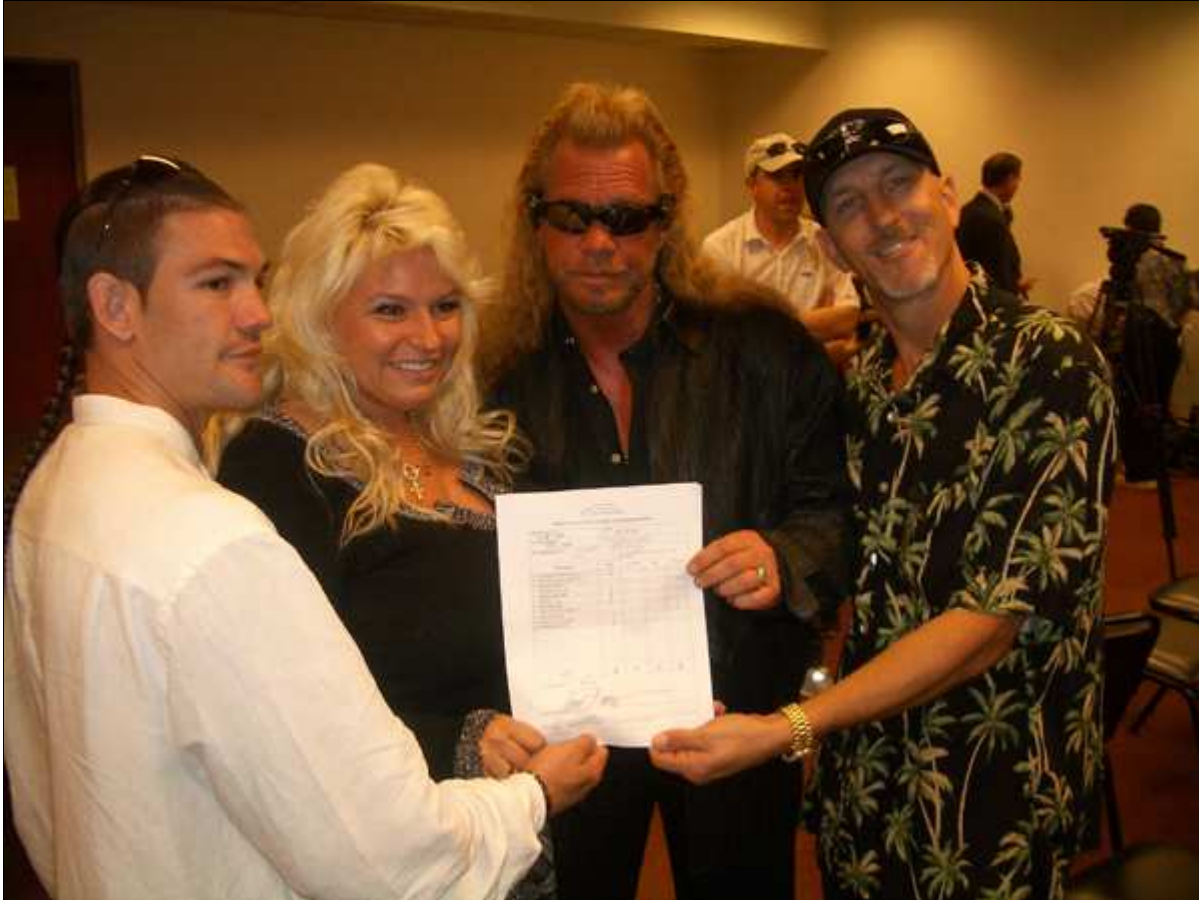


Hawaii Reporter

Freedom to Report Real News

House Committee Votes Unanimously to Support Dog Chapman and Family

By Mona K. Wood, 3/8/2007 6:30:06 AM



HONOLULU – The much-anticipated emergency hearing in the Hawaii House of Representatives supporting DOG THE BOUNTY HUNTER trio Duane “Dog” Chapman, Timothy “Youngblood” Chapman, and Leland Chapman, regarding the extradition charges against them, was supported unanimously today by the members of the House International Affairs Committee. Indeed, the members marked their enthusiastic support when asked for their votes of “Aye” or “Nay”, with “Strong Aye” and even “Super-sized Aye” votes.

House Concurrent Resolution 50, nicknamed the “Chapman Resolution,” was introduced by State Representative Gene Ward (Rep. Hawaii Kai-Kalama Valley), to call on the President of Mexico and the courts in Mexico to drop extradition efforts against the Chapmans, and show the State of Hawaii’s support for the Chapmans. At today’s hearing were Duane, Tim and Leland, Duane’s wife and partner Beth Chapman, and Duane Lee Chapman, Jr. and Lyssa Chapman, who are also regular featured cast members on the popular A&E reality television show.

Several people submitted testimony in person, including Dog, but it was noted by Committee Chair Rida Cabanilla, that hundreds of written testimonies were received, and she and her committee members had also received numerous calls re the resolution. They were overwhelmingly in support of the resolution, with only a scant minority against it, according to Cabanilla.

Among those against was the lone testifier at today’s hearing who called the hearing a “publicity stunt,” and mocked the proceedings as a waste of time.

Luckily, his words had no affect on the vote with the committee members, as evidenced by their unanimous vote in favor of the resolution. Committee Co-Chair Representative James Kunane Tokioka ended discussion among the committee by praising Dog for his compassion, noting that he has to deal with some rough criminals out there, but he does it with aloha.

To the committee, Duane Chapman said, "You guys represent the people and I just want to tell you thank you from the bottom of my heart. I will always make you proud. I didn't start this to be a hero. I just wanted people to see what I do for a living. But I'm going to show you, and I promise you (this), what a hero is."

Supporters from Hawaii, Michigan, California, and other states were present, including Make-A-Wish teenager Dean Luciano. The Chapmans try to grant Make-A-Wish requests whenever they can, and Luciano said this was his dream come true. He posed for photos with Dog and Beth, got their autographs, and was able to chat with them for a while before he had to leave. Luciano and his family returned to Michigan today after the hearing.

Now that Resolution 50 has passed the committee, it will be referred to the House Judiciary Committee for a second hearing, and then is expected to move forward to full passage by the State Legislature.

Despite some saying this measure will be ineffective in the overall fight against extradition, as this is on a State level, the Chapmans feel just the opposite. Having support from their home state has been spiritually uplifting for them, and they also feel the State's initiative of support will be heard throughout the country, and all the way to Mexico.

Duane "Dog" Chapman, star of the top-rated A&E television show DOG THE BOUNTY HUNTER, was arrested on September 14, 2006, by U.S. marshals in Hawaii on charges of illegal detention in his June 18, 2003 capture in Mexico of cosmetics heir Andrew Luster. Also arrested were Leland Chapman, Duane's son, and Timothy Chapman, their associate. The three spent one night in the Federal Detention Center in Honolulu, and were released after posting bail.

Since the arrest, hundreds of thousands of fans from across the country and around the world – including over 50 members of Congress – have been pleading with the U.S. and Mexican authorities for their freedom, holding them up as heroes for bringing serial rapist Luster to justice. Luster is serving a 124-year prison sentence for his heinous crimes against the women he drugged, raped, and videotaped.

Most recently, the Federal Court for the Second District in Guadalajara, Mexico, issued a ruling which was not in the Chapmans' favor. However, they have filed an appeal with the federal circuit court and continue to pray for justice and full exoneration. They currently remain free.

For more information and ways you can help support the Chapmans through petitions and letters, please visit www.dogthebountyhunter.com. Season 4 of DOG THE BOUNTY HUNTER premieres on A&E on April 10th.

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