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This Week In Congress Radio Address: Admittance of Hawaii as the 49th State, 1953 March 13
Speaker: Senator J. Allen Frear
Transcribed by: David Cardillo

[00:00]

Announcer: The Week in Congress, recorded on March 13th, 1953.

Mr. Kelly: From Washington, DC, transcribed, United States Senator J. Allen Frear brings to the people of Delaware the eleventh in a series of brief, weekly reports on current congressional affairs. Ladies and gentlemen, Senator Frear.

Senator Frear: Thank you. The United States may soon be adding a forty-ninth star to its national flag, a star that will represent what is now the territory of Hawai'i. Legislation authorizing the admittance of Hawai'i as a new state has already been approved by the House of Representatives and will shortly be considered by the Senate. Pledges to award Hawai'i statehood were contained in the platforms of both political parties during the last campaign. Former President Truman and our new Chief Executive, Mr. Eisenhower, favor its statehood enthusiastically. There are many sound reasons why Hawai'i should be admitted to the Union. There are also some logical arguments against statehood for these offshore islands. In terms of national defense, Hawai'i, and not the coast of California, must be considered, for all practical purposes, as our western flank. The attack on Pearl Harbor made us grimly aware of that fact. The development of swifter and more powerful aircraft since World War II points up even more strongly the necessity to maintain Hawai'i as our outer bastion of strength. Since the territory serves as such a strategic arm of our defense, it seems unrealistic to retain it in the lesser role of a possession if it qualifies for statehood. We know, too, that the United States has been making strenuous efforts to promote self-government among the nations of the world, and yet, until Hawai'i becomes a self-governing state of its own, this objective cannot be fulfilled. New dignity and prestige would certainly accompany Hawai'i's entrance into the Union. We should also remember the noble record of sacrifice which Hawaiian servicemen have made in World War II, and more recently, on the battlefronts of Korea. Hawai'i's battle casualties in the Korean fighting are proportionally something like three and one-half times those of the United States. There is a definite monetary factor to be considered in awarding statehood to Hawai'i, too. That is, it would transfer to the State the present Federal cost of administering the territory. This would seemingly affect a definite economy for the Federal government. Many Americans are probably not familiar with the territory of Hawai'i in any great detail. I have long believed that an appreciation of its beauty is not possible without a

personal visit. Actually, Hawai'i is composed of a group of sub-tropical islands in the Pacific. There are eight principal islands of the group, and a number of smaller ones. The area of the territory is approximately sixty-four hundred square miles. It is thus larger than the states of Connecticut and Rhode Island combined. The latest Census Bureau figures of the territory list the population there at about a half a million persons. It is comprised of many different nationalities. The largest representation, approximately thirty-six percent, being of Japanese origin. American, or perhaps we should say Yankee, influence in the commerce and culture of the islands has, of course, become predominant. As I mentioned earlier, there are also cogent arguments against admittance of Hawai'i to the Union. One of these is that the islands are far removed, about two thousand miles, from the mainland of the United States. By granting statehood to Hawai'i, we may open the way for similar requests from other offshore possessions less qualified to enter the Union. I am not, of course, referring to Alaska in this instance, because it, too, may become a state before very long. Another argument against Hawai'ian statehood is the alleged existence of communist influence in the territory, which is said to have penetrated political, labor, and social organizations there. **[05:01]** This is, of course, a very disturbing factor, and one which, I hope, can be satisfactorily explained on the Senate floor before a vote is taken. If communist influence is prevalent among the international longshoremen and warehousemen's union, for example, it could result in paralyzing strikes in shipping, such as we have seen before. The people of the United States, therefore, should demand a strong-willed state government in Hawai'i if its admittance is authorized in order to deal effectively with any communist threat. Rigid enforcement of existing Federal statutes against communist subversive tactics should also be required on the islands. If we embrace Hawai'i as our forty-ninth state, we want to do so with the knowledge that its inclusion in the Union will strengthen our democratic system and not weaken it. I hope that every Delawarean will examine most carefully the question of statehood for Hawai'i because its implications, either directly or indirectly, will affect every one of us.

Mr. Kelly:

Thank you, Senator Frear. From the nation's capital, you have heard United States Senator J. Allen Frear in the eleventh in a series of brief reports to the people of Delaware on current congressional affairs.

[End 06:34]