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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Trustee Haunani Apoliona
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United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
Hearing on S. 147, The Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act
Tuesday, March 1, 2005, 10:00a.m.
Room 485, Russell Senate Office Building

Nā 'Ōiwi 'Ōlino

E o e nā 'Ōiwi 'Ōlino 'eā
Nā pulapula a Hāloa 'eā
Mai Hawai'i a Ni'ihau 'eā
A puni ke ao mālamalama 'eā ē

Ku'ē au i ka hewa, ku'ē!
Kū au i ka pono, kū!
Ku'ē au i ka hewa, ku'ē!
Kū au i ka pono, kū!

Answer, O Natives, those who seek knowledge
The descendants of Hāloa
From Hawai'i island in the east to Ni'ihau in the west
And around this brilliant world

I resist injustice, resist!
I stand for righteousness, stand!
I resist injustice, resist!
I stand for righteousness, stand!

INTRODUCTION

E nā alaka'i a me nā lālā o kēia Kōmike o nā Kuleana o ka 'Aha'ōlelo Nui o 'Amelika Hui
Pū ia, aloha mai kākou. He loa ke ala i hele 'ia e mākou, nā 'Ōiwi 'ōlino o Hawai'i, a he ala i hehi

mua 'ia e nā ali 'i o mākou, e la'a, 'o ka Mō'ī Kalākaua, ke Kamali'iwahine Ka'iulani, a me ka Mō'īwahine hope o ke Aupuni Mō'ī Hawaii, 'o ia ko mākou ali 'i i aloha nui 'o Lili'uokalani. A he nui no ho 'i nā Hawai'i i kūnou mai ai i mua o 'oukou e nānā pono mai i ke kulana o ka 'ōiwi Hawai'i, kona nohona, kona olakino, ka ho'onaauao a pēlā wale aku.

Ua pono ka helena hou a mākou nei a loa'a ka pono o ka 'āina, ke kulaiwi pa'a mau o ka lāhui 'ōiwi o Hawai'i pae'āina, 'o ia wale nō ka Hawai'i. No laila, eia hou no ka 'ōiwi Hawai'i, he alo a he alo, me ka 'Aha'ōlelo Nui.

TO THE LEADERS AND MEMBERS OF THIS COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, GREETINGS.

My name is Haunani Apoliona and I am the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), a body corporate created by the Hawai'i State Constitution and statute. The mission of OHA is to protect and assist Native Hawaiian people and to protect our environmental and other resources, and by so doing work to perpetuate our threatened traditional culture. Perhaps most importantly, OHA is working to bring meaningful self-government to the Native Hawaiian people, who are the only indigenous group in the United States to whom Congress has not fully afforded that fundamental right.

Mr. Chairman, as you have stated, "self-determination enables tribes to more successfully develop programs that best serve their members, lessen dependency on the federal government, and ensure greater participation in the national economy." (*Indian Tribes as Sovereign Governments, Second Edition (2004), Foreword; page xii.*) Native Hawaiians seek this same opportunity, this same freedom, to develop programs that best serve our members, lesser dependence on government, and ensure greater participation in the economy.

I testify today in support of enactment of S. 147 and its companion legislation in the House of Representatives, H.R. 309.

WE DESERVE TO BE TREATED WITH THE SAME RESPECT AS AMERICA'S OTHER INDIGENOUS GROUPS

There are three indigenous populations within the United States: American Indians in the lower 48 states, Eskimos, Aleuts and other native groups in Alaska, and Native Hawaiians. The governing entities of American Indians and Alaska Natives have both been recognized by Congress. This recognition extends to indigenous people the ability to govern their own internal affairs in a manner appropriate to their cultures and traditions. Congress acted in 1934 by passing the Indian Reorganization Act, and in 1971 by passing the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. In this legislation, as Hawaiians, we seek only what long ago was granted this nation's other indigenous peoples. See Appendix C. Congress has held numerous hearings on analogous bills very similar to S. 147 to recognize a Native Hawaiian governing entity over the past several years. Indeed, this Committee issued voluminous reports in the 106th, 107th and 108th Congresses detailing the historical relations between the United States and Native Hawaiians and documenting the need for this legislation. A brief summary of this history is further set forth in Appendix A. During this same time period, the United States Departments of Interior and Justice, Governor Linda Lingle of

