

KA LĀHUI HAWAI‘I

KŌMIKE KALAI‘ĀINA

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION AND ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

March 18, 2021

HR 148

Urging the Board of Education to change the name of President William McKinley High School

Aloha Chair Woodson, Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Kapela, and Vice Chair Marten,

Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i Kōmike Kalai‘āina submits the following written testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of House Resolution urging the Board of Education to change the name of President William McKinley High School.

President William McKinley was an expansionist who asserted US domination aboard and took territories like the Phillippines, Puerto Rico, Guam, and Hawai‘i by either force, coercion, and fraud. The justification (that is well documented) for his expansionist policies was racist and rooted in white supremacy. President William Mckinley is quoted as saying, "That there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them and by God's grace do the very best we could by them..." Near the turn of the 19th century there were arguments on both sides (for and against) the US takeover of Puerto Rico, Phillippines, Guam, and Hawai‘i in Congress that dehumanized the people of color who resided in these territories. The winning argument succeeded in "conquering" these territories and the total disenfranchisement of the native residents.

Much of the social injustice that Kanaka Maoli experience today stems from the fraudulent annexation of Hawai‘i into the US and the signing of the ‘Newlands Resolution‘ by President McKinley. Having one of the oldest high schools in Hawai‘i named after someone who subjugated the people of the Phillippines, Puerto Rico, Guam and Hawai‘i and justified his action using white colonial ideas of civilizing the ‘savage‘ is unacceptable and an affront to all Hawai‘i residents of color and most especially the native people of this land.

The McKinley Statue and school name is akin to the confederate monuments that were erected decades after the civil war ended to support Jim Crow segregation. Here in Hawai‘i the naming of what is today President McKinley school and the erection of his statue was done to support fraud of annexation and the disenfranchisement and subjugation of the Kanaka Maoli people.

Sincerely,

M. Healani Sonoda-Pale
Public Affairs Officer, Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i Kōmike Kalai‘āina