

Since Hawaii's admission into the Union, Congress has continued to legislate on behalf of Native Hawaiians as indigenous peoples. Native Hawaiians have been included as Native Americans in a number of federal statutes which have addressed the conditions of Native Hawaiians. P.L. 103-150, the Apology Resolution, extended an apology on behalf of the United States to the Native people of Hawaii for the United States' role in the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii. The Apology Resolution also expressed the commitment of Congress and the President to acknowledge the ramifications of the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii and to support reconciliation efforts between the United States and Native Hawaiians.

The legislation I am introducing today is important not only to Native Hawaiians, but to all people in Hawaii. This measure provides the process to begin resolving many longstanding issues facing Hawaii's indigenous peoples and the State of Hawaii. In addressing these issues, we have begun a process of healing, a process of reconciliation not only with the United States but within the State of Hawaii. The essence of Hawaii is characterized not by the beauty of its islands, but by the beauty of its people. The State of Hawaii has recognized, acknowledged and acted upon the need to preserve the culture, tradition, language and

heritage of Hawaii's indigenous peoples. This measure furthers these actions.

The clarification of the political relationship between Native Hawaiians and the United States is one that has been long in coming and is well-deserved. Unfortunately, the history and the timing of Hawaii's relationship to the United States has not provided the appropriate structure for a government-to-government relationship between Hawaii's indigenous native peoples and the United States. The time has come to correct this injustice.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT A. WEYGAND

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2000

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, during House consideration of H.R. 1102, the Comprehensive Retirement Security and Pension Reform Act, I regret that I missed rollcall votes 410 and 411. I was unavoidably detained returning from the funeral of Senator John O. Pastore in Rhode Island.

Had I been here I would have voted "yea" on both votes. Rollcall vote No. 410, the Democratic substitute, offered by Representative NEAL, would have added provisions to

H.R. 1102 that would have offered tax credits to small businesses to set up pension plans for their employees. The substitute would also have provided refundable tax credits for low and middle income workers to encourage them to save for their retirement. As a former small business owner, I understand both the importance of providing pensions to the employees of small businesses and the difficulties small businesses often face as they attempt to establish these plans. I believe that the provisions of the substitute would have made a good bill even better and I regret that the substitute was not agreed to.

I would also have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 411. This motion to recommit H.R. 1102 would have sent the bill back to Committee with instructions to include additional language requiring that there must be an on-budget surplus and prescription drug coverage for Medicare beneficiaries through the Medicare program before the tax and pension relief provisions of the bill could be enacted. Maintaining our hard-won surplus and providing prescription drug coverage to our senior citizens are critically important and must be given the highest of priorities. I regret that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle do not share our belief in keeping the federal budget in surplus and providing vital prescription drug coverage to our elderly.