
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO KALAUPAPA MONTH.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the month of January
2 is significant in the history of Kalaupapa on the island of
3 Moloka'i.

4 In 1865, the Kingdom of Hawai'i passed "An Act to Prevent
5 the Spread of Leprosy", which required the Board of Health to
6 "cause to be isolated and confined . . . all leprosy patients
7 who shall be deemed capable of spreading the disease of
8 leprosy." Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, is an
9 infection caused by *mycobacterium leprae*, a slow-growing
10 bacteria, that can affect the nerves, skin, eyes, and lining of
11 the nose, and if left untreated can result in the crippling of
12 hands and feet, paralysis, and blindness. Though it is now
13 known that leprosy does not spread easily and there is effective
14 treatment, for many years it was feared as a highly contagious
15 and devastating disease. Accordingly, to prevent the spread of
16 leprosy, the Kingdom bought eight hundred acres of land on the
17 remote Kalaupapa peninsula of Moloka'i in order to forcible



1 remove from the general population individuals believed to have
2 leprosy.

3 On January 6, 1866, twelve citizens of Hawai'i arrived at
4 Kalaupapa, the first of an estimated eight thousand people who
5 were taken from their families and forced into isolation. These
6 first twelve women and men were J. N. Loe, Kahauliko, Liilii,
7 Puha, Kini, Lono, Waipio, Kainana, Kaaumoana, Nahuina, Lapaka,
8 and Kepihe. The original inhabitants of Kalaupapa played a
9 critical role in helping these leprosy patients who faced
10 tremendous difficulties. If not for their kindness and
11 compassion, life would have been far worse for those who had
12 been banished to the peninsula. The government provided very
13 little support or supplies to the early settlement of isolated
14 leprosy patients, including no doctor or hospital, and expected
15 the patients to be self-sufficient.

16 The peak of leprosy in Hawai'i came in the 1880s, when more
17 than one thousand individuals lived at Kalaupapa. As the
18 settlement grew and became overcrowded, the government ordered
19 the original inhabitants to leave the land they had occupied for
20 generations. The last of the original inhabitants of Kalaupapa



1 were evicted in January 1895, a year after the Republic of
2 Hawai'i was established.

3 The legislature further finds that Hale Mohalu, a
4 collection of World War II barracks on eleven acres of land at
5 the edge of Pearl City, Oahu, was converted into a treatment
6 center for leprosy patients registered at Kalaupapa and became a
7 "second home" for many of its patients. Since the 1950s, state
8 officials had let Hale Mohalu fall into disrepair, and in 1978,
9 the State began relocating patients to Leahi Hospital, its
10 designated Honolulu treatment center. On January 26, 1978,
11 eight residents of Hale Mohalu were relocated to Leahi Hospital
12 against their wishes. Twelve others refused to leave and
13 remained behind, including Bernard Punikai'a, Clarence Naia, and
14 Frank and Mary Duarte. This began a nearly six year occupation
15 of Hale Mohalu by these residents, who together with their
16 supporters, protested policies imposed by the then governor and
17 board of health. Punikai'a, Naia, and several of their
18 supporters were arrested on September 21, 1983, when the
19 buildings of Hale Mohalu were bulldozed.



1 The legislature additionally finds that two key individuals
2 who committed their lives to serving those affected by leprosy
3 also share significant dates in the month of January.

4 On January 3, 1840, Jozef De Veuster was born in Belgium.
5 He later joined the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus
6 and Mary. Known as Father Damien, he was ordained in Honolulu.
7 Father Damien arrived at Kalaupapa in 1873 and spent sixteen
8 years of his life caring for the people of Kalaupapa,
9 ministering to them, building houses, churches, and tending to
10 their medical needs, until his death at age 49 in 1889. He was
11 canonized by the Catholic Church as Saint Damien of Moloka'i in
12 2009.

13 On January 23, 1838, Barbara Koob was born in Germany. She
14 later became a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Syracuse,
15 New York, and eventually became known as Mother Marianne Cope.
16 She was a respected health administrator and answered the call
17 of King Kalākaua and Queen Kapi'olani to help people affected by
18 leprosy in Hawai'i. She spent thirty years at Kalaupapa,
19 supervising the Bishop Home for Single Women and Girls and
20 serving as a leader in the community. She was canonized by the
21 Catholic Church as Saint Marianne in 2012.



1 Many of the people banished to Kalaupapa became great
2 leaders of the community. On January 5, 1879, Ambrose Kanewalii
3 Hutchison arrived at Kalaupapa where he lived for the next
4 fifty-three years. He served as resident superintendent for a
5 total of ten years, from 1884 to 1894, the longest of any other
6 person facing the challenges of leprosy.

7 In 1946, leprosy patients in Hawai'i began being treated
8 with sulfone drugs which meant they did not need to be isolated
9 from others. Forced isolation at Kalaupapa ended in 1949 though
10 it took until 1969 for the State's policy to officially end. In
11 1976, Kalaupapa was designated a National Historic Landmark by
12 the U.S. government and then the Kalaupapa National Historic
13 Park was established in 1980 to recognize and preserve the
14 history of the peninsula and support the remaining residents.

15 The legislature finds that the people of Kalaupapa today
16 are viewed as valuable members of society who are some of
17 Hawai'i's finest citizens having overcome the most difficult of
18 circumstances. Mercy Hutchison Bacon, great niece of Kalaupapa
19 leader Ambrose Hutchison, called the people of Kalaupapa "the
20 pride of a nation".



1 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to establish January
 2 of each year as "Kalaupapa Month" to serve as an annual reminder
 3 to people all over of the importance of Kalaupapa and the
 4 significant sacrifices and contributions made by its residents
 5 throughout the history of Hawai'i.

6 SECTION 2. Chapter 8, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
 7 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to
 8 read as follows:

9 "§8- Kalaupapa Month. The month of January shall be
 10 known and designated as "Kalaupapa Month", to serve as an annual
 11 reminder to people all over of the importance of Kalaupapa and
 12 the significant sacrifices and contributions made by its
 13 residents throughout the history of Hawaii. This month is not
 14 and shall not be construed as a state holiday."

15 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

16 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



S.B. NO. 697
S.D. 1

Report Title:
Kalaupapa Month

Description:
Designates January as "Kalaupapa Month". (SD1)

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