

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
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WRITTEN
TESTIMONY ONLY

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 697 SD1 HD1
RELATING TO KALAUPAPA MONTH**

REPRESENTATIVE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing Date: 3/31/2021

Room Number: Videoconference

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** None
- 2 **Department Testimony:** The department supports SB 697 designating the month of January as
- 3 "Kalaupapa month."
- 4 The department supports this bill because of its great significance to the people of Hawaii, in
- 5 recognition of the sacrifices many individuals made during its history and the legacy that endures
- 6 as an important part of Hawaii's history. Notably, January was the month when the first twelve
- 7 Hansen's disease patients arrived on the peninsula, as well as the birth month of Saint Damien,
- 8 Saint Marianne, and Mr. Ambrose Hutchison, who was the first Kalaupapa superintendent as
- 9 well as a patient.
- 10 Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.
- 11 **Offered Amendments:** N/A.



IOLANI PALACE

Post Office Box 2259 Honolulu, HI 96804-2259 Telephone (808) 522-0822 FAX (808) 532-1051

**Testimony of
PAULA AKANA
Executive Director**

**Before the House Committee on
Finance**

**Wednesday, March 31, 2021
1:30 PM
House Conference Room 308 via video conference**

**In Consideration of
SENATE BILL 697 SD1 HD1
RELATING TO KALAUPAPA MONTH**

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Committee Members,

I am Paula Akana, Executive Director of The Friends of Iolani Palace and I support SB697 SD1 HD1. I am glad to see the Bill moving through the House and am pleased to lend my support for the Bill that was initiated through the efforts of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa, who came up with the idea of Kalaupapa Month.

I, like so many Hawaii families, had ohana with ties to Kalaupapa. As a reporter, I visited there many times. I was also in Pearl City the day Bernard Punikai'a and Clarence Naia were arrested.

I believe designating January as Kalaupapa Month will help to ensure the stories of the sacrifices and perseverance of the people of Kalaupapa will live on. It will allow Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa to continue its commitment to educating the public about this special place and the people who called her home.

In fact, right now we have on display at Iolani Palace their exhibit, "A Source of Light, Constant and Fading" about the Royal Families meaningful connection to Kalaupapa.

We just lost Boogie Kahilihiwa, who was here last year to testify for this measure. Let's aloha him by passing SB697 SD1 HD1.

March 31, 2021

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

From: Joseph Lapilio, Executive Director
Ka `Ohana O Kalaupapa

Re: Support for SB697 SD1 HD1, Relating to Kalaupapa Month

Good afternoon, my name is Joseph Lapilio. I am the Executive Director of Ka `Ohana O Kalaupapa, an organization founded by patient residents of the Kalaupapa community and formally registered as a 501(c)3 non-profit in 2003.

I am proud to share that I am a direct descendent of Bonepake Lapilio and Louisa Lui, both of whom sent to Kalaupapa as young children, later met, married, and had seven children there. Bonepake and Louisa are my great grandparents. I like to think I am here today to speak on their behalf and in support and recognition of the more than 8,000 people who went to Kalaupapa between 1866 and 1969.

Ka `Ohana O Kalaupapa is asking the Legislature to designate January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai`i so that it will be observed annually.

No month contains no more important dates throughout the history of Kalaupapa than the month of January. This is the month when the first 12 people were sent to Kalaupapa in 1866; the month of the birthdays of Father Damien and Mother Marianne who have both been canonized; the month when the United Church of Christ celebrates Kalaupapa Sunday – and other important dates.

Kalaupapa Month would be an opportunity to acknowledge and remember the people who were sent to Kalaupapa. Many of us see these people as victims of a disease, exiled, forsaken, isolated from their families and the lives they knew. It is a lesson of politics based on fear looks like - a reminder that policy decisions have real life consequences. And the photos of Kalaupapa residents during that time focuses us on the pain and suffering of people and the people they left behind in the homes in which they once lived.

There are two other reasons establishing Kalaupapa Month would be important.

The first is using Kalaupapa Month as a reminder of the social justice issues we face. Just as we learned with COVID 19, some communities, whether because of ethnicity, income, social status, or education assume a disproportionate share of the negative impacts of the ills we face.

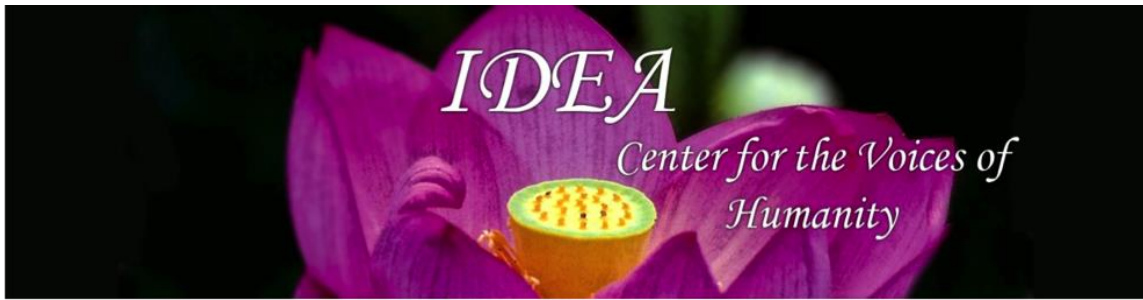
And second, Kalaupapa is a testament to the strength of the human spirit. The first 12 people who arrived in Kalaupapa in 1866, had no support from the government and, if not for the aloha of the original inhabitants of Kalaupapa faced terrible odds. It is a story that despite the odds, the people sent to Kalaupapa moved beyond the labels, made friends, started families, and built a community.

The people of Kalaupapa today are viewed not only as valuable members of society, but as some of the finest citizens in Hawai`i who have overcome the most difficult of circumstances and have much to teach the rest of the world. In the words of Mercy Hutchison Bacon, the great niece of Kalaupapa leader Ambrose Hutchison, the people of Kalaupapa are, “the pride of a nation.”

With the passing of Uncle Boogie Kahilihiwa last month, there are now only 11 people left today who are patient residents of Kalaupapa. They are getting older and it is harder for them to attend meetings such as this to share their voice. Just last year, the Ohana’s President, Uncle Boogie Kahilihiwa, was here to speak on behalf of this proposal. Today he cannot.

It is no longer possible for him and the other kupuna to speak out and make sure we remember. Kalaupapa month is going to make sure we do that.

We respectfully request your Committee’s support of SB697 SD1 HD1. Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment.



March 30, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chairperson
House Committee on Finance
Hawai'i State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

We write in support of SB697, SD1, HD1 Relating to Kalaupapa Month

Hearing: March 31, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 308

To Chairperson Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

As the population of Kalaupapa becomes smaller and smaller, it is increasingly important to find different ways to ensure that this important history is remembered in Hawai'i and throughout the world. The month of January is filled with significant dates related to this history.

On January 6, 1866, the first group of individuals was sent to Kalaupapa because they had leprosy. Accompanying these nine men and three women were at least five family members and one small boy whom they hid in their midst. One of the individuals with leprosy, Kini, was 15 years old, Kaaumoana was 16. The ages of the rest are not yet known. J.N. Loe and J.D. Kahauliko would immediately start writing letters to the Board of Health describing their situation. J.N. Loe noted that they were "in total darkness" and asked that two Hawaiian language newspapers be sent to them.

Father Damien De Veuster was born on January 3; Barbara Koob, who would become Mother Marianne Cope, was born on January 23, which has been designated as her Feast Day; Ambrose Kanewalii Hutchison, who lived at Kalaupapa for 53 years and served as Resident Superintendent for a total of ten years, longer than any other person who was facing the physical, social and emotional challenges of leprosy, arrived at Kalaupapa on January 5, 1879.

In January 1895, the final kama'aina, the original residents of Kalaupapa who had provided the people sent to Kalaupapa with so much support and assistance, were given notice that they had to leave the peninsula.

Designating January as Kalaupapa Month will provide schools, churches and other organizations with a special time to focus on the history of Kalaupapa and the estimated 8,000 individuals who were sent there.

Sincerely,

Anwei Skinsnes Law, MPH
Director, IDEA Center for the Voices of Humanity
President for Heritage & Education, IDEA
Historian, Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa

Henry G. Law
First Superintendent, Kalaupapa National Historical Park

IDEA Center for the Voices of Humanity, 32 Fall Street, Suite A; P.O. Box 651, Seneca Falls, NY 13148. Telephone: 315-568-5838; FAX: 315-568-5891; email: alaw@idealeprosodygnity.org

March 31, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

Bill Number: SB697 SD1 HD1

Hearing: March 31 2021 at 1:30 p.m., Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 308

I write in support of SB697 SD1, Relating to Kalaupapa Month

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance

My name is Susan Woo Smith. I am the great-granddaughter of Wong Chew, who was taken from his family in 1931 to Kalihi Hospital, then forced to reside in Kalaupapa from 1935-1939.

Before retiring, I was an educator for 32 years, as an elementary classroom teacher, middle school assistant principal, and elementary school principal. History is integral to education, recognizing significant events and the impact of these events on culture and on people. Kalaupapa directly affected the lives of 8,000 individuals, the lives of their families, communities, and those who dedicated their lives to serve.

It is important to acknowledge the strength and perseverance of the people of Kalaupapa and their contributions to Hawai'i. Kalaupapa Month will designate time for teachers and churches to recognize and focus on this pivotal aspect of history. I am happy Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa came up with the idea of Kalaupapa Month pursued the idea for consideration by the Legislature.

The month of January holds significant dates in the history of Kalaupapa: the first 12 people were sent to Kalaupapa in 1866; Father Damien's date of birth was January 3, 1840; Mother Marianne's date of birth was January 23, 1838. Additionally, the United Church of Christ celebrates Kalaupapa Sunday in January.

I am writing in strong support of SB697 SD1 HD1, which would designate January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai'i and would be observed annually.

I request your support of SB697 SD1 HD1, designating January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai'i.

Respectfully,

Susan Woo Smith
Great-Granddaughter of Wong Chew
susanjwsmith@gmail.com

March 31, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chairman
House Committee on Finance
Hawai`i State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813

Bill Number: SB697, SD1, HD1

Hearing: March 31, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.
Hawai`i State Capitol, Room 308

I write in support of SB697 SD1, HD1, Relating to Kalaupapa Month

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance.

My name is Colin Brede. I am the nephew of David Kalani Kaluai Brede (1933-2009) and Jimmy Aheana Brede (1929-2016) who was taken from their love ones and sent to Kalaupapa 15 May 1942 at the young ages of 9 and 13. David and Jimmy are siblings of my father John P Brede (1930-2017).

I am writing in strong support of SB697 SD1, HD1. Perhaps no month contains no more important dates throughout the history of Kalaupapa than the month of January. This is the month when the first 12 people were sent to Kalaupapa in 1866; the month of the birthdays of Father Damien and Mother Marianne who have both been canonized; the month when the United Church of Christ celebrates Kalaupapa Sunday – and other important dates.

Ka ‘Ohana O Kalaupapa believes that Kalaupapa Month will be an annual reminder to people all over Hawai`i and the world about the importance of Kalaupapa and the significant contributions made by her people throughout the history of Hawai`i. Ka ‘Ohana also hopes that Kalaupapa Month will be a time when teachers will focus on the history of Kalaupapa in their classrooms and when more churches will pay tribute to the people of Kalaupapa who found strength and community through their faith in God.

My Family the Brede's and Apio's, humbly ask for your support of SB697 SD1, HD1 to Designate January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai'i that will be Observed Annually.

Respectfully submitted,

Colin K Brede

Nephew of David Brede, Jimmy Brede, and Nancy Brede

Member of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa

Friend of Rotary Club of Mililani Sunrise

ckbrede@hawaii.rr.com

March 29, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chairman
House Committee on Finance
Hawaii State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Bill Number: SB697, SD1, HD1

Hearing: March 31, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 308

I write in support of SB697 SD1, HD1 Relating to Kalaupapa Month

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance.

My name is Jason Umemoto. I serve on the Board of Directors of Ka `Ohana O Kalaupapa, the organization that represents the living resident/patients at Kalaupapa and all of the family and descendants of those who were sent to Kalaupapa and have since passed away. My grand uncle Ed Kato was one of those sent to Kalaupapa as a young man and remained a resident of Kalaupapa until his passing.

I am asking the Legislature to designate January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawaii and that it will be observed on an annual basis. No month contains more important dates throughout the history of Kalaupapa than the month of January. Kalaupapa Month will be an annual reminder to all people throughout Hawaii about the importance of Kalaupapa and the significant contributions made by her people throughout the history of Hawaii.

The names of the people of Kalaupapa have been mostly forgotten over the years and left out of the history that they helped create. Kalaupapa Month will make certain that they will be forever remembered by providing annual opportunities to celebrate their lives.

I ask for your support of SB697 SD1 HD1 to establish Kalaupapa Month.

Respectfully submitted and with great Aloha,



Jason Umemoto

*Sister Alicia Damien Lau, osf
15 Bishop Home #0129
P.O. Box 129
Kalaupapa, HI 96742
March 29, 2021*

Representative, Sylvia Luke, Charman
House Committee on Finance

Bill Number: SB697, SD1, HD1 -- Kalaupapa Month

Hearing on Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at 1:30 pm
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 308

I write in strong support of SB697, SD1, HD1 -- Regarding Establishing January as Kalaupapa Month annually in Hawai'i

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

My name is Sister Alicia Damien Lau, a Sister of St Francis from the Order of Saint Marianne Cope who arrived in 1883 at the request of King Kalakaua and Queen Kapiolani, to care of those Hawaiian people who were afflicted with the disease of leprosy. Mother Marianne Cope came to Kalaupapa on November 14, 1888 and our Sisters have been here continuously since then. I came down to Kalaupapa in 1965 and had met many of the patients since then, spending weekends several times a month in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. In 2012, when I retired from healthcare, I spent half of my time, and later, three-fourths time in Kalaupapa as a National Park Service Volunteer. Now, I am in Kalaupapa full time assisting the Kalaupapa National Park at the Bishop Home Complex, a part-time employee of The Pacific Historic Parks Bookstore, and a volunteer for the Kalaupapa Department of Health.

January has been a significant month for Kalaupapa. It is the month when the first twelve people sent to Kalaupapa arrived in 1866. It is the month of both Saint Damien deVaster and Saint Marianne Cope's birthdays. Both of these religious left their homelands to care for the Hawaiian people. Ambrose Hutchison arrived in January, spent 53 years serving as resident superintendent, during which many of those years he worked alongside of Fr. Damien and Mother Marianne. We celebrate the feast day of St. Marianne Cope on January 23 of each year.

I strongly support of SB697, SD1, HD1 - to designate January as Kalaupapa Month and believe that it would be a reminder to all people in Hawaii and elsewhere, about the importance of Kalaupapa and its significant contribution made by the 8000 people who, by their isolation, helped stop the spread of leprosy.

Respectfully submitted,
Sister Alicia Damien Lau, osf
Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities
adlau@sosf.org

Kehaulani Lum
99-045 Nalopaka Place
`Aiea, Hawai`i 96701

March 30, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance
Hawai`i State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813

Re: Testimony in Support of Bill Number: SB697 SD1, HD1, Relating to Kalaupapa Month

Hearing: March 31, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.
Hawai`i State Capitol, Conference Room 308
Via Videoconference

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of SB697 SD1, HD1, which designates the month of January as Kalaupapa Month.

My name is Kehaulani Lum, and I am a member of Ka `Ohana o Kalaupapa. I am also a descendent of four family members from Ninole and Wailea, Hawai`i Island, who were relocated to Kalaupapa in the 1900s, as children, when government quarantine policies meant a one-way ticket to a life in isolation, scarcity and likely death, for most. Only one of my ancestors was ever heard from again.

SB697 SD1 HD1 holds significant meaning for descendants of the 8,000 people who were forcibly exiled, most never to be seen or heard from again.

The powerful stories of these true practitioners of the spirit of Aloha remain hushed in the dark archives of Hawai`i's history, and a month of recognition is the least that a grateful and compassionate community can offer to its noble citizens.

What started as a tale of grief, loneliness, separation and fear, can be transformed, through this effort, into awakenings of strength, dignity and resilience; powerful lessons for present and future generations, especially, as we confront our own mortality, in this moment of COVID-19. Moreover, it will ensure that such injustice never happens again.

On behalf of my `ohana, and in honor of the late Aunty Pi`olani Motta, who urged us until her last breath to never forget, mai poina `ole, I respectfully request your support for this long-overdue measure.

Mahalo nui loa,

Kehaulani Lum

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chairperson, and Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

House Committee on Finance -- Wednesday, March 31, 1:30 p.m. via videoconference

Regarding SB697

I write in strong support of SB697 SD1 HD1, establishing January as Kalaupapa Month annually across Hawai`i

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

As a founding member of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa and former Executive Director, I write in strong support of a proposal from Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa to designate January as Kalaupapa Month annually in Hawai`i.

Ka 'Ohana is asking that January be designated as Kalaupapa Month annually because so many significant events occurred throughout the history in that month -- and it would be the perfect time to pay tribute annually to Kalaupapa. This was the month when the first 12 citizens of Hawai`i were sent to Kalaupapa; when both of Kalaupapa's Saints -- Father Damien and Mother Marianne -- were born and when the Hawai`i United Church of Christ celebrates Kalaupapa Sunday. Other important events also occurred in January.

Designating a month every year to remember the nearly 8,000 men, women and children who were sent to Kalaupapa will be a wonderful way of bringing these individuals back into the history they helped to create -- so many of them have been left out. It's a way for teachers to include the history of Kalaupapa in their classrooms, for churches to recognize how faith helped people to heal and bond and for families to pay special attention to their ancestors who were at Kalaupapa.

Kalaupapa Month is a way for everyone to get involved in honoring the people of Kalaupapa and their important history -- and it would be a great way to start off each year. The longtime President of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa, Clarence "Boogie" Kahilihiwa, died early this month and we are still mourning his loss. Establishing Kalaupapa Month would be a great honor to him as well as to the thousands of others who died at Kalaupapa before him -- and to their families and friends who carry on their legacies.

I humbly ask for your support of SB697 SD1 HD1, designating January as Kalaupapa Month annually in Hawaii. Thank you for your consideration -- and for your continued service.

Respectfully,



Valerie Monson

vmonson175@gmail.com

SB-697-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 10:47:04 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marci Lyons	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

Bill Number: SB697 SD1 HD1

Hearing: March 31, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. Hawai`i State Capitol, Room 308 via
videoconference

I write in support of SB697 SD1 HD1 Relating to Kalaupapa Month

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance.

My name is Marci Weight Lyons. I am a member of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa. My father, Edward Weight, was born in Kalaupapa in 1930. My Dad was taken from his parents and lived his childhood in an orphanage and various foster homes. My grandparents, who were sent to Kalaupapa, and two of their sons are buried there. My volunteerism with Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa has given me many opportunities to be in Kalaupapa where I discovered several additional family members who are buried there. It is a gift and a blessing to share this awareness of these resting places and family history with my extended 'ohana.

I am asking the Legislature to designate January as Kalaupapa Month to be observed annually in Hawai`i. Kalaupapa Month will be a reminder of the importance of Kalaupapa, the significant historical contributions and the people who were a part of that history. I have had the opportunity to listen to Kalaupapa residents who gave heartfelt testimony of what it means to them to honor those sent to Kalaupapa and to never let them be forgotten. I feel my family who are buried in Kalaupapa would share these sentiments if they could speak for themselves.

I am grateful that Kalaupapa residents, Barbara Marks, Ivy Kahilihiwa, John Arruda, Pauline Chow, Winnie Harada, Gloria Marks and Danny Hashimoto are sending in a letter of support and are still here to speak for themselves and to be heard.

I ask for your support of SB697 SD1 HD1 to establish Kalaupapa Month and I extend my appreciation to Ka Ohana O Kalaupapa for initiating and proposing Kalaupapa Month for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Weight Lyons

marciL.email@gmail.com



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE STATE OF HAWAII
DIOCESE OF HONOLULU
WITNESS TO JESUS

March 30, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance, Hawaii State Capitol

Dear Chair Luke:

Peace be with you!

I am writing in favor of SB 697 SD1 HD1, which would declare January of each year as Kalaupapa Month. As a native of Hawaii whose family has been here for 150 years, I have two relatives who were sent to Kalaupapa with Hansen's disease (a great-grandfather and a great-aunt, his daughter). As the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Honolulu I had the privilege of attending the canonizations of St. Damien and St. Marianne Cope, who continue to inspire us all with their spiritual and humanitarian work in Kalaupapa. We are looking into proposing the cause for canonization as a Saint of Joseph Dutton. I have become acquainted with the story of an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, who was a contemporary of Fr. Damien who became his friend and fellow community leader in Kalaupapa. It has been a blessing to know many of the current patients in Kalaupapa and those who have died there in the past decade or so.

Ka Ohana O Kalaupapa, which represents the current patients at Kalaupapa as well as ohana of current and former patients, has endorsed this bill, and its passage would mean so much to them all. As you know, Kalaupapa is currently mourning the recent death of Clarence "Boogie" Kahilihiwa, who served as President of Ka Ohana O Kalaupapa for many years and who would be very pleased if this bill were passed.

The memory of these and so many others who suffered so much yet who made a life of love and happiness for themselves and their community is one that can perpetually inspire us all. Those stories can be told even more faithfully if the entire month of January is dedicated as Kalaupapa month. Therefore I urge the passage of SB 697 SD1 HD1, and I thank you for your work on this important issue.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Larry Silva
Bishop of Honolulu

Cc: Joseph Lapilio, Executive Director, Ka Ohana O Kalaupapa

RESIDENTS OF KALAUPAPA

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

March 26, 2021

Regarding SB697 SD1 HD1 – Kalaupapa Month

We, write on strong support of SB697 SD1 HD1 -- establishing January as Kalaupapa Month annually in Hawai'i

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Members of the House Finance Committee

We send all of you warm greetings from Kalaupapa, which has been home to each of us signing this letter for more than 50 years. This written testimony shows our strong support for SB697 SD1 HD1 as proposed by Ka Ohana or Kalaupapa – establishing January as Kalaupapa Month annually across Hawai'i.

As envisioned by Ka Ohana, Kalaupapa Month would be a time to celebrate and remember the people of Kalaupapa and our important history -- not just remembering those of us still living but all of the nearly 8000 men, women and children who were taken from their families and isolated here on this peninsula because they were diagnosis with leprosy. Because of the work of Ka Ohana O Kalaupapa, we now know many individuals throughout history by their name along with their many accomplishments.

We would hope that teachers would use Kalaupapa Month to focus on the history of Kalaupapa in their classrooms, that churches would pay tribute to the sacrifices made by those sent to Kalaupapa as well as the families who were left behind and the descendants of Kalaupapa who seek out more information about their ancestors and share their stories.

January is the perfect time for everyone in Hawai'i to observe Kalaupapa Month with many significant dates occurring in Januarys throughout history. It's also a wonderful way to start off the new year.

Mahalo for your time and service to all of us in Hawai'i.

With warmest regards,

Ivy K. Kahiliihiwa
John Arruda
Winifred Harada
Barbara Marks
Pauline Chow
Gloria Marks
Danny Hashimoto

*Support Signatures of
Kalaupapa Residents*

Ivy K. Kahiliihiwa
John Arruda
Winifred Harada
Barbara Marks
Pauline Chow
Gloria Marks
Danny Hashimoto

March 31, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chairman
House Committee on Finance
Hawai`i State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813

Bill Number: SB697, SD1, HD1

Hearing: March 31, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.
Hawai`i State Capitol, Room 308

I write in support of SB697 SD1, HD1, Relating to Kalaupapa Month

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance.

My name is Jodi Puaoi. I am a full time resident of Molokai of 40+ years and have many ties to Kalaupapa residents professionally through American Savings Bank and personally through 3 sons employed with State Department of Health – Kalaupapa. I recently have had the honor of joining the Ka Ohana O Kalaupapa Board, serving as the Treasurer.

I am asking the Legislature to designate January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai`i that will be observed annually. Kalaupapa Month will be an annual reminder to people all over Hawai`i about the importance of Kalaupapa and the significant contributions made by her people throughout the history of Hawai`i.

The names of the people of Kalaupapa have been mostly forgotten over the years and left out of the history that they helped to create. Kalaupapa Month will make certain that they will be forever remembered.

I ask for your support of SB697 SD1 HD1 to establish Kalaupapa Month.

Respectfully submitted,
Jodi Puaoi
Email: jodipuaoi@yahoo.com

SB-697-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 12:59:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mahina Martin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance -

My name is Mahina Martin and my husband is Ben Martin. We are supporters of Ka `Ohana O Kalaupapa. Ben's mother, Mary Davidson Martin, was born on Kalaupapa. We have traveled to Kalaupapa in search of family information and are very grateful for the tremendous efforts of Ka `Ohana O Kalaupapa to bring dignity and recognition for the patients of Kalaupapa, its deep history and for connecting families to the stories of Kalaupapa's people.

We ask that the Legislature designate January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai`i nei. An annual recognition would be an important reminder of the significant history of the place and an acknowledgement of its people.

Thank you for your consideration, it is our hope you will support SB697 SD1 HD1.

Best regards,

Mahina and Ben Martin

Representative Sylvia Luke Chair, House Committee on Finance
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

Testimony of DeGray Vanderbilt degray.vanderbilt@gmail.com

Hearing: March 31, 2021 at 1:30 p.m., conference room 308

Strong Support for SB697 SD1 HD 1 - Relating to designation of January as Kalaupapa Month

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Members of the House Committee on Finance Committee

My name is DeGray Vanderbilt. I am member of the Ka ‘Ohana O Kalaupapa Board of Directors, an organization that the patient residents of Kalaupapa felt needed to be formed to insure that as their numbers grew smaller their voices would continue to be heard and the legacy they envisioned for Kalaupapa’s future would be realized.

The organization is made up of the patient residents, their extended ‘ohana and long-time friends of the Kalaupapa Community.

I’ve had the privilege over the last 27 years of assuming the role of Santa at the Kalaupapa Lion's Club annual Christmas party at Kalaupapa. Over the years I’ve had the privilege of benefitting from the friendship of many residents.

I am testifying today as an individual. In an effort to assist your Committee meet its daunting workload during this Covid period, I will only be providing written testimony.

Many of these accomplishments of Ka ‘Ohana O Kalaupapa have involved educational activities/programs with schools throughout the state; reconnecting more than 800 families with their Kalaupapa ancestors, developing a traveling exhibit on the connection of the Royal Family to Kalaupapa, which has traveled around the State and is currently on display at Iolani Palace; working with the Legislature to pass an apology resolution to the people of Kalaupapa in 2008 and other measures involving the legislature, which have benefitted the residents.

The latest undertaking by the ‘Ohana is the design and construction of the Kalaupapa Memorial, which will list the names of the approximate 8000 names of Hawaii citizens separated from their lives and families because of government's policy tied to a disease, leprosy.

There are less than 1,000 marked graves with identifiable names. The Memorial is to be located in the Kalawao ahupua'a of Kalaupapa just across Damien Road from historic St. Philomena Catholic Church.

In a letter from the Most Reverend Larry Silva, Bishop of the Honolulu Diocese, he shared that the "Memorial would serve as a kind of communal headstone so that all buried on the Peninsula, whether in marked or unmarked graves, could be remembered." He went on to state that establishing the Memorial in Kalawao would enhance the feeling of sacred place and would have the positive effects of, among other things, providing opportunities for educational and interpretation activities

Having January be designated Kalaupapa Month will sustain an awareness and appreciation for this extremely important part of Hawaii's history and will contribute to ensure that its legacy is fulfilled as envisioned by the residents of Kalaupapa.

Your support for SB697 along with the proposed amendment will be greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted

DeGray Vanderbilt

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