



GM674

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE ISLAND BURIAL COUNCIL, ISLAND OF MOLOKAʻI, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, KAWAIPUNA KALIPi, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 06-30-2029

Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

April 1, 2025

1:00 p.m.

Room Number 224

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** GM674, which would confirm Kawaipuna Kalipi for appointment to the Molokaʻi Island Burial Council (MIBC). Ms. Kalipi applied for the MIBC through OHA as part of our 2024 IBC recruitment process. After internal vetting of candidates, the top respective candidates for respective IBCs were provided to the full OHA Board of Trustees (BOT) for approval on January 23, 2025. Approved candidates were then submitted to the Office of the Governor on January 28, 2025.

OHA is the constitutionally established body responsible for protecting and promoting the rights of Native Hawaiians.¹ As part of our constitutional and statutory mandate, OHA has been intimately involved with historic preservation related advocacy for decades and is granted specific kuleana under the Hawaiʻi Historic Preservation law, Hawaiʻi Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 6E, and implementing regulations.² Per HRS 6E-43.5, the Governor must select at least two appointees on each IBC from OHA's list of nominees.

Ms. Kawaipuna Kalipi is from Molokaʻi and currently works as the Land Back Manager for Sustʻāinable Molokaʻi, and a PhD student in Political Science. She also holds Bachelor Degrees in Psychology and Hawaiian Studies, with a focus on Mālama ʻĀina. She is fluent in ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi. She currently serves as the Treasurer and Education Chair for Hui Aloha ʻĀina o Honolulu.

For these reasons, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** GM674, to confirm Kawaipuna Kalipi to the MIBC. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

¹ Haw. Const. Art. XII Sec.5

² See HRS 6E-3, 43, -43.5, 43.6; and, HAR 13-284-6(c) and HAR 13-275-6(c).

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Submitted on: 3/19/2025 7:32:12 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/27/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lu Ann Mahiki Lankford-Faborito	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support, Kawaipuna is actively involved in our community. Experience in land management and caring for Iwi Kupuna. He is keiki o Molokai.

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Submitted on: 3/26/2025 4:26:41 PM

Testimony for HWN on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keomailani Hanapi Hirata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha ‘āina kākou,

My name is Keomailani Hanapi Hirata, and I am a kupa‘āina raised within the Ahupua’a o Ahaino, where my ‘Ohana can trace our ‘āina genealogy to time immemorial. I am an invested stakeholder in place-based cultural resource preservation for my island home, Molokai. I do not consider myself a leader, I am a simple and humble educator. I would like to give testimony in support for Kawaipuna Kalipi who has applied to be on the Molokai Island Burial Council. I have spent alot of time with Kawaipuna and I aloha her young spirit.

I recognize the importance of ensuring that the knowledge and practices of caring for iwi kūpuna are passed down to future generations. In a time when many young people are disconnected from our cultural roots, Kawaipuna does stand out as someone who is actively seeking to strengthen her connection to our ‘āina kupuna. If she is approved for the Molokai Island Burial Council, which is council that functions really different then any other burial council, she will have to give up something in her own personal life to make the time and commitment to this kuleana.

My hope is that she is able to be focused and committed to ‘auamo kuleana for our iwi kupuna.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

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Submitted on: 3/31/2025 9:20:22 AM

Testimony for HWN on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kawaipuna Kalipi	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Committee,

My name is Kawaipuna Kalipi and I am deeply honored to have been considered for a position on the Moloka‘i Burial Council. With humility and respect, mahalo nui for the opportunity to serve in a role dedicated to the preservation and protection of our iwi kūpuna.

Ma ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, many sayings speak to the relationship of kānaka to Hawai‘i. Some of them reflect the connection that kānaka have to land, from being born to being raised on the ‘āina. Sayings such as one hānau (sands of my birth), kupa ‘āina (sprout of this land), and kama‘āina (child of this land) illustrate this deep bond. Other sayings emphasize genealogy as a connection to ‘āina—kupa ‘ai au (sprout that is fed through generations), kulāiwi (the source of my bones), and ‘ōiwi (to the bone). I was born and raised on Moloka‘i, and the bones of my kūpuna lay to rest here as well. It is both a responsibility and an honor to come from this land and to uphold the kuleana passed down from our ancestors—to protect those who have come before us, those here today, and the generations yet to come.

Serving on the Island Burial Council is a kuleana I take seriously. It requires thoughtful advocacy, cultural sensitivity, and steadfast dedication to ensuring the proper treatment and protection of ancestral remains. My education and professional experience have prepared me to auamo this responsibility, and I remain committed to upholding our shared duty to mālama iwi kūpuna.

I believe my background in Hawaiian Studies, my experiences within the community, and my willingness to seek advice/guidance from our community have given me a strong foundation to contribute meaningfully to the Island Burial Council’s work. I look forward to bringing this knowledge and perspective to ensure that the council's decisions are rooted in respect for our culture, traditions, and legal obligations.

Mahalo for your time and consideration. I look forward to the opportunity to serve, and I am committed to working collaboratively to fulfill the sacred responsibility of protecting our iwi kūpuna.