

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

WRITTEN ONLY

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 2370
RELATING TO KALAUPAPA MONTH**

SENATOR BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON LABOR, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Hearing Date: 2/11/2020

Room Number: 224

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** This bill requests that the month of January be known and designated
3 as "Kalaupapa month." Notably, January was the month when the first twelve Hansen's disease
4 patients arrived on the peninsula, as well as the birth month of Saint Damien, Saint Marianne,
5 and Mr. Ambrose Hutchison, who was the first Kalaupapa superintendent as well as a patient.

6 The department supports designating the month of January as "Kalaupapa month" because of its
7 great significance to the people of Hawaii, in recognition of the many sacrifices many
8 individuals made during those difficult times, and the legacy that endures as an important part of
9 Hawaii's history.

10 Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

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SB-2370

Submitted on: 2/8/2020 8:56:22 AM

Testimony for LCA on 2/11/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lopaka Hoopii	Testifying for Ka Ohana O Kalaupapa	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Lopaka Hoopii. My father, Robert, along with 6 of his siblings were born in Kalaupapa. He just turned 91 years old 5 days ago. His parents, with two brothers and their wives, are buried in Kalaupapa.

In January 1866, the first 12 patients were sent to Kalaupapa because of Hansen's Disease. These people are pioneers who led hard, but fulfilling lives. Kalaupapa month will honor these first 12 people, with thousands of others who have been sent to Kalaupapa and also led full and fulfilling lives. Many of them were artists, musicians, farmers, composers, carpenters, Boy Scout leaders, leaders of women's organizations, and supporters of the Ku'e petition and Queen Liliuokalani.

Please honor these residents with a month dedicated to their accomplishments and talents.

Lopaka Hoopii

(Director - Ka Ohana O Kalaupapa)

SB-2370

Submitted on: 2/9/2020 1:27:27 PM

Testimony for LCA on 2/11/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Velda N Akamu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TO: Chair Brian T. Taniguchi; Vice Chair Les Ihara, Jr. of Labor, Culture, and the Arts Committee, and Committee members;

FROM: Velda Napua Akamu

Aloha and mahalo for this time to hear us--Ka 'Ohana 'O Kalaupapa. I am 'Ohana, my brothers and I were born 1951, 1952, and I was born 1953. Our parents were sent as children and they were married at Kalaupapa and had us, but we couldn't stay with our parents. I am very involved with the 'Ohana and Kalaupapa.

January is the most special significant month to celebrate Kalaupapa's History with just so many events as Saint Damien's and Saint Marianne's births, and the first 12 patients that were sent there, and the final residents were all forced out in 1895. The Hawaii Conference for the United Church of Christ began observing Kalaupapa Sunday-Fourth Sunday of January where the HUCC churches across Hawaii would remember the people of Kalaupapa and especially the 35 men and women who founded Siloama Church within six months after the first people were sent in January 1866.

Please kakoo--support.

Me ka haa haa,

V. Napua Akamu

SB-2370

Submitted on: 2/9/2020 1:42:19 PM

Testimony for LCA on 2/11/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dita Ramler	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Brian T. Taniguchi, Chairman
Labor, Culture and The Arts Committee
Hawai'i State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Bill Number: SB2370
Hearing: February 11, 2019, 3 p.m.
I write in support of SB2370, Relating to Kalaupapa Month

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Labor, Culture and the Arts Committee,
My name is Dita Ramler.

I am an educator and have worked in public and private schools for the last 30 years.

My Aunt is Sister Rose Annette Ahuna, a Franciscan nun who has given the last 10 years to the education of Hawaii's people to importance of Saint Damien and Saint Marianne.

Having a Month dedicated to Kalaupapa's history will do a great service to the school teachers of Hawaii . They will have a yearly reminder of the importance of this historical place which teaches us about compassion and caring for one another.

Much needed in today's world.

Much Aloha, Dita

SB-2370

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 7:15:16 AM

Testimony for LCA on 2/11/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tessa Munekiyo Ng	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I write in strong support of SB 2370 establishing Kalaupapa Month. Kalaupapa Month will be an annual reminder to people all over Hawai'i about the importance of Kalaupapa and the significant contributions made by her people throughout the history of Hawai'i.

Brian T. Taniguchi, Chairman
Labor, Culture and The Arts Committee
Hawai'i State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Bill Number: SB2370

Hearing: February 11, 2019, 3 p.m.
Room 224, Hawai'i State Capitol

I write in support of SB2370, to Designate January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai'i that will be Observed Annually.

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Labor, Culture and the Arts Committee

My name is Colin Brede. I am the nephew of David Kalani Kaluai Brede (1933-2009) and Jimmy Aheana Brede (1929-2016) who was taken from their love ones and sent to Kalaupapa 15 May 1942 at the young ages of 9 and 13. David and Jimmy are siblings of my father John P Brede (1930-2017).

I am writing in strong support of SB 2370. Perhaps no month contains no more important dates throughout the history of Kalaupapa than the month of January. This is the month when the first 12 people were sent to Kalaupapa in 1866; the month of the birthdays of Father Damien and Mother Marianne who have both been canonized; the month when the United Church of Christ celebrates Kalaupapa Sunday – and other important dates.

Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa believes that Kalaupapa Month will be an annual reminder to people all over Hawai'i and the world about the importance of Kalaupapa and the significant contributions made by her people throughout the history of Hawai'i. Ka 'Ohana also hopes that Kalaupapa Month will be a time when teachers will focus on the history of Kalaupapa in their classrooms and when more churches will pay tribute to the people of Kalaupapa who found strength and community through their faith in God.

My Family the Brede's and Apio's, humbly ask for your support of SB2370, to Designate January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai'i that will be Observed Annually.

Respectfully submitted,

Colin K Brede

Nephew of David Brede, Jimmy Brede and Nancy Brede

Member of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa

ckbrede@hawaii.rr.com

Brian T. Taniguchi, Chairman
Labor, Culture and The Art Committee
Hawai'i State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawai'i 968813

Bill Number: SB2370

Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2020, 3 p.m.
Room 224, Hawai'i State Capitol

I write in support of SB2370, Kalaupapa Month

Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Labor, Culture and the Arts Committee,

My name is Susan Woo Smith. I am the great-granddaughter of Wong Chew, who was taken from his family in 1931 to Kalihi Hospital, then forced to reside in Kalaupapa from 1935-1939.

Before retiring, I was an educator for 32 years, as an elementary classroom teacher, middle school assistant principal, and elementary school principal. History is integral to education, recognizing significant events and the impact of these events on culture and on people. Kalaupapa directly affected the lives of 8,000 individuals, the lives of their families, communities, and those who dedicated their lives to serve. It is important to acknowledge the strength and perseverance of the people of Kalaupapa and their contributions to Hawai'i. Kalaupapa Month will designate time for teachers and churches to recognize and focus on this pivotal aspect of history.

The month of January holds significant dates in the history of Kalaupapa: the first 12 people were sent to Kalaupapa in 1866; Father Damien's date of birth was January 3, 1840; Mother Marianne's date of birth was January 23, 1838. Additionally, the United Church of Christ celebrates Kalaupapa Sunday in January.

I am writing in strong support of SB 2370, which would designate January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai'i and would be observed annually.

I request your support of SB2370, designating January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai'i.

Respectfully,
Susan Woo Smith
Great-Granddaughter of Wong Chew
susanjwsmith@gmail.com

**Kehaulani Lum
99-045 Nalopaka Place
`Aiea, Hawai`i 96701**

Testimony on Senate Bill 2370, Relating to the Kalaupapa Month

**House Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair
Tuesday, February 11, 2020, 3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 224, State Capitol**

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Ihara and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kehaulani Lum, and I strongly support the passage of SB 2370, which designates the month of January as Kalaupapa Month.

This measure holds significant importance for descendants of the 8,000 people who were exiled to the barren peninsula, for decades, and forced to fend for themselves, until they took their last breaths.

Descendants, such as my `ohana, who, in the early 1900s, lost four beautiful children to the mass isolation; three of whom were never seen again. They never returned to their homes. They never saw or hugged their parents and grandparents again. They never laughed with their playmates. They never received medals, compensation or lands on which to live. Most of them simply faded into the abyss of history, with a number held against their chests.

They were the ultimate practitioners of the spirit of Aloha, and this measure will remember them and shine light upon their incredible sacrifices, for the well being of all of our ancestors and us.

What started as a story of grief, loneliness, separation and hunger, can be transformed, through an annual month of awareness, into strength, dignity and resilience; powerful lessons for present and future generations. Moreover, it will ensure that such injustice never happens again.

We thank you, in advance, for giving Hawai`i's heroes voice.

Me ke aloha nui loa,

Kehaulani Lum

Brian T. Taniguchi, Chairman
Labor, Culture and The Arts Committee
Hawai`i State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813

Bill Number: SB2370

Hearing: February 11, 2019, 3 p.m.
Room 224, Hawai`i State Capitol

I write in support of SB2370, designate January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai`i

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Labor, Culture and the Arts Committee,

My name is Jason Umemoto. I am on the Board of Directors of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa. My involvement is directly related to my relationship with my grand-uncle Ed Kato, who was a long-time resident-patient at Kalaupapa.

I am writing in strong support of SB 2370 which would designate January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai`i and that it would be observed annually.

January is an important month for the community of Kalaupapa. The first 12 people were sent to Kalaupapa in January 1866. This is also the month of Saint Damien and Saint Marianne birthdays and month of canonization. The United Church of Christ celebrates Kalaupapa Sunday in January.

I believe Kalaupapa Month will be an annual reminder about the importance of the Kalaupapa community and history. It can also be a celebration of the significant contributions made by the resident-patients of the community throughout the history of Hawai`i. It is an opportunity for schools, churches and community groups to pay tribute and provide education relating to the people and history of Kalaupapa.

We humbly ask for your support of SB2370 to provide funding for The Kalaupapa Memorial.

Respectfully submitted,
Jason Umemoto,

SB-2370

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 10:22:49 AM

Testimony for LCA on 2/11/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cheryl Reeser	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of SB2370, requesting January to be designated as Kalaupapa Month. I am the great, great granddaughter of a Kalaupapa patient who was banished to Kalaupapa for the remainder of her life, removed permanently from her loved-ones. In addition my late parents, Don and Bunnie Reeser, worked tirelessly to memorialize and honor the Kalaupapa patients who were sent there, as well as their families who experienced such loss, and others who lived and took care of them. This is an important chapter in Hawaii's history that should be recognized for future generations.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Cheryl Kuulei Reeser

Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa



*"E Ho 'ohanohano a E Ho 'omau . . .
... To Honor and To Perpetuate"*

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chairman, Labor, Culture and the Arts Committee

SB2370: Kalaupapa Month

Tuesday, February 11, 2020, 3 p.m., Room 224

I write in SUPPORT of SB2370, designating each January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai'i

Aloha Chairman Taniguchi and members of the Labor, Culture and the Arts Committee,

As Executive Director of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa, I am in strong support of a proposal from the Board of Directors of Ka 'Ohana to designate January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai'i.

One of the priorities of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa has been to develop educational materials that provide an accurate and inclusive history of Kalaupapa. We have produced two award-winning exhibits that have been displayed on every island at least once. Our educational materials are available on our website. We also help family members and school groups visit Kalaupapa.

Our 'Ohana Board was thinking of how to increase our outreach, raise awareness of Kalaupapa and celebrate the many great people who continue to inspire us today.

Kalaupapa Month will do just that. Our 'Ohana Board is asking that January be designated as Kalaupapa Month annually because so many significant events occurred throughout history in that month. This was the month when the first people were sent to Kalaupapa; when both of Kalaupapa's Saints -- Father Damien and Mother Marianne -- were born and when the Hawai'i United Church of Christ celebrates Kalaupapa Sunday.

Kalaupapa Month is a way for everyone to get involved in remembering the people of Kalaupapa and their important history -- and it would be a great way to start off each year.

I humbly ask for your support of SB2370, designating each January as Kalaupapa Month in Hawai'i.

Mahalo.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Valerie Monson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Valerie Monson, Executive Director
Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa

February 9, 2020

Bill Number: SB2796

Hearing: February 11, 2019, 3 p.m.
Room 224, Hawai'i State Capitol

I am in FULL SUPPORT of SB2370 providing for the establishment of January as Kalaupapa Month.

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Labor, Culture and the Arts Committee,

I am writing to lend my FULL SUPPORT to SB 2370. So many dynamic events at Kalaupapa took place in the month of January. Kalaupapa is such a important and unique Chapter in the history of our State, a Chapter that many of our State's population has only heard bits and pieces of.

Having Janaury as Kalaupapa Month each year will keep the history of the Kalaupapa community and her people in the forefront for years to come.

For Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa, January will be a time to continue emphasis on our yearly Kalaupapa educational and other community outreach programs. January each year will also tie in with the 'Ohana's annual fundraising campaign to enrich the Memorial's endowment fund, which is intended to insure that the Memorial and its surrounding grounds are maintained in pristine condition in perpetuity, and to help sustain the 'Ohana's highly successful community outreach programs such as "The Restoration of Family Ties" program through which the 'Ohana has reconnected more than 800 families with their ancestors at Kalaupapa during the past several years.

Attached are two letter that reflect the intent and success of the 'Ohana's relationship with residents and family members at Kalaupapa, relationships that will only be enhanced should your Committee approve January as Kalaupapa Month and move it along for final approval of the Legislature.

One letter is from Reverend Charles Buck, former Conference Minister for the United Church of Christ, which owns the historic Siloama Church located next to the site where the Memorial will be established. The other letter is from Anne Mehealani Apo who had kupuna at Kalaupapa and has worked closely with the 'Ohana.

Again, please allow me to emphasize again my FULL Support for Senate Bill 2370.

Respectfully submitted



DeGray Vanderbilt

Phone (808) 283-8171, Email: degray.vanderbilt@gmail.com



HAWAII CONFERENCE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Ms. Haunani Apoliona
Chair, Board of Trustees
Office of Hawaiian Affairs
711-Kapiolani Blvd.
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Ms. Apoliona :

As Conference Minister of the Hawai'i Conference of the United Church of Christ, I am supportive of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa and their efforts "to honor and perpetuate the memory of those individuals who were forcibly relocated to Kalaupapa Peninsula from 1866 to 1969."

The United Church of Christ (UCC) and its predecessor denominations have been active and present on the Kalaupapa peninsula from the beginning of the forced relocation of Hansen's disease patients through the Siloama (Kalawao) and Kana'ana Hou (Kalaupapa) churches, which have merged over time to become what is known today as the Kana'ana Hou-Siloama United Church of Christ.

The UCC is also active as a supporting member of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa, consisting of patients and their families and friends, which advocates for the needs and rights of the patients and works closely and cooperatively with the National Parks Service and State of Hawai'i Department of Hawaiian Homelands.

With the numbers of patients at Kalaupapa declining, our own members at Kana'ana Hou-Siloama along with the members of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa have become increasingly concerned about the future. In particular, will the memories and histories of the thousands of patients survive after the last one has died? How will the tales of injustice, as well as stories of courage and survival, be shared that they may teach and inspire future generations?

Page 2 of 2 (Kalaupapa)

Together we are addressing these questions, and a memorial of some kind as well as and other projects to provide family members with more information, developing an orientation program for staffers and visitors at Kalaupapa, and helping family members visit Kalaupapa would be a positive and encouraging step toward honoring the dignity and perpetuating the legacy of all those who lived in this special place at a unique time in U.S. history.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles Buck".

Charles Buck
Hawai'i Conference Minister

cc: Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa (c/o Valerie Monson)

Dear Ka `Ohana O` Kalaupapa,

I write this letter on behalf of my family and for the ancestors of Kalaupapa waiting to be reunited with their Ohana.

Ka `Ohana O` Kalaupapa has been a significant part of my family. The organization has helped us connect to our ancestors and piece together an important part of our genealogy necessary for preserving our family lineage.

My grandmother never spoke of her father, all that we knew of his life was that he left Hilo to live in Kalaupapa with his teenage son who had contracted leprosy. Just one of the many sad stories of families fallen victim to a deadly disease.

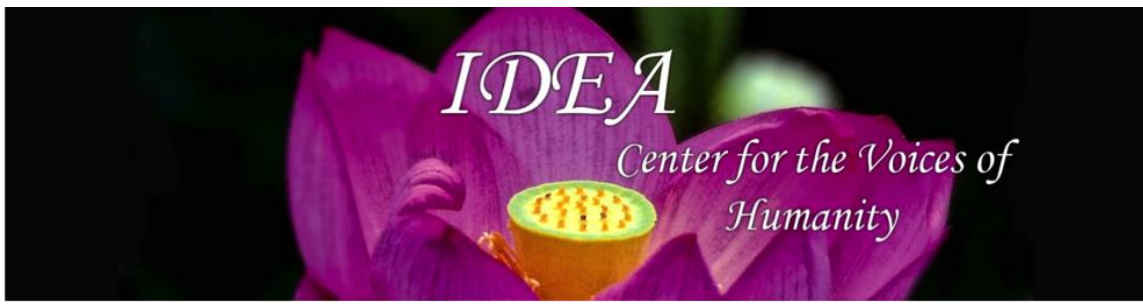
After reading an issue of Ka `Ohana O` Kalaupapa's newsletter and learning of the organization's vision to reunite families of Kalaupapa, I decided to contact the organization. My daughter and I attended Ka `Ohana O` Kalaupapa's 2007 annual meeting, a journey that began a fateful time in our lives. It was the beginning that would uncover one of the most treasured discoveries of our family tree.

The information provided to us was astounding. We learned that our great grandfather, John T. Unea, was the manager of the Kalaupapa Store and a teacher for the Kalaupapa School. He also recorded the first census of the Kalaupapa Settlement in 1900 where his name can be found on every page of the census thus instilling in our hearts a confirmation of dignity.

We were overjoyed and proud to learn about our kupuna's life and continue to learn more about him and other members of our family that were exiled to Kalaupapa. We are also indebted to the "Ohana" for uniting us with the patients of Kalaupapa and their families creating a bond that our ancestors once shared.

We are grateful for all the help that Ka `Ohana O` Kalaupapa has given us and we support their endeavors. We believe the Ohana is an integral part to the survival of the history of Kalaupapa and to the preservation of family genealogy.

Me Ke Aloha Pumehana,
Anne Mahealani Apo
for my Papa Unea & Family



February 9, 2020

Brian T. Taniguchi, Chairman
Labor, Culture and The Arts Committee
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 219

Hearing: February 11, 2019, 3 p.m.; Room 224, Hawai'i State Capitol

In support of SB2370 -- Kalaupapa Month

To Chairperson Taniguchi and Members of the Labor, Culture and the Arts Committee:

As the population of Kalaupapa becomes smaller and smaller, it is increasingly important to find different ways to ensure that this important history is remembered in Hawai'i and throughout the world. The month of January is filled with significant dates related to this history.

On January 6, 1866, the first group of individuals was sent to Kalaupapa because they had leprosy. Accompanying these nine men and three women were at least five family members and one small boy whom they hid in their midst. One of the individuals with leprosy, Kini, was 15 years old, Kaaumoana was 16. The ages of the rest are not yet known. J.N. Loe and J.D. Kahauliko would immediately start writing letters to the Board of Health describing their situation. J.N. Loe noted that they were "in total darkness" and asked that two Hawaiian language newspapers be sent to them.

January 6, 1866 is only one of the important dates in Kalaupapa's history to take place in the month of January. Father Damien De Veuster was born on January 3; Barbara Koob, who would become Mother Marianne Cope, was born on January 23, which has been designated as her feast day; Ambrose Kanewalii Hutchison, who lived at Kalaupapa for 53 years and served as Resident Superintendent for a total of ten years, longer than any other person who was facing the physical, social and emotional challenges of leprosy, arrived at Kalaupapa on January 5, 1879.

In January, 1895, the final kama'aina, the original residents of Kalaupapa who had provided the people sent to Kalaupapa with so much assistance, were given notice that they had to leave the peninsula.

In addition, the last Sunday in January is celebrated internationally as World Leprosy Day.

Designating January as Kalaupapa Month will provide schools, churches and other organizations a special time to focus on the history of Kalaupapa and all of the individuals who were sent there.

Sincerely,

Anwei Skinsnes Law, MPH
Director, IDEA Center for the Voices of Humanity
IDEA President for Heritage & Education
Historian, Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa

Henry G. Law
First Superintendent, Kalaupapa National Historical Park

Sister M. Davilyn Ah Chick, osf
Sisters of St. Francis ~ St. Clare Convent
91-1048 'A'awa Drive, Ewa Beach, HI 96706

Brian T. Taniguchi, Chairman

Labor, Culture and the Arts Committee
Hawai'i State Legislature, Honolulu, HI 96813

Bill Number: SB2370 - To designate January as Kalaupapa Month

Hearing: February 11, 2019 @ 3:00 p.m.
Room 224, Hawai'i State Capitol

Dear Chairman Taniguchi and Committee Members,

Aloha and the blessings of our Lord Jesus Christ and all the Saints!

I am Sister M. Davilyn Ah Chick, osf, a Sister of St. Francis, a Board Director of Ka 'Ohana O Kaluapapa, Chairperson of St. Francis Healthcare System of Hawai'i, and Principal of Our Lady of Perpetual Help School. I am proud to be a Sister of St. Francis, because I belong to Saint Marianne Cope's religious community and able to serve our People of Hawai'i. In 1883, Mother Marianne Cope and six of my Sisters of St. Francis answered the plea of King Kalakaua and Queen Kapiolani to care for those afflicted by Hansen's disease. We are honored and happy to serve God and His People here in Hawai'i now for 137 years.

I am writing to strongly support Senate Bill 2370 designating January as Kalaupapa Month.

- January is the birthdays of our Saints of Hawai'i: Saint Marianne Cope (January 23, 1838), who as a Sister of St. Francis responded to the call of King Kalakaua and Queen Kapiolani in 1883 to care for those afflicted with leprosy spending 30 years in Kalaupapa, and Saint Damien deVeuster (January 3, 1840) arrived at Kalaupapa in 1873 and cared for the people in Kalaupapa for 16 years.
- On January 6, 1866, the first 12 citizen of Hawai'i, who arrived at the Kalaupapa because of government policies regarding leprosy, were the first of 8,000 people taken from their families and forcibly isolated at Kalaupapa never to see their loved ones they left again.
- On January 5, 1879, Ambrose Hutchison arrived at Kalaupapa and lived there for 53 years. He was a Resident Superintendent for 10 years and worked alongside of Father Damien and Mother Marianne. He also helped with the visit of the Ali'i to Kalaupapa.
- January 1895: During this month the original/final kama'aina residents of Kalaupapa were forced to leave the peninsula. Since 1866, the kama'aina residents helped the early residents with much kindness, compassion, support, and even supplies. They were evicted a year after the Republic of Hawai'i was established.

Thank you very much for making it possible for me to ask you for your support of SB2370 to designate January as Kalaupapa Month. All of you are reassured of my humble prayers. May God continue to bless you and all you do for God's people here in Hawai'i and beyond!

Gratefully and sincerely yours in Christ and St. Marianne Cope,

Sister M. Davilyn Ah Chick, osf
Board Member of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa
sisterdavilyn@gmail.com
(808) 689-0474

January 31, 2020

Chair Brian T. Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Labor, Culture and Arts Committee
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 219
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii, 96813

Subject: Kalaupapa: SB2396 and SB 2370

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Committee Members,

We, the undersigned are residents of Kalaupapa, are very appreciative of the Senate introducing the two subject bills advanced by Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa, an organization made up of Kalaupapa residents, their extended family members and longtime friend of the Kalaupapa Community.

These are two important complimentary bills which will continue to build on and sustain the 'Ohana's efforts over many years to insure that the history and legacy of our people will be preserved for the benefit of future generations. Kalaupapa represents a special and unique chapter in our State's history and culture.

One of the major projects of our 'Ohana is the establishment of The Kalaupapa Memorial. The Memorial will list the names of all of the approximate 8,000 men, women and children who were forcibly separated from their families in Hawaii and sent to Kalaupapa. Currently there are less than 1,000 marked graves with names that can be identified. The Memorial will return all of these individuals to their rightful places in their family histories as well as the history of Kalaupapa and will provide a place of dignity where our family members can find healing and closure.

The Most Reverend Larry Silva, Bishop of Honolulu, who had family at Kalaupapa, sent a support letter in for the Kalaupapa Memorial. He wrote that the "Memorial would serve as a communal headstone so that all buried on the Peninsula, whether in marked or unmarked graves, could be remembered."

This is just one of many support letters sent in by stakeholders at Kalaupapa including individuals, organizations and State and County agencies.

The State Land Use Commission unanimously declared that the establishment of the Memorial would be an improvement to a site of "historic interest to the State."

Time is of the essence for this project as there are only 12 of us remaining – our ages range from 78 to 95. We are hopeful Memorial will be completed soon so as many of us as possible will be present at the unveiling.

We understand that your Committee is tasked with evaluating legislation related to programs related to our State's culture and arts, including programs related to historic preservation. Both of the subject bills relate directly to the preservation of our community's history and its cultural values.

At the request of the Kalaupapa community, the Kalaupapa 'Ohana was organized in 2003. Since that time, the organization has been awarded five historic preservation awards by Historic Hawai'i Foundation, including one that honored the 'Ohana's highly successful "Restoration of Family Ties" program. Through this program the 'Ohana has been able to connect over 800 family members with their ancestors who were sent to Kalaupapa.

We understand that both of the attached bills have been referred to your committee and the Senate's Finance Committee, and that the first important step is for your Committee to decide on whether or not to schedule a hearing for the two bills so they can be heard before sending them on to the Senate Finance Committee.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources has approved the project's final State environmental assessment, which includes the awarding the 'Ohana a 65-year lease in principle on the state-owned land where the Memorial will be located. The site is a neighboring property to historic St. Philomena Church, often called Damien's church, for Father – and Saint – Damien who graces the entrance to our State Capitol.

We again humbly request your support for these important bills.

Me ke aloha pumehana,

John Arredy
Pauline Chow
Winfred Harada

Monday, February 3, 2020

Senator Brian Taniguchi and Members of the LCA Committee
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 And we are

Regarding: Senate Bill 2370 and Senate Bill 2796

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Members:

This morning several of us, who are at Leahi Hospital, received a briefing on the two Senate bills mentioned above from Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa ('Ohana) Executive Director Valerie Monson and 'Ohana Board Member DeGray Vanderbilt.

The briefing included a review of the attached letter to Chair Taniguchi dated January 31, 2020 signed by several residents who received a similar briefing at Kalaupapa on the Senate Bills and the process involved in moving them successfully through the legislature.

Those of us who have signed this letter below are fully supportive of the letter signed last Friday by those residents at Kalaupapa.

We would like to add that the five historic preservation awards the 'Ohana received from Hawaii Historic Foundation also included a short video entitled "Pride of a Nation", a tribute to those sent to Kalaupapa from all parts of our State. The video can be viewed at our updated website (kalaupapaohana.org).

As mentioned in the attached January 31 letter, another of the historic preservation awards honored the 'Ohana's highly successful, on-going "Restoration of Family Ties" program that has resulted in approximately 800 families being reconnected with their Kalaupapa ohana over the past several years. Attached is a recent newsletter, which shares additional information on this dynamic program.

Only 12 of us of the 8,000 Hawaii citizens sent to Kalaupapa remain. We are anxious to see the Memorial completed in time for us to participate in its unveiling ceremony. Having the Memorial completed and Kalaupapa Month in place will contribute significantly to our efforts over the years to insure that the legacy of our community is sustained in perpetuity. It is truly a unique chapter in our State's history and one future generations can learn so much from.

We are appreciative of Senator Kalani English introducing Senate Bills 2370 and 2796 for us. They are very important. And we respectfully request that your LCA Committee schedule a hearing for the bills so they can be heard and passed on to the Senate Ways and Means Committee, which includes several members who have provided much support for us and our Kalaupapa community in the past.

Copies:

Senator J. Kalani English

Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa

Clarence Kehelua

Samuel Haskins
Dr. K. Kehelua
Harold Gale
Gloria L. Stark

Sister Alicia Damien Lau, osf
15 Bishop Home #0129
P.P. Box 129
Kalaupapa, HI 96742
February 10, 2020

Brian T. Taniguchi, Chairman
Labor, Culture and The Arts Committee
Hawai'i State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Bill Number: SB2370
Hearing: February 11, 2019, 3 p.m.
Room 224, Hawai'i State Capitol

Kalaupapa Month – SB2370

I write in support of SB2370, to designate January as Kalaupapa Month;

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Labor, Culture and the Arts Committee,

My name is Sister Alicia Damien Lau, a Sister of St Francis from the Order of Saint Marianne Cope who arrived in 1883 at the request of King Kalakaua and Queen Kapiolani, to care of those Hawaiian people who were afflicted with the disease of leprosy. Mother Marianne Cope came to Kalaupapa on November 14, 1888 and our Sisters have been here continuously since then. I came down to Kalaupapa in 1965 and had met many of the patients since then, spending weekends several times a month in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. In 2012, when I retired from healthcare, I spent half of my time, and later, three-fourths time in Kalaupapa as a National Park Service Volunteer. Now, I am in Kalaupapa full time assisting as a NPS Volunteer and an employee of The Pacific Historic Parks Bookstore.

January has been a significant month for Kalaupapa. It is the month when the first twelve people sent to Kalaupapa arrived in 1866. It is the month of both Saint Damien deVaster and Saint Marianne Cope's birthdays. Both of these religious left their homelands to care for the Hawaiian people. Ambrose Hutchison arrived in January, spent 53 years serving as resident superintendent, during which many of those years he worked alongside of Fr. Damien and Mother Marianne. We celebrate the feast day of St. Marianne Cope on January 23 of each year.

I strongly support of SB 2370 - to designate January as Kalaupapa Month and believe that it would be a reminder to all people in Hawaii and elsewhere, about the importance of Kalaupapa and its significant contribution made by the 8000 people who, by their isolation, helped stop the spread of leprosy.

Respectfully submitted,
Sister Alicia Damien Lau, osf
Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities
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