

## The Admission Act of 1959

On March 18, 1959, the United States Congress established an Act to Provide for the admission of Hawai'i into the union, dissolving the Territory of Hawai'i and establishing the State of Hawai'i. (The Hawaii Admission Act, Pub. L. No. 86-3, 73 Stat. 5 (1959)). The Admission Act specified that an election take place whereby qualified voters should be asked to adopt or reject whether Hawai'i should be admitted into the union as a state. Any American citizen who had resided in Hawai'i for one year was eligible to vote. On June 27, 1959, the plebiscite was held resulting in 132,938 votes in favor of statehood and 7,854 opposed.

On August 21, 1959, Dwight Eisenhower issued a presidential proclamation formally accepting Hawai'i into the union.

Under the Admission Act the United States government retained some of the ceded lands, and granted title to the remaining ceded lands to the State of Hawai'i. Currently, the federal government's share is subject to being returned to the public land trust when the federal government no longer needs those lands. The State's share of the ceded lands is placed into the public land trust for five purposes: (1) for the support of the public schools and other public educational institutions; (2) for the betterment of the conditions of native Hawaiians, as defined in the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, as amended; (3) for the development of farm and home ownership; (4) for the making of public improvements; (5) and for the provision of lands for public use.

1. Chester Kahapea, 13 years old, sold copies of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin on August 21, 1959.
2. Statehood supporters at the U.S. Capitol on March 11, 1959, after the U.S. Senate voted in favor of admission. From left: Hawai'i Democratic Committeewoman Dolores Martin; Sen. Henry Jackson D-Wash.; and territorial Gov. William F. Quinn.
3. Members of the Hui Aloha 'Aina, men's branch, who petitioned against annexation 62 years before statehood in 1897.
4. Members of Hui Aloha 'Aina, women's branch, who petitioned against annexation 62 years before statehood in 1897.

