

RES26-228
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 428

*INTERNATIONAL & LEGAL AFFAIRS (ILA)

***INTERNATIONAL & LEGAL AFFAIRS (ILA) Meeting**

Meeting Date: Oct 21, 2026 @ 01:00 PM

Support: 2

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name: Dee-Ann Carpenter	Email: deeannc@hawaii.edu	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Oct 17, 2026 @ 01:34 PM
Name: Dylan Armstrong	Email: dylan.p.armstrong@gmail.com	Zip: 96822
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Oct 19, 2026 @ 07:37 AM

October 16, 2026

Dee-Ann Carpenter, MD
651 Ilalo St. Ste. 306E
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: AIDS Memorial & Community Memory Site at Kaka'ako Waterfront Park overlook

Dear Esteemed Council Members:

As a medical student at the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) in the mid-80's, I was part of Student Educators Against AIDS, and went around the University of Hawai'i campus to talk about HIV and AIDS. It was disheartening to see what was happening to many of our patients as well as our friends who died of this new disease that we were just learning about then. Here we are 40 years later asking for a memorial and community memory site to be placed at the Kaka'ako Waterfront Park overlook. We may not be able to bring our loved ones back, but we can have a place to commemorate them and the impact they made while here on this earth.

As an Internal Medicine physician, I have cared for many patients with HIV and/or AIDS. I have always felt that I was the privileged one to get to know and care for them. Their stories continue in their legacy and in those who carry on the torch. Much research continues, and we have medications which can help people live longer and healthier lives. According to our Department of Health, from the beginning of the epidemic through 2024, 5175 Hawai'i residents have been diagnosed with HIV, with 3640 having stage 3 (AIDS) diagnosis. Of those diagnosed with HIV, 2511 have passed away since the beginning of the epidemic. The total number of Hawai'i residents newly diagnosed with HIV in 2024 was 87.

I am now an Associate Professor at JABSOM, located adjacent to this site, and am the advisor for our Medical Student Pride Alliance, a student led interest group. Over the years, we have met with Dean and Joe and many others who have been part of this journey. We are completely in support of this project and are eagerly awaiting its installation. Our medical students and physicians will carry on caring for our patients with HIV and AIDS. It is up to us as a community to continue to commemorate those who have succumbed to this disease.

We thank you for your support, along with the groups who know that this is the right thing to do. We look forward to the AIDS Memorial & Community Memory Site at the Kaka'ako Waterfront overlook.

Me ka ha'a ha'a,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "D. Carpenter".

TESTIMONY FOR THE HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
THE HONORABLE TOMMY WATERS, CHAIR, AND ANDRIA TUPOLA, VICE CHAIR

19 October 2026

RES 26-228

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Council Members,

Mahalo for considering my SUPPORT for this measure. The proposed gift appears to be a contextually-appropriate monument for the Kaka‘ako Waterfront Park location. The design likewise appears suitable. Its main potential improvement might be more shade for particularly hot days. However, shade trades off with public safety by way of open visibility.

HIV/AIDS represents four decades of visceral tragedy, and also, inspiring activism in Honolulu. Relevant nearby sites such as the Department of Health’s Kīna‘u Hale, key medical facilities, and the Hawai‘i State Capitol all lay in downtown Honolulu, a short distance from the park site.

Further, HIV/AIDS as a topic for a memorial rests in a 248-year timeline of diseases (e.g., malaria, tuberculosis, plague, Hansen's disease, and now CoViD-19) bearing historical and cultural significance to both Native Hawaiians and other Hawai‘i *localized* sub-populations.

Additionally, sexism and variants including homophobia (or rather, heterosexism) are long-present in Hawai‘i, but were intensified through colonization. Sexism’s role in worsening the HIV/AIDS global pandemic is well-documented and also logically obvious. Coupled with the stigma surrounding substance addictions which involve intravenous needles, prejudice and discrimination factored in untold deaths and highly painful suffering.

Our failure to transparently and humanely address HIV/AIDS violated the spirit of American foundational principles and documents which bind together society. These range from the Hippocratic Oath to the Declaration of Independence’s "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" phrase. HIV/AIDS activists, recognizing this hypocrisy and cruelty, both sacrificed and organized greatly to improve public health policy. Consequently, we are today a more egalitarian, humane, and effective society in treating sexuality-transmitted infections (STIs) and substance addiction that entails intravenous needles.

While a monument such as the gift honors and confronts us with the past, it can also remind us to perpetuate compassion and fairness into the future.

Mahalo nui loa,

DYLAN P. ARMSTRONG, Urban Planner and Advocate, *Individual Capacity*