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May 26, 2009

Honorable President Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President – Aloha –

Having just spoken to the Boy Scouts on this Memorial Day about the nature of memory and what Memorial Day is all about – or should be all about - it occurred to me that you might want to consider asking our Mayor, William Kenoi, to accept the detainees now being held at Guantanamo into our island community. He would be honored – deeply honored to be asked to show the world what we here are all about and to turn an episode we would want to forget into a worthy memory.

There would certainly be conditions, but for us these people would not be kept in pens, shackled to walls or surrounded by the razor wire of hate and vengeance.

Memory is selective and when it is pained by atrocity it all too often goes blank and the events that led to the pain repeat. It's time – way past time – to repair the damage inflicted upon humanity by this incarceration, to reinstate the fundamentals of democratic law and restore our basic values.

If we are to remember who we are on Memorial Days of the future then that memory must be proud.

Were you to ask Mr. Kenoi to lead our community in the process of restoring the lives of these prisoners by simply recognizing them as having seen life from a different perspective rather than the monsters they are made out to be, I am certain our island, our 'ohana, would support the challenge and embrace the opportunity to help our President heal the future, and secure the memory. Give him a call, you may be surprised, but then again, I don't think you will.

On this Memorial Day,

Kelly Greenwell
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