

BOYCOTT OF SHINNYO-EN HAWAII FLOATING LANTERN FESTIVAL

Website: BoycottShinnyo.com

April 26, 2024

Shinnyo-en Hawai'i Buddhist Order

ATTN: Reverend Eitaro Hayashi
2348 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96826
TEL: 808-947-2814
FAX: 808-949-3045
hayashie@shinnyoenusa.org

Reverend Eitaro Hayashi, our Representatives, and all Hawai'i News Networks —

Scott Goold and I met with Reverend Hayahi in person 3 days ago at the Shinnyo En Temple in Honolulu and he stated that he would get back to us. Has anyone discussed our request with the Floating Lantern Festival Committee? Did anyone speak with the lead planner in Japan, Atsushi Matasunaga? We explained that we have been ignored for 5 years. Shinnyo En Hawaii continues to ghost us.

Her Holiness Shinso Ito claims commitment in the beliefs that spiritual traditions and practices can help foster peace and understanding in the world; and Her Holiness travels the world cultivating harmony between cultures and religions. We deeply admire her efforts and are motivated by her words. However, the Shinnyo-en Hawai'i are NOT following those principles.

Unfortunately, the words of Her Holiness are not harmoniously aligned with the actions of Shinnyo-en Hawai'i. Our only request is that the beautiful ceremony of Shinnyo Lantern Floating Hawai'i is held on Sunday (or Saturday), and leaves the sacred observation of the sacrifice of our American comrades for Monday — Memorial Day. Their touching event tramples on the memory of those who gave their lives for ALL our freedom. They have no voice. We must speak for and defend our national heroes now in return.

Shifting to Saturday or Sunday from Monday will not only resolve this conflict, but increase attendance. Participants have expressed Monday evening is difficult. Families must return to work or school early the next day. Costs are higher both for you and the city and state due to the overtime spent on the holiday. Your current date also prevents many of our military families from attending our to other Memorial Day ceremonies and activities.

We truly hope Her Holiness Shinso Ito will respect our sacred observation and wish to avoid unpleasantness or further conflict. Our Veteran groups are not appreciative. During the Christmas holiday, we rallied over 5,000+ roaring motorcycles to parade through Waikiki to raise funds for our Toys 4 Tots program. Hawaii's Veterans LOVE our keiki. Imagine their love for their fallen mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, uncles, aunts and cousins. We believe, if necessary, that we will rally a group far larger if we cannot reach peaceful, harmonious compromise.

We all win by working together cooperatively, peacefully and harmoniously ... the stated values of Shinnyo-en Hawai'i.

We are losing our patience. We have tried for 5 years and your organization continues to blow us off. There are over 250,000 Veterans and Active Duty in Hawaii, Shinnyo-En is trampling on a National Day set aside to honor our fallen.

Scott and I will be addressing the Oahu Veterans Council and all the Veteran Service Organizations this Saturday at 9am. Based on that discussion, we are going to the press and our elected leaders to bring this conflict out in the open. We don't want to do that, we would like you to just move your event one or two days to the left (still over Memorial Day weekend, not on Memorial Day).

I will also be attending the Mayor and Governor's Memorial Day ceremonies at Punchbowl and Veterans State Cemetery, and I will be sure to discuss this topic with both of them.

I request any politician or news media to reach out to me so we can bring this topic to light. I am losing my patience. My contact info is below.

Aloha,
Pete

LtCol (Ret) Pete Tingstrom

President, Special Forces Association (SFA) (Life Member)
Senior Vice-Commander Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) (Life Member)
Vice-President SFBMC Fort DeRussy (Life Member)
American Legion (Life Member)
Disabled American Veterans (Life Member)
(808) 436-2901
Pete.Tingstrom@gmail.com

Veteran Action Website

<https://BoycottShinnyo.com>

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2023 Letters from Senators Mike Gabbard and Brenton Awa (p3)
2. 2019 Letter to and Response from Charlene Ide Flanter (p4)
Communications Manager/Program Officer
Nā Lei Aloha Foundation

From: Mike Gabbard

Date: Wed, May 30, 2023, at 5:20 PM

Subject: RE: Sinister Japanese Shinnyo-en Drowns American Heroes on Memorial Day in Hawaii

To: Pete Aloha, Scott Goold

Cc: Meg Turner, Jhanavi Pomerantz

Aloha e Pete and Scott...agree 100%...I'll draft a petition to my colleagues in the Legislature asking them to sign on asking Shinnyo-en to change their event to the Sunday before Memorial Day. If Shinnyo-en doesn't comply, we could introduce a concurrent resolution in the House and Senate next session, and formally ask them to change it to Sunday.

Your thoughts?

Mahalo,

Senator Mike Gabbard

From: Hiiaka Jardine

Date: Thu, Jun 1, 2023, 9:57 AM

Subject: RE: Asking Shinnyo-en to change their event to the Sunday before Memorial Day

To: Pete Aloha

Cc: Sen. Brenton Awa senawa@capitol.hawaii.gov

Aloha Pete,

Thank you for sharing your personal opinion regarding the scheduling of the Floating Lantern Festival on Memorial Day. Senator Awa appreciates your engagement and understands your concerns. He acknowledges the significance of Memorial Day as a day to remember and honor our fallen military members.

Senator Awa will take your viewpoint into consideration and explore possible avenues to address this matter effectively. They appreciate your dedication to maintaining the solemnity and reverence of Memorial Day.

Thank you for sharing your thoughts and concerns. Rest assured that Senator Awa is committed to representing the best interests of the community.

Mahalo,

Hi'iaka Jardine

Office of Senator Brenton Awa, Sentate District 23

Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 203

415 S. Beretania Street

Honolulu, HI 96813

Phone: (808)586-7730

Charlene Ide Flanter
Communications Manager/Program Officer
Nā Lei Aloha Foundation

August 20, 2019

Aloha Charlene,

I was speaking with a group of people about this conflict over the weekend. They said something that may help both our interests. They attended this year's event. Quite a lengthy ordeal with much entertainment and excitement they said.

Their biggest concern??? They really didn't like finishing so late Monday evening. Parking, traffic, crowds ... they didn't get home early enough. Had to work Tuesday morning.

When I mentioned I suggested moving your joyous and inspiring event to Sunday, they were delighted. They had no problem being out late Sunday evening. They could sleep in Monday. They also found this proposed format to be an excellent compromise. Both groups could observe in their unique ways and the two-day observation would strengthen our binds rather than conflict with each other.

Thought their words and opinions might be helpful. Please do not leave me wondering. This is extremely important to those who have served and fallen. There are so many reasons to compromise and work together. Let's not turn this into a negative situation.

Thank you in advance.
Scott Goold

Shinnyo-en responded August 21, 2019

Dear Scott,

Thank you for your email. We appreciate your continued interest in Shinnyo Lantern Floating Hawai'i and we appreciate your thoughts and suggestions.

However, we respectfully wish to let you know that we do not currently have any plans to change the date of the ceremony. Nearly 50,000 residents and visitors participate in the ceremony, including members of the U.S. military, their families and leadership across all branches of the military represented in Hawaii. Many of the attendees have told us that they see the ceremony as honoring the spirit of Memorial Day. And floating a lantern on Memorial Day is another way to remember and honor those who have fallen in service to our country.

Again, we appreciate your interest. And we hope that someday you will be able to join us and experience Shinnyo Lantern Floating Hawai'i.

Sincerely,
Charlene Ide Flanter
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