

**Testimony of Puakeilanī Santos
Pulapula 'Eu - Legislative Coordinator
to Representatives of the Department of Justice and Interior
on Friday, December 10, 1999, 8am-6pm, UH East West Center**

Aloha kākou e Mark van Norman, Director, Office of Tribal Justice, Department of Justice and John Berry, Assistant Secretary, Policy, Management and Budget with the Department of Interior. Aloha kākou e nā kupa o nēia 'āina. Aloha.

I submit this testimony on behalf of Pulapula 'Eu, a Hawaiian education and legislative lobbying organization, comprised of and representing the kūpuna and mākuā in the Department of Education Hawaiian Studies Program Kūpuna Component, who provide community expertise and direct classroom instruction in the culture, language, history, and values of Hawai'i, to the children in Hawai'i's public school system. Pulapula 'Eu envisions the continuance and proper maintenance of the Hawaiian Studies Program, as a permanent, viable vehicle within Hawai'i's educational system, that insures quality instruction, historical understanding, linguistic consciousness and responsibility, and inspires our children towards academic excellence in all areas of study.

Chairs Van Norman and Berry, the Hawaiian Studies Program in the state public school system is the result of the 1978 constitutional mandate requiring the State to promote the study of the Hawaiian culture, language and history by providing a Hawaiian education program and using community expertise as a suitable and essential means in furtherance of this program. The program had resource teachers at one time, but in 1996, these positions were terminated and the implementation left to the individual schools, who use Kūpuna (elders) and Mākuā (parents) to run the program. In response to the termination of resource teachers, some districts immediately created their own executive boards, councils or cabinets to address their growing needs and working many hours without any compensation whatsoever. This has led to uneven implementation of the program.

Furthermore, the program is now being overseen by Part-Time Teachers (PTTs) who have no certification, no title, no salary, and no benefits. They get paid for seventeen (17) hours per week but routinely work 35-40 per week. There are some districts that have a total of 48 schools with only 2 Part-Time Teachers. Their duties include working with the principal of each school, observing Kūpuna and Mākuā in classes, giving orientation and training to new recruits, and coordinating inservice workshops for technical and instructional support.

Mr. Chairs, Pulapula 'Eu would like to state for the record our numerous concerns with the overall management and implementation of the Hawaiian Studies Program, including but not limited to:

- The State of Hawai'i and the Department of Education's non-compliance of the State constitutional mandate of Article X Section 4, as this program currently services only grades K-6 and not grades 7-12 as required by law, thus denying the human and civil rights of students and parents,

- No announcements or mailouts to inform Kūpuna and Mākua about the elimination of the District Educational Specialist (DES) and School Renewal Specialist (SRS), nor a clarification on how the program will henceforth be administered to,

- No announcement informing new Kūpuna and Mākua that applications are being accepted for the Hawaiian Studies Program,

- No informational meetings are held to inform interested parties about the Hawaiian Studies Program, its constitutional mandate and other program matters,

- No strategy or plan to actively recruit interested applicants to fill the vacancies in various schools statewide,

- No plans to train and certify new applicants to fill these vacancies. New applicants are required to be trained and certified in order to effectively execute the precepts of the Hawaiian Studies Program,

- No support team or personnel to actively assist these schools to fill their vacancies by recommending certified recruits for the principal's consideration,

- No plans for the continued in-servicing of current Kūpuna and Mākua, who are the foundation of the Hawaiian Studies Program. Efficient support of the Kūpuna and Mākua is necessary to maintain the viability and success of the program,

- No plans to improve the Hawaiian Studies Program with the existing personnel,

Because of these voluminous concerns regarding the Hawaiian Studies Program, Pulapula 'Eu calls upon your departments, Department of Justice and Interior, to investigate, analyze, and seek resolution, immediate rectification of our matters. Our right to Hawaiian education, as mandated by state constitution and laws, requires your instantaneous attention .

Additionally, Pulapula 'Eu knows that there exists numerous and substantial international charters, conventions and other instruments that recognize the basic human rights of all peoples, amongst which is the right of education.

These include:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- Convention Against Discrimination in Education;
- Kari-Oca Indigenous Peoples Earth Charter;
- Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention;
- Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Pulapula 'Eu also calls upon your departments to examine and implement these international charters, conventions and other instruments, especially those international legal documents that the United States are signatories to. We humbly request that the United States to expeditiously execute and fulfill this obligation with the highest trust standards.

In closing, Mr. Van Norman and Mr. Berry, Pulapula "Eu would like to remind you that the State of Hawai'i and the Department of Education has a legal kuleana to mālama the first Lāhui Hawai'i of this 'āina by:

1. providing a better system to improve Hawaiian education,
2. appropriating more funds to our struggling Hawaiian Studies

Program,

3. allowing Pulapula "Eu to assist in developing, organizing and implementing a Hawaiian educational system and program incorporating Hawaiian culture, language, history and values.

We ask for your support in these stated initiatives and hope the both of you will inform your appropriate supervisors of our requests. We strongly urge you to continue the federal hearings in the immediate future and to all islands for their input and participation.

Mahalo nui loa (Thank you very much) for the opportunity to testify.