
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO STATE HOLIDAYS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that every state in the
2 Union celebrates holidays unique to that state's history. Texas
3 celebrates its own Texas Independence Day, a day honoring Texas'
4 independence from Mexico's central government. Utah celebrates
5 Pioneer Day, the day Brigham Young ventured to its territory.
6 Alaska celebrates Seward's Day, when the purchase treaty between
7 the United States and Russia for the Alaska Territory was
8 codified. The distinctive cultural and storied past of Hawai'i
9 has its own holidays that have been celebrated up through the
10 Territory of Hawai'i. Lā Kū'oko'a, Hawaiian Recognition Day, was
11 widely celebrated with pride as Hawai'i became an emerging power
12 in the Pacific among the global powers of that time.

13 The history and culture of Hawai'i are showcased around the
14 world to tell the story of the archipelago. Hawai'i's culture
15 and native language are used to make areas, buildings, and
16 communities relevant with a sense of place. Lā Kū'oko'a has long



1 been a source of pride in Hawai'i and in recent years has
2 garnered a newfound energy in its celebration.

3 The legislature further finds that during the reign of
4 Kamehameha III, Great Britain and France recognized the
5 independence of the Hawaiian Kingdom by joint proclamation on
6 November 28, 1843. The United States followed on July 6, 1844.
7 These leading world powers recognized Hawai'i as an independent
8 nation state due to the diplomatic work of Timoteo Ha'alilio, the
9 first diplomat of the Kingdom of Hawai'i, and his associate
10 William Richards, who were sent as envoys of Kamehameha III to
11 secure formal diplomatic relations with these countries.

12 In 1847, Kamehameha III required his Minister of Foreign
13 Affairs, Robert Crichton Wyllie, to determine a fitting way to
14 recognize and celebrate the anniversary of Hawai'i's welcome into
15 the family of nations. On October 15, 1847, Wyllie delivered
16 his report, by Privy Council, to the King and ministers. That
17 year marked the first official celebration of Hawaiian
18 Recognition Day, Lā Kū'oko'a.

19 Throughout the 1850s and 1870s, Hawai'i celebrated Lā
20 Kū'oko'a with lū'au, music, and marches. The celebration grew
21 under the reign of King Kalākaua, with formal proclamations sent



1 by official circular to the foreign diplomatic corps in Hawai'i
2 and the Hawaiian Kingdom consuls abroad, informing them of the
3 holiday.

4 The day remained a national holiday under the Provisional
5 Government of Hawai'i (1893), the Republic of Hawai'i (1894-
6 1898), and the initial years of the Territory of Hawai'i. Lā
7 Kū'oko'a was among the codified list of national holidays enacted
8 by the Republic of Hawai'i in 1896 (Act 66).

9 The purpose of this Act is to:

- 10 (1) Reestablish Lā Kū'oko'a, Hawaiian Recognition Day, as
11 an official state holiday; and
12 (2) Remove election days as an official state holiday.

13 SECTION 2. Section 8-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
14 amended to read as follows:

15 "**§8-1 Holidays designated.** The following days of each
16 year are set apart and established as state holidays:

17 The first day in January, New Year's Day;

18 The third Monday in January, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,
19 Day;

20 The third Monday in February, Presidents' Day;



H.B. NO. 678

Report Title:

State Holiday; Lā Kū'oko'a; Hawaiian Recognition Day; Election Day

Description:

Recognizes Lā Kū'oko'a, Hawaiian Recognition Day, as an official state holiday. Removes election day as an official state holiday.

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