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## **Autonomy bill that angered many Hawaiians will be killed**

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By BRUCE DUNFORD  
The Associated Press

HONOLULU -- State House Hawaiian Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Case is killing his "Hawaiian Autonomy" bill, he announced Monday.

The measure provoked Hawaiians into a noisy protest march, 24-hour Capitol vigil and overwhelming opposition at a contentious 10-hour hearing on Saturday.

It called for establishment of a nonprofit private trust to take over responsibilities and assets of all Hawaiian programs, including the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands.

Hawaiian leaders accused Case of using the bill to interfere with the Hawaiian sovereignty movement and to cut off the state and federal obligations to Native Hawaiians. Some called him a "racist."

Case said he conferred with other members of the Hawaiian Affairs Committee and also with Hawaiian members of the House who unanimously urged that the bill be held.

The Democratic majority members of the committee agreed to hold the bill in committee "and leave the discussion of the issues at this point to the Native Hawaiian community."

"While I regret the tone of much of the discussion to date, I strongly believe that this was a necessary step in forwarding the larger resolution we all seek," Case said in a memorandum to House Speaker Joseph Souki.

Office of Hawaiian Affairs Chairwoman A. Frenchy DeSoto said she is pleased with Case's action.

"If there is a single lesson to be learned, it is that Hawaiians must be involved in decisions which affect their lives," she said. "Anything short of this is wrong and perpetuates the damage done to Hawaiians and their community more than 100 years ago."

Case said he scheduled the hearing on the bill because he felt the discussion would be beneficial and that the testimony would assist in focusing and advancing further discussions.

The hearing reflected the complexity of the "big picture" of dealing with Hawaiian issues, Case said.

"The great majority of the testimony opposed the bill, primarily on the grounds of a deep sense of ownership of this discussion within the Hawaiian community," he said. "The testimony also reflected that the Hawaiian community is succeeding in advancing the discussion internally."

According to many Hawaiian leaders who spoke out at the Capitol rally and at the hearing, Case's bill brought closer together some of the diverse groups in the Hawaiian community on the issue of



sovereignty.

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