

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



KENNETH S. HARA
MAJOR GENERAL
ADJUTANT GENERAL

STEPHEN F. LOGAN
BRIGADIER GENERAL
DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816-4495

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1421
RELATING TO A MEMORIAL

PRESENTATION TO
THE COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS, MILITARY, & VETERANS

BY

MAJOR GENERAL KENNETH S. HARA
ADJUTANT GENERAL
DIRECTOR OF THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
AND HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISOR

FEBRUARY 16, 2022

Chair Ohno, Vice Chair Ganaden, and Members of the Committee on Corrections, Military, & Veterans.

I am Major General Kenneth Hara, Adjutant General, Director of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency and Homeland Security Advisor.

The Department of Defense (DOD) provides written testimony in **SUPPORT** of HB 1421.

This measure, if passed, would authorize the issuance of bonds and appropriates funds for plans and design of a veterans' memorial, and replicas of the memorial on each neighbor island, as recommended by the Gulf War memorial task force pursuant to Act 139, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013. This Global War on Terrorism Memorial will honor and pay homage to those service members who paid the ultimate sacrifice with ties from Hawaii in one of the longest war campaigns in modern history. These memorials will be an important site for reflection and remembrance for families and for those who served, not just in this conflict and generation, but for all generations.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1421.

The DOD supports the intent expressed in this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

MG Kenneth S. Hara@hawaii.gov; 808-672-1001



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES
459 PATTERSON RD, E-WING, RM 1-A103
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1421
RELATING TO A MEMORIAL

PRESENTATION TO
THE COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS, MILITARY, & VETERANS

BY

RONALD P. HAN JR.
DIRECTOR, STATE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

FEBRUARY 16, 2022

Chair Ohno, Vice Chair Ganaden, and Members of the Committee on Corrections, Military, & Veterans.

I am Ron Han, Director, State Office of Veterans Services (OVS) and I am providing written testimony in strong **SUPPORT** of HB 1421.

This measure, if passed, would authorize the issuance of bonds and appropriate funds for plans and design of a veterans' memorial, and replicas of the memorial on each neighbor island, as recommended by the Gulf War memorial task force pursuant to Act 139, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013. This Global War on Terrorism Memorial has gone through seven years of promising legislation only to fall short year after year. Honoring and paying tribute to our service members who paid the ultimate sacrifice in this extended conflict that has lasted over 20 years is long overdue.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1421.

The OVS supports the intent expressed in this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

Director Ron Han; ronald.p.han@hawaii.gov , (808) 433-0422

HB-1421

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 11:42:32 AM

Testimony for CMV on 2/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Blair Suzuki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Members of the House Committee on Corrections, Military, and Veterans,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of HB1421. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of a Veterans' Memorial for Gulf War and GWOT Veterans.

Now that the conflicts in the Gulf have officially ended, it is important for us as a State and Community to recognize the sacrifice of those service members that paid the ultimate price in defending our nation's freedoms.

The Global War on Terror is the longest conflict in our nation's history and refers to the period of continuous overseas military conflicts that followed the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. Over 6 million men and women served in the military during the Gulf Wars and the Global Wars on Terror. Together they constitute 25% of the total living veteran population. Since 9/11, approximately 6,967 servicemembers have died and over 52,000 have been wounded.

In 2013, the State's Gulf War Memorial Task Force developed a plan to establish a memorial honoring the veterans of the Persian Gulf War, Operation Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation New Dawn, Global War on Terroism, Homeland Defense, and Operation Noble Eagle, and those who have protected our borders by land, sea, and air. The Gulf War Memorial Task Force recommended to the State Legislature and Governor of the State of Hawaii the construction of a memorial with a prime location at the Hawaii State Veteran's Cemetery and replicas on each neighbor island across the State. This bill picks up where this task force report left off and authorizes money to fund the design and development of these memorials.

These memorials will provide veterans and their families, especially Gold Star families a permanent place in our State for reflecting, healing, and honoring those who served in these conflicts.

As a Hawaii-born resident who served in the Global War on Terror for 7 years, this memorial commemorates the sacrifice for those members I have served with who are no longer here today. The memorial would also provide a gathering place for those of us veterans who are still here today, and acknowledge our service to America's longest conflict.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit testimony and for all your support of our veteran community and for all your efforts to serve the people of Hawaii.

Thank you,

Blair Suzuki

Vice-Chair

State Advisory Board on Veterans' Services

HB-1421

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 4:07:49 PM

Testimony for CMV on 2/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Carlos Santana	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It is time for the State of Hawaii to show support and appreciation for the sacrifices of our service members. This memorial will serve as a place of remembrance for those who gave their lives in the service of our community.

HB-1421

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 7:12:23 PM

Testimony for CMV on 2/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support the establishment of a Veteran's Memorial for honoring all of those involved with any of the Middle East conflicts. Please pass this bill.

Although I'm submitting this testimony as an individual, I am the Vice-Chair, Veterans Caucus, DPH, and a past Chair of the Advisory Board to the Hawaii Office of Veterans' Services.

Mike Golojuch, Lt Col, USAF(Ret)

HB-1421

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 8:43:42 PM

Testimony for CMV on 2/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Reyn Kaupiko	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Legislative Committee,

I write in strong support of HB1421.

I have sacrificed first hand as a Veteran in support of both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, conflicts being honored by this memorial.

This will give an oppurtunity for familes to have closrure for their loved ones.

In addition, this will allow surviving veterans to pay their respects to those they worked alongside with.

Mahalo,

Reyn Kaupiko

HB-1421

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 10:26:21 PM

Testimony for CMV on 2/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Francis DK Dumlao	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

as a local vertan I support this bill.

HB-1421

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 1:04:38 PM

Testimony for CMV on 2/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kenan Knieriem	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair and members of the Committee,

I am in strong support of this Bill as a tool to memorialize and celebrate our veterans, many of whom benefit from physical memorials such as this to commemorate not only their personal sacrifices to our country but also the sacrifices of their peers and family members who also sacrifice when service members answer the call to serve and protect our freedoms.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Kenan Knieriem Jr.

TO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2022

COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS, MILITARY, & VETERANS
Rep. Takashi Ohno, Chair
Rep. Sonny Ganaden, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Members

Re: HB1421

POSITION: **STRONG SUPPORT HB1421**

Aloha Chairs and Members,

I stand in strong support of as to the intent and language of HB1421, as our nations forces has been called to serve in harm's way once again, we should likewise honor their sacrifice. Time away from their families and loved ones, a request for the issuance of bonds for plans and design of a veterans in each neighbor island, as recommended by the Gulf War memorial task force Is a small token to pay respects to those who answered the call and for some making the ultimate sacrifice.

This bill allows for the issuance of bonds and appropriates funds as recommended by the Gulf War memorial task force pursuant to Act 139, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013. This bill has board range of support to include the veterans caucus of the democratic party. Please pass this bill out of this joint committee. Passage will signify this legislative bodies commitment to recognize the service provided by veterans. Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony.

Mahalo,

Ken Farm

HB-1421

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 2:16:50 PM

Testimony for CMV on 2/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Bryan Trumbower	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

YES, I am in support of a Veterans memorial and a lot more. To be honest though, statues are insulting if the leaders who put them up are not invested in actually maintaining them. Let's not build something that we only pretend to care about. As a Veteran here in Hawaii I feel ashamed of the state for the level of disrepair our Waikiki memorial has fallen into. The significance of WAR has clearly been lost on our leaders in Hawaii. All around the memorial you see significant capital invested in maintaining the aesthetic aspects of the area. Everywhere except the WAR memorial. People from around the world come to our state, most to Waikiki, and they see a WAR memorial that's been left to rot. What a perfect analogy for how our states leaders view and prioritize WAR, its Veterans, and essentially anything that's not tourism or defense. The place looks like an ancient ruin, not a WAR memorial built only a few decades ago. Ignored and forgotten, just like the WAR's and their Veterans, and the lessons that were supposed to prevent the same mistakes from the same party politicians.

And as we build this, we must commit to resolving the problems that the WAR caused. We must take WAR seriously. A country whose leaders ignore the significance of WAR, the Veterans and the real costs, is not a very good country. I'm the type of Veteran who thinks 'Thank you for your service,' is insulting. We never learn from past WAR's. We leave our Veterans to shoulder the entire burden and the only relief we offer is a VA that does more to hurt Veterans than help. And worst of all, we never accept responsibility for our failures. Only Veterans understand this experience. So, when we make this memorial to our Veterans, I say we make it one of real truth and significance to represent the reality in the Veteran world. Rather than the same old shit, like a soldier in uniform kneeling. Let's make one of a homeless man on the street next to some tourist douchebag, or a suicidal veteran in the VA parking lot. Or a family member entering a room to find their loved one dead from suicide. Let's not self-gratify like I know you want to. Let's resist the urge and see if truth works. Maybe when the public sees the truth, the Veteran will get real help rather than "thanks for your service."

Our leaders need to take the time to better understand not only WAR but what our Veterans are currently dealing with. We need to take these issues serious and hold those responsible accountable when they fail at their mission. Our leaders need to take ownership of past failures and prioritize pressuring the local VA to DO THEIR JOB!!! Not convince the public with Veteran resources everything is perfect, and nothing is wrong. Call them out like the NAVY and REDHILL...

Bryan Trumbower

OIF Veteran

HB-1421

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 4:44:08 PM

Testimony for CMV on 2/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
David Brostrom	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a Gold Star Father whose son was Killed In Action on July 13,2008 in Wanat Afghanistan. There are dozens of U.S. Military who were assigned to active, guard and reserve units stationed in Hawaii or were citizens of Hawaii that dutifully deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan, some even multiple times, before giving the ultimate sacrifice. The Global War on Terror is still on going in perpetuity. Afghanistan was the longest war in America's history. The United States still has military forces deployed to Iraq, Syria, Philippines and other areas fighting terrorists. It is only fitting that the State of Hawaii authorize funding for bid and proposal for the intial design of a modest Memorial that honors those who sacrificed their lives supporting the Global War on Terror. The War on Terror is not ending, has not subsided and requires a memorial that would be built to honor our military stationed in Hawaii that have given the ultimate sacrifice whether it was 30 years ago and most recently. This Memorial would be located on the grounds of the existing Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery in Kaneohe. This memorial is the right thing to do.