

ACT 11

S.B. NO. 283

A Bill for an Act Relating to Transportation.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Maui has no major roadways commemorating veterans and their role in Maui history. During World War II, Maui became a forward training center for the war in the Pacific. Many of the beaches were used to rehearse the invasion of Guadalcanal. To this day there are remnants of concrete bunkers at some of the beaches in south Maui. Native Hawaiians and cattle ranchers who lived on the island of Kaho'olawe, a part of Maui county, were forced to move and the island was made into a target range for the United States Navy.

The legislature further finds that Puunene Airport was built in 1938 by the Territory of Hawaii. In 1940, the United States Navy started using the airport as a base for the Navy's utility squadron VJ-3. The base was commissioned as "Naval Air Station Maui" in 1942. When the Navy built a larger airport at Kahului, it was renamed Puunene Naval Air Station. Puunene Naval Air Station was used for fighter plane training and a base for small planes which towed targets for practice and retrieved the parachutes of target flares. Puunene Naval Air Station was used by the United States Navy and the United States Army. After the war, Puunene Naval Air Station was transferred back to the Territory of Hawaii.

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According to the American Community Survey, which produces population, demographic, and housing unit estimates for the United States Census Bureau, in 2015, there were nine thousand four hundred fifty-one veterans living on Maui, including one thousand thirty Gulf War veterans (September, 2001 or later); nine hundred twenty-five Gulf War veterans (August, 1990 to August, 2001); three thousand nine hundred sixty-nine Vietnam conflict veterans; seven hundred ninety-one Korean conflict veterans; and six hundred ninety-four World War II veterans.

In addition, Mokulele highway passes along the former location of the Puunene airport, and the Maui army national guard Puunene armory is located just off the highway, which taken together, gives Mokulele highway a symbolic connection to military history.

The legislature finds that Mokulele highway has a clear connection to Maui's military history and that the heroic veterans living on Maui should be remembered for their sacrifice to our country by naming a highway in their honor.

The purpose of this Act is to rename the Mokulele highway to the Maui veterans highway.

SECTION 2. Route 311, known as Mokulele highway, on the island of Maui shall be renamed the "Maui veterans highway".

SECTION 3. The renaming of Mokulele highway under this Act shall not be deemed to affect any federal or state funding for Mokulele highway.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved April 26, 2017.)