

# Hawaii's Path to Statehood

- 300-800 C.E.
  - Hawaiian Islands were first settled by Polynesians
- 1778
  - Captain James Cook (Great Britain) came across the Hawaiian Islands when looking for the Northwest Passage
  - Cook named the island the Sandwich Islands after his patron, the fourth Earl of Sandwich (the man who allegedly invented the sandwich)
  - Cook was killed by the Hawaiians during a skirmish
- 1790s
  - Hawaii became a major stopping point for U.S. ships traveling to and from Asia
- 1810
  - Kamehameha I established the Kingdom of Hawaii by uniting the islands
- 1820s
  - White U.S. missionaries began arriving in Hawaii
- 1840s
  - Children and grandchildren of white missionaries began to grow into a wealthy class of sugar planters
  - 75% of Hawaii's wealth came from sugar plantations
  - Sugar plantations imported laborers from China, Japan, and Portugal
  - Native Hawaiians became outnumbered 3 to 1
- 1867
  - U.S. acquired the Midway Islands, located in the Pacific Ocean approximately 1,300 miles north of Hawaii
- 1874
  - King Kalakaua ascended to the Hawaiian throne

- 1875
  - King Kalakaua signed the Reciprocity Treaty with the U.S.
  - Hawaii could sell duty- and tax-free sugar to the United States
  - U.S. could build Pearl Harbor naval base on the Hawaiian island of Oahu
- 1877
  - White group known as the Honolulu Rifles forced King Kalakaua to sign the Constitution of the Kingdom of Hawaii
  - Hawaii became a constitutional monarchy
  - Suffrage only for non-Asian males, at least 20 years old, who owned property
- 1890
  - McKinley Tariff repealed the sale of duty- and tax-free sugar to the U.S.
  - White plantation owners wanted the U.S. to annex Hawaii to avoid these taxes
- 1891
  - King Kalakaua died
  - Queen Liliuokalani, his sister, ascended to the throne
  - Liliuokalani nullified the Constitution of the Kingdom of Hawaii
- 1893
  - January 14—U.S. Ambassador John Leavitt Stevens led the pro-annexation Committee of Public Safety to intimidate Queen Liliuokalani
  - January 16—162 U.S. Marines and sailors made a visible presence
  - January 17—Liliuokalani forced to relinquish her throne
  - February 1—Hawaii proclaimed a protectorate of the United States
- January 4, 1894
  - Sanford Ballard Dole proclaimed the Republic of Hawaii
- January 16, 1895
  - Queen Liliuokalani arrested in connection with the 1895 Counter-Revolution in Hawaii
  - She served one year of House Arrest in Iolani Palace
  - She abdicated in order to save the lives of her supporters who were on death row

- 1898
  - President McKinley officially annexed Hawaii
  - Hawaii became a dependent republic run by its white aristocracy
- 1900
  - Hawaii Organic Act
  - Hawaii officially reclassified as a territory
  - Suffrage for all adult males
  - Nonvoting delegate in the U.S. House of Representatives
- 1903
  - Congress denied the Hawaiian legislature the right to draw up a state constitution
  - This would have been the first step toward Hawaiian statehood
- 1905-1910
  - Queen Liliuokalani filed a series of unsuccessful claims and lawsuits against the United States for the loss of crown lands
- 1919
  - Prince Kalanianaʻole (son of the late King Kalakaua) introduced the first statehood bill
  - All statehood bills failed due to fears over Japanese imperialism in the Pacific
- 1934
  - Jones-Costigan Act
  - Severely limited U.S. imports of foreign sugar, including sugar from Hawaii
  - White plantation owners began working for statehood
- 1937
  - U.S. Congress held statehood hearings on Hawaii
- 1940
  - Hawaiians voted 2 to 1 for statehood
- 1941
  - December 7 – Pearl Harbor attacked by the Japanese (World War II)
  - Hawaii under martial law until 1944

- 1947
  - House of Representatives voted 196 to 133 for Hawaiian statehood
- 1948
  - Hawaiian statehood movement stalled
  - Senator Hugh A. Butler (Republican, Nebraska), chairman of the House Rules Committee, feared that communists had infiltrated the Hawaiian Democratic Party
- 1949
  - Hawaii's territorial legislature wrote a democratic state constitution in hopes of acquiring statehood
- 1953
  - Delegate Joseph Farrington proposed yet another Hawaiian statehood bill
  - Passed in the House of Representatives
- 1954
  - Hawaiian statehood bill approved by the Senate
  - But Senate attached it to Alaska's pending statehood bill
  - Bill went back to the House for approval
  - Bill died in the House because Speaker Joseph William Martin, Jr. (Republican, Massachusetts) wanted statehood for Hawaii but not for Alaska
- 1959
  - January 3 – Alaska became the 49<sup>th</sup> state
  - Senate passed the Hawaii Statehood Bill
  - August 21 – Hawaii became the 50<sup>th</sup> state