

# Chronological: Hawaii County Planning Commission, 1992-11-18

Senator Daniel K. Inouye Papers  
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DANIEL K. INOUE  
HAWAII

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COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Communications

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## United States Senate

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November 18, 1992

TESTIMONY OF UNITED STATES SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUE  
BEFORE THE HAWAII COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Good afternoon and Aloha. I am pleased to submit my written testimony before the Hawaii County Planning on the subject of a Special Use Permit for the planned Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Center on the Island of Hawaii. As one who has seen combat up-close, I can attest to the horrors of war and its effects on men and women in the line of fire. Anyone who comes away from combat and claims he or she was unaffected is not being entirely truthful. There are many who will live with the wounds of war - be they psychological, physical or spiritual - for the rest of their lives.

Last year, with the triumphant return of our men and women in uniform from the hostilities in the Persian Gulf, I believed that America had finally come home. Americans have come to realize that regardless of our individual feelings about the propriety of our country's involvement in any war, we must not blame and lash out at our troops. Rather, their willingness to sacrifice their lives for our nation deserves only our admiration, respect and gratitude. I note that this hearing comes a week after our country observed Veteran's Day. I have always been grateful that fellow Americans would collectively set aside some time in the year to commemorate those who were willing to stand in harm's way to defend our way of life. Sadly, many of our veterans the year-round suffer in many ways, among them homelessness, the lack of medical care and a decent, paying job.

Today we address ourselves to those veterans who suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. These are veterans who, long after the guns have fallen silent, continue to suffer from a kind of shrapnel in their hearts and minds. Many suffer in silence. And to add to the torment, these veterans are unable to turn to anyone for help. They feel no one cares or understands their problems.

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I have vowed to do all I can to help these servicemen really return home. The PTSD Center I have successfully pursued for the Island of Hawaii is one way to lend assistance to these veterans. That Center will develop educational, training and counseling protocols and will establish specialized in-patient diagnosis and treatment of Asian-American, American Pacific Islander and Native American veterans in a culturally-sensitive manner. It will also serve the extreme and tragic cases of those veterans who find they have no other choice but to live in the jungles and forests of Hawaii.

I hope and pray that the coming home of the Persian Gulf heroes and heroines, together with the development of the PTSD Center on the Island of Hawaii, will help in the healing process. I hope it will ensure that we lose no more veterans to the jungles of Hawaii but, rather, provide the strength and support many need to truly come home.

Thank you for providing me this opportunity to bring forth testimony on this truly worthwhile project.

Aloha,

DANIEL K. INOUE  
United States Senator