

Waimanalo Hawaiian Homes Association

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY
RECONCILIATION PROCESS AS CALLED
FOR IN P.L. 103-150 THE APOLOGY RESOLUTION

TO: John Berry, Assistant Secretary
Department of Interior &
Mark Van Norman, Director
Office of Tribal Justice, Department of Justice

FROM: Paul P. Richards, President *PPR*
Waimanalo Hawaiian Homes Association (WHHA)

DATE: November 20, 1999

Honorable John Berry and Mark Van Norman, Aloha! On behalf of the Executive Board the Board of Directors and General Membership of the Waimanalo Hawaiian Homes Association (WHHA), I am proud to submit this written testimony in support of the Reconciliation Hearings and your efforts in seeking public consultations.

My name is Paul P. Richards, President of the Waimanalo Hawaiian Homes Association that consists of the approximately 660 residential homes located in Waimanalo on the windward northeastern corner of the island of Oahu. As a Hawaiian Homestead residential area, our community is made up of a diverse demographic background. Situated between the town of Kailua and Honolulu, we try to maintain a "country" like living environment. The weather provides us with a constantly gently breeze of the northeasterly tradewinds, and our town is a magnet for tourist and filming sites. A once favorite filming area of Magnum P.I. and now Baywatch, Hawaii, we are truly blessed.

Our association is a member of the State Council of Hawaiian Homestead Association (SCHHA) which is a statewide organization that includes 24 Hawaiian Homestead Associations. Having reviewed the information pertaining to the reconciliation process that is about to take place in December 1999, we support the three objectives that were outline in a correspondence dated November 8, 1999 written by Senator Daniel Akaka.

We fully support the proposal by Senator Akaka regarding the establishing of an Office within the Department of Interior that will permanently put in place an office that will advocate the Native Hawaiian, but more importantly, the Hawaiian Homeland issues that faces us today and in the future.

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By setting this objective into action, it will display and permanently establish an ongoing relationship between the Native Hawaiian people and the federal government. We agree also with Senator Akaka's assessment that "*reconciliation process... a continuing process.*" Ultimately, this will require lengthy discussions, input and a consensus on all sides. With this office in place, efforts can be made and set in motion for ongoing efforts for a meaningful and worthwhile reconciliation process, pursuing a lasting dialogue between the Native Hawaiian people and the federal government.

We also believe that every effort should be made to obtain and gain any type of assistance from the federal government that will help to develop and establish a framework to address self-determination. Of course, with this issue, a long and lengthy discussion will ensue since there exists among the Hawaiian community so many models addressing this issue. We do however, support the efforts of SCHHA and its model regarding self-governance. This issue will more than likely be placed on the agenda in future discussions after the first objective is set in place.

With this second objective, the issue addressing cede lands be discussed with the issue of self-determination. Again, this will be a part of the important discussions, public hearings and community input. We look forward to these discussions and hope that the office established could be the leader in organizing this effort.

Finally, the third is to make every effort within our means and the ability of the Department of Interior and Department of Justice to gain support from the Clinton Administration during the final phase of his presidential to gain assistance for help. This help can be directed in developing and establishing a focus to act on and make better the present conditions of the Native Hawaiians by way of social and economic conditions.

We hope that this assistance can be done in Congress that will affect the passage of such bills under consideration as S225, the Native Hawaiian Housing Act and others such as the Native Hawaiian Health Act also Education and others related to Social, Cultural and Economic Development.

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Finally, I would like to recognize the efforts of the Hawaii Congressional Delegation such as Senator Daniel Akaka, but most of all, the efforts of our senior Senator Daniel Inouye. Senator Inouye has been a positive asset to the Native American, but also to the Native Hawaiian efforts. We extend our fondest congratulations to these fine men and wish them our heartfelt support.

We firmly believe that through our concerted efforts that we, the Native Hawaiian people will be able to work with the federal government to bring about a meaningful and equitable resolution as the starting steps towards the reconciliation process. Like those of the Native American Indians and Native Alaskans, we hope that we will be able to enjoy the benefits and become a stronger people that will continue to enjoy the rights and liberties as an American citizen will.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to submit this testimony and if you should have any questions regarding this issue, please call me at (808) 955-5735. Mahalo nui loa.

Me Kealoha Pumehana,
(With Deepest and Sincere Love,)



Paul P. Richards, President
Waimanalo Hawaiian Homes Association (WHHA)