

**SR-177**

Submitted on: 3/23/2021 3:11:39 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/29/2021 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Nothing is ever Free. This is Bull Shit!!

March 25, 2021

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SCR 215 / SR 177**  
**Recognizing the Contributions of the Compact of Free Association Community in the State of Hawaii**

Mabuhay Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Keohokalole and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My calling for the last 40 years has been giving access to healthcare and health professional careers to poor and underserved children. The connection I have with the people of the Compact of Free Association with the United States is strong. I was born and partially raised on the island of Kwajalein in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. During my training, I spent time in the Republic of Palau seeing patients. Presently, I practice pediatrics at a Kalihi-Palama Health Center clinic where most of my patients are Chuukese or Marshallese.

The young Pacific Islander youth that I see as patients and students were brought here or born here by parents seeking a better life for them. Unfortunately, most of these children know of, and have internalized, the prejudice, injustice and negligence inflicted by the citizens of our “Aloha State”. One of my Marshallese Early College High School students once told me; “Dr. Ric, they think I’m stupid. I make straight A’s.”

How do we begin to right the wrongs perpetrated upon the peaceful Pacific Island people, many of whom we displaced, blew up their islands, and made their homes inhabitable? Recognizing their contributions to the security and economy of the United States is a start. It sends a message to Pacific Island children that their lives matter, that they are not inferior, and that there is hope.

Salamat for your time,

*Custodio*

“Dr. Ric”

Ricardo C. Custodio, M.D., M.P.H.

Principle Investigator, Co-Faculty, DOH-UH Community Contact Tracer Training Program

Principle Investigator, UH West O’ahu Health Career Opportunity Program

Tenured Associate Professor of Health Science, University of Hawaii West Oahu

Practicing Pediatrician, Kalihi-Palama Health Center

Founder, Former Associate Professor & Regional Director of Medical Education, A.T. Stills

University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona, Waianae Community Campus

Former Medical & Training Director, Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center

Former Medical Director, Kalihi-Palama Health Center & Bay Clinic, Inc.

Reede Scholar in Minority Health Policy, Harvard University

**SR-177**

Submitted on: 3/25/2021 11:02:11 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/29/2021 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Christy MacPherson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SR177. I have worked with members of the COFA community in Hawai'i for many years, from my time supporting COFA families in their search for housing and through advocacy and community organizing. Their contributions to our economy, educational system, culture, and society are significant and should be acknowledged and appreciated by the State of Hawai'i.

**SR-177**

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 3:17:46 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/29/2021 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
J.R. Kealoha	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This resolution is incredibly problematic because it doesn't express any real or meaningful appreciation of the contributions of the COFA community. Instead, this resolution is mostly concerned with the strategic value of the COFA relationship; the implication is that we should support the COFA countries and COFA migrants so that we can use them to further our own economic/military conquests. Ironically, there is no mention of the fact that their current problems are deeply rooted in colonialism (and exacerbated by racism and apathy). At best, this resolution is ignorant and callous; at worst, it's thinly veiled racism and neo-colonialism.

**LATE**

**SR-177**

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 12:13:28 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/29/2021 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
chelsea pang	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support

COFA partners are important members of our society