



# COUNCIL FOR NATIVE HAWAIIAN ADVANCEMENT

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## NEWS RELEASE

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **NATIVE GROUPS SHOW SUPPORT FOR AKAKA BILL AND KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS**

Honolulu – The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) and the National Indian Education Association announced that they have filed “amicus briefs” (friend of the court briefs) in support of the Kamehameha Schools petition for a full panel review by the U.S. 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court.

“This is a huge step for Native Hawaiians everywhere,” said Ray Soon, past CNHA board chairman. “You cannot walk through the halls of Congress without noticing the tribal support Hawaiians have received.”

More than 125 Indian and Alaska natives have joined the conference this week to show support for Native Hawaiian issues. At today’s press conference, Alaska state senator and AFN co-chair Albert Kookesh said, “This is just the latest example of the longstanding collaboration between native peoples and our shared belief in the right of self-determination for each distinct native community in America.”

Kamehameha Schools’ CEO Dee Jay Mailer showed her appreciation for the support. “We are grateful for this support. It’s comforting to have a group who’s faced and overcome similar challenges in the past join us in this battle.”

(more)

Other highlighted events from today's conference included the Hawaiian Way Fund Luncheon where \$50,000 raised by the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) was distributed to various small, grass-roots, Hawaiian nonprofit organizations that work in the areas of education, health, housing, economic and community development, cultural preservation, etc. Governor Linda Lingle provided a moving keynote address and announced to the 600 luncheon attendees she intends to head back to Washington, D.C., on Sunday with Micah Kane, chairman of the Hawaiian Homes Commission, to support the Akaka Bill. Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann, David Cole, Maui Land & Pine, and Clyde Nāmu'o, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, also participated in today's conference as guest speakers.

Today's conference will wrap up with the Native Hawaiian GRAMMY® Awards Banquet. The banquet will celebrate the establishment of the Native Hawaiian music category and honor its first-ever nominees. In attendance will be Charles Brotman and various artists from the GRAMMY®-winning CD "Slack Key Guitar, Volume 2," Amy Hanaiali'i & Willie K., Keali'i Reichel, and other nominees. Senator Daniel K. Akaka will make a special keynote address.

The theme for this year's conference is "Na Wai Ke Kuleana? Na Kakou! – Who is Responsible? We All Are!" The conference continues tomorrow at the Sheraton Waikiki Hotel and wraps up on September 2.

CNHA is a national, member-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides support services to organizations serving native communities. CNHA's primary expertise is in community development, technical assistance and training, public policy initiatives, and the coordination of events and conferences focused on native community development issues. For more information on CNHA call 521.5011 (800.709.2642 toll free) or visit [www.hawaiiancouncil.org](http://www.hawaiiancouncil.org).

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