



KŪKULU KE EA A KANALOA
KAHO'OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
KŌMIKINA MĀLAMA KAHO'OLAWE

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Testimony of
MICHAEL K. NĀHO'OPTI
Executive Director

Before the Senate Committee on
WATER AND LAND

Friday, April 11, 2025
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSENGER 783
CONFIRMATION TO THE KAHO'OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION,
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, BENTON PANG

Governor's Message No. 783 submits for consideration and confirmation, Dr. Benton Keali'i Pang, Ph.D. to serve on the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC), for a second term, in the seat reserved for a representative of Native Hawaiian organizations. On behalf of the KIRC, I wish to express my **strong support** and **recommendation** for his confirmation.

Dr. Pang is the former President (Pelekikena) of the O'ahu Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs and a member of the Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu. As the Native Hawaiian Organization Representative on the KIRC, Dr. Pang will bring to the KIRC the support of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, a national organization of 61 clubs across Hawai'i and the United States. The purpose of the Association is to "actively participate in the promotion, perpetuation and practices of long-held traditional native Hawaiian attitudes and values that dignify all human life and that are the underpinning of our culture that comprise a unique, rich and enduring legacy of the indigenous people of Hawai'i."

During his first tenure as a commissioner from 2021 to 2024, Dr. Pang provided invaluable guidance in the stewardship of Kaho'olawe, ensuring that restoration and conservation efforts remained aligned with Native Hawaiian values and practices. His deep understanding of Hawai'i's ecological systems, coupled with decades of experience in conservation and natural resource management, has greatly benefited KIRC's mission.

The KIRC will be truly fortunate to have the support and advice of Dr. Pang on the commission and I strongly support his confirmation.



Ka Moku'aina 'O Hawai'i Aha Moku O Pae'Aina

State of Hawai'i Aha Moku

P. O. Box 621

Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

Testimony of the Hawaii State Aha Moku

Before the Senate Committee on

Water and Land

Friday, April 11, 2025

1:00 PM

Conference Room 229

IN SUPPORT of GM 783

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC),
Gubernatorial Nominee, BENTON PANG, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

The Hawaii State Aha Moku (Aha Moku) supports this Gubernatorial Nominee.

Aside from his extensive professional experience in botany and biology, Mr. Pang has the additional expertise of a generational and traditional native Hawaiian practitioner who embraces the kuleana of perpetuating and protecting natural resources, particularly on Kaho'olawe – the island sacred to the native Hawaiian culture. He is well-respected for his reliability and honesty in dealing with difficult issues pertaining to the grave restoration of Kanaloa's diminished botanical condition. He is accustomed to answering to the native Hawaiian people in this kuleana.

Aha Moku brings forth the voices of the generational and traditional native Hawaiians of the eight islands of the Pae'Aina, the natural and cultural resources of Hawaii Nei. The health of the natural resources is intertwined with the health of the indigenous and host culture – the Native Hawaiian. All depend on the sustainability of the natural and cultural resources. We believe that Mr. Pang will safely ensure the sustainability of the natural and cultural resources of Kaho'olawe through careful planning that is fair and perpetual.

Thank you for the opportunity to sharing our mana'o with you. We support Mr. Pang's nomination to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC).

Respectfully,

Rocky Kaluhiwa, Chair

Hawaii State Aha Moku Advisory Committee

808-286-7955

Rockykaluhiwa1122@gmail.com

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Hawaii State Aha Moku

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*Pae'Aina: Moku O Keawe, Moku O Piilani, Moku O Kanaloa, Nana'i Kaula, Moloka'i Pule O'o, Moku O Kakuhihewa,
Manokalanipo, Ka'Aina O Kawelonakala*



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

April 11, 2025

1:00 PM

Conference Room 229

In SUPPORT of GM783: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, Benton Pang, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Elefante, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** Dr. Benton Keali'i Pang's nomination to continue his service on the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC).

The story of Kaho'olawe holds many lessons of continued and particular relevance today. Its long history of mismanagement and abuse, the sacrifices made by the "Kaho'olawe 9" to stop its desecration, and the damage it continues to suffer from all remind us of the costs we and our future generations must bear when we do not uphold our responsibilities of reciprocity and care for the 'āina that sustains and nurtures us. The successes of the "Kaho'olawe 9" and the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana against the United States Navy in securing the return of Kaho'olawe also gives us inspiration and hope - that a deep and steadfast love for our islands can, in fact, triumph over the greatest of odds. The community-led actions and efforts that ended the bombing of Kaho'olawe, and that continue to clean-up and heal the land, also remind us of the importance of grassroots voices and leadership in ensuring the proper stewardship of our Hawai'i nei – a lesson that we must continue to hold close, as we navigate the ongoing Red Hill water crisis, and as we contemplate the true costs of military live fire training and other activities from Ka'ula, to Pu'uloa, to Mākua, to Pōhakuloa. Accordingly, the work of restoring, protecting, and honoring Kaho'olawe is of particular importance not only to this sacred 'āina itself, but to all of Hawai'i nei.

Those tasked with overseeing the restoration and protection of Kaho'olawe must therefore not only have requisite expertise to carry out this work, but a deep grounding in and appreciation of our islands' history and culture as well, including efforts to continue the legacy of the Kaho'olawe 9 in pursuing justice and protection for our 'āina and people.

Dr. Pang satisfies both of these important requirements, and more. His expertise in botany and decades of experience managing restoration and conservation projects, including on Kaho'olawe itself, have proven and will continue to be invaluable to the KIRC's work. His

long familiarity with Kaho'olawe's history is also well documented through his service on the Ho'ōla Hou i Ke Kino o Kanaloa working group, just two years after the U.S. Congress relinquished the island to the state of Hawai'i. Finally, his longstanding service in the Hawaiian Civic Club movement – including his years of service on Ke One O Kākuhihewa (the O'ahu Council) – evidence his connection and commitment to the efforts and legacy of Kānaka 'Ōiwi who have dedicated themselves to pursuing justice and upholding Native Hawaiian self-determination and self-governance in Ka Pae 'Āina o Hawai'i nei.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i strongly urges the Committee to recommend that the Senate advise and consent to Dr. Pang's nomination in GM783. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

MOKU O MANOKALANIPŌ
KAUA'I COUNCIL OF THE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS

PO Box 383 Hanapēpē, HI 96716

Date: April 9, 2025

To: Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair, Committee on Water and Land
Senator Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair, Committee on Water and Land
Senate Committee on Water and Land Members

From: Moku o Manokalanipō, Kaua'i Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
Malia Nobrega-Olivera, President
malianob@gmail.com

Re: GM 783 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, BENTON PANG, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

We're writing in **STRONG SUPPORT** of GM 783 which confirms Benton Pang to serve on the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. We support the confirmation of qualified Native Hawaiians to government appointments and boards and commissions to ensure our state government reflects the communities it serves.

Dr. Pang has demonstrated exceptional leadership, scientific expertise, and cultural dedication in his service to Kaho'olawe and the broader Native Hawaiian community. During his first tenure as a Commissioner from 2021 to 2024, Dr. Pang provided invaluable guidance in the stewardship of Kaho'olawe, ensuring that restoration and conservation efforts remained aligned with Native Hawaiian values and practices. His deep understanding of Hawai'i's ecological systems, coupled with decades of experience in conservation and natural resource management, has greatly benefited KIRC's mission.

Dr. Pang is a member of the Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu and previously served on the board of our organization as the president of the O'ahu Council.

Therefore, Moku o Manokalanipō respectfully urges the Committee to **CONFIRM** to Benton Pang's nomination, as reflected in GM783.

The Hawaiian Civic Club movement was founded in 1918 by Congressional Delegate Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole with the creation of the Hawaiian Civic Club; the Association was formally organized in 1959 and in 1968, the Hawaiian Civic Clubs on the island of Kaua'i organized Moku o Manokalanipō, the Kaua'i Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs.

GM-783

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 9:48:40 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/11/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mahealani Cypher	Testifying for Ko`olau Foundation	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

The Ko`olau Foundation offers our strong support for the nomination of Benton Pang to serve on the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission.

Keali`i, as we know him, is a dedicated, hard-working `aina warrior, who strives to protect the lands of Hawai`i nei and will honor this appointment through his service on the Kaho`olawe Reserve.

We urge your votes in support of confirming his appointment.

Mahalo for your consideration of our mana`o.

Mahealani Cypher, Ko`olau Foundation

GM-783

Submitted on: 4/5/2025 3:23:31 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/11/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Makaala Kaaumoana	Testifying for Hanalei Watershed Hui	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hanalei Watershed Hui is very proud to support the nomination of Benton Pang for a position on the Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission. He is smart and collaborative and well connected with our lands and culture.

Mahalo



April 11, 2025

TESTIMONY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS
To the Senate Committee on Water and Land

**Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve
Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, BENTON PANG,
for a term to expire 06-30-2028.**

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Committee:

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs testifies in strong **SUPPORT** of GM 783 which confirms Benton Pang to serve on the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. We support the confirmation of qualified Native Hawaiians to government appointments and boards and commissions to ensure our state government reflects the communities it serves.

Dr. Pang has demonstrated exceptional leadership, scientific expertise, and cultural dedication in his service to Kaho'olawe and the broader Native Hawaiian community. During his first tenure as a Commissioner from 2021 to 2024, Dr. Pang provided invaluable guidance in the stewardship of Kaho'olawe, ensuring that restoration and conservation efforts remained aligned with Native Hawaiian values and practices. His deep understanding of Hawai'i's ecological systems, coupled with decades of experience in conservation and natural resource management, has greatly benefited KIRC's mission.

Dr. Pang is a member of the Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu and previously served on the board of our organization as the president of the O'ahu Council.

Founded by Prince Kūhiō in 1918, the Hawaiian Civic Club movement is the oldest Native Hawaiian community-based advocacy movement. The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs is a not-for-profit organization that is a confederation of 60 individual and autonomous Hawaiian Civic Clubs and 3,500 members located across Hawai'i and across the continental United States.

We appreciate your favorable consideration of our support for Dr. Benton Pang.



Senate Committee on
Water and Land

April 10, 2025

RE: Supporting confirmation of Dr. Benton Keali'i Pang for the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission.

The Moanalua Gardens Foundation is in strong SUPPORT of GM 783 which confirms Dr. Benton Keali'i Pang to serve on the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. We support the confirmation of qualified Native Hawaiians to government appointments and boards and commissions to ensure our state government reflects the communities it serves.

Dr. Pang has demonstrated exceptional leadership, scientific expertise, and cultural dedication in his service to Kaho'olawe and the broader Native Hawaiian community. During his first tenure as a Commissioner from 2021 to 2024, Dr. Pang provided invaluable guidance in the stewardship of Kaho'olawe, ensuring that restoration and conservation efforts remained aligned with Native Hawaiian values and practices. His deep understanding of Hawai'i's ecological systems, coupled with decades of experience in conservation and natural resource management, has greatly benefited KIRC's mission.

The Moanalua Gardens Foundation was founded in 1970 to protect Moanalua Valley from the H3 being built through it. As a culturally grounded 'āina organization, we support the appointment of qualified Kanaka to government positions and appointments that impact our 'āina and communities across the Pae 'āina.

We mahalo the Committee for its time and consideration and reaffirm our strong support for the confirmation of Dr. Benton Keali'i Pang.

Please feel free to contact me by email at ian@mgfhawaii.org or by phone at 808-468-1686 x101 with any questions or concerns, or if we may provide any further information.

Mahalo

Ian Keali'i Custino

Executive Director
MGF Hawai'i



LATE

Hawai'i State Senate
Water and Land Committee
April 11, 2025
1 PM

Re: GM738 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, BENTON PANG, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

Aloha Chair Lorraine Inouye, Vice Chair Brandon Elefante, and members of the Committee on Water and Land,

On behalf of the Prince Kuhio Hawaiian Civic Club, I respectfully submit our strong SUPPORT for GM738 and express our heartfelt support for the confirmation of Dr. Benton Keali'i Pang as a member of the KIRC. It is with great admiration and deep gratitude for all his contributions to the Hawai'i and the Native Hawaiian community that we wholeheartedly endorse his nomination.

Dr. Pang's journey began in California, but his roots and heart are firmly planted in Hawaii. His genealogy stems from Lāhainā, Maui, with roots in the Akiona/Pang 'ohana, and this connection to the land and his ancestors has guided his life's work. He pursued his passion for botany at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, where he earned his Master's and Ph.D. under the guidance of renowned botanist and previous KIRC commissioner, Dr. Isabella Aiona Abbott. His doctoral dissertation on the dry forests of Ka'ūpulehu, North Kona, Hawai'i, and his Master's research on Hawaiian kapa fibers demonstrated his expertise in the field of botany and his commitment to the preservation of Hawaiian cultural and natural resources.

As Dr. Pang's career unfolded, he became increasingly involved in the conservation and restoration of Hawaii's unique ecosystems. In 1995, he was a member of the working group that drafted the first Restoration Plan (Ho'ola Hou i Ke Kino o Kanaloa-Kaho'olawe Environmental Restoration Plan) for Kaho'olawe, an experience that would shape his future work and dedication to the island. He went on to serve as the natural resource manager for Parsons UXB during the Navy UXO clean up project from 1997-1999, where he gained valuable experience in managing and conserving the natural resources of Kaho'olawe. Today, Dr. Pang continues to work as a supervisory biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and his residence in Pālolo, O'ahu, allows him to remain an active and engaged member of our community.

Throughout his career, Dr. Pang has also been a dedicated leader and advocate for Native Hawaiian interests. He has served as the pelekikena (president) of Ke One O Kākuhihewa (O‘ahu Council for the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs), representing 23 clubs on the island of O‘ahu. His commitment to the advancement of Native Hawaiian interests and his ability to bring people together have made him a respected and beloved member of our community. We are grateful for his selfless service and tireless efforts to protect and preserve our cultural and natural resources.

We recognize that Dr. Pang’s outstanding contributions have not gone unnoticed, and we are grateful for the numerous awards and recognitions he has received, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Certificate of Appreciation, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs Pualeilani Award, and the U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary's Four-Cs Award. These awards are a testament to Dr. Pang’s hard work and dedication, and we are thankful for his continued commitment to our community.

We offer our deepest gratitude to Dr. Benton Keali‘i Pang for his tireless efforts and dedication to the restoration and stewardship of Kaho‘olawe. We strongly believe that his unique blend of scientific expertise, cultural leadership, and community engagement experience make him an exceptional candidate for the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission. We urge you to confirm his nomination and support his continued efforts to contribute to the restoration and stewardship of Kaho‘olawe.

Founded in 1964, the Prince Kuhio Hawaiian Civic Club (PKHCC) was established to promote the education and social welfare of people of Hawaiian ancestry. Its objectives include supporting high ethical standards in business, industry, and professional fields.

PKHCC urges the committee to pass GM738. Mahalo for your attention and consideration.

Me ke aloha,

Norman Llanos
Pelekikena
president@pkhcc.org

April 1, 2025

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J. C. Elegante, Vice Chair
Members, Committee on Water and Land

Subject: GM783, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission, gubernatorial nominee, BENTON PANG, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

Aloha,

I am writing to express my strong support for the reappointment of Dr. Benton Keali'ikiamoku Pang to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC). Dr. Pang's extensive background in botany, ecological restoration, and his unwavering commitment to Native Hawaiian cultural preservation make him an invaluable asset to the Commission.

Dr. Pang is a distinguished alumnus of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Botany Department, where he earned both his Master's and Ph.D. under the mentorship of the late Dr. Isabella Aiona Abbott, a former KIRC commissioner. His doctoral research focused on the dry forests of Ka'ūpulehu, North Kona, Hawai'i, while his Master's thesis explored Hawaiian kapa fibers. These academic pursuits have provided him with a profound understanding of Hawai'i's native flora and the ecological challenges facing our islands.

Beyond his academic achievements, Dr. Pang has demonstrated exemplary leadership within the Native Hawaiian community. As the president (pelekikena) of Ke One O Kākuhihewa, the O'ahu Council for the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, he represented 23 clubs on the island, advocating for cultural and environmental initiatives that benefit our 'āina and people. In acting on resolutions at the annual convention of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, Dr. Pang's testimonies have always influenced decision making by delegates. He is valued and highly respected by Hawaiian Civic Club members. We listen to his advice on environmental and botany issues.

Dr. Pang's dedication to Kaho'olawe spans several decades. In 1995, he contributed to the initial Restoration Plan, "Ho'ola Hou i Ke Kino o Kanaloa-Kaho'olawe Environmental Restoration Plan." From 1997 to 1999, he served as the natural resource manager for Parsons UXB during the Navy's unexploded ordnance cleanup project on the island. Currently, as a supervisory biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Dr. Pang continues to apply his expertise to the conservation and restoration of Hawai'i's unique ecosystems.

Dr. Pang's deep-rooted connection to Kaho'olawe, combined with his scientific knowledge and cultural leadership, uniquely positions him to contribute meaningfully to the KIRC's mission. As a member of the KIRC since 2021, he has been instrumental in the following achievements:

First Confirmed Hawaiian Green Sea Turtle Nesting

In May 2024, KIRC documented the island's first-ever confirmed nesting site of the Hawaiian green sea turtle (*honu*). This significant event resulted in the successful hatching and release of 87 hatchlings, marking a pivotal moment in the island's ecological restoration efforts. This was

possible thru Dr Pang network that enabled the documentation and successful release of the first confirmed green sea turtle hatchlings on Kaho'olawe.

Completion of the Hakioawa Watershed Restoration Project

In August 2022, KIRC neared completion of an 18-month initiative aimed at restoring native habitats and improving coastal water quality in the Hakioawa Watershed. The project involved installing 20 check dams, repairing erosion control structures, and planting over 5,000 native seedlings across a 37-acre area. These efforts led to a 28% reduction in sediment load entering the ocean, thereby enhancing the health of surrounding coral reef ecosystems.

Development of Digital Access Tools

Recognizing the challenges of physical access to Kaho'olawe, KIRC implemented digital initiatives to connect the public with the island's cultural and natural resources. These included livestreaming video from Kaho'olawe, sharing 360-degree video updates of volunteer activities, and developing a pilot virtual reality expedition. These tools have expanded educational outreach and engagement with broader audiences.

Volunteer Engagement and Native Plant Reintroduction

Throughout this period, KIRC facilitated numerous volunteer programs focused on reintroducing native vegetation. For instance, in December 2024, Maui Ocean Center employees collaborated with KIRC to plant 1,500 native plants on the island. Such initiatives have been instrumental in combating erosion, restoring native ecosystems, and fostering community involvement in the island's healing process.

These accomplishments reflect the ongoing commitment of KIRC's Commissioners (including Dr Pang) to ecological restoration, cultural preservation, and community engagement on Kaho'olawe Island.

Dr. Pang's reappointment would ensure the continuation of informed, culturally sensitive stewardship of Kaho'olawe Island Reserve.

I respectfully urge you to support Dr. Benton's reappointment to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. His proven dedication and expertise are vital to the ongoing restoration and preservation efforts of this sacred island.

Mahalo for considering this testimony.

Me kealoha pumehana

LEIMOMI KHAN

Past President of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (2006-2010)

GM-783

Submitted on: 4/6/2025 9:39:12 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/11/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keoni Shizuma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land,

I am testifying in support of GM783.

Benton Pang has a wealth of knowledge and experience working to preserve the ecosystems of Hawaii and with communities around Hawaii. He will be a valuable member of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission.

Mahalo for your consideration,
Keoni Shizuma

GM-783

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:33:08 AM

Testimony for WTL on 4/11/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Kaakua	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Committee on Water and Land,

This testimony is in SUPPORT for the confirmation of nominee BENTON “KEALI‘I” PANG to the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission. I had the please of serving as the Chair of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission with Mr. Pang and he was an asset to the commission in supporting the staff and projects, providing professional expertise as a botanist and subject matter expert in natural resource management, and in advancing Kaho‘olawe as a wahi pana - sacred place. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Mr. Pang.

GM-783

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 12:43:37 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/11/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kea Kala	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Kakoo!

GM-783

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 5:14:35 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/11/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexander K.D. McNicoll	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong **SUPPORT** of Dr. Benton Keali'i Pang.

GM-783

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 3:39:07 AM

Testimony for WTL on 4/11/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Burt Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Dear Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support of GM No. 783 for Benton Pang’s nomination to serve as a Commissioner of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC).

I’ve known Mr. Pang for many years through his dedicated work to support Kaho‘olawe and Aloha ‘Āina through his work in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

It has been my experience that Mr. Pang is an excellent and informed resource and will make an excellent choice as a Commissioner at KIRC. He has Kaho‘olawe’s best interest at heart.

For these and other reasons, I strongly urge his confirmation as Commissioner of KIRC.

LATE

GM-783

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 1:31:26 PM
Testimony for WTL on 4/11/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Makana Paris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of GM783

Aloha Chair Lorraine Inouye, Vice Chair Brandon Elefante, and members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land,

I am writing to express my strong support for the confirmation of Dr. Benton Keali'i Pang as a member of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. Dr. Pang's exceptional blend of scientific expertise, cultural leadership, and community engagement experience make him an ideal candidate for this position.

With his roots firmly planted in Hawaii and a deep connection to the land and his ancestors, Dr. Pang has dedicated his life's work to the preservation of Hawaiian cultural and natural resources. His extensive experience in botany, conservation, and restoration of Hawaii's unique ecosystems has equipped him with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to the restoration and stewardship of Kaho'olawe.

I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Pang, and I can personally attest to his thoughtful, professional, and knowledgeable approach to his work. He is a respectful and dedicated individual who consistently demonstrates a deep respect for the cultural and natural resources of Hawaii. His ability to bring people together and facilitate collaborative efforts is truly impressive, and his commitment to the advancement of Native Hawaiian interests is unwavering.

Throughout his career, Dr. Pang has demonstrated his commitment to Native Hawaiian interests and has been a respected leader and advocate for our community. His selfless service and tireless efforts to protect and preserve our cultural and natural resources have earned him numerous awards and recognitions.

I strongly believe that Dr. Pang's nomination is a valuable opportunity for the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission to benefit from his expertise and experience. I urge you to confirm his nomination and support his continued efforts to contribute to the restoration and stewardship of Kaho'olawe.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Me ke aloha,

Anthony Makana Paris

Kapolei, O'ahu, Hawai'i

GM-783

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 2:15:55 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/11/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonnetta Peters	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Benton Pang to be elected to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. He will be excellent in this position.

Mahalo!