

RES25-205
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 444

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Sep 3, 2025 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 22

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name: Brandon Elefante	Email: senelefante@capitol.hawaii.gov	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 28, 2025 @ 01:40 PM

Name: Cory Chun	Email: repchun@capitol.hawaii.gov	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 29, 2025 @ 08:34 AM

Name: Kikuko Rees	Email: rocket75do@gmail.com	Zip: 96707
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 30, 2025 @ 06:15 PM

Testimony:

Coach Ken, thank you for teaching my son how to swim when he was in 5th through 8th grade.

My son is the type of swimmer who enjoys swimming with his friends and having fun rather than focusing on swimming fast. He absolutely loved being in your class because of the freedom he had to swim however he wanted. He also really appreciated your kind, warm, and fun-loving personality. If he had a coach who only cared about speed, I truly believe he would have quit swimming.

As a parent, I am so grateful that you accepted him for who he is and coached him with such understanding. Thank you very much.

Coach Ken is grate coach we love.

Name: Drake Yuuta Aoki Rees	Email: drake.y.rees@hotmail.com	Zip: 96707
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 31, 2025 @ 12:42 AM

Testimony:

Coach Ken was my coach for almost all my time as a swimmer in elementary and middle school. I was lucky enough to be under his very inclusive and warming practices that included everyone who swam. I had lots of fun with the community because of Coach Ken. He made swimming a fun sport for all no matter what you wanted out of it. I think he is an amazing representation for what he has done for the swimming scene in Hawaii and the naming of the pool to his name would be perfectly fitting to pay homage to one of America's Vietnam veterans but also an amazing swim coach who taught everyone to love the sport.

Name: michelle kim	Email: svtwhom@yahoo.com	Zip: 96707
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Self	Support	Aug 31, 2025 @ 02:04 PM
Testimony: It would a be incredible tribute to Coach Ken Suenaga to have the Pearl City District Pool renamed for him to honor all that he has done for the Pearl City community. Coach Ken has dedicated his entire life to help the children and families not only in the Pearl City community but the entire state in regards to promoting swimming in Hawaii. He is highly regarded amongst swim coaches throughout the nation. He has championed to have a competition 50 meter pool, K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center, which allows our keiki the opportunity to compete in a olympic sized pool. Coach Ken's goal was to engage children in an activity that is wholesome and will help them be successful in life by teaching life skills as well as swimming. He wholeheartedly welcomed everyone. He believes in developing the whole child. He talks to the team about academics, being kind and helpful, having clean fun, and being part of a family. When we were with the team everyone got along and both children and adult. These relationships continue until today. Our families still keep in touch with one another and our kids are still close friends. He treats everyone, both swimmers and families, like his own. He has taught my children to persevere and not give up when times are tough. He taught me how to relax and enjoy life. He emphasizes that instead of getting mad, look at the situation as a learning opportunity. He always has a positive and optimistic attitude towards life. He has and continues to make a huge impact on my family. While my children were swimming with Coach Ken we spent endless hours at the Pearl City District pool for practice and swim meets; daily practice was from 5-7pm. My kids would often be in the pool from 3pm during free swim. Coach Ken was also only coach to Pearl City Highschool' s swim team until a few years ago. There are so many fond memories with Pearl City Aquatics and Coach Ken. I know when the pool is named after Coach Ken, generations of children will learn about him and what he stands for. The multitude of stories about all the wonderful experiences and memories that were created at the pool will live on. I think that would be the best gift to give such an outstanding person.		
Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dyne Peich	dyne.peich@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Aug 31, 2025 @ 02:14 PM
Testimony: My name is Dyne Peich, and I'm a long time resident of PC. I can't think of a better way to honor Coach Ken than to change the Pearl City District Park pool in his name. I started swimming for Coach at 9 years old and continued all the way through high school. Though my competitive swimming days were behind me, my relationship with and love for him continues to this day. Coach not only made me a better swimmer, he made me a better person. He taught me to work and train hard, but to never forget that at the end of the day it's not about whether you won or lost a swim meet, but did you work together and support each other as a team. He developed our swimming skills, but never at the expense of developing our character, our hearts, and understanding that we are family.		

He has shaped and inspired generations of swimmers in Pearl City, and did so by his amazing commitment to the sport of swimming; his zest for life; and his love for each and all of his swimmers. He wasn't just a great coach, he was (and still is!) a great man, father, and grandfather as well.

I'm so proud to have been coached and inspired by Ken Suenaga. When a person makes an impact like this in his community, we all win. And so, I wholeheartedly support this decision to rename the PC pool to honor such a man as this. It is so so deserving.

Name:

Lynn Ikeda

Email:

kona808hi@gmail.com

Zip:

96782-1823

Representing:

Self

Position:

Support

Submitted:

Aug 31, 2025 @ 09:50 PM

Testimony:

I wholeheartedly support RENAMING THE PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK POOL AT PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK TO THE KEN SUENAGA PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK POOL! Coach Ken has dedicated his heart, his soul and his life to coach our youths in developing skills in swimming, instilling the value of sportsmanship and the importance of teamwork. You could always count on him to be at every practice and every meet coaching and supporting the teams. He cared about every member of the team and wanted to bring out the best in everyone. Being part of the Pearl City swim team was like being part of an extended ohana and has produced lifelong relationships beyond swimming. It would be a wonderful gesture to honor his lifelong commitment to developing our youths in the sport of swimming by renaming the pool Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Park Pool.

Name:

Dustin Ikeda

Email:

dikeda08@gmail.com

Zip:

96782

Representing:

Self

Position:

Support

Submitted:

Sep 1, 2025 @ 07:52 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair and Councilmembers,

My name is Dustin Ikeda, and I am submitting testimony in strong support of renaming the Pearl City District Park Pool in honor of Coach Ken Suenaga.

From age 11 through 18, I trained under Coach Suenaga, and during those years he was far more than just a coach. His dedication to the sport of swimming and his passion for developing young athletes helped shape me not only as a swimmer, but as a person. Through his guidance, I learned discipline, resilience, and the importance of teamwork, lessons that I still carry with me today.

Coach Suenaga devoted decades to the Pearl City community, giving countless hours to train and mentor youth. His

influence extended well beyond the pool, positively shaping the lives of generations of young people. Naming the pool in his honor is a meaningful way to recognize his lifelong commitment and to ensure that his legacy continues to inspire future swimmers and families in Pearl City.

I respectfully urge the Council to support this measure.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dustin Ikeda

Former Pearl City Aquatics swimmer

Name: Lance & Susan Miyahara	Email: lmiyahara@hawaii.rr.com	Zip: 96789
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 1, 2025 @ 08:25 PM

Name: Kristi Ikeda	Email: kristiikeda@gmail.com	Zip: 94158
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 1, 2025 @ 09:22 PM

Testimony:

Swimming for Ken Suenaga, or as many of us call him “Coach Ken,” taught me more than just the importance of teamwork — it gave me a lifelong community and friendships I’ll always cherish. His dedication to developing swimmers taught us the importance of hard-work, while also reminding us to have fun along the way. Many of my fondest childhood memories include practicing and competing at the Pearl City pool, which is why I fully support renaming the pool to the Ken Suenaga Pearl City Pool.

Name: Alyce Hong	Email: honga004@gmail.com	Zip: 96797
Representing: Suenaga Ohana	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 2, 2025 @ 08:36 AM

Name: Sheldon Shiira	Email: shiira1@gmail.com	Zip: 96821
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 2, 2025 @ 09:52 AM

Name: Lesley Hong	Email: leshongie@gmail.com	Zip: 96797
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Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 2, 2025 @ 10:33 AM
Testimony: Coach Ken has been a great contributor to the pearl city community in swimming. Through years of hard work and dedication for Hawaii swimming and pearl city high school. I am now the pearl city high school swim and water polo coach after coach Ken and there is no way I can contribute that much as he has. I most definitely support the renaming of the pearl city pool. Due to hardships and his team pearl city aquatics being taken from him a few years back by the pearl city aquatics board members kicking him and his family off the team, I feel that this would be a great comeback story for him and a way for him to be remembered.		
Name: Jodi Ofsonka	Email: Kauai525@yahoo.com	Zip: 96789
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 2, 2025 @ 01:52 PM
Testimony: Coach Ken Suenaga is an amazing individual. My son had the honor to swim for his club from the age of 7. He has not only introduced swimming to our son, but taught him to believe in himself and be happy and balanced! He is such a family oriented man with an amazing ohana. He has done so much for many swimmers. Winning wasn't his priority, but to enjoy swimming, train hard and let the process take its place. His contagious smile, knowledge of swimming and outlook in life is felt by many. We would love to see this pool be named after Coach Ken Suenaga. Thank you!		
Name: Gregg Takayama	Email: reptakayama@capitol.hawaii.gov	Zip: 96782
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 2, 2025 @ 02:06 PM
Name: Rodney & Jane Nishihara	Email: nishiharaj5@yahoo.com	Zip: 96782
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 2, 2025 @ 06:11 PM
Testimony: We strongly support the renaming of the Pearl City District Pool to the Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Pool. It would be an excellent way to honor Coach Ken for all the years he dedicated to the sport of swimming. Coach Ken has had a positive influence on the many swimmers that were lucky enough to learn from him. This influence extended well beyond the pool. He fostered a supportive team environment that helped build confidence and promoted hard work and perseverance. As parents of a former swimmer in Pearl City Aquatics, we are deeply grateful to Coach Ken. The years of our family being a part of PCA will forever be a warm memory for all of us. Coach Ken celebrated his 94th birthday and this would be a wonderful honor to bestow on him.		

Thank you.

Name: Colin Kanemoto	Email: colin.kanemoto@k12.hi.us	Zip: 96701
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 2, 2025 @ 08:34 PM
Name: Sharon Fujita	Email: sharon.fujita@gmail.com	Zip: 96797
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 3, 2025 @ 03:31 AM
Name: Ronald Ikari	Email: ikariohana@yahoo.com	Zip: 96782
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 3, 2025 @ 08:04 AM

Testimony:

As a parent of a former member of the Pearl City Aquatics organization, I can wholeheartedly attest to the extraordinary impact that Ken Suenaga had the youth of our community. My daughter had the opportunity to swim competitively for his club and under the guidance of the many coaches and parents of Pearl City Aquatics, my daughter was able to grow and blossom into the amazing young woman she is today. Coach Ken and his coaches sacrificed hundreds, if not thousands, of hours to grow the sport of swimming in Hawaii and to help our keiki grow in health and confidence. That spirit of giving to others has been ingrained in my daughter and today, she does the same with the youth in her community. As a lifelong Pearl City resident, I wholeheartedly support the renaming of Pearl City District Park Pool to Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Park Pool. Thank you.

Name: Sarah Keller	Email: sarahkeller716@gmail.com	Zip: 63010
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 3, 2025 @ 08:06 AM

Testimony:

Coach Ken Suenaga is a legend. A man of patience, persistence, and purpose.

When I asked him why he founded Pearl City Aquatics, his answer wasn't about producing the fastest swimmers—it was about guiding kids, keeping them on the right path, and giving them a safe place to belong. That vision alone says everything about the kind of coach and man he is.

Though he didn't grow up as a competitive swimmer himself, his gift for coaching was unmatched. He had an

extraordinary ability to see each swimmer’s potential, refine their technique, and—more importantly—connect those lessons in the pool to lessons in life. He taught generations of athletes that discipline, perseverance, and small changes can make the biggest difference, not just in swimming but in who they would become.

Countless swimmers, myself included, carry his wisdom far beyond the water. Every achievement, every milestone reached, every moment of perseverance traces back to his belief in us. He was never just a swim coach—he was a life coach, a mentor, and a constant presence in the stands cheering us on long after we left Pearl City.

Renaming the Pearl City pool in his honor is not just fitting—it is necessary. It ensures that his name, his vision, and his legacy continue to inspire future generations the way he inspired us all. The Ken Suenaga PC Pool would stand as a lasting tribute to a man who gave so much to his athletes, his community, and to the sport of swimming in Hawaii.

Name: Nikki Toma	Email: mamatoma96782@gmail.com	Zip: 96782
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 3, 2025 @ 09:30 AM

Testimony:

Aloha All,

My name is Nikki Toma. I have known Coach Ken for most of my life, and I have personally seen how many people he has impacted with all that he so generously has given of his time and talents. He has shared his passion for swimming with generations of families, and produced many top notch swimmers. To my best knowledge, he was the first and for many years the only coach for the Pearl City High School swim team, he has coached noted people such as K. Mark Takai, and he is the original Pearl City Aquatics founder.

Going beyond these accomplishments, Coach Ken has also supported the parks that he has coached at with his whole heart and best intentions. These include but are not limited to assisting with park special activities in the Pearl City Complex parks, the re-opening of the Pearl City District Park Pool after years of closure, and the design for the Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center Pool.

In my personal opinion, this recognition of Coach Ken is the perfect way of recognizing his living legacy. Please consider the approval of this resolution. Thank you.

Name: Ian Nishihara	Email: hawaiiianjohn@hotmail.com	Zip: 96782
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 3, 2025 @ 09:51 AM

Testimony:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of the proposal to rename the Pearl City District Park Pool in honor of Coach Ken Suenaga. Coach Ken is a man whose dedication of mind, body, and soul has left a lasting legacy not only on Pearl City, but on generations of swimmers, students, and community members, myself included.

Coach Ken was more than a coach. He was a mentor, a role model, and a pillar of the community. Through his tireless commitment to the sport and to the kids he coached, he cultivated an environment of discipline, perseverance, and mutual respect. He gave everything he had to ensure that we not only became better athletes, but better people.

Coach Ken's influence extended far beyond the lanes of the pool. Through his leadership, his swim program became a family that fostered lifelong connections and friendships for all involved, swimmers and parents.

Renaming the Pearl City District Park Pool to the Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Park Pool would be a fitting and meaningful way to honor the countless hours he poured into this community, the lives he transformed, and the legacy he leaves behind.

Thank you for considering this tribute to a man who truly gave his all for this community.



The Senate
Ka 'Aha Kenekoa

STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
August 28, 2025

The Honorable Tommy Waters, Chair
The Honorable Andria Tupola, Vice Chair
and Members of the Honolulu City Council
Honolulu City Council, City Council Chambers
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Waters and Members:

Subject: Testimony in Support of Resolution 25-205
RENAMING THE PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK POOL AT PEARL CITY
DISTRICT PARK TO THE KEN SUENAGA PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK
POOL.

My name is Brandon Elefante and I serve as a member of the Hawai'i State Senate representing the Pearl City area. I offer this testimony in **strong support** for Resolution 25-205 which renames the Pearl City District Park Pool to the Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Park Pool for the Hall of Fame Swimmer and Coach Ken Suenaga.

I first met Coach Ken over a decade ago, and it is without question that he has been an integral part of the Pearl City community teaching and inspiring many keiki throughout his 59-year legacy. He has instilled values of hard work, strong work ethics, and most importantly, valuable lessons in the pool and in our communities.

Coach Ken's unwavering advocacy for the development of the now K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center in honor of the late Congressman K. Mark Takai, swimming classes, starting the Pearl City High School swim team, and serving as a mentor to countless swimmers throughout his decorated career is a testament to his leadership and passion for swimming. Coach Ken truly cares about mentoring leaders and has shown these efforts by leading the next generation of swimmers and leaders in our community.

Renaming the Pearl City Park Pool in his honor is a fitting tribute to his extraordinary contributions and enduring impact.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brandon Elefante", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brandon Elefante
Hawai'i State Senator District 16



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Hale o nā Luna Makaʻāinana

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE CAPITOL
415 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

August 29, 2025

Councilmember Tommy Waters, Chair & Presiding Officer
Councilmember Andria Tupola, Vice Chair
Members of the Honolulu City Council

Re: Support of Resolution 25-205, Renaming the Pearl City District Park Pool to the Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Park Pool

Dear Chair Waters and members of the Honolulu City Council,

I want to express my support for Resolution 25-205, which renames the Pearl City District Park Pool to the Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Park Pool. Coach Ken Suenaga is a legend in the Pearl City community and the swimming community as well. He founded Pearl City Aquatics, Inc. in 1968, with a mission to train, support, and encourage competitive swimming to Hawai'i's youth. It continues today after decades of swimmers competing through the program. Coach Suenaga's excellence and dedication to the sport of swimming was memorialized when he was inducted into the Hawai'i Sports Hall of Fame in 2012. He also has an annual swimming invitational named in his honor. Renaming the Pearl City District Park Pool to the Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Park Pool recognizes Coach Suenaga's contributions to the sport of swimming, our community, and all the lives that he touched through his many years of coaching. For these reasons, I am in full support. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on this resolution.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Cory Chun".

Representative Cory Chun
Hawai'i State House of Representatives
District 35 - Pearl City, Waipahū, Crestview

95-1045 Kowa Street
Mililani, HI 96789
September 1, 2025

Dear Honorable Honolulu City Council Members,

Subject: **RES25-205** - RENAMING THE PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK POOL AT PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK TO THE KEN SUENAGA PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK POOL

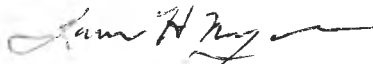
We are writing to express our strong support to rename the Pearl City District Park Pool at Pearl City District Park to the Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Park Pool.

Coach Ken Suenaga possessed the ability and patience to teach, inspire, and mentor swimmers he worked with. He connected to the swimmers as individuals in his own special way, taught them the importance of discipline, perseverance, competitiveness, and teamwork, all while having fun at the same time. Coach Ken not only taught swimming, he developed the character and instilled lifelong virtues in all his swimmers.

We remember when our son first joined the Pearl City Aquatics Club in 2005 and Coach Ken worked with him to improve his swimming flip turn technique. It was a very humbling experience for our high schooler, as he was told to do his exercises in the kiddie pool. Imagine a tall, 10th grader doing swimming flip turns in the training pool at the Pearl City District Park Pool. At first, it was a laughable moment, but our son soon learned to position his body while doing flip turns to prevent his back from scraping the bottom of the shallow pool. It was a simple and effective solution that worked!

Through the years, it's truly heartwarming to see Coach Ken and many of the swimmers and their families continue to keep in touch with each other. His passion and dedication to the swimming community is an inspiration to us, and we wholeheartedly endorse renaming the Pearl City District Park Pool at Pearl City District Park to the Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Park Pool.

Sincerely,


Lance Miyahara


Susan Miyahara

Dear Honorable Honolulu City Council Members,

SUBJ: RES25-205 – RENAMING THE PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK POOL AT PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK TO THE KEN SUENAGA PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK POOL

Thank you for the opportunity permitting the Suenaga family to represent Coach Ken Suenaga aka Dad, Grandpa, Great Grandpa, Great-Great Grandpa, Korean War Veteran and Hawaii Hall of Fame Swim Coach. As many of you know, he started the swimming program for our Pearl City District Park pool in the late 60's and continued development of swimmers until 2022.

He recently celebrated his 94th birthday and thankfully is still able to manage his life independently. He believes that being with young swimmers, sharing experiences, and laughter for the past 50+ years is the significant factor towards the blessing of his health.

His decades of inspiration, passion and leadership gave swimmers the space to be heard, motivated, to build confidence, grow and achieve their personal goals. Today he speaks very proudly of the former swimmers and achievements they have since accomplished. For example many community professionals like Doctors, Accountants, Nurses, Police Officers, EMS, Engineers, Teachers, Chefs, Pharmacists, Financial Advisors, Federal, State, and City Employees, Military Officers/Enlisted Personnel, etc.

Our Suenaga Ohana and swimmers are very grateful for the opportunity to provide information to community leaders in support of renaming the Pearl City Pool to Coach Ken Suenaga. He is truly an example of a citizen sharing the "Aloha Spirit" for our community!

Very Respectfully,

The Suenaga Ohana Swimmers

Scott Suenaga, Amy Billiamosa, Chad Billiamosa, Sheena Yamamoto, Sarah Keller, Alyce Hong, Lesley Hong, Kylie Vixaysakd, Rayden Hong-Matsuki, Jae Hong-Matsuki, Robert Suenaga, Krystal Suenaga, Chel'c Suenaga

September 2, 2025

Letter of support for the renaming of the PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK POOL to honor KEN SUENAGA

(RES25-205)

My Personal Written Testimony in Support of Renaming the Pearl City District Park Pool to honor Coach Ken Suenaga:

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Sheldon Shiira. I was fortunate enough to be one of the original Pearl City Aquatics Swim Team members when it all began back in 1968—I was just nine years old. My mother enrolled me simply to learn how to be safe in the water. At that time, I could barely make it across the pool at Momilani Recreation Center. But Coach Ken Suenaga was patient. He took me, and so many other kids, under his wing, teaching us not just how to swim, but how to commit ourselves and work hard at something. He never lost patience, no matter how long it took.

Over the years, I grew up with Pearl City Aquatics, and later joined the Pearl City High School Swim Team, which Coach Suenaga also started. From age 9 to 18, I spent countless hours at the pool, often at Coach's house, making lasting friendships with his family and teammates. Some of my fondest memories are body surfing at team beach outings, skin diving, and traveling to neighbor island meets. Those years shaped me, both as a swimmer and as a person.

Now, as I approach my 66th birthday, I look back at those days with so much gratitude. Coach Suenaga didn't just teach us to swim—he gave us opportunities, lessons, and experiences that shaped who we became. For decades, he dedicated himself fully to the kids and families of Pearl City. Through his guidance, hundreds of us learned about hard work, teamwork, and giving back.

For all he has done—not just for me, but for this entire community—I believe there is nobody more deserving to have the Pearl City District Park Pool named in his honor. I wholeheartedly support renaming the pool for Coach Ken Suenaga, to recognize his years of dedication and the lasting impact he's had on us all.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Sheldon Shiira



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Hale o nā Luna Makaʻāinana

STATE OF HAWAII

STATE CAPITOL

415 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

September 2, 2025

Testimony in Support of Resolution 25-205 RENAMING THE PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK POOL AT PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK TO THE KEN SUENAGA PEARL CITY DISTRICT PARK POOL.

Dear Chair Waters and Members:

My name is Gregg Takayama and I serve as a member of the Hawaii State House representing the Pearl City area. I strongly support Resolution 25-205 to rename the Pearl City District Pool to honor former swim coach Ken Suenaga.

Over the past 55 years, Coach Ken has trained and mentored hundreds of swimmers with Pearl City Aquatics, Inc., Pearl City High School, and Palama Swim Club. He has been an inspirational role model for young people, producing not only excellent swimmers, but also many outstanding citizens and leaders.

He has earned well-deserved recognition in the Hawaii Swimming Hall of Fame for his contributions to our State as a leader in the sport of swimming. And it should also be noted that Ken served our country in the United States Army as a combat medic in the Korean War.

It is truly fitting that Pearl City District Park Pool be renamed the "Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Park Pool" in honor of this exceptional individual who has influenced so many young lives.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gregg Takayama". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Representative Gregg Takayama
District 34 – Pearl City, Waiau, Pacific Palisades

September 2, 2025

Dear Honolulu City Council,

Ken Suenaga has dedicated his life to serving others. From serving in the Korean War, to coaching swimming, water polo, and basketball at Pearl City High School, Ken always found a way to support the community. I support the renaming of the Pearl City District Park Pool to the Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Park Pool for several reasons.

First, Ken Suenaga created Pearl City Aquatics (PCA) in 1968 to teach children how to swim at the Pearl City District Park Pool. He didn't just teach swimmers good technique and stamina, but he also built up his swimmers' characters to be good people. Ken's "15 Minutes of Fly" taught his swimmers about perseverance and grit when the going got tough. He used to say, "Fly makes all the other swim strokes better," even though his swimmers didn't think so. Ken treated everyone like family, and he helped everybody like family. I believe it was this core value that attracted families to PCA. It was a genuine family atmosphere.

Second, Ken Suenaga was a Pearl City High School coach for many years from its inception in 1971. He was a swim coach and water polo coach. Ken was even the coach for basketball, a sport he did not play, because there was a void to be filled. Whenever the athletic directors needed a coach, they could rely on Ken to help out. I would tell Ken to retire from coaching and enjoy life already, but he kept on coaching because it was always about the kids.

Third, Ken Suenaga was instrumental to the development of the K. Mark Takai Veteran's Memorial Aquatics Center (VMAC) in 2001. He attended the planning and development meetings to make sure things moved along and to give advice to improve the development plans. Ken also supported VMAC with his equipment. I started working at VMAC in 2018. When he saw that the lifeguard tent was too small, he donated metal poles, connectors, bungees, and a bigger tarp so the lifeguards would be more comfortable when watching over the pool.

Finally, there is a swim meet named after Ken Suenaga. This does not happen by chance, but it is intentional and deserving. In 1980, the Ken Suenaga Invitational (KSI) Swim Meet was born. It takes place every December and attracts swim teams from other states and countries to test their speed and swimming technique against the best swimmers Hawai'i has to offer. Ken always made sure that KSI always had the best food, and did they. From egg omelets for breakfast to tasty bentos for lunch, KSI always had great food that everyone looked forward to.

The only name I can think of to be connected to the Pearl City District Park Pool is Ken Suenaga. It would be an honor to see his name on the sign that welcomes people to the pool

for everything he has done for Pearl City. It would be a greater honor for Ken Suenaga to see the sign for himself.

Ken Suenaga Pearl City District Park Pool

Mahalo,

Colin Kanemoto

Written Testimony to change PC Pool to Ken Suenaga Pool

Our two daughters (age 5 and 7 at the time) enrolled in the City and County swim classes. They would swim at the Pearl City pool (by Highlands Intermediate School) which was very convenient since the girls were both at Momilani Elementary School. After their swim classes the Pearl City Aquatics (PCA) Team would practice. One of the coaches from PCA asked my husband if our girls were interested in participating with PCA. We met Coach Ken and Coach Jane and the other coaches and our journey with PCA started in 2006 with many late evening swim practices and weekends swim meets.

The Suenaga Ohana started with Coach Ken, Coach Jane, Coach Al, and Coach Shige and then their grandchildren helped with (Coach Sarah, Coach Kailey, Coach Leslie) coaching PCA and teaching my children about this sport and how to compete. This family showed unconditional love for our children and wanted them to do well in swimming. From the coaching staff to the parents then to the children we all became one big Ohana.

My children stayed with PCA for about 10 years and continued to keep in touch with Coach Ken and Coach Al and today the parents and swimmers have become our lifetime friends. As a former PCA parent, I am so fortunate, I had my children learn swimming from Coach Ken and his family and the fond memories my girls have today of their swimming and water polo experiences.

Coach Ken also helped Pearl City High School (PCHS) with coaching the boys and girls Swim Team and girls Water Polo Team. My girls participated in both the swim and water polo teams and were very comfortable since they already knew Coach Ken. He would get to the Swimming Pool at 3:30 pm to coach the PCHS swim team during winter season and water polo during the spring season. After practice he would stay at the swimming pool to coach PCA from 5 to 7 pm.

Recommend renaming the PC Pool to Ken Suenaga PC Pool. Coach Ken lives in Pearl City, coached swimming (PCA Aquatics) in Pearl City for many years and coached boy and girls Swimming and girls Water Polo at Pearl City High School (PCHS). His love and dedication to swimming is in his blood (family, too) and the love for the Pearl City community.

Thank you for your consideration....Love the Fujita Family (Mike, Sharon, Michele and Malia)