

To: Undersecretary John Berry  
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My name is Lorraine Monilani Kuahine Freitas. I am a native Hawaii. My mother is of Hawaii and I was adopted by her Portuguese husband at age 1 1/2. My great, great grandparents and their progeny were fishermen, farmers, kahuna and the women worked beside their men in the lands of Halawa, Molokai, Kaula, Hawaii and Kaalea, Oahu. I live on land given to my ancestor by King Lunalilo.

When the Hawaii government was taken, my kupsuna followed the command of their Queen (No trouble). The mother tongue was not spoken because of "implied threats" by the teachers and powers that be that their children would suffer. The children received corporal punishment from the school teachers if they spoke Hawaii. The children were admonished to speak English at home so the kupsuna would learn to speak English.

Growing up without my kupsuna, I was blessed by God to always have a guide (a male ancestor) and guidance

2.  
from older Hawaii women who taught me to be proud of my Hawaii blood and my birth right. My parents raised me in a totally western way which I respected and followed through high school. As a teenager and young adult I always questioned my mother and great aunts as to why they did not speak the language of Hawaii. As a hula student and dancer the marvelous rich history of my Hawaii was revealed. Listening to the stories of many kupauna about their lives and what happened caused me to be more aware that the Hawaii blood people were considered by the haole, oriental people to be happy, go-lucky, lazy, don't care to work hard and living off welfare. Children with Hawaii family names were considered mentally-slow. These children were dumped into Title IX and Title I program of the D.O.E.

I served on a committee headed by Rep. Kinai Boyd Kemelii to identify how many books per child did the D.O.E. have allotted for schools and libraries. The need for this study came about because the reading scores of Hawaii school children were

very poor - preschool thru high school. It was more pronounced the further away schools were from Honolulu, especially in the heavily populated communities with large contingency of Hawaii people. The committee had the support of Senator Daniel Inouye and Senator Daniel Akaka. The results demonstrated no books / money available to the state rural schools / libraries. It also showed that the existing books were old, out-dated and not pertinent to present day learning. The D.O.E. officials and principals were using allocated funds for other projects. I spent many volunteer hours on many community committees to help cause the process of positive changes in the schools, educate and legislature.

I worked in the Northeast shoreline communities for 30 years. When I began I asked the children of various school ages: "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Their replies were: policeman, fireman, fisherman, teacher, football player, and a rubbish man. The girls were all going to have families. When I attended health and educational

meetings in Honolulu the most often-repeated statement by the "professionals and degree people" was: "These people don't want to learn or change. All they want is welfare, alcohol, and the easy life. They are lazy." I disagreed vehemently and said repeatedly: "The people want to learn, work and change but they need the supportive, advocacy services and opportunities like better medical services, more formal and technical services and affordable housing. When I retired the children were studying to be engineers, computer technicians, pilots, doctors, dentists, nurses and careers. They never had in their families before. This proved that "my Hawaii" were willing to learn and grow more independent. What they needed was the right tools and resources. Their families received the support of resources.

My experience working in the community in many different capacities and areas to cause general awareness and change helped me identify some situations that became barriers/walls. This was a process of educational empowerment for "my Hawaii" people.

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1. Aloha Spirit - It is alive and well. It is used every day by Hawaii people. It should not be for the malihini/foreign to tell us Hawaii people we don't have the Aloha spirit. They need to learn that because we have it as a constant in our lifestyle they have never met a more tolerant people than us.
2. The western way is to appoint a committee of what is deemed "smart-people" by a group in Washington. Experience has proven that the one person in Washington (President) gets information from one source, reviewed by another committee and the concerned people get a "watered-down" interpretation and action from the original intent.
3. Malihini people claim they like Hawaii people and move here. Soon they want to change Hawaii to what they left behind. Then they want to work with their own kind saying: "I'm afraid of the locals." This shows that the individual is not of sincere heart and purpose. This has been my experience working with many such people.

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Example: A Massachusetts couple moved to Hawaii saying they loved it. Soon the wife became active in community groups and schools. Then she wanted changes in the community like: get the welfare people to move, cleaner communities and homes renovated. To do this would call owners / landlords and report on their tenants. She called the Legislative representatives. One landlord got so tired of her meddling, she told the person: "I'm from the mainland, married to a local. If you are so unhappy, catch the next plane and move back to Massachusetts."

4. The Hawaii people want to create their own future. Give them the opportunities to receive formal & technical education. As Captain Cook wrote in his journals: "The people of Hawaii are of high mind, creative, strong and hospitable. They have perfected their arts & crafts, housing and rituals to a higher degree than their polynesian brothers and sisters."

6. Many people feel threatened through "inference" that the Hawaii people will

7.

take their land away. No, one reason is my family kept their land. They did not sell it or lose it. I realize that some Hawaii people want "all lands" back. That is not the answer. It is very important the Hawaii people have a system in place that benefits the whole. The Hawaii people must be the decision makers.

6. All of the hearings & rhetoric will fade fast away at the political whims of whomever is in charge in Washington, D.C. Is this pono? Aole.

7. For years the supposed 5 Hawaii organizations have been upheld by government officials as the ones who know best what Hawaii people need. These organizations are: Kamehameha Schools-Bishop Estate, Alu Like, O. H. A., Queen Liliuokalani Trust, Queen Emma Foundation. These decision-makers/planners have been the same players for over 30 years and we still have little or no change. The "sovereignty" issues have made or caused more changes. This should prove that the Hawaii way is necessary. Hawaii people want to participate and be heard on all

8.

important issues. They need to be given the chance.

I Thank you for the opportunity to present this long letter. I am usually handicapped. God be with you in your deliberations and meetings.

I am Hawaii,  
Lorraine M.H. Freitas  
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