

Aloha mai Kākou,

My name is Mary Alice Ka'iulani Milham and I come from an 'ohana with a long tradition of service to our lāhui and the life of the land.

Some of you knew my mom, the late Sovereignty Activist Dallas Keali'hooneaina Mossman Vogeler.

Among her many contributions to our lāhui, she was the director behind the reenactment of overthrow during the Centennial Observance in 1993.

My mom was a lifelong advocate of education as a means to empowerment. And while she worked hard educate our lāhui, she also made sure to educate me in the the true history of our people.

It is her example that has instilled me with an passion to contribute to the restoration of our people, our land and our government.

Although I've only lived here a year, I've been preparing myself for this nation-building work all of my adult life.

But first I had to make it home.

Last fall, I was finally able to do it. Timing my arrival to coincide with this historic nation-building endeavor, I drove nine hours to testify at the DOI hearing in Washington State and then, on the way home, I put my car on a Matson barge bound for Honolulu.

Why I'm Running

I want to help ensure that we who are living in these islands today leave behind a healthy pa'e 'āina with productive farmlands and fisheries and the fresh water necessary to sustain our people for generations to come.

But to do that, we're going to have to face some very inconvenient truths.

After 123 years, we must face the fact that the existing governments - who have allowed our islands to become ground zero for GMO pesticide bombing, biennial RIMPAC bombing, US military training bombing and settler population bombing - *do not* have our best interest at heart.

This must change and the sooner the better. And I believe Na‘i Aupuni *can* serve as a forum for creating the changes necessary by launching a path of true self-determination for our lāhui.

### **Independence Begins With Education**

While this ‘Aha was conceived as a venue to draft a constitution, as a *pre-requisite* to a referendum on such constitution, I propose an aggressive one-year educational push, to ensure we are on the same page regarding our true history and to give us the foundation necessary to *unify*.

### **Creating a Pono Roll**

While working to protect our rights as Native Hawaiians, we must remember that we are minority in our homeland.

If our people propose a path to international recognition, a race-based citizenship will hurt our chances.

But if we base citizenship on a pono roll - on the solid foundation of the Kū‘ē Petition - we will not only build *good will* with our neighbors here in Hawai‘i but we will also greatly improve our prospects for a successful independence referendum.

### **Art Is A Hammer**

Before we do *that*, we must tell our story.

Whether it be through hula, mele, ‘oli or mo‘olelo, we Hawaiians have always known the power of storytelling.

As the German playwright Bertolt Brecht said, “Art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it.”

A cornerstone of my platform calls for a massive effort to expand our storytelling capacity.

I will propose a Native Hawaiian Media Commission and a five-year educational campaign aimed at building support for recognition through a multi-media strategy of film, theater, traditional and social media.

By commissioning art that upholds our *true* history, we will strengthen our lāhui and *build* international support for recognition.

Those of you who took part in the Centennial Observance, know how powerful a consciousness-raising experience that was.

Likewise, our people have been empowered by the true story of our illegitimate annexation - through public installations of the Kū'ē Petitions and presentations of the re-enactment, Ka Lei Maile Ali'i.

We need to build on this foundation. As my mom used to say, "Nothing succeeds like success."

To further raise up our lāhui, we must raise monuments to our national heroes, like Joseph and Emma Nawahi, who joined with our Queen to lay the foundation for our enduring pursuit of justice and restoration of our government.

## **A Two-Pronged Approach**

Our kūpuna who organized the Kū'ē Petitions, gave us a profound role model of lōkahi that we have yet to embrace.

Differing opinions on decolonization and de-occupation have divided us for too long.

If we pursue both paths, with fact-finding missions to former colonies and indigenous peoples who have *achieved* the rights and recognition we desire, we improve our chances for success.

## **Repatriation**

As was true in the days of King Kalākaua, to maintain self-governance in our islands we need to ho'oulu lāhui.

In preparation for an Independence referendum, I will propose a repatriation program for the return to Hawai'i nei of the 48 percent of our people who have

been forced to live outside the state of Hawai'i because of the high cost of housing and other economic factors.

Through repatriation, we can bring our 'ohana home and have the potential to double our voting bloc and thus our chances for success.

### **My Qualifications**

As a journalist for 20 years, I've worked to foster the empowerment that comes through education and public discourse.

As a delegate, I will bring my journalistic skills to the table, including:

- The ability to listen and understand other points of view
- A commitment to accuracy and clarity
- The ability to fearlessly and articulately advocate for truth
- And the ability to work with others calmly, deliberately and respectfully

I humbly ask for your vote. Mahalo nui for listening.

Aloha 'Āina