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KE KIA'ĀINA



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DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES | KA 'OIHANA LOIHELU A LAWELAWE LAULĀ
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WRITTEN TESTIMONY
OF
KEITH A. REGAN, COMPTROLLER
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
TO THE
COMMITTEE ON CULTURE & ARTS

MARCH 18, 2026, 10:30 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 309 AND VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, STATE CAPITOL

S.B. 2256

RELATING TO BROTHER JOSEPH DUTTON DAY

Chair Kapela, Vice Chair Kong, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on S.B. 2256.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) **supports** this bill and wishes to add the following comments for consideration:

1. The interest in the history of Kalaupapa has seen a strong resurgence after generations of disinterest and neglect. Not only are those souls who were exiled to the peninsula to live out the remainder of their lives worth remembering, but so are those courageous volunteers who risked their own lives to bring comfort and care to the population of Kalaupapa. The efforts of these caregivers to bring a sense of humanity back to the residents of Kalaupapa should be

honored and brought back from obscurity.

2. Recognition of the efforts of Brother Joseph Dutton will provide a unique opportunity for the people of Hawai'i to reflect upon their history, while also increasing awareness and educational opportunities about those who lived at Kalaupapa for both kama'āina and visitors.

3. As the keepers of public memory, the State Archives has a rich collection of over 100 pages of correspondence, photographs, newspaper clippings and personal journal entries from Brother Dutton. To assist in teaching people about the efforts and accomplishments of Brother Dutton, the State Archives is willing to digitize and post these letters online in order to make them freely and openly accessible from anywhere in the world.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

March 18, 2026

WRITTEN TESTIMONY
OF
THE JOSEPH DUTTON GUILD TO

THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND ARTS

March 18, 2026, 10:30 A.M. CONFERENCE ROOM 309 STATE CAPITOL

S. B. 2256, RELATING TO BROTHER JOSEPH DUTTON DAY.

Chair Kapela, Vice Chair Kong, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on S.B. 2256. I am Patrick Boland, representing the Joseph Dutton Guild. The Guild promotes dissemination of Dutton's story and supports his Sainthood Cause.

The Guild **supports** this bill. The merits of the bill are expressed very well in Section 1 of the bill itself. We note that the bill includes a reference to a 1929 resolution of the Territorial House in acknowledgement and appreciation of Dutton's service. This bill is a logical extension of that legislative precedent.

Dutton served honorably in the Civil War, but that was followed by a failed marriage, alcoholism and other problems. He referred to this as a "degenerate decade," and vowed to reform his life. He learned about the work of Father Damien at the Kalaupapa Settlement and in 1886 came to Kalaupapa to dedicate the rest of his life in service to the patients. He remained there, in service, for 44 years. For the first 17 years his primary work was sore-dressing, at which he became an unsurpassed expert. Eventually he assumed management of the Baldwin Home for Boys, which by 1926 had cared for 1,376 boys and men. He maintained this life of service for 44 years, never leaving Kalaupapa, until his health failed at the age of 87 and he was removed to St. Francis Hospital in Honolulu, where he died in 1931.

This extraordinary life of service and dedication deserves the recognition proposed in this bill.

I have taken the liberty of attaching to my testimony the testimony of two Kalaupapa patients to an earlier hearing in the Senate. They are 91 and 102 years-old respectively, and do not navigate zoom or internet submissions easily. They point out that recognizing Dutton also honors them, the people he served.

We would ask that the bill be passed without amendments, including the effective date of "upon its approval," thereby avoiding the perils of the conference committee process.

Kalaupapa Settlement
Kalawao County

Kalaupapa, HI 96742
Feb. 2, 2026

To: Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

From: Meli Watanuki, John Arruda, Kalaupapa residents

Subject: **Support for SB 2256 Relating to Brother Joseph Dutton Day**

Chair Lee, Vice-Chair Inouye and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. We are in strong support.

There are three remaining Kalaupapa patients still residing at the Settlement of the five remaining patients. The other two are in Honolulu. Accordingly, we believe we have special standing to comment on this bill. We are 91 and 102 years-old respectively and would like to see timely approval.

Brother Dutton spent the last 44 years of his life in selfless and dedicated service to our people, the people of Kalaupapa, first with the primary duty of sore-dressing, and later managing the Baldwin Home for boys.

He, and the people he served, deserve the recognition that this bill would provide.



Meli Watanuki
PO Box 117



John Arruda
PO Box 27

**Brenda R Duarte
45-526 Halekou Road
Kaneohe, HI 96744**

Testimony on SB 2256

Chair Rep. Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair Rep. Sam Satoru Kong and members of the Committee on Culture and Arts. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. I strongly support this bill.

My name is Brenda Rose Duarte a descendant of previous residents of Kalaupapa and patients Frank and Mary Duarte, Richard and Gloria Marks, Eddie Marks and Winifred (Marks) Harada.

I also serve on The Joseph Dutton Guild seeking toward the beatification and canonization of Joseph Dutton. I am aware of the impact the lives of Fr. Damien, Mother Marianne and Joseph Dutton had on many of the afflicted and medical personnel of Kalaupapa.

Joseph Dutton served in the Union Army for the entire Civil War. After the war he spent more than a year in the psychologically difficult work of disinterring about 6000 hastily buried Union soldiers for reburial in national cemeteries. His life was further marred by a failed marriage, alcoholism and other problems which led to what he called his “degenerate decade.”

He vowed to reform, and after hearing about Father Damien he went to Kalaupapa to give the rest of his life in service to the patients. He spent the last 44 years of his life in that service. His story is part of the story of my ancestor's legacy. In a way recognition of his life validates the lives of the past whims he so selfless served. I believe this life of service deserves the recognition provided by this bill.

I would like to note that in 1929 the Territorial House passed a resolution acknowledging Dutton’s work.

I highly recommend the passage of this bill making April 27th annually Brother Joseph Dutton Day upon approval of this document.

**Sincerely,
Brenda R Duarte**

SB-2256

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 6:28:20 AM

Testimony for CAA on 3/18/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn P Altadonna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dutton Testimony for Hawaii Legislature

Altadonna Testimony for Dutton Day.

Young Mr. Dutton showed a pattern of community service throughout his life. As a youthful member of the Zouaves Corps (aka Boy Scouts) and a volunteer in the 13th Wisconsin Infantry in the Civil War, Dutton was forever invested in public service before he was old enough to vote. Following the Civil War, he continued to serve the Army by locating and properly burying battlefield dead into National Cemeteries.

Life took Mr. Dutton to Hawaii in 1886 when he answered a call from Fr. Damien to serve the patients on Molokai, facing a deadly disease with unknown cause and unknown medical treatment. Mr. Dutton served there heroically for 44 years, dying of old age at 87 years in 1931 and was buried with military honors on Molokai.

Mr. Dutton is deserving of the proposed honor as a model citizen for all in Hawaii; in fact, all humanity.

Lynn Altadonna

Stowe, Vermont, Dutton's Birthplace

SB-2256

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 6:53:44 AM

Testimony for CAA on 3/18/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter Skelly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

(Ira) Dutton was born in Stowe Vermont on April 27, 1843. At age 4 he moved with his parents to Janesville in the then Territory of Wisconsin. He was always an active individual and became involved with the young, growing community from the start. His community involvement began at around age 10 when he started working at Sutherland's Bookstore. He would continue there until he was 18 and leaving for the Civil War. At age 14 he became interested in gymnastics and help organize a gymnastics club. As he got older he joined a local volunteer fire unit. His next interest was a local militia unit: all state cities were required to have one. He helped form that with a good friend of his. Dutton became politically active when he joined a local Wide Awake group. These were young men who were supporting Abraham Lincoln in his campaign for the Presidency. He also found time to help put the local base ball team.

Militia unit the Janesville Zouaves would form a company in the 13th Wisconsin Infantry. y organized early in the Civil War. Ira would serve the entire course of the war. His organizational skills served him well as a quartermaster for the unit, eventually becoming district quartermaster for most of Northern Alabama by the wars end. This all serves to illustrate his unselfish nature in giving back to his community and taking care of the soldiers that depended on him for sustenance and protection.

This would also come to the forefront when he found his calling in service to the patients at Molokai.