

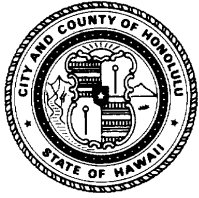
SUMMARY OF PROPOSED COMMITTEE DRAFT:

RESOLUTION 26-236

**URGING THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO RETURN THE LANDS UTILIZED
BY THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE STATION AT BELLWS, WAIMĀNALO,
HAWAI'I, TO THE PEOPLE OF HAWAI'I.**

The PROPOSED CD1 makes the following amendments:

- A. Amends the BE IT RESOLVED clause to provide that the United States of America is urged to return the lands utilized by the United States Air Force Station at Bellows in Waimānalo, O'ahu, Hawai'i, to the people of Hawai'i, in consultation with the Native Hawaiian community, the Waimānalo community, and the State of Hawai'i Department of Hawaiian Home Lands.
- B. Adds a BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED clause to provide that the cost of any cleanup of unexploded munitions and remediation of chemical contamination on the Bellows Air Force Station land be borne solely by the United States.
- C. Makes miscellaneous technical and nonsubstantive amendments.



HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. 26-236, CD1
PROPOSED

RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO RETURN THE LANDS UTILIZED BY THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE STATION AT BELLOWS, WAIMĀNALO, HAWAI'I, TO THE PEOPLE OF HAWAI'I.

WHEREAS, Bellows Air Force Station and the United States Marine Corps Training Area Bellows share management of a single parcel of real property identified as Tax Map Key (1) 4-1-015:001, consisting of approximately 1,500 acres owned by the United States, and situated on the windward side of the island of O'ahu in Waimānalo, Ko'olaupoko District, Hawai'i ("Bellows property"); and

WHEREAS, during the Hawaiian Kingdom at the time of the Great Mahele (land division) in the mid-19th century, lands in the Ahupua'a of Waimānalo were designated as Crown Lands under the jurisdiction of the Hawaiian monarch; and

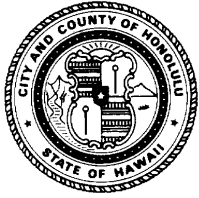
WHEREAS, following the unlawful overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai'i in 1893 by a group of businessmen with the assistance of the U.S. military and the U.S. Minister to the Kingdom of Hawai'i, the Crown Lands were seized and managed by a provisional government that in 1894 declared itself to be the Republic of Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, the Republic of Hawai'i passed the Land Act of 1895, which merged Crown Lands and Government Lands into a single category of Public Lands; and

WHEREAS, the Newlands Joint Resolution of the U.S. Congress, which was signed by President William McKinley on July 7, 1898 (30 Stat. 750) ("Newlands Resolution"), provided for the annexation of Hawai'i, and the self-declared Republic of Hawai'i ceded sovereignty over the Hawaiian Islands to the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Republic of Hawai'i also ceded 1.8 million acres of Public Lands to the United States, without the consent of or compensation to the Native Hawaiian people of Hawai'i or their sovereign government; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress, through the Newlands Resolution, ratified the cessation of sovereignty, annexed Hawai'i as part of the United States, and vested title to the Public Lands in the United States; and



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WHEREAS, on April 30, 1900, President William McKinley signed the Organic Act (31 Stat. 141), which established a Territorial Government for Hawai'i and provided that the public land laws of the former Republic of Hawai'i would remain in force, and the Public Lands ceded to the United States would remain in the possession, use, and control of the United States until the U.S. Congress provides otherwise, or unless the ceded lands are taken for use by the United States by executive order of the U.S. President or the Governor of the Territory of Hawai'i; and

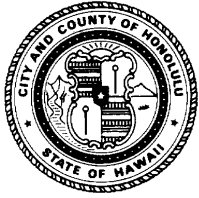
WHEREAS, on March 28, 1917, pursuant to the Organic Act, President Woodrow Wilson created the Waimānalo Military Reservation through Executive Order No. 2565, which set aside 1,510 acres of land at Waimānalo "for military purposes"; and

WHEREAS, subsequently, the acreage of the Waimānalo Military Reservation, renamed "Bellows Field" in 1933 after a World War I hero, expanded and contracted with small revisions through a series of Executive Orders issued by the U.S. President or the Governor of the Territory of Hawai'i, as well as various land transfers, such as the return of 1.24 acres no longer required for U.S. military purposes to the Territory of Hawai'i on August 25, 1942, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt through Executive Order 8870; and

WHEREAS, in 1958, the last aircraft runways at Bellows Air Force Station were closed, and the Bellows Air Force Station flying field status was terminated; and

WHEREAS, when Hawai'i became a state on August 21, 1959, under the Admissions Act (73 Stat. 4), most of the Public Lands corpus was transferred to the State of Hawai'i, except for approximately 400,000 acres that were retained by the U.S. government, and all of the Bellows property remained property of the U.S. government, subject to subsequent act of Congress, executive order, proclamation of the U.S. President, or proclamation of the Hawai'i Governor setting aside, amending, or cancelling previously set aside land within the Bellows property, including Public Law 88-233 which requires the return of "surplus property"; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, Bellows Air Force Station transferred the use of 1,049 acres of the Bellows property that had been Crown Lands to the Marine Corps Training Area Bellows; and



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WHEREAS, according to the *2021 Hawaii Military Land Use Master Plan, 2021 Interim Update*, Appendix A, as of April 2021, the Bellows property consisted of a total of 1,481 acres of fee property and former Crown Lands (excluding 77 acres of other real property interests), with 409 acres in fee property used by Bellows Air Force Station and 1,072 acres in fee property and former Crown Lands used by Marine Corps Training Area Bellows; and

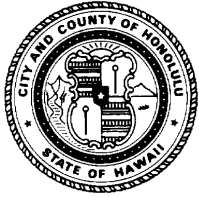
WHEREAS, a sizeable portion of the Bellows property is occupied by a derelict landing strip that was closed in 1958, and a significant portion of the Bellows property mauka (west) of the abandoned landing strip appears to be vacant; and

WHEREAS, the land used by the Bellows Air Force Station is no longer used for the military purposes for which it was originally set aside – the Bellows Air Force Station currently uses the Bellows property under its jurisdiction for recreational purposes by military personnel, retirees, and civilian employees of the U.S. armed forces, who are serviced by onsite commercial operations (shops and recreational activities); and

WHEREAS, by being stationed or employed on O'ahu in Waimānalo, with its close-knit community and predominantly Native Hawaiian population, breathtaking beaches, scenic backdrop of the Ko'olau mountains, and proximity to attractions, military personnel, retirees, and civilian employees already have the opportunity to enjoy some of the best Hawai'i has to offer, and a recreational area in Waimānalo for exclusive use by the military is not needed; and

WHEREAS, Public Law No. 103-150, the "Apology Resolution," which was signed into law by President William J. Clinton on November 23, 1993, acknowledged the United States' role in the illegal overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai'i and stated that Native Hawaiians "never directly relinquished their claims to their inherent sovereignty as a people over their national lands to the United States, either through their monarchy or through a plebiscite or referendum" (107 Stat. 1510 (1993)); and

WHEREAS, the Apology Resolution expressed Congress' commitment to acknowledge the ramifications of the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai'i, thus providing a proper foundation for reconciliation between the United States and the Native Hawaiian people; and



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WHEREAS the Apology Resolution further urged the U.S. President to also acknowledge the ramifications of the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai'i, and to support reconciliation efforts between the United States and the Native Hawaiian people; and

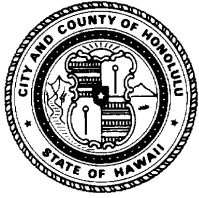
WHEREAS, despite the Apology Resolution's express support of reconciliation efforts and the recognition that many of the federally owned lands used by the U.S. government in Hawai'i base their original tenure on an unlawful seizure, only a limited amount of lands that were set aside for U.S. military use in Waimānalo have been returned to the people of Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, in spite of various environmental, legal, and cultural struggles over time, the State of Hawai'i and the City and County of Honolulu have for decades acknowledged the United States' national security interests and assets in our communities; however, this acknowledgement is not unconditional, and is contingent on the military objective of using Hawai'i's lands for military training and readiness, while respecting the land, people, and culture of Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 88-233 provides a process for transfer of "surplus property" to the State of Hawai'i, subject to the public land trust created by Section 5(f) of the Admissions Act, and use of former military lands for exclusively recreational purposes should trigger review of whether such lands are in fact surplus as they no longer serve the purpose of the Executive Order setting aside these lands for use by the United States, specifically military training and readiness; and

WHEREAS, Hawai'i, as an island state with approximately 4 million acres of land, is challenged by a scarcity of land, including publicly owned land; State and City authorities are always seeking the return of federal land for use to benefit the people of Hawai'i; in this context, the return of military land that is no longer used for military purposes is reasonable and appropriate; and

WHEREAS the City Council finds that it is desirable, just, and in the public interest that the ownership, use, and control of the lands occupied by the Bellows Air Force Station be returned to the people of Hawai'i; now, therefore,



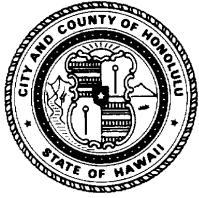
HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
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BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that the United States of America is urged to return the lands utilized by the United States Air Force Station at Bellows in Waimānalo, O'ahu, Hawai'i, to the people of Hawai'i, in consultation with the Native Hawaiian community, the Waimānalo community, and the State of Hawai'i Department of Hawaiian Home Lands; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the cost of any cleanup of unexploded munitions and remediation of chemical contamination on the Bellows Air Force Station land be borne solely by the United States; and



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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to
Admiral Samuel Paparo, Commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command;
General Kevin B. Schneider, Commander, Pacific Air Forces, and Air Component
Commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command; United States Senator Brian Schatz;
United States Senator Mazie Hirono; United States Representative Ed Case;
United States Representative Jill Tokuda; Governor of the State of Hawai'i Josh Green;
State of Hawai'i Board of Land and Natural Resources Chair Ryan Kanaka'ole;
Hawaiian Homes Commission Chair Kali Watson; Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Board of Trustees Chair Kaiali'i Kahele; and Mayor Rick Blangiardi.

INTRODUCED BY:

Esther Kia'aina

Tommy Waters

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

October 15, 2026
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers