



The House of Representatives
STATE OF HAWAII

NEWS RELEASE

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‘Iolani Palace Bill Advances at the Legislature

Freshman lawmaker seeks to provide financial relief for Hawaiian national treasure

HONOLULU. Rep. Roland Sagum's bill to assist ‘Iolani Palace has made it through the critical lateral deadline and is advancing at the state legislature. House Bill 959, HD1, proposes to exempt ‘Iolani Palace from the qualifying standards and conditions that apply to recipients of funds under Chapter 42F, the Hawaii Revised Statutes section on grants and subsidies. The purpose of the bill is to provide some financial relief for the costly maintenance and operation of ‘Iolani Palace, which has the distinction of being the only official state residence of royalty in the United States.

"The historical and cultural significance of ‘Iolani Palace to the people of Hawaii is immeasurable," said Rep. Sagum, who introduced the bill. "We cannot allow this Hawaiian national treasure to fall into a state of disrepair, as it did after the overthrow of the monarchy. It takes great resources to preserve the palace, but I believe we are also preserving our heritage."

‘Iolani Palace is state-owned and falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Land and Natural Resources. The Friends of ‘Iolani Palace, however, is the organization responsible for the stewardship of the palace, including the day-to-day operations, the public tours, and the considerable maintenance of a historic building.

The bill would allow the exemption for the Friends of ‘Iolani Palace, but not for providers contracting with the palace. HB959 has passed the Water, Land, Ocean Resources & Hawaiian Affairs committee and two readings before the entire House of Representatives. It next goes before the Finance Committee, of which Rep. Sagum is a member.

"I see hundreds of visitors, including school children, coming to ‘Iolani Palace and learning about our Hawaiian history and culture every day," continued Rep. Sagum, whose office at the State Capitol overlooks the palace. "The state can and should do more to assist in this effort."

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