
HOUSE RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF ETHNIC STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY
OF HAWAI'I AT MĀNOA.

1 WHEREAS, it is an honor for the House of Representatives to
2 recognize programs and institutions that have put the State of
3 Hawai'i at the forefront of academic and cultural conversations
4 surrounding issues relating to social justice and race
5 relations; and

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7 WHEREAS, the DEPARTMENT OF ETHNIC STUDIES at the University
8 of Hawai'i at Mānoa emerged as a response and outgrowth of the
9 tumultuous civil rights, anti-war, ethnic empowerment, and
10 students' rights sentiments of the 1960s; and

11
12 WHEREAS, officially established in 1970, the DEPARTMENT OF
13 ETHNIC STUDIES was designed to focus on race and ethnicity in
14 the State of Hawai'i, United States, and Pacific for students to
15 think critically about society and pop culture and embrace
16 multiculturalism; and

17
18 WHEREAS, ethnic studies in Hawai'i allowed for student and
19 faculty engagement in land struggles at Kalama Valley, Waiāhole-
20 Waikāne, Kaho'olawe, and Chinatown during the 1960s and became a
21 beacon for learning, research, and community service connected
22 to Hawai'i's multiethnic population; and

23
24 WHEREAS, the DEPARTMENT OF ETHNIC STUDIES offers a major,
25 Bachelor of Arts degree, and certificate in ethnic studies, as
26 well as a combined Bachelor's and Master's degree in ethnic
27 studies and education; the undergraduate program strives to
28 address local, regional, national, and global problems by taking
29 an 'āina-based and ocean-based approach to its four focal areas
30 of migration, social justice, oceanic connections, and
31 engagement; and



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2 WHEREAS, scholars within the DEPARTMENT OF ETHNIC STUDIES
3 hone in on the intersectionality of race, ethnicity,
4 indigeneity, class, gender, and sexuality in Hawai'i and analyze
5 inequalities through a social justice lens to guide teachings in
6 an ever-changing political and social landscape; and
7

8 WHEREAS, the DEPARTMENT OF ETHNIC STUDIES thrived under the
9 directorship of Franklin Odo, who believed ethnic studies were
10 critical in exploring race relations and how they impact the
11 lives of working-class people; and
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13 WHEREAS, born and raised in Hawai'i and a proud graduate of
14 Kaimukī High School and the Asian Studies programs at Princeton
15 University and Harvard University, Franklin Odo lobbied the
16 University of Hawai'i at Mānoa for additional positions within
17 the department and higher pay and encouraged professors to
18 obtain academic credentials expected of any university faculty;
19 and
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21 WHEREAS, balancing academics and activism was of chief
22 importance to Franklin Odo; one of his main philosophies was to
23 take the theories discussed in the classroom and apply them to
24 benefit the larger community, not just to teach the community
25 but to learn from them as well, and always find a way to include
26 a focus on Native Hawaiians; and
27

28 WHEREAS, the success of the DEPARTMENT OF ETHNIC STUDIES is
29 also due to its faculty members, Roderick N. Labrador, Davianna
30 Pōmaika'i McGregor, Ethan Caldwell, Monisha Das Gupta, Ulla
31 Hasager, Richard C. Rath, Ty P. Kāwika Tengen, Ibrahim G. Aoude,
32 Noel Kent, and Jonathan Y. Okamura, who continue to carry on the
33 responsibilities and legacy of this critically important program
34 every day; now, therefore,
35

36 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
37 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular
38 Session of 2023, that this body hereby recognizes the DEPARTMENT
39 OF ETHNIC STUDIES at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, commends
40 its outstanding efforts and strides in ethnic studies, and



H.R. NO. 223

1 extends its warmest aloha and best wishes for continued success
2 in all future endeavors.

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OFFERED BY: Allen A. Bellotti

MAR 31 2023

