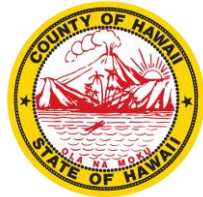


Maile Medeiros David
Council Chair
Council District 6
(Portion N. S. Kona/Ka'ū /Volcano)



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HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

County of Hawai'i
West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

April 12, 2022

Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Honorable Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair
Committee on Health, Human Services & Homelessness
Conference Room 329 & Via Videoconference

Re: SCR181 SD1 – Requests the County of Hawai'i to conduct a feasibility study on the Creation of a Marshallese Community Center in Hawaiian Ocean View Estates.

Honorable Chair Yamane and Vice Chair Tam:

On behalf of myself and as Councilmember representing the rural districts of South Kona, Ka'ū and Volcano Village (Council District 6), I express my support of SCR181 SD1 relating to conducting a feasibility study to create a Marshallese Community Center in Hawaiian Ocean View Estates.

As you may know, many of the Ka'ū residents face cultural, financial, and geographical barriers that prevent them from accessing much needed services in rural areas such as my Council District of Ka'ū. The creation of a Marshallese Community Center in Hawaiian Ocean View Estates will assist the Marshallese community by providing various informational services, social support, health care, and group activities.

Mahalo a nui loa for your favorable consideration.

Very truly yours,

Maile David

Maile David, Council Member
Council District 6, S. Kona, Ka'ū, and Volcano Village

SCR-181-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/13/2022 9:17:17 AM

Testimony for HHH on 4/14/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Anitok	COFA Alliance National Network	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee. I will be appearing remotely to testify in support. Thank you so much for this opportunity.

David Anitok

TO: House Health, Human Services and Homeless (HHH)

Chair: Ryan Yamane

Vice Chair : Adrian K. Tam

Bill: SCR181 SD1 , Hearing 4-14-2022

Date: April 12, 2022

From: Neal A. Palafox MD MPH

Dear Chair Yamane and Vice Chair Tam,

My Testimony is in Strong Support for SCR 181 SD!

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 and lived in the Republic of the Marshall Islands for 9 ½ years, and have worked with the Enewetak community in Ocean View intermittently for about 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.

SCR 181 SD1 is intended to:

REQUESTS THE COUNTY OF HAWAI‘I TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE CREATION OF A MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY CENTER IN HAWAIIAN OCEAN VIEW ESTATES .

Enewetak Atoll , one the most North Western Atolls in the Republic of the Marshal 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 strong Marshallese community and now thrive.

The organized response of the Marshallese Community in Ocean View with the Hawaii State, Hawaii County and other Pacific Islander Partners highlighted how an organized and resilient community can overcome language barriers, lack of transportation, lack of health insurance, lack of translators, discrimination, and challenged health literacy to do well in the pandemic in spite of the living conditions in Ocean View. A Marshallese Community Center in Ocean View will promote and enhance the community resilience, ie the positive adaptation of the Marshallese individuals and the community to an environment of adversity.

The Community Center will enable further community action (health, education, welfare), shared community responsibility and a place and space for the Marshallese culture and history to thrive and be remembered. A Marshallese Community Center is a symbol of the village, its gathering house and a place of continuing leadership. A Marshallese Community Center is a further way to enhance the Marshallese path to self- determination and reconciliation in its world view.

The Enewetak Marshallese 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 Marshallese Enewetak community assets should be formally recognized, celebrated, and held up as a model from which to learn.