

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor



Lee E. Lord
Managing Director

Robert H. Command
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i
Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

April 13, 2022

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
Rep. Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair
Committee on Culture, Arts & International Affairs

Hawai'i State Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

**Subject: SCR 179 SD 1 DESIGNATION MARCH 10 AS ENEWETAK ATOLL
(MARSHALL ISLANDS) LIBERATION DAY**

Hearing Date: Wednesday, April 13, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.
Time/Place of Hearing: Via Video Conference
Conference Room 329

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam and Water and committee members;

On behalf of the County of Hawai'i, I am expressing my unequivocal support for SCR 179 SD 1 which would designate March 10th as Enewetak Liberation Day.

The County of Hawai'i recently participated in a very successful Enewetak Liberation Day event with our Marshallese Community in South Kona on March 10, 2022. I believe that formal recognition of this important date will raise awareness of the 44 U.S. nuclear bomb testing and cleanup programs on Enewetak Atoll, and will also provide opportunities for the Marshallese community to display the culture, resilience, and harmony they contribute to Hawai'i.

Your consideration of this resolution is sincerely appreciated.

Mahalo,

for Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor
County of Hawai'i

SCR-179-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/13/2022 8:54:41 AM

Testimony for CAI on 4/13/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jane Clement	County of Hawaii Office of the Mayor	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha,

Our written testimony will be uploaded separately.

Mahalo,

Jane Clement

SCR-179-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/12/2022 1:28:55 PM

Testimony for CAI on 4/13/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Anitok	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Esteem Members of the House Committee on Labor, Culture, and The Arts,

My name is David Anitok from the Marshall Islands residing now with families and community from Enewetak living and raising their children in Ocean View Island of Hawaii. I urge your support for this as an advocate so their kids and our children will never forget the history and adversaries their grandparents had to endure during the World War II as important part of their labor and culture, and the arts of who we are. Thank you for the opportunity.

David Anitok

TO: Culture, Arts, International Affairs (CAI)

Chair: Cedric Asuega Gates

Vice Chair : Adrian K. Tam

Bill: SCR179 SD1 , Hearing 4-12-2022

Date: April 11, 2022

From: Neal A. Palafox MD MPH

Dear Chair Gates and Vice Chair Tam,

My name is Neal A. Palafox MD MPH. I was born and raised in Hawaii , a resident of Hawaii and work for the John A. Burns School for Medicine, University of Hawaii. I actively work with four COVID-19 response teams for the in the State of Hawaii, have worked an lived in the Republic of the Marshall Islands for 9 ½ years, and have worked with the Enewetak community in Ocean View for over 15 years. The views in this testimony are my own, and do not necessarily represent the State institutions where I am employed or which I work.

SB 2883 is intended to:

DESIGNATE MARCH 10 AS ENEWETAK ATOLL (MARSHALL ISLANDS) LIBERATION DAY

Enewetak Atoll , one the most North Western Atolls in the Republic of the Marshall islands , was occupied by the Japanese Military between 1914 through 1944. Fierce combat raged on different parts of Enewetak atoll between the Japanese and American forces during February 1944 as part of a major strategic encounter in the World War II Pacific war arena. After 2 weeks of ground combat and air bombing the American Forces prevailed liberating the Enewetak peoples. March 10th was the official designated liberation day, the 10th symbolizing coming out of their hiding in great fear for more than 10 days of the raging battle for Enewetak .

Enewetak then was used as one of two atolls in the Marshall Islands for above ground US Nuclear Weapons testing between 1946 to 1958. The island landscape was forever changed as a result of nuclear destruction, the Enewetak peoples were moved to accommodate the testing, and the northern part of Enewetak atoll currently remains contaminated with radioactive particles from the nuclear testing.

When they could, many of the Enewetak peoples began to resettle in a safer environment. Over many years the families found themselves settling in the lava fields of Ocean View , Hawaii Island --- located in Ka'u the Southern tip of Hawaii Islands. . There were no electrical lines, running water, or sewer facilities in this area when they began to settle their Enewetak community the 1990's , and there still is are no electrical lines, running water , or city sewage facilities for their community in 2022. Together they worked and evolved as a community and now thrive.

Recognizing March 10th as Liberation Day , the State of Hawaii and the Enewetak community recognizes their resilience , ie the positive adaptation of the Enewetak individuals and the community to an environment of adversity. The community has found a path to self- determination and reconciliation in its world view since the Japanese Occupation.

The Enewetak Community has kept its identity and cultural practices which has promoted its ability to thrive. As the community develops and further integrates into Hawaii's larger community, there is much to be learned about their resilience and ability to thrive in great adversity. The Enewetak community assets should be formally recognized, celebrated, and held up as a model from which to learn.