

Resolution

No. 25-205

EXPRESSING SOLIDARITY AND SUPPORT FOR KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS AS IT DEFENDS THE LEGACY OF KE ALI'I BERNICE PAUahi BISHOP

WHEREAS, Kamehameha Schools was founded under the will of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop in 1883, dedicating her private estate to uplift Native Hawaiians through education and naming the school in honor of her great-grandfather, Kamehameha I, a decade before the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom and 15 years before the U.S. occupation; and

WHEREAS, Ke Ali'i Bernice Pauahi Pākī was born on December 19, 1831, the hiapo of Abner Pākī and Laura Konia, in their family home known as 'Aikupika in Honolulu; her father was a high chief from Molokai who served in the House of Nobles and as an Assistant Judge of the Supreme Court, and her mother was an ali'i who served in the House of Nobles; and under the Hawaiian tradition of hānai, Ke Ali'i Pauahi was raised by Kīna'u, eldest daughter of Kamehameha I, and her husband Mataio Kekūānāo'a, Governor of O'ahu, as their own; and

WHEREAS, Ke Ali'i Pauahi inherited lands passed down from generations of royal lineages, including 'āina once belonging to Ruth Ke'elikōlani, Lot Kapuāiwa, Mataio Kekūānāo'a, Victoria Kamāmalu, Moses Kekūāiwa, William Pitt Leleiōhoku, William Lunalilo, Abner Pākī, Laura Konia, 'Akahi, and Mahune; and

WHEREAS, since its establishment in 1887, Kamehameha Schools has honored the vision of Ke Ali'i Pauahi for nearly 140 years by providing educational opportunities rooted in Native Hawaiian language, culture, and values, thereby strengthening Hawai'i's social, spiritual, and cultural foundations; and

WHEREAS, Kamehameha Schools' presence on Maui includes the Kamehameha Schools Maui campus, established in 1996 in Pukalani, which serves approximately 1,100 K-12 students, and includes preschools in 'A'apueo, Hāna, Paukūkalo, and Kalama'ula on Molokai that serve children across Maui County; and

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WHEREAS, Kamehameha Schools also maintains a Resource Center on Molokai that provides educational support, community outreach, and post-secondary guidance for students and families on Molokai and Lānaʻi; and

WHEREAS, through scholarships, grants, community programs, and other educational partnerships, Kamehameha Schools continues Ke Aliʻi Pauahi's legacy by educating over 5,400 haumāna from kindergarten to grade 12 across three campuses, serving more than 1,650 keiki in 30 preschools, and supporting Native Hawaiian learners across the pae ʻāina; and

WHEREAS, Kamehameha Schools also has programs benefiting non-Native Hawaiian students, families, and communities throughout Hawaiʻi, including many on Maui, with annual investments exceeding \$83.9 million; and

WHEREAS, Native Hawaiians maintain a special political and trust relationship with the United States, recognized through more than 250 federal statutes and administrative programs, and have rights as aboriginal and indigenous peoples under international law; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, a federal lawsuit titled *John Doe v. Kamehameha Schools* was filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaiʻi challenging the constitutionality of Kamehameha Schools' admissions preference policy for students of Hawaiian ancestry; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, sitting *en banc*, affirmed the admission policy's legality, recognizing that the preference serves a legitimate remedial purpose that advances Native Hawaiian education and addresses the continuing effects of historical and social disadvantage; and

WHEREAS, following the 2006 ruling, the case was settled in 2007, preserving Kamehameha Schools' ability to maintain its admissions policy consistent with the will and intent of Ke Aliʻi Pauahi; and

WHEREAS, Kamehameha Schools' admission policy rests on its status as a private, charitable institution funded by a private trust, receiving no federal funding and established for a specific, remedial purpose; and

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WHEREAS, on October 20, 2025, Students for Fair Admissions filed a lawsuit challenging Kamehameha Schools' admissions policy, which prioritizes Native Hawaiian applicants in accordance with Ke Ali'i Pauahi's will and charitable intent; and

WHEREAS, Kamehameha Schools has pledged to vigorously defend its admissions policy, affirming that the facts and law are on its side, and that preserving the policy is essential to upholding the integrity of Ke Ali'i Pauahi's kauoha (testamentary instructions); and

WHEREAS, through its "E Ulu Koa — Standing Strong for Ke Ali'i Pauahi and Hawai'i" campaign and its "Ola Pauahi, Ola Hawai'i" movement, Kamehameha Schools has called upon the lāhui to unite in kapu aloha, stand firm in faith, and act in defense of justice and equity for Native Hawaiians; and

WHEREAS, Kamehameha Schools alumni, students, and community members continue to demonstrate unity through cultural and civic engagement, including the historic Kū I Ka Pono March held in August 2005 in Honolulu, reaffirming kapu aloha and collective action in support of Native Hawaiian educational and cultural rights; and

WHEREAS, the County of Maui recognizes Kamehameha Schools' long-standing contributions to education, community partnerships, and cultural preservation across the islands, including on Maui, where its programs continue to uplift students, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds it necessary and proper to express its collective support for Kamehameha Schools and to affirm the importance of protecting educational institutions that uphold the language, heritage, and values of Hawai'i's first people; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it expresses solidarity with Kamehameha Schools as it defends the legacy of Ke Ali'i Bernice Pauahi Bishop; and
2. That it honors the vision of Ke Ali'i Pauahi, whose enduring gift has empowered generations of Native Hawaiians and continues to strengthen the fabric of Hawai'i; and

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3. That it affirms the County's commitment to educational equity, cultural preservation, and self-determination for the Native Hawaiian people; and
4. That certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to Crystal Rose, Chair, Board of Trustees, Kamehameha Schools; Livingston "Jack" Wong, Chief Executive Officer, Kamehameha Schools; Dr. Wai'ale'ale Arroyo, Vice President of Hi'ialo, Kamehameha Schools; Dr. Scott Parker, Po'o Kula, Kamehameha Schools Maui; the Honorable Josh Green, M.D., Governor, State of Hawai'i; Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, State of Hawai'i; Members of the Hawai'i State Legislature; Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair, Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Kali Watson, Chair, Hawaiian Homes Commission; Dawn N.S. Chang, Chair, Board of Land and Natural Resources, State of Hawai'i; Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent, Department of Education, State of Hawai'i; the Honorable Kimo Alameda, Mayor, County of Hawai'i; Rick Blangiardi, Mayor, City and County of Honolulu; Derek S.K. Kawakami, Mayor, County of Kaua'i; and Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor, County of Maui.

INTRODUCED BY:


KEANI N.W. RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ