



Proclamation

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) which kills or damages immune system cells, eventually leaving the body unable to protect itself from infections and disease. The World Health Organization and Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) estimate that 33.2 million people worldwide have HIV/AIDS. In 2007 alone, 2.1 million people around the globe died from this deadly disease.

According to the Hawai'i Department of Health, as of December 2007, a total of 3,011 AIDS cases had been reported in our state. Since 1987, UNAIDS has observed *World AIDS Day* on December 1 of each year. This is a day of remembrance for those who lost their lives to HIV/AIDS, as well as a time to reflect upon the importance of providing compassion, support and medical assistance for individuals afflicted with the disease.

World AIDS Day will be observed throughout the islands in various ways, one of which is the *World AIDS Day* Youth Leadership Challenge, a statewide contest for middle and high school students, giving them the opportunity to share their creative ideas to lead the fight against AIDS. Winners will be announced at the Parish of St. Clement on 'Oahu. Also on 'Oahu, the Cathedral Church of St. Andrew will offer a candle corner, an informational display and HIV testing, while Kapi'olani Community College will host different events to raise awareness and discuss preventative measures to stop the spread of this disease. On the Big Island, the HIV/AIDS Foundation will host memorial services in Hilo and Kona. In addition to displaying a panel of the AIDS Memorial Quilt, Hilo's Palace Theater will also host the *World AIDS Day* Concert to benefit HIV/AIDS services in Hawai'i. On Maui, the Maui AIDS Foundation will hold a ceremony at the 21st-annual James Manness Memorial Dance, an event dedicated to the first Maui resident diagnosed with the AIDS virus.

Despite these efforts to raise awareness and improve treatment, there is still no cure for HIV/AIDS. *World AIDS Day* reminds us of the importance of testing for HIV/AIDS and employing preventative strategies to reduce and eliminate discrimination, stigmas and prejudices against people who are fighting this disease.

THEREFORE, I, LINDA LINGLE, Governor, and **I, JAMES R. "DUKE" AIONA, JR.**, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim **December 1, 2008**, as

WORLD AIDS DAY

in Hawai'i, and urge all of our citizens to reaffirm their commitment to combat HIV/AIDS and to support those affected by this disease.

DONE at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this thirtieth day of November 2008.

Linda Lingle
Governor, State of Hawai'i

James R. "Duke" Aiona, Jr.
Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawai'i