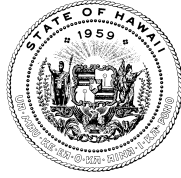


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII  
*Ke Kia 'āina o ka Moku 'āina 'o  
Hawai'i*

SYLVIA J. LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII  
*Ka Hope Kia 'āina o ka Moku 'āina  
'o Hawai'i*



KALI WATSON  
CHAIRPERSON, HHC  
*Ka Luna Ho'okele*

KATIE L. LAMBERT  
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIR  
*Ka Hope Luna Ho'okele*

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**  
*Ka 'Oihana 'Āina Ho'opulapula Hawai'i*

P. O. BOX 1879  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

**TESTIMONY OF KALI WATSON, CHAIR**  
**HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION**  
**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**  
**HEARING ON JANUARY 28, 2025 AT 1:00PM IN CR 224**

**SB 624, RELATING TO PRINCE JONAH KUHIO KALANIANAOLE**

January 27, 2025

Aloha Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) **supports** this bill which requires certain public buildings near mass transit projects and on Hawaiian Home Lands to display portraits of Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole.

Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole spearheaded the passage of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, as amended, and was responsible for instituting the county system still in place today. As a statesman, Prince Kūhiō shaped the foundation for Hawai'i's modern government structure. This measure seeks to honor his legacy by requiring his portrait be displayed at certain public buildings near mass transit projects and on Hawaiian Home Lands.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

**SB-624**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 12:34:37 PM

Testimony for HWN on 1/28/2025 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By                 | Organization   | Testifier Position | Testify                   |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Kenneth R. Conklin,<br>Ph.D. | Testifying for Center for<br>Hawaiian Sovereignty<br>Studies | Oppose             | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

This bill **REQUIRES** certain public buildings near mass transit projects and on Hawaiian home lands to display portraits of Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole.

This bill implies that DHHL leadership and the managers of those buildings, offices, rooms, and waiting areas have not already placed such portraits in those places. Bills or resolutions **REQUIRING** the placement of such portraits in such places were introduced in 2021, 2023, and 2024 and failed. Apparently during these last several years, DHHL personnel still have not seen fit to put up those portraits on their own initiative. One must wonder why they have not done so. What do they have against Kuhio, so that the legislature felt compelled to **FORCE** them to do it in previous years and continues to feel compelled to urge them to do it now? Or perhaps the facilities have not yet been built, and the legislature is acting now to urge DHHL personnel to erect such portraits when the facilities are built, for fear they would not otherwise do so.

Or maybe the reason why DHHL personnel want the legislature to pass this bill is for the purpose of ensuring that additional taxpayer money will be sent to DHHL. But in 2022 the legislature appropriated \$600 Million dollars extra to go to DHHL. Isn't that enough money for them to get the job done?

Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole is widely regarded as a cultural and political hero among today's ethnic Hawaiians. But there are some important reasons why even Hawaiian sovereignty activists would want to re- evaluate their opinion of him, if they were aware of these facts about his life. Below are details about two of those reasons: (1) He abandoned Hawaii at the time when its independence was being lost to annexation, in order to go to South Africa on an adventure as a soldier fighting for Britain in the Boer War; and (2) he waged a personal attack against ex-queen Lili'uokalani during the last years of her life, trying to have her declared mentally incompetent so he could become conservator of her estate and grab her Waikiki properties for himself.

Before providing some details about those character flaws, let's think about the idea of putting up pictures glorifying Kuhio in public buildings on DHHL lands, even if his character had been beyond reproach.

In dictatorships around the world there are photos of the dictator looming large over public squares and inside government buildings. It's ugly. After a while those pictures arouse resentment and feelings of oppression more than they inspire love or respect. Haven't we all seen news reports from China showing the huge photo of long-dead Chairman Mao looming over Tiananmen Square in Beijing? In the old Soviet Union there was a big photo of Joseph Stalin in every classroom in every school, every office in every government building, and every grocery store. Big brother is watching you!

Some ethnic Hawaiians revere Kuhio as a prince for the same reasons the peasantry in any monarchical nation reveres its royalty -- majesty, mystery, pride in the nobility of a great leader, and hope for handouts to help the poor and downtrodden. Wealthy racial separatist Hawaiian government institutions honor Kuhio as their founding father, the man who bowed low enough to the colonizers to bring home the bacon from their far-away seat of power.

But was Kuhio's personal behavior princely? At least two major events in Kuhio's life after the revolution of 1893 should cause Hawaiian sovereignty activists to question his worthiness as their torch-bearer. On these two occasions Kuhio was grossly unpatriotic to his Hawaiian "nation." The first occasion was when he abandoned his nation at its time of greatest peril in order to pursue personal pleasure and foreign adventure. The second occasion was two decades later when he abused his power and prestige to launch a personal attack against Queen Liliuokalani in order to steal her land, for his personal enrichment, from the children she intended to help. Kuhio's behavior on both occasions should be seen as not merely selfish, but treasonous from the viewpoint of today's sovereignty activists.

In January 1895, at age 23, Kuhio participated in the attempted counterrevolution against the Republic of Hawaii led by Robert Wilcox. He was sentenced to a year in prison, where his fiancée visited him regularly. After his release they got married and went to Europe. It's understandable that the heir to the throne would feel unhappy about imprisonment and about the loss of his future crown. Certainly nobody would begrudge him the right to get married, and perhaps to travel for a while.

But Kuhio's extended absence is inexcusable in view of the major political events taking place in Hawaii. He played no part in fighting against annexation, even while his fellow "patriots" were making speeches, writing articles in the newspapers, and gathering 21,000 signatures on a petition in 1897 opposing annexation. Today's sovereignty activists excuse his non-participation by claiming he was "in exile." But nobody forced him to leave. Others who had been imprisoned with him stayed in Hawaii after their release in 1895.

Kuhio extended his European adventure by going to Africa where he spent three years fighting on the side of England in the second Boer War.

Let's put that in different terms so that today's sovereignty activists will get the point. Kuhio, designated heir to the throne, abandoned his native land during a time of great political upheaval and went to war halfway around the world, fighting on the side of one White colonial power against another White colonial power in a war to see which one would win control over the land of a poor, downtrodden dark-skinned native population.

Kuhio returned to Hawaii in time to join the Republican Party and defeat the incumbent Robert Wilcox in the 1902 election for Territorial Delegate to Congress, whereupon he took the oath of office swearing to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic (Traitor to the Hawaiian nation!). He introduced the first bill in Congress for statehood for Hawaii (Traitor to the Hawaiian nation!). He finally "brought home the bacon" after 19 years in Congress with passage of his Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (Sellout!).

The case of Kuhio vs. Liliuokalani in 1915-1916 is perhaps even more troubling. The "prince," now Hawaii's Territorial Delegate to Congress for 13 years, abused his power and prestige to launch a personal attack against Queen Liliuokalani in order to steal her Waikiki land from the children she intended to help. Kuhio publicly accused her of mental incompetence in order to nullify her creation of the Queen Liliuokalani Childrens' Trust, and to establish himself as conservator of her estate, so that after her death her Waikiki properties would go to him instead of to the benefit of the Hawaiian children. Luckily for the children, his lawsuit failed. Full text of the Hawaii Supreme Court decision, including details about what Kuhio was trying to do, is on a webpage: JONAH KUHIO KALANIANAOLE v. LILIUOKALANI, Supreme Court of Hawaii, 23 Haw. 457; 1916. Syllabus and full text of the Court's decision:  
<http://tinyurl.com/ce7avc>

Evelyn Cook's book "100 years of Healing" includes extensive description of the lawsuit, and especially the role of attorney W.O. Smith in defending Liliuokalani. Knowledgeable readers might be surprised, because W.O. Smith was one of the leaders of the revolution of 1893 that overthrew Liliuokalani. But as time went by the ex-queen realized that Smith was completely trustworthy whereas Kuhio was arrogant, selfish, greedy, and profoundly disrespectful to the woman most ethnic Hawaiians still regarded as their Queen. Instead of native Hawaiian "Prince" Kuhio, Lili'uokalani appointed White man W.O. Smith as trustee of her Queen Lili'uokalani Childrens Trust.

Kuhio was also a womanizer, both in Hawaii and in Washington D.C., -- in today's parlance we might call his scandalous behavior Trumpian. He earned the nickname "Prince Cupid" (Google it if you want some titillation).

Kuhio does not deserve to be ensconced as head of a cult of personality. You should defer this bill to avoid the embarrassment of voting against it or the even larger embarrassment of voting for it.

**SB-624**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 4:48:22 PM

Testimony for HWN on 1/28/2025 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By                | Organization                                  | Testifier Position | Testify                   |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Jennifer Kamahoʻi<br>Mather | Testifying for Lahaina<br>Hawaiian Civic Club | Support            | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

The Lahaina Hawaiian Civic Club humbly submits testimony in strong **SUPPORT** of SB624, that requires certain public buildings near mass transit projects and on Hawaiian Home Lands to display portraits of Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole, which honors the legacy of Prince Kūhiō and his enduring contributions to the well-being of the Lāhui.

Prince Kūhiō, affectionately known as Ke Aliʻi Makaʻāinana, was a visionary leader whose dedication to the Hawaiian people continues to shape our path forward. As a prince of the Hawaiian Kingdom, Kūhiō exemplified servant leadership, tirelessly working to improve the lives of his people even after the loss of his kingdom to the belligerent occupation of the Republic and subsequent annexation by the United States of America.

Among his many significant achievements, Prince Kūhiō founded the Hawaiian Civic Club movement in 1918, establishing a network of organizations devoted to preserving Hawaiian culture, advocating for community well-being, and fostering a sense of identity and pride among Native Hawaiians. His foresight in creating this movement ensured that the voices of our people would remain strong and Lahaina Hawaiian Civic Club was founded to continue this important work.

Perhaps his most transformative achievement was his leadership in the establishment of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920. As a territorial representative, Kūhiō held no authority and had little leverage to assist him with his intent to return his people to their ʻāina, and for nearly two decades he advocated to this end, persevering through the quagmire of commercial sugar interests, political opposition, rampant American racism, and conceding to the marginality of the lands offered. This act, however controversial, set aside land for Native Hawaiians, providing opportunities for our people to rebuild their connection to ʻāina and sustain their families through homesteading. This bold initiative was rooted in the belief that the prosperity and resilience of the Lāhui begin with a deep connection to ʻāina, a value that continues to guide us today.

Prince Kūhiō's work was not merely political but deeply personal. He understood that preserving our culture, language, and traditions was vital for the survival of the Hawaiian people. His legacy

serves as a reminder of our collective responsibility to perpetuate these values and to ensure that future generations understand the strength and resilience of our ancestors.

Honoring Prince Kūhiō through measures like SB624 is more than a symbolic gesture; it is an acknowledgment of the foundational role he played in shaping modern Hawai‘i. Ensuring there is representation in public spaces of our me‘e Hawa‘i is profoundly important to educate, inspire, empower, and connect the citizens of Hawai‘i with our history, heritage, culture, and identity. We also see this as a commitment to amplify Prince Kūhiō's enduring vision of a united Lāhui and thriving Kaiāulu. We urge the Committee on Hawaiian Affairs to advance this measure to celebrate the life and contributions of one of our most cherished leaders.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,  
Jen Mather  
Co-Chair, Government Relations Committee  
Lahaina Hawaiian Civic Club



# WAI'ANAE COAST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

(a nonprofit organization serving our community)

P. O. Box 2308, Wai'anae, Hawaii 96792

Phone: (808) 723-9161

[www.waianaeccfoundation.org](http://www.waianaeccfoundation.org)

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Patty Kahanamoku Teruya  
President/Director

Keoki K. Aiwohi  
Vice President/Director

Christopher L. Kuaiwa  
Secretary/Director

Katherine Lundgren  
Treasurer/Director

January 27, 2025

## COMMITTEE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Senator Tim Richards III, Chair

Senator Joy A Buenaventura, Vice Chair

RE: Relating to Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole – requires certain public buildings near mass transit projects and on Hawaiian Homelands to display portraits of Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole

Aloha Chair Richards, members on the Hawaiian Affairs Committee:

My name is Patty Kahanamoku-Teruya, a lessee on Hawaiian Homelands, Nanakuli, O'ahu, speaking on behalf of the Wai'anae Coast Community Foundation.

Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole is a significant figure in Hawaiian history, known for his work to promoting the rights and welfare of Hawaiians. We support strongly to display portraits of Prince Kuhio on specific Hawaiian Homelands in public buildings considering engaging with community stakeholders reaching out to local community leaders, cultural organizations, and the individuals in the Hawaiian homelands wish to be involved. Also to consider developing educational materials that can accompany the portrait, which can assist informing the public about his life, contributions, and the significance of Hawaiian culture.

For example: along the Wai'anae Coast they are three public schools, Charter School, Nanakuli Village Center Mall, Kamehameha Learning Centers, Wai'anae Comprehensive Center, several City and County Parks along with churches on Hawaiian Homelands under a general lease community use with very low rental compensation to the trust. All these buildings, schools, hospitals, malls, parks should also be included in SB624.

In closing the Waianae Coast Community Foundation will continue to bring awareness of our Prince Kuhio by celebrating the yearly Prince Kuhio Festival and held at the Kalaniana'ole Beach Park field, named after Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole. This is our 6<sup>th</sup> Annual, and we welcome and invite you all to enjoy the festivities planned for March 22nd, in beautiful Nanakuli Moku.

Mahalo for the opportunity and urge you to support portraits that can promote cultural pride and awareness in communities island wide.

Aloha Pumehana,  
Patty Kahanamoku-Teruya  
P.O. Box 2308  
Waianae, Hawaii 96792



Me Ke Aloha Pumehana,  
Patty Kahanamoku-Teruya  
Project Coordinator

**SB-624**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:36:31 AM

Testimony for HWN on 1/28/2025 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By           | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify   |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Kawaiohawaiki Anakalea | Individual   | Support            | In Person |

## Comments:

Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaʻole was a true Renaissance man - an athlete, politician, and advocate for Native Hawaiian rights. Born on March 26, 1871, in Kauai, he was named after his grandfathers, Jonah Piikoi and Kuhio Kalanianaʻole.<sup>1</sup> After his parents' death, he was adopted by King David Kalakaua and Queen Kapiolani through the traditional Hawaiian practice of hanai.<sup>2</sup>

Kuhio's early life was marked by excellence in sports, including football, wrestling, boxing, and surfing. He even introduced surfing to California and Great Britain. However, his life took a dramatic turn when he joined the rebellion against the provisional government of Hawaii in 1895. He was arrested, sentenced to a year in prison, and later pardoned.<sup>3</sup>

Kuhio's political career spanned nearly two decades, during which he served as a delegate to the U.S. Congress from 1902 until his death in 1922.<sup>4</sup> He was a strong advocate for Native Hawaiian rights, women's suffrage, and Hawaii's statehood. Some of his notable achievements include:

- **\*Hawaiian Homes Commission Act\***: He introduced this bill in 1920, which aimed to provide land for Native Hawaiians to live and farm.
- **\*Statehood Bill\***: Kuhio introduced the first bill for Hawaii's statehood in 1919, which eventually became a reality 40 years later.
- **\*Women's Suffrage\***: He supported the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, granting women the right to vote.

Today, Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaʻole is remembered as a champion of Native Hawaiian rights and a symbol of Hawaiian resilience. His legacy lives on through the many institutions, landmarks, and holidays named in his honor, including Prince Kuhio Day on March 26.

This is some of the many reasons that we should Require certain public buildings near mass transit projects and on Hawaiian home lands to display portraits of Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaʻole.

**SB-624**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 12:55:47 PM

Testimony for HWN on 1/28/2025 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By     | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Ronnie N Inagaki | Individual   | Oppose             | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Written Testimony Opposing SB269**

**To:** Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair, Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee

**From:** Ronnie Inagaki

**Date:** January 27, 2025

**Subject:** Opposition to SB269 – Office of Hawaiian Affairs Appropriations Act of 2025

Dear Chairperson and Members of the Committee, Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB269, which appropriates funds for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) for the fiscal biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027. While I appreciate the intent of the bill to provide critical services to Native Hawaiian communities, I am compelled to oppose SB269 due to several concerns with its structure and implementation.

**1. Lack of Oversight Regarding Fund Transfers**

SB269 grants the OHA Board of Trustees authority to transfer funds and positions between programs at their discretion (Section 10). While flexibility is important, this provision lacks adequate safeguards to ensure that such transfers align with legislative intent and do not lead to unintended consequences. Without clear guidelines or oversight mechanisms, the risk of fund misallocation is high, and it may divert resources away from critical programs. **Recommendation:** Any fund transfers should require prior approval from the legislature or an independent oversight board, and detailed reports should include justifications for each transfer.

**2. Broad Scope of Legal Services Funding**

The bill provides \$700,000 per year in general and trust funds for legal services and representation (Section 7). While legal assistance is vital for Native Hawaiian beneficiaries, the wide range of issues covered—such as land rights, cultural preservation, family law, and more—may dilute the effectiveness of this funding. With limited resources, it is unclear whether these funds can sufficiently address all the legal challenges listed. **Recommendation:** The scope of legal services should be narrowed to prioritize urgent and impactful cases, or additional funds should be allocated to ensure comprehensive support in all areas.

### **3. Administrative Costs vs. Direct Beneficiary Services**

The bill allocates \$1,258,454 and \$1,296,208 for administrative costs in FY 2025-2026 and FY 2026-2027, respectively (Section 3). While administrative expenses are necessary, it is critical to ensure that these funds are not disproportionately high compared to the amounts allocated for direct services to beneficiaries. Excessive administrative costs could undermine the effectiveness of the programs meant to benefit Native Hawaiians. **Recommendation:** Conduct a thorough review of OHA's administrative expenses to ensure efficiency, and prioritize funding for direct services that directly impact beneficiaries.

### **4. Sustainability of Trust Fund Usage**

The bill relies heavily on trust funds alongside general funds to finance its programs. While this is a common practice, over-reliance on trust funds raises concerns about their long-term sustainability. Depleting trust funds could jeopardize the future financial stability of OHA and its ability to support Native Hawaiian communities in the long term. **Recommendation:** Require periodic assessments of trust fund sustainability, and ensure that appropriations do not deplete these funds beyond their capacity to regenerate.

### **5. Lack of Measurable Outcomes for Programs**

While SB269 outlines funding for various programs (e.g., affordable housing, education, legal services), it fails to establish clear, measurable outcomes or benchmarks for success. This lack of accountability makes it difficult to evaluate whether the appropriations are effectively addressing the intended needs of Native Hawaiian communities. **Recommendation:** Include specific performance metrics and reporting requirements for each program to ensure that appropriations achieve their intended goals and provide value to the beneficiaries.

### **6. Potential Overlap with Existing Programs**

Some initiatives funded by SB269, such as affordable housing and education, may overlap with other state or federal programs. Without proper coordination, there is a risk of duplicating efforts or inefficiently using resources. **Recommendation:** Mandate coordination between OHA and other relevant agencies to ensure that resources are used efficiently and programs complement one another rather than overlap.

### **7. Unclear Climate Change Adaptation Framework**

The bill allocates \$600,000 to \$625,000 annually for climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies (Section 8). However, it does not detail specific actions or projects that these funds will support. Given the urgency of addressing climate change impacts, this lack of clarity raises concerns about the effective use of these funds. **Recommendation:** Require OHA to develop a detailed plan for how these funds will be used, including specific projects, timelines, and expected outcomes, before funds are allocated.

### **Conclusion**

While the intent of SB269 is commendable, the bill contains several areas of concern that could limit its effectiveness and accountability. Without stronger safeguards, clearer priorities, and measurable outcomes, there is a risk that the appropriations may not deliver the maximum benefit to Native Hawaiian communities. I urge the committee to consider these concerns and amend SB269 to address the issues outlined above. If these concerns cannot be resolved, I respectfully oppose the passage of the bill in its current form.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to ensuring the responsible use of public funds to support Native Hawaiian communities.

Sincerely, Ronnie N. Inagaki

**SB-624**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:09:00 AM

Testimony for HWN on 1/28/2025 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By         | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                   |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Kapua Keliikoa-Kamai | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai e Hawaiian Committee, Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura and Committee Members,

‘O wau Kapua Keliikoa-Kamai and I support Bill SB624 - Relating to Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole. Requires certain public buildings near mass transit projects and on Hawaiian Home Lands to display portraits of Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ole.

This is reasonable, appropriate and should be funded.

Me ke aloha,

Kapua Keliikoa-Kamai

Wai‘anae Hawaiian Home Lands Beneficiary

**LATE**

**SB-624**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:38:36 PM

Testimony for HWN on 1/28/2025 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By                | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify   |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Kimmer Horses<br>(Bighorse) | Individual   | Support            | In Person |

Comments:

I support this bill