

SB-2657-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 4:11:25 PM

Testimony for CAI on 3/13/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dr. Kaliko Baker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha nui e ke Kōmike Culture, Arts, & International Affairs:

My name is Dr. Kaliko Baker and **am in complete support of SB2657 being passed.** I am testifying here as an individual citizen of the State of Hawai‘i. Although I hold a Philosophical Doctorate in Linguistics, a position as an Associate Professor of Hawaiian at UH Mānoa, and other titles, the one that I put my highest regard to is my title as Mo‘o Lono, a traditional conductor of Lono rituals and ceremonies. I have held this title since 1998 with the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana and since 2003 been at the helm of the ceremonies on Kaho‘olawe.

There are currently no holidays or recognized calendar days of the State of Hawai‘i that finds its roots in the traditional ways of the Kānaka Maoli, the aboriginal people of Hawai‘i nei. Sure there is a day in July that recognizes Lā Ho‘iho‘i Ea. However, that is a holiday which celebrates a post-colonial constructed government. What SB2657 will do is honor a traditional Kanaka Maoli practice, namely, Makahiki, in a modern way, by creating an official day of recognition.

Traditionally, there were periods of time, days, that were set aside to honor the rights and rituals of Makahiki that were focused on harvest and yield of crops. Society was put on pause, as holidays do, while these rights and rituals were performed. For those who may wonder what the Makahiki is, it is the recognition of the Hawaiian new year based on the lunar month of ‘Ikuā during the kapu nights of Hua, namely, Mōhalu, Hua, and Akua. The Hawaiian lunar month of ‘Ikuā generally coincides with October. Easter Sunday is a holiday that is celebrated on various dates of the calendar year based on the first full moon after the vernal equinox. There is, thus, precedence to have holidays being based on lunar and/or stellar calendars.

There is a historical issue in connection to the timing of Makahiki in the recommendation for today’s hearing. The Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts Chaired by Senator Chris Lee stated the following: “Due to Makahiki's dependence upon the star cluster Makali‘i's orbit, the beginning of the festival can fall between late October to early November.” This statement is well intended, yet incorrect. In authoring a book slated for publication this calendar year on the traditional practice of Makahiki and its relevance today, I found in my research that, as reported in other research, [specifically Dr. Kalei Nu‘uhiwa’s doctoral thesis](#), the timing of Makahiki does not have much to do with Makali‘i, the Pleiades. In fact the timing of the Makahiki is reported in many traditional Hawaiian sources as initially beginning in the lunar month of ‘Ikuā (which correlates roughly with October) on the kapu nights of Hua, namely, Mōhalu, Hua and Akua, or the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth nights of ‘Ikuā.

Therefore, the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts respectfully requested the following: “For this reason, your Committee respectfully requests any subsequent committee to which this measure is referred to deliberate on an appropriate day for Makahiki Commemoration Day to be celebrated.”

If I may reiterate my suggestion, SB2657 should be amended to have the recognition day be in October based on the lunar month of ‘Ikuā and on one of the kapu Hua nights (where nights here means "days" of month), either Mōhalu, Hua, or Akua. The calendar date can be projected yearly using various technologies that track celestial phenomena. For example, this year's dates will be between October fourteenth and sixteenth and the 2025 dates will be on October third through the fifth. I am not an expert on the traditional Hawaiian lunar calendar. I simply used a phone app to project the above dates. However, in consultation with those who are experts, the calendar dates for opening Makahiki could be easily predicted and set.

Like many harvest orientated traditions, the Makahiki season also indicated the start of the new year, similar to Christmas, or the Christmas season as it's said. The Makahiki throughout the Hawaiian community has provided significant inspirational change to our community as well as other communities. By making Makahiki a recognized day by the State, it will further work in the same light it has for the past 40 plus years.

‘O au nō me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Dr. C.M. Kaliko Baker.

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Submitted on: 3/13/2024 7:50:28 AM

Testimony for CAI on 3/13/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ahtooanya jones	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a native HAWAIIAN I am in STRONG SUPPORT of SB2657

mahalo for taking my testimony