



“Akaka would be an unconstitutional, race-based mistake. It shouldn't pass.”

[It's Not Just the Obamas Going to Hawaii This December](#)

National Review, The Corner

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For years (since 1999), Daniel Akaka has been trying to make the Native Hawaiian [Government](#) Reorganization Act law. On Friday afternoon, the minority on the House Natural Resources Committee got word that there will be a mark-up on it on Wednesday. Apparently there's an agreement on the bill, but Republicans on the committee haven't seen it.

The Hill rumor is that Democrats plan to attach Akaka to the [Department of Defense](#) funding bill before this session ends — basically, sneaking it in at a busy, contentious time of year to avoid full debate.

[Here's](#) how we editorialized about the Akaka bill in 2006:

The Akaka bill is a terrible piece of legislation. Every aspect of it—from its premises to its goals to its methods—undermines the American belief that we are one people from many. It would create a separate government for “native” Hawaiians, who would in all likelihood be determined almost exclusively by bloodlines. The new government would be able to conduct sovereign-to-sovereign relations with [the United States](#), much as Indian tribes do today. Although no one knows what the final form of the government would be, presumably some 400,000 “natives” would be invited to weigh in—even a resident of New Hampshire who has never stepped foot in Hawaii and has but a trace of Hawaiian blood would get a say in forming the new government. The most pernicious outcome is perhaps the only one that is assured: The governing entity would lead to a permanent hereditary caste in Hawaii, where natives—defined however the interim government chooses to define them—enjoy at least some rights that non-natives do not. Tax-exempt status and immunity from Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations are two possibilities.

Akaka would be an unconstitutional, race-based mistake. It shouldn't pass. And it really shouldn't be snuck in as [Christmas gift](#) to Daniel Akaka.

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