

NATIONAL CAUCUS OF NATIVE AMERICAN STATE LEGISLATORS

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT REAUTHORIZATION OF THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2009

The National Caucus of Native American State Legislators (NCNASL) is made up of American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian State Legislators from 18 states and is organized to provide a forum for discussion, education and increased communication. Additionally, the NCNASL identifies and proposes legislation and administrative actions to eliminate barriers to achievement of a better quality of life for Native people.

WHEREAS the State of Hawaii was once the Kingdom of Hawaii, with a monarchy that was afforded full diplomatic recognition by the United States; and

WHEREAS on January 17, 1893, the government of the Kingdom of Hawaii was overthrown by a group of American citizens, who acted with the support of United States Minister John Stephens and a contingent of United States Marines from the U.S.S. Boston; and

WHEREAS Native Hawaiians are a distinct indigenous population with their own culture, identity, and assets set aside for their benefit; and

WHEREAS the long-range economic and social changes in Hawaii over the 19th and early 20th centuries have been devastating to the health and well-being of Native Hawaiians; and

WHEREAS the Native Hawaiian people are determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations, in accordance with their own spiritual and traditional beliefs, their customs, practices, language, social institutions, ancestral territory, and cultural identity; and

WHEREAS exempted the land from then-existing public land laws of the United States by mandating that the revenue and proceeds from that land be used solely for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Hawaiian Islands for education and other public purposes', thereby establishing a special trust relationship between the United States and the inhabitants of Hawaii; and

WHEREAS in furtherance of the trust responsibility for the betterment of the conditions of Native Hawaiians, the United States has established a program for the provision of comprehensive health promotion and disease prevention services to maintain and improve the health status of the Hawaiian people; and

WHEREAS that program is conducted by the Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems and Papa Ola Lokahi; and

WHEREAS health initiatives implemented by those and other health institutions and agencies using Federal assistance have been responsible for reducing the century-old morbidity and mortality rates of Native Hawaiian people by

- (A) providing comprehensive disease prevention;
- (B) providing health promotion activities; and
- (C) increasing the number of Native Hawaiians in the health and allied health professions; and

WHEREAS those accomplishments have been achieved through implementation of the Native Hawaiian Health Care Act of 1988; and

WHEREAS the historical and unique legal relationship between the United States and Native Hawaiians has been consistently recognized and affirmed by Congress through the enactment of more than 160 Federal laws that extend to the Native Hawaiian people the same rights and privileges accorded to American Indian, Alaska Native, Eskimo, and Aleut communities; and

WHEREAS the unmet health needs of the Native Hawaiian people remain severe and the health status of the Native Hawaiian people continues to be far below that of the general population of the United States; and

WHEREAS the cancer mortality rate of Native Hawaiians is 50 percent higher than the rate for the total population in Hawaii; and

WHEREAS the prevalence of diabetes for Native Hawaiians is 12.7 percent, which is 87 percent higher than the total prevalence for all residents in Hawaii; and

WHEREAS the prevalence of current asthma in Native Hawaiian adults is 12.8 percent, which is 71 percent higher than the prevalence of the total population of Hawaii; and

WHEREAS the mortality rate for Native Hawaiians as a result of heart disease is 86 percent higher than the rate for the total population in Hawaii; and

WHEREAS Native Hawaiians have the lowest life expectancy of all population groups in Hawaii; and

WHEREAS the prevalence of obesity among Native Hawaiians is 119 percent higher than the prevalence for the total population in Hawaii; and

WHEREAS Native Hawaiian physicians make up four percent of the total physician workforce in Hawaii; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE NATIONAL CAUCUS OF NATIVE AMERICAN STATE LEGISLATORS that the inherent sovereignty of Tribes as recognized through historical treaties and legal relationships that exist between Tribal Nations and the United States of America is undeniable; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the National Caucus of Native American State Legislators, that the United States Congress and the President of the United States are urged to support the reauthorization of the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act of 2009.

Sponsored by: Rep. Mele Carroll (HI), Sen. Brickwood Galuteria (HI), Rep. Faye Hanohano (HI), Rep. Karen Awana (HI), Rep. Pono Chong (HI)

Approved date is: September 25, 2009

Committee of Jurisdiction: Health and Wellness Committee

Certified by Committee Chair: Rep. Mele Carroll (HI)

Certified by Caucus Chair: Rep. John McCoy (WA)

Ratified certified by: The NCNASL, September 25, 2009

Distribution List: **Members of Congress**
Administration