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ADJUTANT GENERAL

RONALD P. HAN, JR.
COLONEL USAF (Ret.)
DIRECTOR

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF THE VETERANS' SERVICES
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HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819-1522
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TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1947
RELATING TO WORLD WAR II COMMEMORATION

PRESENTATION TO THE
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, VETERANS, & MILITARY AFFAIRS

BY

MR. RONALD P. HAN
DIRECTOR OF THE STATE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

February 5, 2020
10:00 a.m.

Good morning, Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Gates, and members of the Committee:

I'm Ron Han, Director of the State Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony **in support** of the concepts in House Bill 1947.

This measure appropriates funds for programs, ceremonies and activities commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the End of WWII. After the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii played a prominent role in supporting the war effort directly. One example, the vast majority of the aviators and aircrew headed to the Far East received their tactics and specialized training on airstrips located in Puunene on the island of Maui before entering the lines of battle in the Pacific. Furthermore, despite having to fight on two distinctive battlefields, the heroism and sacrifice of many of our Hawaii Nisei Soldiers is well documented and highlights the incredible determination and loyalty that is truly representative of the "Greatest Generation."

The OVS supports the intent expressed in this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Hawaii's Veterans and their families.

Ron Han: ronald.han@va.gov Phone: (808) 433-0422



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David Y. Ige
Governor

Chris Tatum
President and Chief Executive Officer

Statement of
CHRIS TATUM

Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, VETERANS, & MILITARY AFFAIRS

Wednesday, February 5, 2020
10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room #430

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL NO. 1947
RELATING TO WORLD WAR II COMMEMORATION

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Gates, and members of the Committee on Public Safety, Veterans, & Military Affairs: the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) **supports** House Bill 1947, which appropriates funds for programs, ceremonies, and activities commemorating the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II.

HB1947 would help Hawai'i in its efforts to remember the sacrifices and honor the lives lost during World War II. The commemoration will bring together as many WWII veterans as possible to not only highlight the historic signing of the instrument of surrender, but also to engage and educate our community. To show our support, HTA has already committed \$500,000 to fund the 75th WWII Commemoration.

It is for these reasons that the HTA **supports** HB1947. We appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony.



February 5, 2020



To: Members of the House Committee on Public Safety, Veterans & Military Affairs Committee

RE: Support for HB1947, which will provide \$250,000 to support the 75th World War II Commemoration

My name is Michael Carr, and I am the President and CEO of the USS Missouri Memorial Association. I am testifying in support of HB1947.

This bill will provide financial support for the activities planned for August 29-Sept 2, 2020 to honor the 75th anniversary of the End of WWII in Hawaii and to recognize and honor the men and women of the Greatest Generation who fought in that war for the freedom of not just the United States but for all freedom loving peoples of the world. This will likely be the last time that we as a nation can do these veterans this honor because the youngest ones are in their 90's.

The USS Missouri, one of the US Navy's most famous ships, is of course where WWII ended for all the nations of the world on Sept 2, 1945 in Tokyo Bay. Now permanently anchored at Pearl Harbor, just 500 yards from the Arizona Memorial where WWII began for the United States, they both represent the bookends of WWII for Americans. Although she was built for war, the Missouri, within 2 years of her launching, instead became an international symbol of peace and reconciliation- a message we impart to our visitors every day. In 2019, we welcome almost 600,000 visitors and have welcomed over 9 Million since we opened in 1999.

National legislation was passed last year to lend support of these remembrances both in Hawaii and in Washington DC, where the end of WWII in Europe will be recognized in May. The National Co-Chairs and Senators Bob and Elizabeth Dole and in Hawaii the Honorary Chairs are Gov David Ige and ADM Philip Davidson, the CO of INDO PACOM Command. The Dept of Defense is lending logistical and material support to all these activities and we expect many high-level leaders from all the countries who signed the peace document to attend as well.

The programs, events, ceremonies, tributes and exhibits planned will:

- Highlight the role of Hawaii communities during WWII, collecting stories, artifacts, and oral histories that can live on in museums, libraries and other sources of learning;
- Embrace Hawaii's diversity, honoring the role of groups whose impact and contributions to the war effort during the 1940's and after has been overlooked by history;
- Support community-based initiatives that promote local use of and participation in Hawaii's historic treasures;
- Ensure diverse activities/experiences throughout 2020 and beyond;
- Provide unique and authentic Hawai'i experiences that benefit local communities and strengthen the quality of the destination expectations;
- Create high level local engagement with visiting populations who also seek to remember, honor, and participate in the celebration of the end of a global conflict;
- Strengthen awareness for and the significance of the Battleship Missouri Memorial as a learning destination for local, national and international visitors;
- Engage media through streaming to share the Hawaii events statewide, nationally, and globally.

I urge, along with all the members of the 75th Commemoration Committee, your support of this important initiative.

Respectfully,

Michael A. Carr
President & Chief Executive Officer

HONORARY FOUNDER
Senator Daniel K. Inouye

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USS Bowfin Submarine Museum & Park

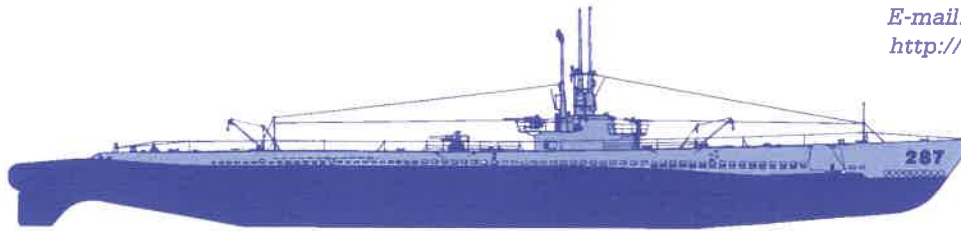
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<http://www.bowfin.org>



Pacific Fleet Submarine Memorial Association

200008

February 4, 2020

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

CAPT Charles K. Merkel, USN (Ret)

By email: reptakayama@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Dear Representative Takayama,

As a member of our Hawaii community, I am pleased to add my strong support to HB 1947, the 75th WWII Commemoration bill under review.

National legislation was passed creating the 75th WWII Commemoration, ensuring that as a nation, we remember and honor veterans and civilians, members of "Our Greatest Generation" who stepped forward to defend freedom. National Honorary chairs, Senator Bob and Elizabeth Dole, and our State Honorary Chairmen, Gov. Ige and ADM Davidson, Commander, U.S. IndoPACOM, have committed their support to this effort. Pearl Harbor holds the unique distinction of being the only place where people can experience the bookends of WWII – we often forget this historic impact. The Pearl Harbor National Monument stands in tribute to those who perished during the attack that launched our entry into this global conflict and the Battleship Missouri Memorial, now proudly moored in Pearl Harbor, reminds our nation of the end of conflict and the beginning of peace and global friendship that has changed our world.

The goals of the 75th WWII Commemoration here in Hawaii are straightforward and deliver impact beyond the commemoration events.

- **Create renewed / heightened awareness of our historic impact**
- **Develop programs, exhibits, events, experiences and curricula that combine to engage communities throughout the State and beyond**
- **Broadly communicate the significance of the 75th WWII Commemoration, the Pearl Harbor historic sites, and the Battleship Missouri Memorial as an international symbol of global peace**
- **Collaborate with the DoD, National WWII Memorial in Washington D.C., and the Arsenal of Democracy, to leverage exposure of both bookends of the 75th WWII Commemoration, the End of War in Europe, May 8th, 2020, and the**

- End of War in the Pacific, September 2, 2020, promoting national and international engagement
- **Build a lasting impact** by promoting participation by local, national and international visitors,

We seek to educate and promote community engagement, throughout the State, bringing to the forefront oral histories, artifacts, and exhibits that display the role Hawaii played throughout the war years and beyond. Sharing history, the stories of our WWII veterans, the remembrances of neighborhoods, and thus inspiring young people in the core values of service, patriotism, and support of freedom.

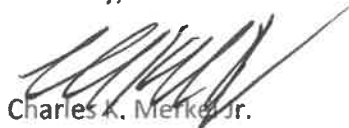
It is envisioned that this educational programming will help fill in the gaps of recorded history, will help build community pride and engagement in commemoration activities and those that live on, celebrating our collective commitment to peace and global friendship. The Commemoration also provides a forum to explore the impact of emerging technologies, then and now, that provide a gateway to the future for our youth.

The programs, events, ceremonies, tributes, and exhibits planned will:

- Highlight the role of Hawaii communities during WWII, collecting stories, artifacts, and oral histories that can live on in museums, libraries and other sources of learning;
- Embrace Hawaii's diversity, honoring the role of groups whose impact and contributions to the war effort during the 1940's and after has been overlooked by history;
- Support community-based initiatives that promote local use of and participation in Hawaii's historic treasures;
- Ensure diverse activities/experiences throughout 2020 and beyond;
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- Create high level local engagement with visiting populations who also seek to remember, honor, and participate in the celebration of the end of a global conflict;
- Strengthen awareness for and the significance of the Pearl Harbor Historic Sites as a learning destination for local, national and international visitors;
- Engage media through streaming to share the Hawaii events statewide, nationally, and globally.

I urge your support of this important effort.

Sincerely,



Charles K. Merker Jr.

President and Executive Director



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

Testimony to the House Committee on Public Safety, Veterans and Military Affairs

**Wednesday, February 5, 2020 at 10:00 A.M.
Conference Room 430, State Capitol**

RE: HB 1947 RELATING TO WORLD WAR II COMMEMORATION

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Gates, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** HB 1947, which appropriates funds for programs, ceremonies, and activities commemorating the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II.

The Hawaii Military Affairs Council (MAC) was established in 1985 as part of the Chamber, and advocates on behalf of Hawaii's military, and is comprised of business leaders and retired U.S. flag and general officers. The MAC works to support Hawaii's location as a strategic U.S. headquarters in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

The attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 resulted in the United States entering World War II. Hawaii played an integral role in the United States' efforts during the war as it served as the central location for the United States in the Pacific and many citizens from the islands served as troops. The most famous being the 442nd Regimental Combat Team comprised of Japanese Americans who went on to be the most decorated unit of its size in the history of the US Military.

In December 2019, Governor Ige announced the creation of a committee that would help to oversee this year's commemoration in Hawaii, and both the Chamber and MAC are honored to have a representative on this committee. While the federal government has allocated some funding for these celebrations, the committee is continuing to raise funds in order to support the number of events that are planned for August 29 to September 2, 2020 here in Hawaii. Support from the legislature, will help to ensure that we are able to honor one of the greatest generations in American history, as well as educate our youth about the impact that World War II left on the country and the world.

We appreciate the opportunity to express our support for HB 1947.



75th WWII Commemoration
 PO Box 945
 Washington, D.C. 20005
 Ph. 77.883.4773
 Fax 85.924.8537

Aloha Representatives,

As the Executive Director of the 75th WWII Commemoration Committee and a member of our Hawaii community, I am pleased to add my very strong support to HB 1947, the 75th WWII Commemoration bill under review.

National legislation was passed creating the 75th WWII Commemoration, ensuring that as a nation, we remember and honor veterans and civilians, members of “Our Greatest Generation” who stepped forward to defend freedom. National Honorary Chairpersons, Senator Bob and Elizabeth Dole, and our State Honorary Chairmen, Gov. Ige and ADM Davidson, Commander, U.S. IndoPACOM, have committed their support to this effort.

Pearl Harbor holds the unique distinction of being the only place where people can experience the bookends of WWII – we often forget this historic impact. The Pearl Harbor National Monument stands in tribute to those who perished during the attack that launched our entry into this global conflict and the Battleship Missouri Memorial, now proudly moored in Pearl Harbor, reminds our nation of the end of conflict and the beginning of peace and global friendship that has changed our world.

Hawaii’s participation did not just impact the war in the Pacific. As these stories unfold, the role and impact of fighting forces from Hawaii, courageous warriors who at the time faced harsh American racial prejudice, will add substance to the entire commemoration. The commemoration will help bridge the gap between historic tourism that only targets out of state visitors to a historic impact that targets local communities. The advent of the 75th WWII Commemoration opens the door to building local embracement of the very sites that currently serve primarily out of state visitors.

The idea of a Pilgrimage to Pearl Harbor, to Puunene, to Barbers Point, to Honouliuli National Historic Site and other such locations will resonate with our local communities who, during this commemoration effort, assist in building the story and the experience.

75th WWII Commemoration...“Salute their Service...Honor their Hope”

Objective 1: Engage our Hawaii community in remembering and honoring those who served and continue to serve our country, highlighting the strategic role of Hawaii then and now, in the defense of our nation

Objective 2: Coordinate the culminating events and programs that help our nation and the world commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII

Objective 3: Develop educational programs, experiences, exhibits and events that preserve the legacy of “Our Greatest Generation” ensuring that young and old alike honor our past and inspire our future

An integrated marketing communications approach will target the following audiences:

- * **Hawai’i ...Residents, military, visitors in the Islands, and media**
- * **Mainland United States ...Historic tourism, higher-spending, quality visitors and related travel trade/media**
- * **International ...Historic tourism, higher-spending, quality visitors and related travel trade/media**
- * **Military ...Military media and military affinity travel companies (U.S. & International)**

Most sincerely,

Tony S. Vericella
 Executive Director, 75th WWII Commemoration Committee



HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM
A S S O C I A T I O N

Testimony of

Mufi Hannemann
President & CEO

Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association

Committee on Public Safety, Veterans, & Military Affairs

House Bill 1947: Relating to World War II Commemoration

Chair Takayama and members of the committee, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association, the state's largest private sector visitor industry organization.

The Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association—nearly 700 members strong, representing more than 50,000 hotel rooms and nearly 40,000 lodging workers —supports House Bill 1947 which appropriates funds for programs, ceremonies, and activities commemorating the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Hawai'i shares a unique place in the history of World War II; Pearl Harbor serves as the unofficial bookends of the United States' role in the war. The surprise attack by Japan and its eventual surrender upon the deck of the USS Missouri both occurred in O'ahu's waters and Hawai'i's role in the war will forever hold a place in the history books.

The planned 75th World War II commemoration is an extremely important occasion as many of the veterans of Pearl Harbor and World War II are well into their 90's, and this may very well be the final time to honor them, their sacrifices, and the sacrifices of their comrades on such an auspicious anniversary. Moreover, the occasion presents a significant educational opportunity for our community. HLTA in working with HTA is committed to providing informative opportunities of this nature for our members and the Hawai'i community as a whole, and we look forward to utilizing the 75th commemoration to bring together people of all generations through various community engagement activities. We thank the legislature for its support of this momentous celebration, and we urge the passage of this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer this testimony.