



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT TO HOUSE BILL 957 HD1**  
RELATING TO LAULAU DAY

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
Hawai'i State Capitol

February 21, 2025

2:00PM

Room 325

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Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HB 957 HD 1 which would designate the first Friday in May of each year as “Laulau Day” in the State, effective July 1, 3000.

On January 1, kalo was officially designated as Hawai'i's state plant—a milestone recognition of its deep-rooted importance to Hawaiian culture. Laulau is a direct extension of kalo, as its leaves are fundamental to this traditional dish. Beyond its cultural and historical importance, laulau has long been a source of economic support for Native Hawaiian families. It has been widely used in fundraising efforts for schools, sports teams, and community programs, demonstrating its role in strengthening and sustaining Hawaiian communities. Lau lau is also a key component of luau gatherings marking the passage of time from one-year birthday parties to high school graduations through other significant life events and celebrations.

If passed into law, Laulau Day would follow in the tradition of other food heritage days recognized by the State—it would not be an official state holiday, but rather a symbolic recognition of our shared celebration and enjoyment of Hawaiian culture. Moreover, given recent appropriation of poke for outside commercial advantage, it is appropriate for the State to recognize lau lau as a specifically Hawaiian cultural tradition and invention that, while enjoyed by many, is intricately linked to Hawaiian culture. As a technical amendment, OHA respectfully suggests moving the day out so that it does not overlap with May Day (lei day) another cherished tradition in Hawai'i. An alternative date might be appropriate during Hawaiian history month.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs urges this committee to **PASS HB957 HD 1**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



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February 21, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

**TESTIMONY ON HB 957, HD1**  
RELATING TO LAULAU DAY

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference  
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, 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, HD1**, which designates the first Friday in May 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, HD1 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-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 3:56:18 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Heide Kila	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Heide Kila

Waianae, HI 96792

I Heide Kila am in favor and Support Laulau day Exist and to be first Friday of May! Hawaiian food should be recognized. We in the island love food . We are super proud of Hawaiian food!

We have a Kim chi day why not a Laulau day!

I personally love Laulau! I make it on a weekly with my Laulau business!

Mahalo for your time.

Heide Kila

Laulau Lover

Owner of PapaLaulauz LLC

Testimony Presented Before the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Friday, February 21, 2025 @ 2 p.m.

By

Clementina D. Ceria-Ulep

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Clementina D. Ceria-Ulep**, 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 fond memories of laulau. While earning my doctorate in Virginia, laulau was one of the local foods that I used to bring back to Virginia after summer break/or coming home for the holidays. My roommate who became a lifelong friend came to love laulau. She and I used to enjoy eating the laulau together! 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.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:43:43 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Anapuni Coleman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support.

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:44:39 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tyler Yuu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:44:57 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ryan Dolan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:45:29 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Conan K Donahue	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957.

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:45:38 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Robbie Paikai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of HB957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:48:13 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kaleo Buck	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB 957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:48:54 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Liam Wilmott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:49:43 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Makana Fronda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of this bill

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:51:08 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kona Makaula	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support HB957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:51:18 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Hopena Pokipala	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of HB957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:52:22 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kapukonakona Bagood-Makanui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:52:53 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Robert Enriquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:56:50 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Scott Gauvin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It would be nice to honor a hawaiian staple

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 6:58:07 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Collin Mansanas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support for HB957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 7:01:18 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Imiloa Koka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957.

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 7:01:44 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jarred Burns	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 7:04:42 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
anthony padilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of hb957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 7:15:27 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Wade Terlep	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 7:45:40 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Aaron Miyashiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 8:12:45 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bryson Wailehua-Hansen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957!

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 9:16:22 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cole B Kashimoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 11:33:00 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jonovan Tuinei	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm in strong support.

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 11:34:41 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sierra Revilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support HB957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 11:37:24 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alfonso Pitolo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this strongly

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 12:13:07 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Justin Dunhour	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In Strong Support of HB957

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 3:03:45 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dr. Anil Mehta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is an important bill for building and maintaining our community! I used to go to first Fridays all the time and they were our community's way to gather and support each other in a fun environment! Support this bill build and maintain our 'ohana and do pono for the āina!

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 5:17:26 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Makai Freitas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of HB 957.

**HB-957-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 5:41:59 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joshua Mueller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB957