

PAPA OLA LOKAHI

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FAX TRANSMITTAL

LA (DATE): 9/20/00

KE HOOUNA IA NEI IA (DIRECTED TO):

INOA (NAME): Assist Sec. John Berry

HUI (COMPANY): DOI

HELU KELEPA'I (FAX NUMBER): (202) 208-3230

MAI(A) (FROM): Wesley Spaulds

HE HELUNUI O NA'AO'AO:  
(NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER SHEET)

KE KUMUHANA NUI (SUBJECT):

Original w/ATTACHMENTS IS IN THE MAIL

Please call us at (808) 536-9453 if you have any questions regarding the above.  
The information contained herein is intended for the addressee or his/her designee  
only.

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September 19, 2000

Assistant Secretary John Berry  
c/o Document Management Unit  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW, Mailstop-7229  
Washington, DC 20240

FAX: (202)208-3230

Dear Assistant Secretary Berry,

Papa Ola Lokahi (POL) is part of the federal health initiative established to improve the health status of Native Hawaiians through the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-579) and reauthorized in 1992.

First, congratulations on a fine report. It captures the essence of issues and concerns which have remained with us for generations.

Our specific comments, however, are directed to the section on *Health and Welfare* (pp. 45-46) in your report:

(1) You note a number of health statistics in the first paragraph. More up to date data on Native Hawaiian health disparities are found in the reauthorized legislation for the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act (s. 1929) which is currently being considered by Congress (See Attachment 1-Sec. 2 FINDINGS (b).. p 91)

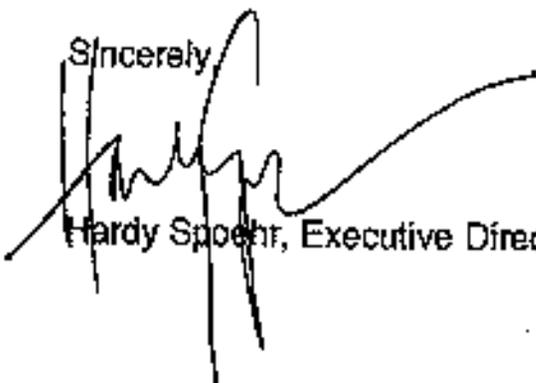
(2) You note in your final paragraph the need for additional health care resources. We agree. The current level of funding is no where near to that provided to other indigenous peoples of the United States (See Attachment 2 for statement by our president, Myron B. Thompson).

(3) Again, in your final paragraph, you reference our program and the need for additional resources. We strongly agree. The justification for health care dollars to Native Hawaiians is similar to that for American Indians and Alaska Natives. Native Hawaiians were members of an autonomous nation with whom the United States had a direct political

relationship through treaties prior to Hawai'i becoming a state. Further, that in the process of Hawai'i becoming a state, Native Hawaiians lost or gave up their ability to use or control large tracts of land formerly held "in trust" by the Crown and the Hawaiian Government and used for their health and wellbeing. Today, large portions of these lands are still controlled by the United States. Papa Ola Lokahi views the provision of health care to Native Hawaiians as part of compensation for loss of access to and use of these lands.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments. We are in the process of designing a federal health care partnership and look forward to continuing discussions in this area.

Sincerely



Hardy Specht, Executive Director