



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MEDIA RELEASE

OHA WELCOMES HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION UNANIMOUS VOTE TO SUPPORT THE AKAKA BILL

HONOLULU, HAWAII'I (July 26, 2010) The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) said today the unanimous vote by the Hawaiian Homes Commission (HHC), in support of the passage of the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act (NHGRA), is welcomed and important to a collective voice for Native Hawaiians.

“We are pleased that the Hawaiian Homes Commissioners join with OHA Trustees to support passage of the NHGRA, inclusive of the amendments recently agreed to by Senator Akaka, Senator Inouye and Governor Lingle,” said OHA Chairperson Haunani Apoliona. “This united front is proof that Native Hawaiians can and must unite in order to move forward with a collective voice and greater political strength to malama Hawai'i lands, our culture and our way of life. Both DHHL and OHA urge the Senate to pass this measure quickly and forward the bill to the House of Representatives for final approval.”

The NHGRA, known to many as the Akaka bill, recognizes the sovereignty of Native Hawaiians and provides Native Hawaiians with the opportunity to create a governing entity that will negotiate for powers, authorities, land, and resources. The recent changes to the NHGRA ensures that the Native Hawaiian Governing Entity will negotiate with the State of Hawai'i and the U.S. Government to determine powers and authorities among the three governing bodies.

NHGRA represents a major milestone that moves Native Hawaiians closer to reconciliation more than a century after Queen Lili'uokalani and the Hawaiian government were illegally overthrown. Until now, Native Hawaiians are the only group of Native Americans in the 50 states that has not been provided a process for federal recognition; Alaska Natives and American Indians have had federal recognition for many years.

For more information, visit www.oha.org/nhgra

About OHA

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is a unique, independent state agency established through the Hawai'i State Constitution and statutes to advocate for

the betterment of conditions of all Native Hawaiians, with a Board of Trustees elected by the voters of Hawai'i. OHA is guided by a vision and mission to ensure the perpetuation of the culture, protect the entitlements of Native Hawaiians, and build a strong and healthy Hawaiian people and nation. For more information, visit www.oha.org.

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