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Interior Considers Procedures to Reestablish a Government-to-Government Relationship with the Native Hawaiian Community

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In response to requests from the Native Hawaiian community, Hawaii’s congressional delegation and state leaders, the U.S. Department of the Interior announced today a first step to consider reestablishing a government-to-government relationship between the United States and the Native Hawaiian community.

The purpose of such a relationship would be to more effectively implement the special political and trust relationship that currently exists between the Federal government and the Native Hawaiian community. Today’s action, known as an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM), provides for an extensive series of public meetings and consultations in Hawaii and Indian Country to solicit comments that could help determine whether the Department develops a formal, administrative procedure for reestablishing an official government-to-government relationship with the Native Hawaiian community and if so, what that procedure should be.

“When I met with members of the Native Hawaiian community last year during my visit to the state, I learned first-hand about Hawaii’s unique history and the importance of the special trust relationship that exists between the Federal government and the Native Hawaiian community,” said Secretary of the Interior, Sally Jewell. “Through the Advanced Notice of Proposed Rule Making, the Department is responding to requests from not only the Native Hawaiian community but also state and local leaders and interested parties who recognize that we need to begin a conversation of diverse voices to help determine the best path forward for honoring the trust relationship that Congress has created specifically to benefit Native Hawaiians.”

Over many decades, Congress has enacted more than 150 statutes that specifically recognize and implement this trust relationship with the Native Hawaiian community, including the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, the Native Hawaiian Education Act, and the Native Hawaiian Health Care Act. The Native Hawaiian community, however, has not had a formal governing entity since the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii in 1893. In 1993, Congress enacted the Apology Resolution which offered an apology to Native Hawaiians on behalf of the United States for its role in the overthrow and committed the U.S. government to a process of reconciliation. In

2000, the Department of the Interior and the Department of Justice jointly issued a [*report on the reconciliation process*](#) that identified self-determination for Native Hawaiians under Federal law as their leading recommendation.

The ANPRM, available tomorrow [on the Federal Register](#), outlines the following five threshold questions that will be the subject of the forthcoming public meetings regarding whether the Federal Government should reestablish a government-to-government relationship with the Native Hawaiian community:

- (i) Should the Secretary propose an administrative rule that would facilitate the reestablishment of a government-to-government relationship with the Native Hawaiian community?
- (ii) Should the Secretary assist the Native Hawaiian community in reorganizing its government, with which the United States could reestablish a government-to-government relationship?
- (iii) If so, what process should be established for drafting and ratifying a reorganized Native Hawaiian government's constitution or other governing document?
- (iv) Should the Secretary instead rely on the reorganization of a Native Hawaiian government through a process established by the Native Hawaiian community and facilitated by the State of Hawaii, to the extent such a process is consistent with Federal law?
- (v) If so, what conditions should the Secretary establish as prerequisites to Federal acknowledgment of a government-to-government relationship with the reorganized Native Hawaiian government?

The Department will be engaging in an extensive series of public meetings throughout the State of Hawaii and in Indian Country to solicit comments and feedback on whether and how the process of reestablishing a government-to-government relationship should move forward. These meetings will be held in Hawaii and the continental United States as follows:

Public Meetings in Hawaii – June 23 through July 8

Oahu

Monday, June 23 -- Honolulu – 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Hawaii State Capitol Auditorium

Monday, June 23 -- Waimanalo – 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Waimanalo Elementary and Intermediate School

Tuesday, June 24 -- Waianae Coast – 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Nanaikapono Elementary School

Wednesday, June 25 -- Kaneohe – 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Heeia Elementary School

Thursday, June 26 -- Kapolei – 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Makakilo Elementary School

Lanai

Friday, June 27 – Lanai City – 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Lanai Senior Center

Molokai

Saturday, June 28 – Kaunakakai – 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Kaunakakai Elementary School

Kauai

Monday, June 30 – Waimea – 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Waimea Neighborhood Center

Tuesday, July 1 -- Kapaa – 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Kapaa Elementary School

Hawaii Island

Wednesday, July 2 -- Hilo – 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Keaukaha Elementary School

Thursday, July 3 -- Waimea – 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Waimea Community Center

Thursday, July 3 -- Kona – 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Kealakehe High School

Maui

Saturday, July 5 -- Hana – 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Hana High and Elementary School

Monday, July 7 -- Lahaina – 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
King Kamehameha III Elementary School

Tuesday, July 8 -- Kahului – 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Pomaikai Elementary School

Indian Country Consultations – July 29 through August 7

Tuesday, July 29 – Minnesota – 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Mystic Lake Casino Hotel, Prior Lake, MN

Wednesday, July 30 – South Dakota – 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Rushmore Civic Center, Rapid City, SD

Friday, August 1 – Washington – 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Tulalip Resort, Seattle, WA

Tuesday, August 5 – Arizona – 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Talking Stick Resort, Scottsdale, AZ

Thursday, August 7 – Connecticut – 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

As set forth in the ANPRM, the Department welcomes comments from leaders and members of the Native Hawaiian community and federally recognized Indian tribes, as well as the State of Hawaii, its agencies, other state agencies, and the general public. Attendance at the above-listed consultation meetings is not required for public comment.

In addition to the public meetings, comments can be submitted online through the Federal eRulemaking Portal: www.Regulations.gov beginning later this week, or via U.S. mail, courier, or hand delivery to: Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior, Room 7329, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240 (please use Regulation Identifier Number 1090-AB05 in your message).

The public will have 60 days from the date of publication in the Federal Register to provide comments on this action.

For a list of frequently asked questions and answers on this topic, please click [here](#).

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