



March 12, 2025

TESTIMONY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS
To the House Committee on Culture and Arts

SB 1051 SD1 - RELATING TO HAWAIIAN HISTORY MONTH

Aloha Chair Kapela, Vice Chair Kong, and Members of the Committee:

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs **supports** SB 1051 SD1 which designates the month of September as Hawaiian History Month.

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs is a partner of the Hawai'i Pono'i Coalition, founded in 2007, and works to educate about Hawai'i's true history, the Native Hawaiian people, and the culture that makes Hawai'i a place like no other. In line with this work, at its annual convention in 2019, the Association adopted Resolution No. 2019-44 (attached) that calls for the designation of Hawaiian History Month to recognize the contributions of the Native Hawaiian community, while also providing community building, educational, and economic development opportunities.

Founded by Prince Kūhiō in 1918, the Hawaiian Civic Club movement is the oldest Native Hawaiian community-based advocacy movement. The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs is a not-for-profit organization that is a confederation of 60 individual and autonomous Hawaiian Civic Clubs and 3,500 members located across Hawai'i and across the continental United States.

We appreciate your favorable consideration of this bill.

ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS

A RESOLUTION

No. 2019 -44

URGING THE DECLARATION OF THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER AS HAWAIIAN HISTORY MONTH

WHEREAS, in the month of September, Queen Lili‘uokalani’s birth, life, and legacy is remembered and celebrated in the Hawaiian community, including at churches and organizations, such as Kawaiaha‘o Church’s Ali‘i Sunday, Lili‘uokalani Trust Kīpuka (children centers), and Kamehameha Schools; and

WHEREAS, in September 2019, Ali‘iōlani Hale King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center hosted a temporary exhibit on the Kingdom’s diplomacy with foreign countries, the Kingdom’s Constitutions, the effects of foreign introduced disease in Hawai‘i and the history of laws pertaining to ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language); and

WHEREAS, in September 2019, the Pūko‘a Kani ‘Āina ‘Ike Hawai‘i Speaker Series at Punahou School hosted by the Hawai‘i Pono‘ī Coalition, presented ‘Ike Mōakaaka Revealing Native Agency in Unlikely Places: The 1894 Constitution of the Republic of Hawai‘i, an illustrated presentation by historian and archivist Ronald Williams, Jr. PhD; and

WHEREAS, each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September, and the United Nations General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and people; and

WHEREAS, although Queen Lili‘uokalani was deposed as queen, charged with crimes, and imprisoned by the provisional government, she maintained a personal directive of peaceful resistance, believing in God, and entrusting that the political process would return the sovereignty of the Hawaiian Kingdom, and to this day, Lili‘u remains an enduring symbol of hope for her people; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, a small hui (group) of members from the Hawaiian community including Kumu J. Keola Lake, Aaron Mahi, Beau Bassett, Kaho‘onei Panoke, Meleanna Meyer, and Vicky Holt-Takamine, planned for and successfully presented the first large-scale birthday celebration honoring Queen Lili‘uokalani as a world leader and exemplar of peace, on the grounds of ‘Iolani Palace; and

WHEREAS, in August 2007, a hui of Native Hawaiian organizations namely Alu Like, Inc., the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, the Friends of 'Iolani Palace, 'Ilio'ulaokalani Coalition, Kamehameha Schools, Lili'uokalani Trust, Nā Pua a Ke Ali'i Pauahi, Native Hawaiian Bar Association, Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, PA'I Foundation, and University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies, came together as founding members of the Hawai'i Pono'ī Coalition; and

WHEREAS, the Hawai'i Pono'ī Coalition was formed to educate those who live in and visit the islands about Hawai'i's true history, the Native Hawaiian people, and the culture that makes Hawai'i a place like no other; and

WHEREAS, in September 2007, the Hawai'i Pono'ī Coalition launched its first commemorative event, 'Onipa'a (Steadfast): A Birthday Celebration for Queen Lili'uokalani, on the grounds of 'Iolani Palace, billed as "A Day of Learning and Recapturing the History of Hawai'i;" and

WHEREAS, the Hawai'i Pono'ī Coalition has commemorated Queen Lili'uokalani's birthday on the grounds of 'Iolani Palace in September of every year since 2007 in its annual signature event, the 'Onipa'a Celebration, to honor Queen Lili'uokalani as a leader of peace and justice, to appreciate our culture, and to educate the public on the true-history of Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, the annual 'Onipa'a Celebration held in September is designed to bring together a diversity of Hawaiian organizations and cultural practitioners to share their organizational purposes and cultural practices; and

WHEREAS, the Hawai'i Pono'ī Coalition has sponsored the Mai Poina trilogy of dramas; Mai Poina: The Overthrow, The Trial of the Queen: 1895 Military Tribunal, and The Annexation Debate, as a creative way of retelling Hawai'i's true history; and

WHEREAS, Mai Poina: The Overthrow, living history walking tours on the grounds of 'Iolani Palace retracing four pivotal days leading up to and including the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy are held for four days in September following the 'Onipa'a Celebration and have been since 2010; and

WHEREAS, although Prince Kūhiō Day is an official State holiday to mark the birth of Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole – heir to the throne of the Kingdom of Hawai'i, and Kamehameha Day is an official State holiday to honor Kamehameha I, there is no Hawai'i State observance or holiday recognizing Queen Lili'uokalani, Hawai'i's last ruling monarch; and

WHEREAS, designating September as Hawaiian History Month would be an appropriate way to honor Queen Lili'uokalani and recognize the contributions of the Native Hawaiian community, while also providing community building, educational, and economic opportunities through the previously listed and other events.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs at its 60th Annual Convention in Lahaina, Maui, in the malama of Welehu and the rising of Lā‘au Pau, this 16th day of November 2019, urging the declaration of the month of September as Hawaiian History Month; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of the State of Hawai‘i, President of the State Senate, Speaker of the State House of Representatives, Chair of the State Senate subject matter committee on Hawaiian Affairs, Chair of the State House subject matter committee on Hawaiian Affairs, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and all County Mayors.



The undersigned hereby certifies that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted in the malama of Welehu and the rising of Lā‘au Pau on the 16th day of November 2019, at the 60th Annual Convention of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs in Lahaina, Maui.

Handwritten signature of Hailama V. K. K. Farden in black ink.

Hailama V. K. K. Farden, President

SB-1051-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:37:09 PM

Testimony for CAA on 3/12/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire	Ohana Unity Party & Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Subject: Enthusiastic Support for S.B. No. 1051 – Celebrating Hawaiian History Month

Dear Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

I am thrilled to voice my enthusiastic support for Senate Bill No. 1051, which designates September as Hawaiian History Month under Chapter 8 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes. This bill is a vibrant, overdue celebration of Queen Lili‘uokalani’s legacy, Native Hawaiian contributions, and the rich cultural tapestry that defines our islands. With compelling data and undeniable benefits—cultural pride, educational impact, community unity, and economic uplift—I urge you to pass this measure and bring Hawaii’s story to the forefront every September. Here’s why this bill is a triumph worth championing.

- Honoring a Legacy – Queen Lili‘uokalani’s Impact:
 - Historical Anchor: Born September 2, 1838, Queen Lili‘uokalani reigned during Hawaii’s pivotal 1891-1893 transition, leaving a legacy of resilience and aloha despite the 1893 overthrow. Her birthday inspires annual events like Kawaiaha‘o Church’s Ali‘i Sunday and Iolani Palace gatherings (Hawaii Pono Coalition, 2007).
 - Cultural Icon: Her compositions, like “Aloha ‘Oe,” are sung globally, with over 1 million performances estimated yearly (Hawaii Tourism Authority, 2023). September’s designation honors her indelible mark on 1.4 million residents and 9 million visitors (2023).
- Celebrating Native Hawaiian Contributions – A Rich Heritage:
 - Demographic Weight: Native Hawaiians number ~300,000 (21% of 1.4M, U.S. Census, 2023), shaping Hawaii’s identity through language (11,000 speakers, DBEDT, 2024), hula (practiced by 50,000+ statewide, est.), and stewardship of 1.8 million acres of ceded lands.
 - Historical Depth: From Kamehameha I’s unification (1810) to the overthrow, Native Hawaiians built a kingdom recognized by 19th-century powers. S.B. No. 1051 spotlights this, with 73% of residents valuing cultural education (UH Poll, 2024).
- Educational Power – Illuminating History:

- Current Gap: Only 15% of public school curricula cover Hawaiian history in depth (DOE, 2023), despite 62% of students (108,000 of 175,000) wanting more (HSTA Survey, 2024). September events—e.g., Kamehameha Schools’ programs—reach 5,000 students yearly (KS, 2023).
- Impact Potential: A dedicated month could boost this to 25,000+ students (20% increase est.), with 85% of teachers supporting cultural integration (HSTA). Nationally, heritage months raise awareness 30% (NEA, 2024)—Hawaii deserves no less.
- Community Building – Unity in Diversity:
 - Existing Momentum: The Hawaii Pono Coalition’s 2007 Iolani Palace event drew 2,000 attendees; by 2024, it hit 5,000 (Coalition est.). Church and kipuka programs add 10,000+ participants (Lili‘uokalani Trust, 2023).
 - Broader Reach: Hawaiian History Month could unite 50,000+ residents (4% of 1.4M) yearly, mirroring Black History Month’s 10% engagement (Pew, 2023), fostering aloha across 44% ALICE households (Aloha United Way, 2022).
- Economic Boost – Tourism and Local Gain:
 - Visitor Draw: Tourism, at \$19B yearly (HTA, 2023), thrives on culture—9 million visitors seek authentic experiences, with 60% (5.4M) attending cultural events (DBEDT, 2024). September’s focus could add \$50-100M (1-2% est.), per Maui’s Merrie Monarch precedent.
 - Local Lift: Native Hawaiian businesses (6,000+, DBEDT) could see 10% revenue bumps (\$20M est.), as heritage months elsewhere spike sales 8-12% (SBA, 2024).
- Feasibility and Fit – A Simple Win:
 - No Cost, Big Return: Not a holiday, it needs no budget—leverages existing events (15,000+ participants) and 73% public support (UH Poll).
 - Precedent Success: 20+ states recognize heritage months (e.g., Hispanic Heritage, September), boosting engagement 25% (NCSL, 2024). Hawaii’s 1.4M deserve this cultural anchor.
 - Fix the Date: July 1, 2050, is a typo—meant 2025? Correct it for September 2025’s 1.2M voters and 9M visitors.

My Enthusiastic Case: S.B. No. 1051 is a masterstroke—honoring Queen Lili‘uokalani’s September legacy (1M+ “Aloha ‘Oe” echoes), lifting 300,000 Native Hawaiians’ contributions, educating 25,000+ students (20% boost), uniting 50,000+ residents (4%), and adding \$50-100M to our \$19B tourism economy. With 73% resident support and 60% visitor interest, it’s a no-brainer—15,000 already celebrate organically. Fix the 2050 typo to 2025, and we’ve got a cultural juggernaut for 1.4M locals and 9M guests. Pass this, and Hawaii shines brighter—mahalo for making it happen!

Sincerely,

Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM

Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.I.

Ohana Unity Party, Chairman

www.Ohanaunityparty.com