
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO KALAUPAPA MONTH.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that January is a
2 significant month in the history of Kalaupapa on the island of
3 Moloka'i.

4 In 1865, Hawai'i passed "An Act to Prevent the Spread of
5 Leprosy", which required the isolation of leprosy patients.
6 Accordingly, for that purpose, the State bought eight hundred
7 acres of land on the Kalaupapa peninsula of Moloka'i. On
8 January 6, 1866, twelve citizens of Hawai'i arrived at Kalaupapa,
9 the first of an estimated eight thousand people who were taken
10 from their families and forced into isolation.

11 When the first ships arrived in 1866, the original
12 inhabitants of Kalaupapa played a critical role in helping these
13 leprosy patients. If not for their kindness and compassion,
14 life would have been far worse for those who were forced into
15 isolation. The government provided very little support or
16 supplies to the early settlement of isolated leprosy patients.
17 As the settlement grew and became overcrowded, the government



1 ordered the original inhabitants to leave the land they had
2 occupied for generations. The last of the original inhabitants
3 of Kalaupapa were evicted in January 1895, a year after the
4 Republic of Hawai'i was established.

5 The legislature further finds that Hale Mohalu, a
6 collection of World War II barracks on eleven acres of land at
7 the edge of Pearl City, Oahu, was converted into a treatment
8 center for leprosy patients registered at Kalaupapa and became a
9 "second home" for many of its patients. Since the 1950s, state
10 officials had let Hale Mohalu fall into disrepair, and in 1978,
11 the State began relocating patients to Leahi Hospital, its
12 designated Honolulu treatment center. On January 26, 1978,
13 eight residents of Hale Mohalu were relocated to Leahi Hospital
14 against their wishes. Twelve others refused to leave and
15 remained behind, including Bernard Punikai'a, Clarence Naia, and
16 Frank and Mary Duarte. This began a nearly six-year occupation
17 of Hale Mohalu by these residents, who together with their
18 supporters, protested policies imposed by the then-Governor and
19 the board of health. Punikai'a, Naia, and several of their
20 supporters were arrested on September 21, 1983, when the
21 buildings of Hale Mohalu were bulldozed.



1 The legislature additionally finds that two key individuals
2 who committed their lives to serving those affected by leprosy
3 also share significant dates in the month of January.

4 On January 3, 1840, Jozef De Veuster was born in Belgium.
5 He later joined the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus
6 and Mary. Known as Father Damien, he was ordained in Honolulu.
7 Father Damien arrived at Kalaupapa in 1873 and spent sixteen
8 years of his life caring for the people of Kalaupapa,
9 ministering to them, building houses, churches, and tending to
10 their medical needs. He was canonized as Saint Damien of
11 Moloka'i in 2009.

12 On January 23, 1838, Barbara Koob was born in Germany. She
13 later became a member of The Sisters of St. Francis of Syracuse,
14 New York, and eventually became known as Mother Marianne Cope.
15 She was a respected health administrator and answered the call
16 of King Kalākaua and Queen Kapi'olani to help people affected by
17 leprosy in Hawai'i. She spent thirty years at Kalaupapa,
18 supervising the Bishop Home for Single Women and Girls and
19 serving as a leader in the community. She was canonized as
20 Saint Marianne in 2012.



1 Many of the people sent to Kalaupapa also became great
2 leaders of the community. On January 5, 1879, Ambrose Hutchison
3 arrived at Kalaupapa where he lived for the next fifty-three
4 years. He served as resident superintendent for a total of ten
5 years, the longest of any other person facing the challenges of
6 leprosy.

7 The legislature further finds that since 2014, on the
8 fourth Sunday of January, the Hawai'i Conference of the United
9 Church of Christ (HUCC) observes "Kalaupapa Sunday", wherein
10 HUCC churches across Hawai'i remember the people of Kalaupapa,
11 particularly the thirty-five men and women who founded Siloama
12 Church less than six months after the first leprosy patients
13 were sent to Kalaupapa in 1866.

14 The legislature finds that the people of Kalaupapa today
15 are viewed not only as valuable members of society, but as some
16 of Hawaii's finest citizens who have overcome the most difficult
17 of circumstances. Mercy Hutchison Bacon, great niece of
18 Kalaupapa leader Ambrose Hutchison, called the people of
19 Kalaupapa "the pride of a nation."

20 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to establish January
21 of each year as "Kalaupapa month" to serve as an annual reminder



1 to people all over Hawai'i about the importance of Kalaupapa and
2 the significant contributions made by its people throughout the
3 history of Hawai'i.

4 SECTION 2. Chapter 8, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
5 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to
6 read as follows:

7 "§8- Kalaupapa month. The month of January shall be
8 known and designated as "Kalaupapa month". This month is not
9 and shall not be construed as a state holiday."

10 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

11 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.



S.B. NO. 2370
S.D. 1

Report Title:

Kalaupapa Month

Description:

Designates January as "Kalaupapa month." Effective 7/1/2051.
(SD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

