness of this healthy practice. Yoga practitioners will appreciate your support!

Aloha,

My name is Willow Chang and I'm writing in support of testimony of the bill to recognize and formalize Hawaii's involvement with International Yoga Day, June 21st.

I started my personal journey with yoga, back in 1988. It was offered as an alternative to regular PE at Punahou School, and I wanted to try something different that didn't involve the subtext of competition, or interaction of teams playing with a ball. As a teenager then, I couldn't have possibly guessed that learning yoga would lead to a life long practice that has been incorporated into many roles in my life: a daily, self practice, teaching to dance and yoga students alike, sharing and leading yoga on the beach to visitors in Hawai'i, to this written testimony.

Yoga, originally from the Indian subcontinent, is a practice that dates back nearly 5,000 years ago. The earliest mention of yoga is in the written documents, the Rig Vedas, or Vedas, the sacred texts of India that are essentially guide books to a sacred life, as prescribed to the Brahmins (priestly castes).

Yoga encompasses a world of profundity and depth. For many, people will simply think of the Asanas- a series of 'poses', forms and stretches, and think this is all yoga is. But yoga is much more: it is a way of life, much like the Aloha that guides our thoughts, actions and inactions with others, here in Hawai'i and abroad, to be kind, compassionate and respectful.

Yoga encompassed what's referred to as the "8 limbs of yoga". They include:

Yama: universal morality

Niyama: personal observances

Asanas: body postures

Pranayama: breathing exercises and control of prana, life force energy

Pratyahara: control of the senses

Dharana: concentration and cultivating inner perceptual awareness

Dhayana: devotion, meditation on the Divine

Samadhi: union with the Divine

Not every practitioner of yoga may pursue every path of the discipline. But contemporary yoga has expanded and unfolded to blossom into a global, international celebration of discovery, creativity and exploration of both classic and hybrids forms of yoga. Aside from becoming a multibillion dollar industry that includes schools, certifications, workshops, retreats, merchandising, videos, clothing and teacher training, yoga has become a part of the 21st century consciousness.

Yoga is now taught in elementary schools to prisons, on beaches and in health clubs. It reaches people from every faith, creed and belief, from atheists to the devoted. It has scientifically proven means of rehabilitating the body and mind, with numerous benefits should the practice be done in a mindful, safe and health conscious manner.

With the use of the breath to harness awareness and harmony in the body with the Prana- life energy or force, yoga recognizes as does Hawaiian culture, (with the Ha), the importance of the breath. And, as with the yamas, yoga and Hawaiian cultural practices strive for union with a

higher power, or the divine- even if the pursuit is to be our healthiest, best self, to be of peaceful service to others.

It is for these reasons and infinite others, that I humbly ask you seriously will considering having Hawaii officially join the international community and ohana, by recognizing International Yoga Day on June 21st. It is a positive, mindful and meaningful way to commit to a message of peace and understanding, in a world that at times feel rife with conflicts. Our aina and aloha lend itself to amazing outdoor actives to support the event which is always a welcome boost to our visitor-based economy.

And above all, Hawai'i is a place where people from all over the world are inspired to coexist, share, learn, thrive and heal, side by side. Yoga as a practice, helps all who try, reach those meaningful and purposeful pursuits.

With Aloha,

Willow Chang  
Instructor\*Performer\*Producer\*Advocate