



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
Monday, March 22, 2021 at 2:15 p.m.

By

Jerris Hedges, MD, Dean  
Keawe Kaholokula, MD, Chair  
Native Hawaiian Health  
John A. Burns School of Medicine  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HCR 111 – ASSERTING THAT RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND URGING THE STATE TO COMMIT TO RECOGNIZING AND ADDRESSING THE RESULTING INEQUITIES

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **support** of HCR 111. This resolution seeks to address the inequities of systemic racism by urging the State to establish partnerships with communities and residents most impacted by racism, prioritize diversity in board membership and promote equity through its policies in an effort to understand and eliminate racism.

The John A. Burns School of Medicine has been committed to helping the State address social inequities in order to deal with health disparities in Hawai'i. We have long recognized the issues faced by native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) groups in accessing health care as well as the problems that stem from the lack of proper medical treatment. The COVID-19 pandemic brought these disparities into greater focus when it was found that the highest rates of positive cases in Hawai'i were among native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander groups.

We suggest that copies of the resolution be transmitted to the Dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine as well as the Director of the Department of Human Services in addition to the recipients identified in the measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**Hawaii**  
*Holding Power Accountable*Statement Before The  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

Monday, March 22, 2021

2:15 PM

Via Video Conference, Conference Room 325

in consideration of

**HCR 111****ASSERTING THAT RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND URGING THE STATE TO COMMIT TO RECOGNIZING AND ADDRESSING THE RESULTING INEQUITIES.**

Chair NAKASHIMA, Vice Chair MATAYOSHI, and Members of the House Judiciary &amp; Hawaiian Affairs Committee

Common Cause Hawaii provides written comments regarding HCR 111, asserting that racism is a public health crisis and urging the state to commit to recognizing and addressing the resulting inequities.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to upholding the core values of American democracy. We work to create open, honest, and accountable government that serves the public interest and promotes equal rights, opportunity, and representation for all.

Being silent in the face of wrongdoing is not an option; it is tacit cooperation and being complicit. Common Cause agrees that the State should, as provided in HCR 111, at page 2, lines 17-33, commit to:

- (1) Eliminating racial disparities in the criminal justice system
- (2) Prioritizing racial equity in decision making processes
- (3) Acknowledging that communities of color have borne the greatest burdens of inequitable social, environmental, technological, economic, and criminal justice policies, practices, and investments
- (4) Understanding that the legacy of inequitable policies has caused deep disparities, harm, and mistrust; and
- (5) Recognizing that racial equity is realized only when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes. . . .

Let us not forget the words of Pastor Martin Neimöller:

First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist.  
Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out— because I was not a trade unionist.  
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew.  
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

We all need to reject and call out racism, xenophobia, intolerance, discrimination, or hate crimes against all Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), including women.

Common Cause Hawaii supports HCR 111, urging the State, at page 2, lines 35-41, and page 3, lines 1-9, to (1) commit to engage as partners with communities and residents most impacted by systemic racism and to identify and implement solutions, (2) prioritize diversity in board membership, centering voices of people of color when

addressing issues of racism, and holding one another accountable to address implicit biases of all kinds, and (3) promote equity through all policies approved by the Legislature and enhance educational efforts throughout the state system aimed at understanding, addressing, and dismantling racism and how it affects the delivery of human and social services, economic development, and public safety.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HCR 111. If you have questions of me, please contact me at [sma@commoncause.org](mailto:sma@commoncause.org).

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma  
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii



**Fernhurst YWCA**  
1566 Wilder Avenue  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822  
808.941.2231

**Kokokahi YWCA**  
45-035 Kāne'ohe Bay Drive  
Kāne'ohe, Hawai'i 96744  
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[ywcaoahu.org](http://ywcaoahu.org)

House Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee  
Monday, March 22, 2021, 2:15pm  
Hawaii State Capitol, Rm. 325/Videoconference

### **Testimony in Strong Support of HCR 111**

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of HCR 111**, asserting that racism is a public health crisis and urging the State to commit to recognizing and addressing the resulting inequities.

YWCA O'ahu is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. In 1900 we opened our doors to provide opportunity to women for growth, leadership and power to change. Today, over a century later, the YWCA O'ahu is the largest and oldest women's membership organization in the State of Hawaii. We are a charter member of the YWCA USA and one of more than 200 community associations nationwide that share the mission of empowering women and eliminating racism.

As a new core of women are preparing for our future, we are committed to reinventing the YWCA for the 21<sup>st</sup> century so it remains relevant to all women as their lives and needs change. The YWCA offers a unique place – a place where women and girls can build relationships for life and have opportunities to move forward in life and give back to their community. Our three centers at the YWCA, Fernhurst, Kokokahi and Laniakea, provide valuable programs and services that develop women and girls' social, economic, leadership and community skills.

We are writing in strong support of this critical resolution. While Hawaii is different in many ways from the mainland, we are not immune to racism and the ways in which racism has impacted generations of our citizens. Racism has been long been looked at as a risk factor rather than what it is, the root cause of racial disparities that face our state and nation. As stated in the resolution, over the past year Covid-19 has “revealed, reaffirmed, and cast into sharp relief the exigent nature of these pre-existing inequities caused by systemic racism”. While not new, COVID-19 has shone a new light on these existing issues and has presented us with yet another opportunity to balance the scales.

Racism is complex, multi-layered and often not talked about or challenged for these reasons. There is no easy answer or silver bullet to address racism and for that reason we support the many and varied ways this resolution calls on the State to begin tackling this pervasive issue in

**YWCA IS ON A MISSION**

eliminating racism  
empowering women

**ywca**

O'ahu

**Fernhurst YWCA**

1566 Wilder Avenue  
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808.941.2231

**Kokokahi YWCA**

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[ywcaoahu.org](http://ywcaoahu.org)

deliberate and meaningful ways. We must examine the racist foundations of our policies and procedures and work to rebuild systems from the ground up in many cases. This work will not be easy, but it must be done to truly dismantle the broken systems within our government, in our health care settings, in our communities and every other place that have not been serving the people of Hawaii equitably.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HCR 111.

Jen Wilbur  
Director of Advocacy  
YWCA O'ahu

**YWCA IS ON A MISSION**



**Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
Monday, March 22, 2021 9:00 a.m.  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 111, ASSERTING THAT RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND URGING THE STATE TO COMMIT TO RECOGNIZING AND ADDRESSING THE RESULTING INEQUITIES.**

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** House Concurrent Resolution No. 111, and requests your favorable consideration of proposed **AMENDMENTS**.

The measure, as received by your Committee, would assert that racism is a public health crisis affecting our entire State and that the State is urged to take steps to address racial disparities in the criminal justice system, and in decision making processes, among other things.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

Hawaii's public health system is indeed in a state of crisis. The health outcomes of residents in rural and underprivileged communities throughout our islands are deteriorating at alarming pace. While institutional racism is part of the reason why this situation exists, a more direct cause has been the growing segment of our population in or near poverty.

In recent years, the Aloha United Way (AUW) conducted a series of studies looking at the growing ALICE population in our State. Defined as Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed households, the AUW found that 42% of Hawaii's 455,138 households were households struggling to make ends meet. While 9% of these households were living below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), another 33% -- more than three times as many -- were ALICE households that earned above the FPL, but not enough to afford basic household necessities.

**Testimony on House Concurrent Resolution No. 111**  
**Monday,, March 22, 2021; 9:00 a.m.**  
**Page 2**

These statistics were released before COVID-19 hit our islands in March 2020. Since then, Hawaii went from having the lowest unemployment rate (2.0%) to the highest (10.2%) in the Nation. Literally hundreds of thousands of Hawaii's citizens are struggling to make ends meet. Many are forced to go without medication, stand in food lines, and try to make the best of a truly surreal situation.

The HPCA believes that the Legislature must take all steps to reduce the number of ALICE households in our State. This will do much to improve the health care outcomes of our population. Among other things, by getting more people employed full-time, more will have access to health insurance under the Prepaid Healthcare Act, thus reducing the number of uninsured.

With more income, families will have access to food, shelter, and the stability needed for them to thrive. This, more than any other outcome, will improve the health care of our citizens.

Accordingly, the HPCA transmits for your consideration a proposed House Draft 1. As amended, the resolution would:

- (1) Assert that economic disparities have created a public health crisis in the State of Hawaii;
- (2) Request the Director of Health, in conjunction with the Director of Human Services, to identify the twenty communities with the largest number of ALICE households in the State of Hawaii, as listed in the AUW ALICE Data Sheet, 2020, and provide a summary of all activities conducted by those departments to provide health care services in those communities; and
- (3) Request the Department of Health, in conjunction with the Department of Human Services, the AUW, and the Hawaii Primary Care Association, to develop a plan of action to reduce the number of ALICE households in the State of Hawaii.

With these amendments, the HPCA urges your favorable consideration of this Concurrent Resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or [eabe@hawaiiipca.net](mailto:eabe@hawaiiipca.net).

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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

ASSERTING THAT ECONOMIC DISPARITIES HAVE CREATED A PUBLIC HEALTH  
CRISIS.

1           WHEREAS, public health is defined by the World Health  
2 Organization as "the art and science of preventing disease,  
3 prolonging life, and promoting health through the organized  
4 efforts of society; and  
5

6           WHEREAS, despite its best efforts, the State of Hawaii is  
7 experiencing dramatic disparities in the health care outcomes of  
8 its citizens; and  
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10          WHEREAS, the situation is getting worse; and  
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12          WHEREAS, Hawaii has one of the most, if not the most,  
13 racially diverse populations in the United States of America;  
14 and  
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16          WHEREAS, according to the Hawaii State Data Book, published  
17 by the Hawaii State Department of Business Economic Development  
18 and Tourism (DBEDT), Hawaii does not have a majority of its  
19 population that identifies with a single race; and  
20  
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1 WHEREAS, according to the Hawaii State Data Book, Table  
 2 1.32, Population by Major Race:  
 3

Subject	2000 Census		2010 Census	
	Race Alone	Percentage Race Alone	Race Alone	Percentage Race Alone
<b>Total Population</b>	1,211,537	100%	1,360,301	100%
<b>White</b>	294,102	24%	336,599	25%
<b>Black or African American</b>	22,003	2%	21,424	2%
<b>American Indian and Alaska Native</b>	3,535	0%	4,164	0
<b>Asian</b>	503,868	42%	525,078	39%
<b>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</b>	113,539	9%	135,422	10%
<b>Some Other Race</b>	15,147	1%	16,985	1%

4  
 5 WHEREAS, because the categories utilized by the United  
 6 States Census are so broad, the Census attempted to break down  
 7 these numbers by race with greater detail; and  
 8

9 WHEREAS, according to the Hawaii State Data Book, Table  
 10 1.34, Resident Population for Selected Races: 2010", DBEDT  
 11 listed the races that respondents to the Census identified with:  
 12

Race	Respondents
White	336,599
Filipino	197,497
Japanese	185,502
Native Hawaiian	185,502
Chinese	54,955

Korean	24,203
Black or African American	21,424
Samoan	18,287
Vietnamese	9,779
Marshallese	6,316
Tongan	4,830
American Indian and Alaska Native	4,164
Guamanian or Chamorro	2,700
Asian Indian	2,201
Thai	2,006
Okinawan	1,886
Laotian	1,844
Chuukese	1,883
Palauan	729
Cambodian	464
Indonesian	399
Pohnpeian	398
Fijian	282
Kosraean	245
Tahitian	225
Burmese	199
Sri Lankan	186
Pakistani	174
Yapese	129
Nepalese	125
Mongolian	109
Malaysian	86
Hmong	70
Bangladeshi	60
Bhutanese	7

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WHEREAS, because Hawaii's population is so diverse, disparities in health care outcomes apparently apply to all races; and

WHEREAS, a more significant observation is that the health care outcomes of Hawaii's population are becoming more and more bifurcated each year; and

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii has become a place of the "haves" and the  
2 "have nots"; and  
3

4 WHEREAS, shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic hit our  
5 islands last year, the Aloha United Way (AUW) issued its report  
6 entitled, "ALICE in Hawaii: A Financial Hardship Study"; and  
7

8 WHEREAS, referring to **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained,  
9 **E**mployed households, the AUW found that 42% of Hawaii's 455,138  
10 households still struggle to make ends meet; and  
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12 WHEREAS, while 9% of these households were living below the  
13 Federal Poverty Level (FPL), another 33% -- more than three  
14 times as many -- were ALICE households that earned above the  
15 FPL, but not enough to afford basic household necessities; and  
16

17 WHEREAS, the AUW found that the cost of living in Hawaii  
18 was increasing for ALICE households, worker vulnerability is  
19 increasing while wages stagnate in ALICE jobs, and the number of  
20 ALICE households has increased; and  
21

22 WHEREAS, shortly after the release of this report, COVID-19  
23 hit our island state; and  
24

25 WHEREAS, in January 2020, Hawaii's unemployment rate was  
26 2.0% -- the lowest in the country; and  
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28 WHEREAS, by January 2021, Hawaii's unemployment rate was  
29 10.2% -- the highest in the country; and  
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31 WHEREAS, for hundreds of thousands of Hawaii's citizens,  
32 reality has become a struggle to find enough resources to keep a  
33 roof over the family's heads, put food on the table, and be  
34 employed; and  
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36 WHEREAS, research around the world has shown that people in  
37 poverty have higher rates of illness, injury, disability, and  
38 death; and  
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40 WHEREAS, those in poverty have a substantially shorter life  
41 expectancy compared to affluent people in society; and

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WHEREAS, as early as 2011, the Legislature was informed of the impacts poverty in Hawaii has had on health care outcomes; and

WHEREAS, in her report to the Legislature entitled, "Chronic Disease Disparities Report 2011, Social Determinants", then-Director Loretta Fuddy wrote:

*"Upstream 'root causes' are socio-economic and political structures that influence living conditions and social circumstances that can support or impede health. Socio-economic and political structures can create conditions that result in poverty or wealth, job instability or stability, opportunities for education or insufficient education, discrimination/racism, historical trauma, and community deprivation.";* and

WHEREAS, she added, ". . . poorer people live shorter lives and are more often ill than the rich. This disparity has drawn attention to the remarkable sensitivity of health to the social environment.", citing Wilkinson & Marmot (2002); and

WHEREAS, given the abundance of scientific evidence showing how the residents of underprivileged communities in Hawaii live shorter lives and are inflicted with more chronic diseases, among other indicators, the Legislature believes more must be done to improve the health care outcomes of our citizens; now, therefore,

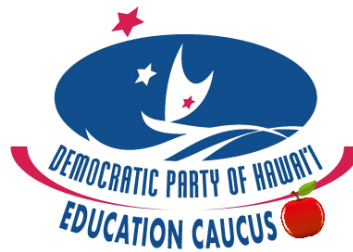
BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2021, the Senate concurring, that this body asserts that economic disparities have created a public health crisis in the State of Hawaii; and

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of Health, in  
2 conjunction with the Director of Human Services, are requested  
3 to identify the twenty communities with the largest number of  
4 ALICE households in the State of Hawaii, as listed in the AUW  
5 ALICE Data Sheet, 2020, and provide a summary of all activities  
6 conducted by the Departments of Health and Human Services to  
7 provide health care services in these communities; and  
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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health, in  
10 conjunction with the Department of Human Services the AUW, and  
11 the Hawaii Primary Care Association, are requested to develop a  
12 plan of action to reduce the number of ALICE households in the  
13 State of Hawaii; and  
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of Health is  
16 requested to transmit a report of the findings and  
17 recommendations to the Legislature at least twenty days prior to  
18 the convening of the Regular Session of 2022; and  
19

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
21 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to: the Governor of the  
22 State of Hawaii; the Directors of Health and Human Services; the  
23 Executive Director of Aloha United Way; and the Chief Executive  
24 Officer of the Hawaii Primary Care Association.  
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## **HCR 111, ASSERTING THAT RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND URGING THE STATE TO COMMIT TO RECOGNIZING AND ADDRESSING THE RESULTING INEQUITIES.**

MARCH 22, 2021 · HOUSE JUDICIARY AND  
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE · CHAIR REP.  
MARK M. NAKASHIMA

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus **supports** HCR 111, asserting that racism is a public health crisis and urging the state to commit to recognizing and addressing the resulting inequities.

Intolerance is an epidemic within the COVID-19 pandemic. As the coronavirus has surged throughout our shores, anti-Asian racism has soared. Stop AAPI Hate tracks reports of violence against Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. Since the start of the pandemic, they've received reports of nearly 4,000 hate incidents directed toward Asians and Asian-Americans across the U.S. Similarly, a recent report from the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, revealed that hate crimes against Asian-Americans in 16 cities rose by 150 percent in 2020. Anti-Asian xenophobia has frequently resulted in violent acts. Just this week, an armed white male murdered eight people of Asian ancestry in Atlanta, Georgia, in an act of racial terror. We must take a stand against racial discrimination. If we don't, as Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "We will learn very shortly that racism is a sickness unto death."

**Kris Coffield · Chairperson, Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus ·  
(808) 679-7454 · kriscoffield@gmail.com**



## HCR 111, ASSERTING THAT RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND URGING THE STATE TO COMMIT TO RECOGNIZING AND ADDRESSING THE RESULTING INEQUITIES

MARCH 22, 2021 · HOUSE JUDICIARY AND  
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE · CHAIR REP.  
MARK M. NAKASHIMA

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** Imua Alliance supports HCR 111, asserting that racism is a public health crisis and urging the state to commit to recognizing and addressing the resulting inequities.

Intolerance is an epidemic within the COVID-19 pandemic. As the coronavirus has surged throughout our shores, anti-Asian racism has soared. Stop AAPI Hate tracks reports of violence against Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. Since the start of the pandemic, they've received reports of nearly 4,000 hate incidents directed toward Asians and Asian-Americans across the U.S. Similarly, a recent report from the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, revealed that hate crimes against Asian-Americans in 16 cities rose by 150 percent in 2020. Anti-Asian xenophobia has frequently resulted in violent acts. Just this week, an armed white male murdered eight people of Asian ancestry in Atlanta, Georgia, in an act of racial terror. We must take a stand against racial discrimination. If we don't, as Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "We will learn very shortly that racism is a sickness unto death."

**Kris Coffield · Executive Director, Imua Alliance · (808) 679-7454 · [kris@imuaalliance.org](mailto:kris@imuaalliance.org)**



## HIPHI Board

Michael  
Robinson, MBA, MA  
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Hawaii Pacific Health

JoAnn Tsark, MPH  
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Pediatrics

Rachel Novotny,  
PhD, RDN, LD  
University of Hawaii at Manoa,  
College of Tropical Agriculture  
and Human Resources

Garret Sugai  
Kaiser Permanente

Date: March 21, 2021

To: Representative Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
Representative Scot Z. Matayoshi, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee

Re: Support for HCR 111, Asserting that Racism is a Public Health  
Crisis and Urging the State to Commit to Recognizing and  
Addressing the Resulting Inequities.

Hrg: March 22, 2021 at 2:15 PM via Videoconference

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The Hawai'i Public Health Institute<sup>i</sup> **supports HCR 111**, which asserts that racism is a public health crisis and urges the state to recognize and address the resulting inequities.

The events of 2020 saw widespread acknowledgement of racism as a public health crisis, and greater understanding of the influence of social determinants of health on Hawaii's communities. We believe these events are an opportunity for us to confront these issues directly, to act in unity to rethink our priorities, invest in a just society, and a safe and healthy future.

HIPHI strives to eliminate racism, disparities and injustices to improve the health and wellness of all people. For us, this translates to moving beyond advocating *for* equity, but rather amplifying our work *against* inequity. This means calling out the systemic discrimination that continues to drive poor health outcomes in Hawai'i and actively working to change this narrative. This is why we work to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol. This is why we oppose policies that penalize use for the possession, use, or purchase of tobacco products. This is why we advocate to invest revenue from a sugary drink tax into the communities most affected by them. This is why we support restoring dental benefits for adult Medicaid enrollees.

All of us are called to rise to the challenge: to determine how we interrogate deeply-held beliefs and entrenched systems, and move forward with action and purpose. We commend the legislature for recognizing that racism is a public health crisis and look forward to working with the legislature on policies that work towards a more equitable, healthy future.



Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HCR 111.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Yamauchi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jessica Yamauchi, MA  
Executive Director

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<sup>i</sup> Hawai'i Public Health Institute is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.

**HCR-111**

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 2:00:09 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/22/2021 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
amy agbayani	Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights	Support	No

Comments:

Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights strongly supports this resolution that recognizes racism is a public health issue that our communities and government must address. We should make every effort to stop discrimination and the unequal treatment of people. Both federal and state civil rights laws must be enforced.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of this timely and important resolution.

Amy Agbayani, co-chair. Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights

**HCR-111**

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 2:42:49 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/22/2021 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael Golojuch Jr	LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

The LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, Hawaii's oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization, fully supports HCR 111.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.

Chair

LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i



*Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

To: Representative Nakashima, Chair  
Representative Matayoshi, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Re: **HCR 111- Asserting that racism is a public health crisis and urging the state to commit to recognizing and addressing the resulting inequities**  
2:15 PM, March 22, 2021

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and committee members,

On behalf of HCAN Speaks!, thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support HCR 111**, asserting that racism is a public health crisis and urging the state to commit to recognizing and addressing the resulting inequities.

The wage gap, over representation of Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and Black people in the criminal justice system, household wealth gap, access to care, maternal mortality and infant well-being, and access to early learning programs and educational outcomes, are results of systemic racism in our state. Poverty is racism in action. It is generations of policies that put the welfare and wellbeing of white people above all others. Even in Hawai'i, the culture of white supremacy and the racist ideologues that follow are very much intact and have been since the overthrow of the Queen Lili'uokalani.

All children should be able to grow up and thrive in their families and their neighborhoods. But that is not what's happening. We have ample evidence from families sharing their lived experiences and research that racism is harming lives. Our systems were never created to allow everyone to live a violence free life, and racism is violence, and we need to change that now.

Eights states have made a declaration that racism is a public health crisis.<sup>1</sup> The evidence of racism is all around us yet we do not address it head on in our policy making. While this resolution is a first step towards correcting systems of injustice and inequities, we must move quickly to dissolve the policies and practices that continue to harm and kill our communities.

**For these reasons, HCAN Speaks! respectfully requests that your committee vote favorably on the resolution.**

Kathleen Algire  
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy

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<sup>1</sup> American Public Health Association, <https://www.apha.org/topics-and-issues/health-equity/racism-and-health/racism-declarations>

**HCR-111**

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 3:02:20 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/22/2021 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Laurie Field	Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii supports HCR 111. Thank you!



## HCR111

ASSERTING THAT RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND URGING THE STATE TO COMMIT TO RECOGNIZING AND ADDRESSING THE RESULTING INEQUITIES

Ke Kōmike Hale o ka Ho‘okolokolo a me ke Kuleana Hawai‘i  
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Malaki 22, 2021

2:15 p.m.

Lumi 325

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Administration will recommend that the Board of Trustees **SUPPORT** HCR111, which would declare racism as a public health crisis and urge the State to commit to several actions to assist in the dismantling of racism in Hawai‘i.

OHA has long advocated for meaningful policies, including targeted and systemic actions, necessary to help reduce the health inequities of Native Hawaiians and to better protect and uplift the health and vitality of the Lāhui. OHA’s most recent strategic priorities included Maui Ola (Health), which represents our continuing commitment to improve the quality of life of Native Hawaiians. In furtherance of this commitment, and in line with the Hawai‘i State Planning Act under Hawai‘i Revised Statutes § 226-20, OHA supports a “social determinants of health” approach to health policy, which takes a holistic and systemic view in addressing the health of Hawai‘i’s communities. Accordingly, OHA appreciates that **HCR111 may facilitate an examination of the racial inequities and disparities within those social determinants of health affecting Native Hawaiians and other health-vulnerable communities, including through the critically needed improvement of state data governance practices.**

As the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted, timely, consistent, and appropriately disaggregated data for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders is essential to best inform our programmatic interventions, whether it be for COVID-19 or general public health planning, as well as data driven policymaking. OHA’s Data Governance Resolution, HCR3/SCR5, streamlines the acknowledged need for a coordinated approach for not only public health data, but also data related to various social determinants of health. OHA accordingly emphasizes that improved data governance and disaggregated Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander data is part of what is needed to reconcile the impact of racism in Hawai‘i and ensure equitable policymaking as this resolution proposes.

As a final note \OHA appreciates this resolution’s call to dismantle structural and systemic racism in Hawai‘i, and particularly appreciates its language calling for diversity, inclusion, and engaging communities as partners that are most impacted by systemic

racism. OHA has long advocated for its beneficiaries by requesting inclusion and representation for Native Hawaiians and other communities on various boards, commissions, task forces, and committees that may be able to address the social determinants of health arising from, and contributing to, racial inequities in our society.

Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** HCR111. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

## COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, HI 96837-0158

Phone/E-Mail: (808) 927-1214 / [kat.caphi@gmail.com](mailto:kat.caphi@gmail.com)



### COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Representative Mark Nakashima, Chair

Representative Scot Matayoshi, Vice Chair

Monday, March 22, 2021

2:15 PM

### **STRONG SUPPORT FOR HCR 111 - RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS**

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies in Hawai`i for more than two decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the almost 4,100 Hawai`i individuals living behind bars or under the “care and custody” of the Department of Public Safety on any given day. We are always mindful that 1,075 of Hawai`i’s imprisoned people are serving their sentences abroad thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands.

Community Alliance on Prisons is in strong support of this resolution and we assert that if public policy were developed through a public health lens, everything would look different. No one would be expendable. Racism IS a public health problem, and a political problem as well because the entire western system is based upon structural racism.

Racism in any form is intolerable and it should be acknowledged and called out whenever and wherever it rears its ugly head.

While we appreciate the legislature’s heightened interest in racial justice issues, we wonder why the government has never addressed and, in fact, avoids acknowledging the racism against Kanaka Maoli. Why are studies ignored that show the overcriminalization of Kanaka in their own country?

We have been asking this question for decades when the data show<sup>1</sup> that Kanaka Maoli are no different than any other group in the criminal legal system, yet are more likely to be incarcerated than any other group. One look inside our jails and prisons will make it pretty clear that they are populated with Kanaka Maoli and Pacific Islanders.

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<sup>1</sup> THE DISPARATE IMPACT OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM ON NATIVE HAWAIIANS, Office of Hawaiian Affairs.  
[https://19of32x2yl33s8o4xza0gf14-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/factsheets\\_final\\_web\\_0.pdf](https://19of32x2yl33s8o4xza0gf14-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/factsheets_final_web_0.pdf)



In 2010, at least 12,000 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders were under the supervision of the U.S. correctional system. Over 3,600 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders were in prison<sup>2</sup>, 1,540 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders were in jail<sup>3</sup>, 21,300 were on parole, and 6,800 were on probation<sup>4</sup>.

There are 447 per 100,000 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island adults in prison, a ratio higher than Whites (425).<sup>5</sup>

The number of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island prisoners in custody increased 22% between 2002 and 2010, a rate higher average (8%) and higher than any other racial group except for Native Americans and Alaska Natives (29%).<sup>6</sup>

Among Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders, women are disproportionately incarcerated. In 2010, over 1 in 8 prisoners in custody were female. On average, 1 in 12 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islands prisoners in custody were female.<sup>7</sup>

Some states experienced disproportionate growth in the number of incarcerated. Between 2002 and 2010, the number of NHPI prisoners in California increased 144%, while the total number of prisoners increased 2%. The number of NHPI prisoners in Utah increased 134%, while the total number of prisoners increased 27% over the decade. While the number of prisoners overall decreased in Hawai'i (-10%), there was an 8% increase in the number of NHPI incarcerated in the state.<sup>7</sup> A 2010 study by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs found that Hawai'i holds 50% of its prisoners on the continental United States, and that Native Hawaiians make up a disproportionate number of those sent to out-of-state prison facilities (41%).<sup>8</sup>

HCR 111 urges the state to commit to:

- Eliminating racial disparities in the criminal justice system;
- Prioritizing racial equity in decision making processes;

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics. 2010. Note: BJS's official measure of prison population is based on the count of prisoners under jurisdiction or legal authority of state and federal correctional officials, which includes local jails, halfway houses, and other facilities. However, race data by jurisdiction is not available. Prisoner race data in this report includes all those who are held under custody, which includes those in private and publicly owned state and federal facilities.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Annual Survey of Jails. 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Glaze, Lauren E., and Thomas P. Bonczar. "Probation and Parole in the United States, 2010." U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics, 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census SF2, Table DP-1.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics, 2002–2010.

<sup>7</sup> Id.

<sup>8</sup> See FN 1

- Acknowledging that communities of color have borne the greatest burdens of inequitable social, environmental, technological, economic, and criminal justice policies, practices, and investments;
- Understanding that the legacy of inequitable policies has caused deep disparities, harm, and mistrust; and
- Recognizing that racial equity is realized only when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes.

These are all noble goals, yet unless there is an implementation plan with benchmarks for accomplishing these goals, how do we move forward? And who develops the plan? How is the larger community involved? Racism affect everyone.

We suggest that in the criminal legal realm, the recommendations of the HCR 85 Correctional Reform Task Force<sup>9</sup> is a great place to start. Implementing the recommendations and funding them will send a strong message to the community that you are serious.

Data on Native Hawaiians/Kanaka Maoli in the criminal legal system has been analyzed for 50 years and nothing has changed, except to say it has gotten worse. It is no secret that jails and prisons in Hawai'i are overflowing with Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander peoples.

It is not uncommon for members of the same family to be incarcerated, as the Department of Justice found out when they came to Hawai'i in 1998. They reported that they had never seen the degree of intergenerational incarceration they witnessed in Hawai'i nei. And that was 23 years ago.

Unless the state is willing to do the hard work to model anti-racism behavior, dismantle their racist criminal laws and policies, and address the underlying policies that promote racism, we can expect more right-wing groups like the Proud Boys to infiltrate every sector of society with their racist ideology. Please lead by example; model anti-racist behavior.

Please present the larger community with your plan to examine and change state policies and laws that promote the structural racism that divides our communities and generally benefit the few at the expense of the many.

Community Alliance on Prisons urges the committee to pass HCR 111 and to start developing the plan to dismantle Hawai'i's racist policies and laws that have denied opportunities for too many, especially the first people of these islands.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

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<sup>9</sup> Creating Better Outcomes, Safer Communities, Final Report of the House Concurrent Resolution 85 Task Force on Prison Reform to the Hawai'i Legislature 2019 Regular Session, December 2018.

[https://www.courts.state.hi.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/HCR-85\\_task\\_force\\_final\\_report.pdf](https://www.courts.state.hi.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/HCR-85_task_force_final_report.pdf)



## THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

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To: The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
The Honorable Scot Z. Matayoshi, Vice Chair  
Members, House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

From: Dr. Gerard Akaka, Vice President of Native Hawaiian Affairs & Clinical Support, The Queen's Health Systems

Colette Masunaga, Director, Government Relations & External Affairs, The Queen's Health Systems

Date: March 22, 2021

Re: Support for HCR111, Asserting That Racism is a Public Health Crisis and Urging the State to Commit to Recognizing and Addressing the Resulting Inequities

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The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's) is a nonprofit corporation that provides expanded health care capabilities to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin. Since the founding of the first Queen's hospital in 1859 by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV, it has been our mission to provide quality health care services in perpetuity for Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i. Over the years, the organization has grown to four hospitals, and more than 1,500 affiliated physicians and providers statewide. As the preeminent health care system in Hawai'i, Queen's strives to provide superior patient care that is constantly advancing through education and research.

Queen's appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HCR111, asserting that racism is a public health crisis and urging the state to commit to recognizing and addressing the resulting inequities. Racial discrimination is recognized as a key social determinant of health and has adversely impacted the health and well-being of minority communities. When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, the stark reality of racial health disparities was amplified by the disproportionate harm caused to historically marginalized groups. Queen's is committed to addressing health disparities and improving quality of care through data driving initiatives and a comprehensive system-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy for our organization.

Thank you for your attention to this important resolution.

*The mission of The Queen's Health Systems is to fulfill the intent of Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i.*



## Hawai'i

Committees: Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
Hearing Date/Time: Monday, March 22, 2021, 2:15 p.m.  
Place: Via videoconference  
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in Support of H.C.R. 111, Asserting that Racism is a Public Health Crisis and Urging the State to Commit to Recognizing and Addressing the Resulting Inequities.

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and members of the Committee:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i ("ACLU of Hawai'i") writes **in support of H.C.R. 111**, which declares racism as a public health crisis and urges the State to commit to assisting in dismantling structural and systemic racism in Hawai'i.

Pervasive racial discrimination in all areas of life – housing, education, healthcare, food access, employment – results in health outcome disparities for Black, Indigenous, and people of color. Systemic and structural racism's impact on public health existed long before COVID-19, but as the resolution states, the pandemic "has revealed, reaffirmed, and cast in sharp relief the exigent nature of these pre-existing inequities caused by systemic racism." In Hawai'i, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and Filipino communities have faced disproportionate rates of COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations. Structural racism is the root of this harm.

Racism's influence on public health has led many groups, such as the American Public Health Association, to call for racism to be declared a public health crisis. Eight states, 100 municipalities, and 76 counties have done so. In declaring racism a public health crisis in Hawai'i, this resolution urges the State to commit to a number of actions to work toward achieving racial equity.

For these reasons, the ACLU of Hawai'i urges the Committee to support this resolution. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mandy Fernandes'.

Mandy Fernandes  
Policy Director  
ACLU of Hawai'i

*The mission of the ACLU of Hawai'i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawai'i fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawai'i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai'i has been serving Hawai'i for over 50 years.*

**HCR-111**

Submitted on: 3/18/2021 4:11:43 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/22/2021 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
cheryl B.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

Start in the Capitol building and the government offices of the State and City/County.

Make sure that all educational entities follow this.

Adopt a State calendar that reflects our population, not the Christian side of the US from 1776.

Remove statues and rename buildings that cause additional trauma due to their racist implications.

Provide funds and a legitimate state resource to address the issues of inequity and racism

Listen to folks in the community, not the same talking heads who always pop up as the expert.

**HCR-111**

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 11:42:27 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/22/2021 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
tlaloc tokuda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear JHA Committee,

This is an important bill and racism needs to be addressed head on.

- Being silent in the face of wrongdoing is not an option; it is tacit cooperation and being complicit.

- We agree that the State should, as provided in HCR 111, at page 2, lines 17-33, commit to:

1. Eliminating racial disparities in the criminal justice system

2. Prioritizing racial equity in decision making processes

3. Acknowledging that communities of color have borne the greatest burdens of inequitable social, environmental, technological, economic, and criminal justice policies, practices, and investments

4. Understanding that the legacy of inequitable policies has caused deep disparities, harm, and mistrust; and

5. Recognizing that racial equity is realized only when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes. . . .

- We all need to reject and call out racism, xenophobia, intolerance, discrimination, or hate crimes against all Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), including women.

- We support HCR 111, urging the State, at page 2, lines 35-41, and page 3, lines 1-9, to (1) commit to engage as partners with communities and residents most impacted by systemic racism and to identify and implement solutions, (2) prioritize diversity in board membership, centering voices of people of color when addressing issues of racism, and holding one another accountable to address implicit biases of all kinds, and

(3) promote equity through all policies approved by the Legislature and enhance educational efforts throughout the state system aimed at understanding, addressing, and dismantling racism and how it affects the delivery of human and social services, economic development, and public safety.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Tlaloc Tokuda

Kailua Kona, HI 96740

**HCR-111**

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 2:50:24 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/22/2021 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Barbara Best	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Anything that can be done to recognize and redress racism is overdue



**HCR-111**

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 5:53:52 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/22/2021 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
David Anderson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Being silent in the face of wrongdoing is not an option; it is tacit cooperation and being complicit.

So I support the State committing to: Eliminating racial disparities in the criminal justice system, prioritizing racial equity in decision making processes, acknowledging that communities of color have borne the greatest burdens of inequitable social, environmental, technological, economic, and criminal justice policies, practices, and investments, understanding that the legacy of inequitable policies has caused deep disparities, harm, and mistrust; and recognizing that racial equity is realized only when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes. . . .

We all need to reject and call out racism, xenophobia, intolerance, discrimination, or hate crimes against all Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), including women.

I support HCR 111, urging the State to: (1) commit to engage as partners with communities and residents most impacted by systemic racism and to identify and implement solutions, (2) prioritize diversity in board membership, centering voices of people of color when addressing issues of racism, and holding one another accountable to address implicit biases of all kinds, and (3) promote equity through all policies approved by the Legislature and enhance educational efforts throughout the state system aimed at understanding, addressing, and dismantling racism and how it affects the delivery of human and social services, economic development, and public safety.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this resolution.

**HCR-111**

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 12:17:07 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/22/2021 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sharde Freitas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

**HCR-111**

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 1:03:53 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/22/2021 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi and Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

Please support HCR111.

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the racial inequities and barriers to healthcare and health service. Those who have lower paying, public facing jobs and live in multigenerational housing are more likely to contract and spread COVID-19.

It is important for our state government to acknowledge these racial inequities and work to remove the barriers to healthcare and health service. If not, the pandemic will linger and continue to breed viral mutations which may be more contagious and more deadly to the entire population. The scientist don't know how long the current versions of the COVID-19 vaccine will be effective against the newer viral mutations.

Thank you for taking the time to review this issue. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HCR 111.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

**HCR-111**

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 11:09:32 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/22/2021 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Samantha Neyland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

Asserting Racism as a Public Health Crisis in Hawaii is absolutely necessary. I have heard many times that "racism does not exist in Hawaii." This sentiment is not only false but harmful to the growth of our community. Ending racial disparity is everyone's responsibility.

I fully support this resolution as a Hawaii resident, former Miss Hawaii USA and founder of the Hawaii for Juneteenth Coalition.

Mahalo,  
Samantha Neyland