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Members of the House of Representatives
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 S. Beretania St.
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LATE

Dear Hawai'i House of Representatives:

My name is Kyle Okimoto. I was born and raised in Honolulu and now reside in New York City. My father was Frank T. Okimoto.

Until his sudden passing in July 1978, my father worked for the State of Hawai'i Department of Transportation, Airports Division for my entire childhood. One of my fondest childhood memories comes from the 5th grade. Prior to the Reef Runway's opening, my father took my sisters and I out of school and we sped around the brand-new runway in a State vehicle.

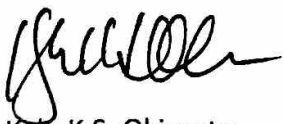
Ambitious public works projects have always been challenging to complete in Hawai'i. But they have enabled Hawai'i to become what it is today. The Pali and Wilson Tunnels enabled access to the Windward side, dredging enabled Waikiki and Ala Moana to capitalize on its central location and the interstate highway system connected the entire island. Each encountered considerable challenges, but through perseverance and creativity they got completed.

The Reef Runway provides air access to thousands of visitors and kama'aina, while minimizing noise pollution for residents of Downtown Honolulu, Kalihi and surrounding areas. Engineers enabled all of these projects to happen, delivering efficiency and functionality and balancing other factors like cost and environmental impact. It's hard to imagine a project like this conceived today, let alone pulled off.

By recognizing my father, it is my hope that travelers and Hawai'i residents will wonder "why is this runway named after this guy?" In doing so, they will learn about the importance of engineers and the possibility of delivering ambitious, seemingly impossible projects.

I thank Representatives Kobayashi, Aquino, Ganaden, Nakamura, Perruso, Tokioka and McKelvey for initiating this Resolution. And I thank the entire Legislature for their tireless work in service of my beloved home state.

With warm aloha from New York City,



Kyle K.S. Okimoto

LATE

Hawaii State Legislature
House Committee on Transportation
Representative Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair
Representative Geggor Ilagan, Vice Chair

Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.R. 122 and H.C.R. 144, requesting the Department of Transportation designate the Reef Runway at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport as the Frank T. Okimoto Reef Runway.

I am Lionel Y. Tokioka and have know Frank Okimoto from 1961 until his passing in 1978. Frank was a dedicated public servant devoted to his work at the Department of Transportation. He took pride in his work and lived by his motto, “whatever you do, be the best you can be.” In addition, Frank truly embraced the Aloha Spirit and designating the Reef Runway at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport, not only is recognizing the outstanding engineer that Frank Okimoto was, but acknowledging the efforts of a local kid who graduated from Roosevelt High School and the University of Hawaii.

Although Frank left us before his time, these resolutions are paying tribute to not just Frank’s accomplishments, but emphasizing the quality and talent our locally born and educated persons have in the State of Hawaii. Frank was proud of the people he worked with and for. He never forgot who he was and where he was from and actively participated in community service. His giving back to the community was so infectious as he enlisted many of his friends, including myself, to participate in his community service activities.

While there is so much more that I could say about why Frank T. Okimoto should be honored with the designation of the Reef Runway as the Frank T. Okimoto Reef Runway, I will close by saying there is no one more deserving than Frank.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Committee in support of H.R. 122 and H.C.R. 144.

Lionel Y. Tokioka

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Aloha Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Ilagan and members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Maizie Okimoto and I am writing in support of HCR144/HR122. I was Frank Okimoto's wife.

Frank loved his family and especially loved taking his family on trips. Our last trip was a road trip in June 1978 to Canada and some national parks in the upper part of the United States.

The engineer in Frank was reflected in his planning for the car we would drive. Of particular importance was the trunk space. Frank carefully measured the space of various cars. It had to hold our suitcases and simple cooking appliances for quick and easy meals. He had ordered ahead to pick up the car with the correct trunk specifications from a car dealership in Oregon- where our trip began.

Frank's work on the reef runway probably helped him to make good quick decisions on this road trip to keep his family happily travelling for two weeks. He left a legacy of enjoyment in travel to his children. Frank would be happy to know that the Reef Runway he carefully planned has left a similar enjoyment to the many travelers that come and go on it. Naming it in his honor would mean a lot to my family. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.