

I am a native Hawaiian who has, depending on the way one looks at it, been fortunate/unfortunate to live in both worlds. Both worlds means that I grew up in a small sugar plantation town and my time was divided between my local (ethnic) friends and my haole (caucasian) friends. Both worlds means that although I was born and raised in Hawaii, where I still reside, I was educated on the mainland. Both worlds also means that although I have not lived in poverty, abuse or chronic ill health, I have friends and ohana (family) who have. Both worlds also means that I have been judged by the color of my skin by our people but have also been accepted by our people because of the color of my heart.

Now my testimony does not necessarily stem from the personal pain and suffering many of our people have experienced. If there is testimony you hear from us that stems from pain and anger, e kalamai (excuse us) but our losses and pain are many and generational.

I have a personal loss of not knowing my culture. I grew up in an era where we did not learn the roots and depth of our culture in school. Unfortunately, I did not learn this at home either. My father grew up when we were becoming "westernized". My pure Hawaiian grandmother died when my father was young, thus, his family of mixed race did not learn much of our culture. Only as an adult am I aware that my culture is amazingly alive in my pu'uwai (heart) and na'au (my gut feeling). This was provided to me through ancestral memory. The awareness of this sacred part of our culture holds a key to our survival.

My testimony is simple. No one needs to tell you that an apology without action is a failure. No one needs to tell you of the illegalities of the United States presence in Hawaii. No one needs to tell you that there are many akamai (smart) people who

the ramifications of Hawaiian issues such as ceded lands, the Rice vs
Ayala case and our status as a nation in regards to International Law.

What we need to tell you is that we **ARE** as a nation coming together. Despite the
diversity of agendas, issues and desires presented in testimonies, we have worked
together in the last several years to come together as a people with a united voice.

Unfortunately, there are many of our people not actively involved with this important
issue. After all, our people are on the top of the list for poverty, substance abuse,
domestic violence, incarceration, children in foster care, ill health, crime,
unemployment and other disturbing statistics. I have worked most of my adult life with
many of the above people. I have worked with educating our people about diabetes
and have also watched many of our people die from this disease. I have four adopted
part-Hawaiian children, who, like many of your youngsters, were placed in the
"system" at an early age. I have watched and experienced their pain and that of their
biologic families in watching their ohana (family) fall apart. I have worked with
foster parents the majority of whom were part-Hawaiian. I have watched many of our
women become single parents, not by choice but by circumstance due to domestic
violence. I have watched our young people fall prey to Ice and Heroin. I have
witnessed them sacrifice their cultural pride and their respect for our aina (land) by
stealing and plundering our waters to sell seafood for drugs.

Should I say I am fortunate to have watched and not have "been there done that"
? Since I have been spared this, I choose to be a meek but mighty voice for our people.

In closing, my answers, at least at this moment, are simple. In short term, we need
legislation and money to continue to help our people in the areas of education, health,

... economic development, housing, managing resources and cultural perpetuation
and other pressing issues. In the long term we need to address the issues of ceded
lands and where the revenues should best be put to benefit **ALL** our people. We also
must be able to choose our direction for self determination. Although I am speaking as
an individual I am also a delegate to the Native Hawaiian Convention (Aha Hawaii
...). As you may know this was an election conducted by Hawaiians for Hawaiians.
Every Hawaiian whether in Hawaii or abroad had a chance to vote. The diversity and
expertise within our delegation is incredible. Ask Senator Akaka. We have worked
not as a political body but as an ohana (family) with the intent of helping all our
people. We have done this for almost a year all at our own expense. We need
financial support to carry out our directive.

... also need to add that we will **NOT** to be bought out by the United States as some of
our native people were. Carrots look good to starving people. We have our own
gardens to plant our own carrots and that is the solution!

... there are many other delegates, individuals and groups who will submit their
testimony. Please do not take the loudest voices as being the voices of our silent
majority, they are not! However, I believe the majority of the testimonies you will hear
are messages from the heart and soul of our people. Look deep into what is being
said about our past injustices and desires. Please also look deep into your hearts and
with your minds to rectify past injustices.

MAHALO NUI LOA,



Lani Bowman