

MAR 07 2025

## SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING SEPTEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup> AS RICHARD "BUFFALO" KEAULANA DAY.

1 WHEREAS, Richard "Buffalo" Keaulana was an iconic surfer  
2 and lifesaver who was born in Honolulu on September 2, 1935, and  
3 learned to surf as a young boy in the gentle rollers off  
4 Waikiki; and

5  
6 WHEREAS, Keaulana eventually graduated to the level of  
7 "beach boy" before his family settled in his home community of  
8 Makaha, and Keaulana grew to be known as one of Hawaii's most  
9 naturally talented surfers; and

10  
11 WHEREAS, his smooth style, switch-stance skills, and "nose  
12 for the pocket" made him a favorite at the annual Makaha  
13 International contest, an event he won in 1960; and

14  
15 WHEREAS, Keaulana captured six of the top-four finishes in  
16 the contest between 1957 and 1965, and these achievements led  
17 many to consider him the world's best bodysurfer at the time;  
18 and

19  
20 WHEREAS, along with his renowned surfing talent, Keaulana  
21 was named Makaha's chief lifeguard in 1969, a position he held  
22 for over two decades, earning him the honorary title of "Mayor  
23 of Makaha" and the honor of statue of his likeness in front of  
24 the Makaha library; and

25  
26 WHEREAS, in 1976, Keaulana was on the first voyage of the  
27 Hokulea to Tahiti, acting as the voyaging canoe's steersman; and

28  
29 WHEREAS, his unique nickname, "Buffalo", is derived from  
30 his constant connection and companionship with the water, in  
31 addition to his "large head and copious amounts of hair", as his  
32 friends would describe him; and  
33



1 WHEREAS, Keaulana was also honored with an annual surf  
2 contest and beach party in his name, Buffalo's Big Board  
3 Classic, which continues to be a community mainstay today; and  
4

5 WHEREAS, in 2010, Keaulana was inducted into the Outrigger  
6 Duke Kahanamoku Foundation Hall of Fame; and  
7

8 WHEREAS, perhaps his greatest honor and achievement was  
9 becoming the patriarch of his own West Oahu dynasty, known as  
10 "Makaha's first family", currently in its third generation, with  
11 two of his six children having noteworthy careers in surfing:  
12 Brian, a world class waterman and big-wave surfer; and Rusty, a  
13 three-time world longboard champion (1993-1995); and  
14

15 WHEREAS, Richard "Buffalo" Keaulana's enduring legacy of  
16 aloha has touched generations of ocean lovers and surfers  
17 worldwide; and  
18

19 WHEREAS, as a friend and fellow beach boy of Duke  
20 Kahanamoku, Keaulana's contributions to the sport of surfing and  
21 Hawaiian cultural restoration are everlasting; and  
22

23 WHEREAS, as Makaha's first lifeguard, Keaulana's legacy  
24 extends beyond surfing and his ambassadorship of aloha and he  
25 not only was essential in protecting swimmers in Makaha's rough  
26 waters but was a father figure to many of West Oahu's youth;  
27 now, therefore,  
28

29 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third  
30 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025, the  
31 House of Representatives concurring, that this body recognizes  
32 September 2 of each year as Richard "Buffalo" Keaulana Day in  
33 the State of Hawaii; and  
34

35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Richard "Buffalo" Keaulana Day  
36 shall not be construed as a state holiday; and  
37



# S.C.R. NO. 232

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this  
2 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor.

3  
4  
5 OFFERED BY:

*Kurt Feolck*

