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February 5, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE & ARTS

TESTIMONY ON HB 957
RELATING TO LAULAU DAY

Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
10:30 AM

Aloha Chair Kapela, Vice-Chair Kong, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 957, which designates May 1 of each year as "Laulau Day" in the State. Laulau is an iconic dish in Hawaiian cuisine, deeply tied to both the cultural and agricultural traditions of Hawai'i.

Recognizing Laulau Day not only celebrates the cultural importance of laulau but also highlights the farmers and ranchers who provide the essential ingredients that make this dish possible. Kalo farming has been a foundation of Hawaiian agriculture for generations, with its leaves and corms serving as a staple food source. Traditionally used in cooking, medicine, and cultural practices, Ti leaves remain an important part of local agriculture. Hawai'i's pork industry also contributes to the production of laulau, further supporting local food sustainability.

Establishing Laulau Day provides a valuable opportunity to celebrate the traditions of Native Hawaiian culture and promote greater awareness of the time-honored practices that have been preserved and shared across generations. It also serves as an opportunity to recognize the farmers, ranchers, and food producers who sustain Hawai'i's agricultural industry. Promoting the use of locally grown ingredients in laulau preparation helps strengthen the state's food security, reduces dependence on imports, and supports Hawai'i's farming communities.

We encourage the committee to pass HB 957 to recognize this culturally significant dish while also celebrating and supporting Hawai'i's agricultural industry. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 2:35:45 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rynetta K	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I write in strong support of HB957. Laulau represents the resilience, history, and cultural identity of the Hawaiian people. Hawaii has already recognized cultural observances such as Kimchi Day, Buddha Day, and Sakada Day, highlighting the contributions of diverse ethnic groups in our State. Establishing Laulau Day would ensure Hawaiian culture is honored in the same way.

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 2:42:16 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Davina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kapela and Vice Chair Kong, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Davina, and I am writing in **strong support** of **HB957**, which seeks to designate **Laulau Day** as an annual celebration of Hawaiian culture, honoring the significance of this traditional dish and the people who perpetuate it.

Laulau is more than just food—it represents the resilience, history, and cultural identity of the Hawaiian people. From the farmers who cultivate kalo (taro) and luau leaves to the chefs and families who prepare it with care, laulau embodies a deep connection to ‘āina (land), sustainability, and community.

Hawai‘i has already recognized cultural observances such as **Kimchi Day, Buddha Day, and Sakada Day**, highlighting the contributions of diverse ethnic groups in our state. Establishing **Laulau Day** would ensure that **Hawaiian culture is honored in the same way**, celebrating not only a beloved food staple but also the economic, historical, and cultural significance it holds.

For many, laulau has also served as a means of economic empowerment. I personally have [share a brief personal connection—e.g., "participated in laulau fundraisers for school/sports" or "learned to make laulau as a way to stay connected to my heritage"]. This measure provides an opportunity to **recognize Hawaiian traditions and ensure they continue to thrive for future generations**.

I **respectfully urge** the committee to pass **HB957** and formally establish Laulau Day as a recognized cultural observance in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Davina

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 2:43:38 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nelson	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kapela and Vice Chair Kong, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nelson, and I am writing in **strong support** of **HB957**, which seeks to designate **Laulau Day** as an annual celebration of Hawaiian culture, honoring the significance of this traditional dish and the people who perpetuate it.

Laulau is more than just food—it represents the resilience, history, and cultural identity of the Hawaiian people. From the farmers who cultivate kalo (taro) and luau leaves to the chefs and families who prepare it with care, laulau embodies a deep connection to ‘āina (land), sustainability, and community.

Hawai‘i has already recognized cultural observances such as **Kimchi Day, Buddha Day, and Sakada Day**, highlighting the contributions of diverse ethnic groups in our state. Establishing **Laulau Day** would ensure that **Hawaiian culture is honored in the same way**, celebrating not only a beloved food staple but also the economic, historical, and cultural significance it holds.

For many, laulau has also served as a means of economic empowerment. I personally have [share a brief personal connection—e.g., "participated in laulau fundraisers for school/sports" or "learned to make laulau as a way to stay connected to my heritage"]. This measure provides an opportunity to **recognize Hawaiian traditions and ensure they continue to thrive for future generations**.

I **respectfully urge** the committee to pass **HB957** and formally establish Laulau Day as a recognized cultural observance in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Nelson

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:15:21 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Conan K Donahue	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:16:59 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sierra Revilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:20:31 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Montgomery Meyer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB957

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:20:45 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Liam Wilmott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am In strong support of bill HB957

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:21:35 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Al Savea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:22:12 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Collin Mansanas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support HB957

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:22:31 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anapuni Coleman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:22:33 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robbie Paikai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:25:03 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Darby ventura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support HB957.

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:26:36 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Enriquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

strongly support HB957

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:28:04 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kona Makaula	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:28:11 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Makana Fronda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:30:51 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
anthony padilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of hb957

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:30:57 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Dolan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of HB957.

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:33:29 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cole B Kashimoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:37:35 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin Dunhour	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:38:22 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aaron Miyashiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957.

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:39:38 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tyler Yuu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:55:29 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pomai Kalama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of HB957!

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 4:06:42 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support Lau Lau Day

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 4:24:08 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tai-ni Hsia	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kapela and Vice Chair Kong, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Tai-ni Hsia and I am writing in **strong support** of **HB957**, which seeks to designate **Laulau Day** as an annual celebration of Hawaiian culture, honoring the significance of this traditional dish and the people who perpetuate it.

Laulau is more than just food—it represents the resilience, history, and cultural identity of the Hawaiian people. From the farmers who cultivate kalo (taro) and luau leaves to the chefs and families who prepare it with care, laulau embodies a deep connection to ‘āina (land), sustainability, and community.

Hawai‘i has already recognized cultural observances such as **Kimchi Day, Buddha Day, and Sakada Day**, highlighting the contributions of diverse ethnic groups in our state. Establishing **Laulau Day** would ensure that **Hawaiian culture is honored in the same way**, celebrating not only a beloved food staple but also the economic, historical, and cultural significance it holds.

For many, laulau has also served as a means of economic empower. This measure provides an opportunity to **recognize Hawaiian traditions and ensure they continue to thrive for future generations**.

I **respectfully urge** the committee to pass **HB957** and formally establish Laulau Day as a recognized cultural observance in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Tai-ni Hsia

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 4:28:56 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Imiloa Koka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957.

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 5:09:46 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heide Kila	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kapela and Vice Chair Kong, and Members of the Committee,
My name is Heide Kila and I am writing in strong support of HB957, which seeks to designate Laulau Day as an annual celebration of Hawaiian culture, honoring the significance of this traditional dish and the people who perpetuate it.

Laulau is more than just food—it represents the resilience, history, and cultural identity of the Hawaiian people. From the farmers who cultivate kalo (taro) and luau leaves to the chefs and families who prepare it with care, laulau embodies a deep connection to ‘āina (land), sustainability, and community.

Hawai‘i has already recognized cultural observances such as Kimchi Day, Buddha Day, and Sakada Day, highlighting the contributions of diverse ethnic groups in our state. Establishing Laulau Day would ensure that Hawaiian culture is honored in the same way, celebrating not only a beloved food staple but also the economic, historical, and cultural significance it holds.

For many, laulau has also served as a means of economic empowerment. I personally have [share a brief personal connection—e.g., "participated in laulau fundraisers for school/sports" or "learned to make laulau as a way to stay connected to my heritage"]. This measure provides an opportunity to recognize Hawaiian traditions and ensure they continue to thrive for future generations.

I know firsthand how Laulau brings people together. I’m the owner of Papa Laulau LLC and we sell Laulau! I always say an “ONO Laulau always take me back to the Good ole days of when I was growing up as a child and at family Luaus. When Laulau was being served you know there’s gonna be Onolicious food! At a young age we were taught how to make Laulau as an Ohana everyone’s hands would play a part in this process from the kupuna to keiki. Definitely good memories of Better days. Doing this as a business going on 8 years good food still brings the ohana to the table and at that moment gives you a chance to talk story with your ohana. We have customers that would reminisce about their past when their ohana would make Laulau. The luau leaf from the Kalo plant which is needed to make Laulau represents Resilience it looks soft but it is super strong. It keeps itself together even in the windiest days!! It’s not Easily broken!

I respectfully urge the committee to pass HB957 and formally establish Laulau Day as a recognized cultural observance in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully, Heide Kila Papa Laulau LLC Owner 808-275-6061

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 5:24:21 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tia pearson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is **Tia Pearson** and I am writing in **strong support** of **HB957**, which seeks to designate **Laulau Day** as an annual celebration of Hawaiian culture, honoring the significance of this traditional dish and the people who perpetuate it.

This measure provides an opportunity to **recognize Hawaiian traditions and ensure they continue to thrive for future generations.**

I **respectfully urge** the committee to pass **HB957** and formally establish Laulau Day as a recognized cultural observance in Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Tia Pearson

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 5:33:27 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jarred Burns	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 5:52:08 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wade Terlep	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 6:43:33 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Makai Freitas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of HB 957.

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 7:10:33 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chair Kapela, Vice Chair Kong, and Members of the Committee,

Aloha, my name is Nanea Lo, and **I am writing in strong support of HB957**, which seeks to designate Laulau Day as an annual celebration of Hawaiian culture. This bill is not just about honoring a beloved dish—it is about recognizing the resilience, history, and identity of Kānaka Maoli and ensuring that our traditions are celebrated and perpetuated for generations to come.

Laulau is more than just food; it is a symbol of our deep connection to ‘āina (land), sustainability, and community. From the farmers who cultivate kalo (taro) and lu‘au leaves to the families and chefs who prepare it with care, laulau represents the collective effort and knowledge that has sustained our people for centuries. The practice of making laulau is an embodiment of Hawaiian values.

Hawai‘i has already recognized cultural observances such as Kimchi Day, Buddha Day, and Sakada Day, which highlight the contributions of various ethnic communities in the islands. Establishing Laulau Day ensures that Hawaiian culture receives the same recognition and appreciation. This is an opportunity to uplift Kānaka Maoli traditions and reaffirm our place in our homeland.

For many, laulau has also served as a means of economic empowerment. I personally have participated in laulau fundraisers for school and community initiatives, and I have learned to make laulau as a way to stay connected to my kūpuna. These experiences have reinforced the importance of food sovereignty and the need to protect and celebrate our traditional practices.

By passing HB957, we ensure that laulau is more than just a dish—it remains a living legacy of our people. I respectfully urge the committee to support this measure and formally establish Laulau Day as a recognized cultural observance in Hawai‘i.

Me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo

Mō‘ili‘ili, HI 96826

Executive Commission Member, Sierra Club of Hawai‘i

Board Member, Hawai‘i Workers Center

Kanaka Maoli | Lineal Descendant of the Hawaiian Kingdom

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 7:48:21 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stacelynn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully urge the committee to pass HB957 and establish Laulau Day.

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 8:54:13 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonovan Tuinei	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support.

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 9:55:05 PM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristen Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 957 relating to Laulau Day. We have similar observances for other cultures (such as Kimchi Day) and we should also honor the native culture of this place by recognizing something equally significant to Hawaii.

HB-957

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 6:39:48 AM

Testimony for CAA on 2/5/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Like	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Robert Like, strongly support HB957.