JAN 2 4 2024

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO RICHARD "BUFFALO" KEAULANA DAY.

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

- 1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Richard "Buffalo"
- 2 Keaulana was an iconic surfer and lifesaver. Born on September
- 3 2, 1935, in Honolulu, Keaulana learned to surf as a young boy in
- 4 the gentle rollers off Waikiki. Keaulana eventually graduated
- 5 to the level of "beach boy" before his family settled in his
- 6 home community of Makaha. Keaulana grew to be known as one of
- 7 Hawaii's most naturally talented surfers. His smooth style,
- 8 switch-stance skills, and "nose for the pocket" made him a
- 9 favorite at the annual Makaha International contest, an event he
- 10 won in 1960. Keaulana captured six of the top-four finishes in
- 11 the contest between 1957 and 1965. His achievements led many to
- 12 consider him the world's best bodysurfer at the time.
- 13 Along with his renowned surfing talent, Keaulana was named
- 14 Makaha's chief lifeguard in 1969, a position he held for over
- 15 two decades. He came to be known as the "mayor of Makaha", and
- 16 in 1972, the community erected a statue in his honor in front of
- 17 the Makaha library. Keaulana was also honored with an annual



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- 1 surf contest and beach party in his name, Buffalo's Big Board
- 2 Classic, which continues to be a community mainstay today.
- 3 Additionally, in 2010, Keaulana was inducted into the Outrigger
- 4 Duke Kahanamoku Foundation's hall of fame. Perhaps his greatest
- 5 honor and achievement was becoming the patriarch of his own West
- 6 Oahu dynasty, currently in its third generation. Two of his six
- 7 children have noteworthy careers in surfing: Brian, a
- 8 world-class waterman and big-wave surfer; and Rusty, a
- 9 three-time world longboard champion (1993-1995). His family
- 10 continues to be known as "Makaha's first family".
- 11 Richard "Buffalo" Keaulana's enduring legacy of aloha has
- 12 touched generations of ocean lovers and surfers worldwide. A
- 13 friend and fellow beach boy of Duke Kahanamoku, Keaulana's
- 14 contributions to the sport of surfing and Hawaiian cultural
- 15 restoration are everlasting. In 1976, Keaulana was on the first
- 16 voyage of the Hokulea to Tahiti, acting as the voyaging canoe's
- 17 steersman. His unique nickname, "Buffalo", derives from his
- 18 constant connection and companionship with the water, in
- 19 addition to his "large head and copious amounts of hair", as his
- 20 friends would describe him. As Makaha's first lifeguard,
- 21 Keaulana's legacy extends beyond surfing and his ambassadorship

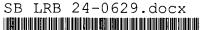


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- 1 of aloha. He not only was essential in protecting swimmers in
- 2 Makaha's rough waters but was a father figure to many of West
- 3 Oahu's youth.
- 4 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to honor Keaulana
- 5 by designating September 2nd of each year as Richard "Buffalo"
- 6 Keaulana Day.
- 7 SECTION 2. Chapter 8, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
- 8 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to
- 9 read as follows:
- 10 "§8- Richard "Buffalo" Keaulana Day. September 2 of
- 11 each year shall be known and recognized as "Richard "Buffalo"
- 12 Keaulana Day"; provided that this day is not and shall not be
- 13 construed to be a state holiday."
- 14 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.
- 15 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY: Kurt Feella



S.B. NO. 3270

Report Title:

Richard Buffalo Keaulana Day

Description:

Designates September 2nd of each year as "Richard "Buffalo" Keaulana Day".

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