

Kyle K.S. Okimoto
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RE: HB2218
Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committee
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu HI 96813

Dear Chairman Nakashima, Vice Chairman Matayoshi and Members of the House Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committee:

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.

JHA Committee Members – thank you for your tireless work in service of my beloved home state.

With warm aloha from New York City,

Kyle K.S. Okimoto

Hawaii State Legislature
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Representative Mark M. Nakashima, Chair
Representative Scot Z. Matayoshi, Vice Chair

Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 2218, the Frank T. Okimoto Reef Runway. This bill would designate runway 89-26L at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport as the Frank T. Okimoto Reef Runway.

I am Lionel Y. Tokioka and have known 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, his accomplishments as an engineer, respect for the land, and his spirit lives on in his family, friends, and colleagues. While this legislation will not bring him back, it will pay tribute to not just Frank's accomplishments, but emphasize 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.B. 2218.

Lionel Y. Tokioka

HB-2218

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 11:13:20 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2022 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Maizie Okimoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi and members of the Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee:

My name is Maizie Okimoto and I am writing in support of HB2218. Frank Okimoto was my husband.

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. He was a very careful planner in all things, from the kind of car we would drive during the trip to the amount of trunk space it had. He had pre-ordered a car with the correct trunk specifications from a car dealership in Oregon where our trip began.

Frank used the same kind of careful planning on the Reef Runway as he did with practical matters like good decisions on this road trip to keep his family happily travelling for two weeks. He left a legacy of enjoyment of travel to his children. Frank would be happy to know that the Reef Runway he carefully planned has helped bring enjoyment to the many travelers that come and go on it.

One of my children's favorite memories is their dad driving them and a few elementary school friends on the Reef Runway before it was open to air traffic. Naming the Reef Runway in his honor would mean a lot to my family. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Maizie M. Okimoto

LATE

Testimony by: R. Scott Simon, P.E. (Hawaii resident with Calif. engineering license)

Testimony in Support of HB 2218: RELATING TO THE FRANK T. OKIMOTO REEF RUNWAY.

The Reef Runway at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport is truly an unsung hero among our state's critical infrastructure: essential to tourism and air travel of local residents; vital to the air transport of essential goods and supplies; and innovative as the world's first major runway built offshore – creating the vast acreage required in an innovative and environmentally responsible way.

Likewise, the expert, committed work of civil engineers throughout Hawai'i can often be taken for granted. While educators and business leaders urge the promotion of STEM learning and careers, an impactful way to draw positive attention to excellence and achievement by homegrown engineering talent within the State of Hawai'i Dept. of Transportation would be through the designation of the Reef Runway as the "Frank T. Okimoto Reef Runway."

Frank T. Okimoto embodied STEM and environmental stewardship decades before those terms gained popularity. Educated at Roosevelt High School and the University of Hawai'i, Mr. Okimoto was an airports civil engineer from 1967 until his untimely passing in 1978. Today, approximately forty-four years later, Mr. Okimoto's dedication to betterment of our community through pioneering infrastructure engineering continues to serve our state. Engineers in the public and private sectors can benefit from learning about Mr. Okimoto's distinguished career.

As a civil engineer myself by education and earlier career experience, I am struck by the magnitude of national awards earned by the Reef Runway under Mr. Okimoto as project engineer:

- NSPE's Outstanding Engineering Achievements Award in 1977 (only ten awarded nationally);
- FAA's Aviation Environment Award (second time ever awarded).

Such awards indicate a truly remarkable project executed with great care to success.

As a long-time friend to several generations of Mr. Okimoto's family, I can attest that the Okimoto family carries on his traditions of strong character, excellence, and service to the community.

For the above reasons, I strongly support HB 2218. Thank you for your consideration.