



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB410_HD1

Relating to the Budget of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

March 18, 2025

1:10 p.m.

Room 224

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

Mahalo for setting HB410_HD1, which is part of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA's) 2025 Legislative Package, for public hearing. OHA submits this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB410_HD1**, Relating to the Budget of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, as necessary to ensure continued provision of high quality services to our beneficiaries.

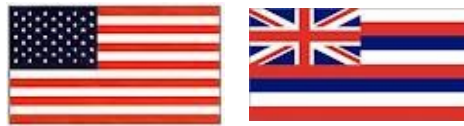
The Office of Hawaiian Affairs is the constitutionally established body responsible for protecting and promoting the rights of Native Hawaiians. Haw. Const. Art. XII § 5. Among its statutory duties, OHA is required to (1) serve as principal public agency in the State of Hawai'i responsible for the performance, development and coordination of programs and activities relating to native Hawaiians and Hawaiians; (2) assess the policies and practices of other agencies impacting native Hawaiians and Hawaiians; and (3) conduct advocacy efforts for native Hawaiians and Hawaiians. Hawai'i Revised Statutes § 10-3.

In fulfillment of these duties, OHA is requesting a \$1,858,454 increase in FY26 and \$1,996,208 increase in FY27 in general fund appropriations (reflected in the FY26 and FY27 biennium budget totals of \$4.8M and \$4.9M).

The requested appropriation increases are necessary to adjust for the cost of inflation since 2020 when OHA began implementing its strategic plan [Mana i Maoli Ola](#) and to fund 13 new staff positions to accelerate implementation of the plan. The 13-member team will evaluate existing programs and develop new programs and tactics to advance 'oiwi well-being and reduce disparities in health, housing, education and economic development, as set forth in the strategic plan. The team will also partner with state and county agencies to leverage their resources, and ensure effective delivery of services to Native Hawaiian communities across providers through data sharing, program design, and program evaluation. To ensure transparency for elected officials and the public, staff will post dashboard progress reports on our progress in reducing disparities.

OHA is in the process of initiating bold new initiatives to make measurable progress in advancing Native Hawaiian well-being over the remaining 10 years of its strategic plan. We look forward to partnering with our beneficiaries, the legislature, other Native Hawaiian Organizations and state agencies, and private sector partners as we advance this mission. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Center for Hawaiian Sovereignty Studies
46-255 Kahuhipa St. Suite 1205
Kane'ohe, HI 96744
(808) 247-7942
Kenneth R. Conklin, Ph.D. Executive Director
e-mail Ken_Conklin@yahoo.com
Unity, Equality, Aloha for all



To: SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

For hearing Tuesday March 18, 2025

Re: HB 410 HD1 RELATING TO THE BUDGET OF THE OFFICE OF
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS.

Appropriates moneys to fund the operating expenses of the Office of
Hawaiian Affairs for the fiscal biennium beginning on 7/1/2025, and
ending on 6/30/2027. Effective 7/1/3000 (HD1)

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

This bill appropriates moneys to fund the operating expenses of the
Office of Hawaiian Affairs for the fiscal biennium beginning on
7/1/2025, and ending on 6/30/2027.

According to OHA's Annual Report for the fiscal year ending June 30,
2024, on page 15, OHA's total assets were \$971 Million. By now,
three-quarters of a year later, that figure is likely more than A BILLION
DOLLARS. No other branch of the State government is allowed to
carry forward such a huge amount. Yet here comes OHA, demanding
money for its operating expenses like a beggar holding out his tin cup.

Hawai'i Free Press on Friday June 24, 2025 reported some information from OHA's check register which it was able to obtain only after demanding access through the Freedom of Information Act. OHA's payroll was \$15.9 Million for its bloated bureaucracy, which was 40.7% of its spending. Any charity spending such a large percentage on payroll would be regarded as a scam.

Every year OHA's bills demanding money try to distinguish between general funds and trust funds. That's a distinction without a difference. Money is fungible. All these funds belong to the State of Hawai'i, whether the money is kept in the right trouser pocket or the left pocket. It is laughable to make it look like there's a fair and equitable balance between general funds and trust funds by appropriating identical amounts of each type of fund for each of the listed purposes.

It might be asserted that OHA's administrative costs for the salaries of its board of directors and its bureaucrats, and the operation of its buildings, should be paid from general funds because OHA is an agency of the state government. However, most of the money appropriated in this bill is to provide political advocacy, personal assistance, or legal representation that will be given exclusively to OHA "beneficiaries" -- i.e., exclusively to people of Hawaii's favorite racial group who have at least one drop of the magic blood (at least one ancestor who lived in Hawaii before Captain Cook's arrival in 1778). All money restricted by race should come from "trust funds"; and even if thus restricted, it is probably unconstitutional for a government agency to engage in such blatant racial discrimination.

Please vote NO on this bill. Give the money back to Hawai'i's taxpayers, or spend it to help the thousands of truly needy people of all races who are citizens of Hawai'i.



**Ko'olauloa
HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB**

**P.O. Box 532
Hau'ula, Hawaii 96717**

March 15, 2025

**Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:**

WE SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As OHA beneficiaries and voters, we are happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

***Raynae M. Fonoimoana*
Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club**

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 5:24:01 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marilyn Moniz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's critical to be able to fulfill the trust and better the well being of Native Hawaiians . We cannot let another decade go by.

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 6:00:09 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanani Higbee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I, Kanani Higbee, am a Maui 'oiwi. I strongly support HB 410. Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) only received a portion of their share from Hawaii Public Lands when they should receive all of it. Hawaii Public Lands is not truly public. That was lands taken from the Hawaiian people and still supposed to benefit the Hawaiian people.

The Hawaiian people, such as myself, need all the help we can get so we can remain in Hawaii nei. Currently, we are not getting paid our worth as we try to claim the corporate ladder, but are denied due to glass ceiling. We are over represented in homelessness and underrepresented in home ownership. OHA has programs that can tremendously help us, but they need more funding and workers to reach us all. It's important to adequately staff and fund a program so it can help us.

With Aloha,

Kanani Higbee

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 7:11:50 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Thomas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

I SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. [Your contact information]

Mr. Michael Thomas
mthomas020@gmail.com

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 7:36:43 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monica Morris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

My name is Monica Morris.

I SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 7:37:02 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sharoldine Sisneros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB410 HD1 for OHA Budget.

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 7:49:05 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vanessa Lee Miller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

I SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. [Your contact information]

Vanessa Lee Miller

1514 Wailuku Drive

Hilo, Hawaii 96720

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 7:19:56 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tien Doan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject: Opposition to HB 410 HD1

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed OHA Budget Bill (HB 410 HD1). While I understand the importance of advancing ‘Ōiwi wellbeing and addressing disparities in health, housing, education, and economic development, I have several concerns regarding the bill's approach and implementation.

Firstly, the allocation of funds for 13 new staff positions raises questions about the efficiency and necessity of such an expansion. It is crucial to ensure that existing resources are being utilized effectively before committing to additional expenditures. Additionally, the feasibility and projected outcomes of the 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, warrant further scrutiny to ensure alignment with broader community needs.

Moreover, while expanding collaboration across government service-providers is a commendable goal, the potential bureaucratic challenges and hurdles could impede timely and effective service delivery. It is essential to have a clear and actionable plan to address these challenges.

Lastly, although the creation of an online dashboard aims to increase transparency, it may not be sufficient to ensure accountability. More robust oversight mechanisms should be considered to guarantee that the benchmarks of Mana i Maui Ola are met.

I urge you to consider these points and explore alternative solutions that might achieve the same goals with greater efficiency and effectiveness.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Tien Doan

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 8:44:48 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kawaiohawaiki Anakalea	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

WHY YOUR FAKE STATE WITHHOLDING OUR MONEY???????

Are you dirty politicians jealous of the native people??? You want to do everything you can to hold us back??

no matter how many aloha shirts you wear you'll NEVER BE NATIVES OF THIS LAND!!!!
Stop stealing from us!!!!

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 9:26:10 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matt L	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

I SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians. **Not only this, but the State has continuously failed the native people of Hawai'i, the Hawaiians for several decades. You think this would happen in Japan or China- the answer is NO!! Stop failing us. We are still the largest voting block and our unity is growing stronger.**

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. **Start doing the work on your side.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Matt L.

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 9:38:34 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 9:59:05 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johne Constance Colahan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support ORA'S testimony.

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2025 5:22:34 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lily Cabinatan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's time to take care of the Hawaiian population which was wronged so many years ago.
we are seeing the aftermath of all the wrongs that were done to them.

do what is Pono so we can all live in peace.

aloha,

Lily Cabinatan

808-372-5952

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2025 6:31:32 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Madeline C Neely	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Committee members, my name is, Madeline Neely, and I am in support of, HB410 HD1.

I am glad to see OHA's "must do" approach to its leadership for and, in addition, to its related set established rules and constitutional mandates to competently further administer its designated responsibilities of HB410 HD1, and all related rules and affected benefits for and to its beneficiaries.

Mahalo Nui

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2025 7:28:19 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brenten Kanoa Yamane	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

I SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Brenten Kanoa Yamane
brentenyamane@gmail.com

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2025 8:11:16 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shaeralee-Tiare Manosa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

I SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. [Your contact information]

Shaeralee-Tiare Manosa

P.O Box 581

Kaunakakai, HI 96748

(808)658-9366

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2025 11:57:20 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara del Fierro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

I SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. Tara del Fierro

Tara del Fierro

delfierro.tara@gmail.com

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 7:58:06 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kekama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

I SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. [Your contact information]

Scott W. Kekama Amona

swamona@gmail.com

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2025 1:59:38 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Loraine Kanervisto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

I SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As a former Honolulu resident who was born and raised on the islands, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Loraine Kanervisto

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2025 6:58:29 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kalani Ah Toong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

I SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Kalani Ah Toong

276 Gala lane Inman, South Carolina

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2025 7:45:05 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire	Testifying for Ohana Unity Party & Kingdom of The Hawaiian islands	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Support for HB410 with Reservations and a full analysis is listed below with data & stats with a final letter of support and caution below.

Aloha Hawaii Legislators:

House Bill No. 410 (H.D. 1), introduced in the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawaii in 2025, appropriates funds for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) for the fiscal biennium 2025-2027. It allocates general funds (A) and trust funds (T) across three programs: Office of the Trustees (OHA150), Administration (OHA160), and Beneficiary Advocacy (OHA175), with specific earmarks for housing, social services, education, legal services, land protection, and economic development benefiting Native Hawaiians.

Data and Statistics

- **Funding Breakdown:**
 - OHA160 (Administration): \$1,258,454 (FY25-26) and \$1,296,208 (FY26-27) in general funds, supporting 13 permanent positions.
 - OHA175 (Beneficiary Advocacy): \$3.6M (FY25-26) and \$3.7M (FY26-27) in general funds, matched by equal trust fund amounts, totaling \$7.2M and \$7.4M annually.
 - Specific allocations: \$1.2M-\$1.25M for housing, \$1.03M for social services, \$1.43M-\$1.48M for education, \$1.4M for legal services, \$1.2M-\$1.25M for land protection, and \$0.94M-\$0.99M for economic development per fiscal year.
- **Native Hawaiian Context:**
 - 2020 Census: 296,400 Native Hawaiians in Hawaii, 26.8% of the state's 1.46M population.
 - Poverty: Native Hawaiians face a 15.2% poverty rate (2021 ACS), vs. 7.5% statewide; 22% of Native Hawaiian households earn under \$35,000 annually (2022 DHHL).
 - Housing: Median home price \$850,000 (2023 Redfin); Native Hawaiian homeownership at 30% vs. 60% statewide (DHHL 2022); 8,900+ on DHHL waitlist (2023).

- Education: 17% of Native Hawaiians hold bachelor's degrees vs. 32% statewide (UH 2022); 68% of Native Hawaiian students qualify for free/reduced lunch (DOE 2023).
- Homelessness: 45% of Hawaii's 6,500 homeless are Native Hawaiian (HUD 2023 Point-in-Time Count).
- OHA Historical Funding: FY23-25 budget ~\$37M annually (OHA reports); OHA175's \$7.2M-\$7.4M is 19.5%-20% of that, a focused escalation.
- Economic Impact: OHA's \$1.5M in micro-grants (2018-2021) generated \$4.5M in community revenue (OHA 2021); Hawaii's \$14B tourism industry relies on cultural preservation tied to Native Hawaiian land rights (HTA 2023).

Support

1. Addresses Dire Housing Crisis:
 - Evidence: \$1.2M-\$1.25M targets Native Hawaiian homelessness (45% of 6,500 statewide, HUD 2023) and a 70% gap in homeownership (30% vs. 60%, DHHL).
 - Impact: Could fund ~15-20 homes annually at \$60,000-\$80,000 per infrastructure unit (DHHL cost estimates), chipping at the 8,900-person waitlist.
2. Empowers Education and Stability:
 - Evidence: \$1.43M-\$1.48M aids Native Hawaiian students (17% college attainment vs. 32% statewide, UH 2022); 68% in poverty-linked lunch programs (DOE 2023).
 - Impact: Could support 500-700 students yearly with \$2,000-\$3,000 scholarships (OHA precedent), boosting post-secondary success and breaking a 15.2% poverty cycle (ACS 2021).
3. Economic and Cultural Powerhouse:
 - Evidence: \$0.94M-\$0.99M for ahupua'a economics mirrors OHA's 3:1 ROI (\$1.5M to \$4.5M, 2018-2021); \$1.4M for legal services protects 1.8M acres of ceded lands (OHA 2022), underpinning \$14B in tourism (HTA 2023).
 - Impact: Amplifies workforce readiness for 22% of low-income households (\$35K or less, DHHL 2022) and safeguards cultural assets driving 20% of state GDP.

Concerns for Corruption and Accountability

1. Loose Fund Transfers:
 - Risk: Section 10's flexibility to shift funds with only annual reporting echoes OHA's \$1.8M in dubious spending (2018 State Audit), including \$500K to a single firm with board ties (Star-Advertiser 2019).
 - Data: Hawaii ranks 35th in transparency (CPI 2022); \$600M HART scandal (2022) shows oversight gaps.
 - Analysis: Without real-time checks, \$7.4M could drift from intent, especially with trust funds tied to Native Hawaiian assets.
2. Vague Outcomes:
 - Risk: No metrics (e.g., homes built, students graduated) despite \$7.2M-\$7.4M; OHA met only 60% of goals in 2022 due to fuzzy targets (Hawaii Budget & Policy Center).

- Data: 2023 DHHL audit found 60% of 200,000 trust acres undeveloped, partly from poor fund tracking.
 - Analysis: Risks inefficiency or diversion without mandated results, eroding trust in a \$37M agency.
3. Corruption Exposure:
- Risk: High allocations (\$1.4M legal, \$1.25M housing) could favor insiders; OHA's 2019 legal contract controversy cost \$500K with no bids (Star-Advertiser).
 - Data: Hawaii's legislature killed transparency bills 5 times since 2018 (Civil Beat 2023); OHA's \$3M in lobbying (2015-2020) suggests influence.
 - Analysis: Lack of procurement rules or audits heightens misuse potential in a state with a "C" corruption grade (Center for Public Integrity 2015, still relevant).

Honest Assessment

H.B. 410 is a bold \$7.2M-\$7.4M lifeline for Native Hawaiians, tackling a 45% homelessness rate, 15.2% poverty, and 70% education gap with precision. Its \$14B tourism tie-in and 3:1 economic ROI make it a powerhouse for cultural and fiscal health. Yet, OHA's \$1.8M scandal history and Hawaii's 35th transparency rank scream for tighter controls. The \$1.26M-\$1.3M admin budget for 13 staff is lean, but \$7.4M in advocacy needs ironclad metrics to avoid waste. Support it, but demand accountability to match its ambition.

Letter of Support it

March 15, 2025

Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Honorable Legislators,

I passionately support House Bill No. 410 (H.D. 1), "Relating to the Budget of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs," and urge your vote to fund OHA's \$7.2M-\$7.4M powerhouse for Native Hawaiians in 2025-2027. Here's why, with a plea for ironclad oversight:

- Solves a Housing Emergency:
 - \$1.2M-\$1.25M fights 45% Native Hawaiian homelessness (6,500 total, HUD 2023) and a 70% ownership gap (30% vs. 60%, DHHL 2022).
 - Could build 15-20 homes yearly (\$60K-\$80K each, DHHL), slashing an 8,900-person waitlist amid \$850K median prices (Redfin 2023).
- Ignites Education and Opportunity:

- \$1.43M-\$1.48M lifts 17% college attainment (vs. 32% statewide, UH 2022); 68% of Native Hawaiian kids need lunch aid (DOE 2023).
- Funds 500-700 scholarships (\$2K-\$3K each, OHA model), breaking a 15.2% poverty rate (ACS 2021) for 296,400 Native Hawaiians (Census 2020).
- Drives Economic and Cultural Might:
 - \$0.94M-\$0.99M for ahupua'a economics triples ROI (\$1.5M to \$4.5M, OHA 2021); \$1.4M legal defends 1.8M ceded acres (OHA 2022), fueling \$14B tourism (HTA 2023).
 - Empowers 22% of low-income households (\$35K or less, DHHL 2022), tying 20% of state GDP to Native Hawaiian resilience.
- Demands Accountability:
 - Concern: \$7.4M risks waste without metrics; OHA's \$1.8M scandal (2018 Audit) and \$500K insider deal (2019) linger in Hawaii's 35th transparency rank (CPI 2022).
 - Fix: Require quarterly reports (e.g., 20 homes, 600 students) and audits, avoiding HART's \$600M mess (2022) or DHHL's 60% idle lands (2023 audit).

H.B. 410's \$7.4M is a game-changer for 26.8% of Hawaii's people, but only with transparency matching its scale. Pass it with safeguards to deliver real results. Mahalo for your bold leadership!

Sincerely,

Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM

Ohana Unity Party, Chairman

www.Ohanaunityparty.com

Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.I.

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2025 8:33:48 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lin McEwan (Thieman)	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

I SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Respectfully,

Lin Thieman

linthieman@gmail.com

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2025 12:30:36 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Regina Gregory	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2025 8:57:20 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gordon B. Lindsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support hb410 hd1

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2025 6:05:20 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Walter Ritte	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am having a hard time starting with saying the greetings word "Aloha".

The State's constitution says 20% and yet the legislature does not follow that mandate. How can I say Aloha when Hawaiians are treated so badly. It is no secret that Hawaiians have lost their lands and government via illegal acts. There is no excuse for you to continue illegal acts such as not following your own constitutional mandates.

Trying to keep the peace,

Walter Ritte

Hokulani K. Garcia

95-1017 Koolani Drive Mililani, Hawaii 96789

(808) 230-4614

hrosa@hawaii.edu

March 17, 2025

Chari Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and
Members of the Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

**Support for HB410 HD1: Relating to the Budget of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs
House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs**

Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura and Members of the Committee:

Aloha! As a working mother, a recipient of an educational scholarship from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), a government employee and as a Kanaka, I write in support of HB410 HD1.

It is easy for people to deny funds for employment positions, especially when it is seen as a “government” office such as OHA. People are quick to point out that said office was not able to meet requirements xyz in the past. As a government employee myself, in an office that is severely understaffed, we do the best we can in the 8 hours that we are present at work. With no allotted overtime, many of us work through lunch, sometimes come in a few minutes early or stay a few minutes late just to get things finished. Yet still, we fall short of what is expected of us in the public’s eye. Staffing is an issue! If more is to be done, the staff need to be in place to take on the workload. For this reason alone, I strongly support HB410 HD1.

As a scholarship recipient, a mother and a Kanaka, OHA provides many opportunities for Kanaka alike to get an education, to educate others, to obtain personal growth as well as options for business growth and sustainability. OHA’s Mana I Maui Ola Strategic plan will provide much needed support to the Native Hawaiian Community. But like any other plan, it requires the proper staffing to execute.

HB410 HD1 also offers transparency and collaboration between OHA and other government service providers. This will allow for a greater impact and positive outcomes for the community as a whole. I look forward to seeing this work in action and to be able to see the people of Hawaii flourish.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **support of HB410 HD1.**

Respectfully,



Hokulani K. Garcia

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2025 6:08:12 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support with comments as this bill provides vital funding to help OHA to advance programs and activities for affordable and quality housing, social services, education and post Secondary education, legal services, ‘Aina (land and water), and Economic Development workforce readiness. **However, I note that the bill does not specifically address the health needs /disparities of Native Hawaiians unless this is covered under "social services" or other funding resources.**

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2025 10:58:09 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimmer Horsesen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

I Kimmer Horsesen, SUPPORT HB410 HD1 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

Transparency and Synergy: OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. [Your contact information]

Kimmer Horsesen

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2025 2:38:49 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dr. William H. Wilson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Legislators,

I am a non-Hawaiian university professor in a university program open to all, but in which many Native Hawaiian students enroll. I also serve as a volunteer member on boards of a private non-profit and a charter school again open to all, but in which many Native Hawaiian students enroll. In the East Hawai'i area where I live, the largest group of young people are Native Hawaiians and they are often the majority being served by the state.

OHA's programs are important to the young people in our community and the state as a whole. I urge you to support OHA's budget request as part of your overall effort to serve the people of the state. OHA's efforts to collaborate and integrate their outreach with that of other state entities will benefit the young people of Hawai'i as a whole, as it has in the programs for which I have personal experience.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.



Queen Emma Hawaiian Civic Club

Pō‘akahi, Malaki 17, 2025



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 410 HD1

Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Tuesday, March 18, 2025, 1:10 p.m.

Aloha e Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs,

I submit this testimony in strong support of HB 410 HD1, which appropriates critical funding to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to implement its Mana i Maui Ola (Strength to Wellbeing) Strategic Plan. This 15-year roadmap is essential in addressing persistent disparities in education, health, housing, and economic stability, challenges that directly impact the future of our lāhui. Queen Emma Hawaiian Civic Club (QEHC) upholds the legacy of Queen Emma, who dedicated her life to the advancement of education, healthcare, and social welfare for her people. This bill continues that legacy by equipping OHA with the necessary resources to uplift our people and strengthen our communities.

HB 410 HD1 is more than just a budget appropriation. It is an investment in the well-being and self-sufficiency of Native Hawaiians. The funding directly supports the three foundational pillars of Mana i Maui Ola: ‘Ohana (Family), Mo‘omeheu (Culture), and ‘Āina (Land and Water). The ‘Ohana pillar is strengthened through housing assistance and social services, ensuring that Native Hawaiian families have access to stable, affordable homes. Mo‘omeheu is reinforced through educational improvement programs and workforce development initiatives, creating opportunities for Native Hawaiians to gain economic independence. ‘Āina is protected through legal advocacy for kuleana landowners, environmental sustainability initiatives, and the preservation of sacred sites, securing our cultural and ancestral ties for future generations.

Education and economic stability are key to breaking cycles of poverty and inequity, and HB 410 HD1 advances OHA’s efforts to close these gaps. The bill provides funding for educational improvement programs designed to help Native Hawaiian students prepare for post-secondary education and economic stability. These programs play a vital role in equipping our students with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities needed for success in a competitive economy. Additionally, financial literacy initiatives and workforce readiness programs supported by this bill will help Native Hawaiians build wealth, increase homeownership, and create sustainable economic opportunities for their families.

Beyond economic challenges, HB 410 HD1 reinforces OHA’s legal advocacy for Native Hawaiian land rights, a core component of Mana i Maui Ola. This bill ensures continued

funding for legal services that protect kuleana lands, quiet title claims, iwi kūpuna, and access to water rights, all of which are under increasing threat. OHA's legal services program has assisted hundreds of Native Hawaiian families in preventing displacement, and this funding will allow these essential efforts to continue.

Housing remains one of the most pressing challenges facing Native Hawaiians today. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 53,000 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander renter households, or 51.7 percent, were cost-burdened in 2023, meaning they spent more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs {U.S. Census Bureau, September 12, 2024, News Release CB24-150}. This alarming statistic underscores the urgent need for affordable housing initiatives and homeownership retention strategies, both of which are supported by this bill. Stable housing is a foundation for economic and social success, and HB 410 HD1 ensures that OHA has the funding to continue providing critical housing assistance to our people.

Despite its broad mandate to serve the Native Hawaiian community, OHA continues to receive only a fraction of its rightful share of Public Land Trust revenues, specifically 21.5 million dollars of the 78.9 million dollars owed annually. Until this issue is fully resolved, legislative appropriations like HB 410 HD1 remain necessary to bridge the funding gap and ensure OHA can fulfill its mission. This is not just a matter of financial allocation. It is a matter of justice and equity for the Native Hawaiian people.

As President of the Queen Emma Hawaiian Civic Club, I strongly urge the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs to pass HB 410 HD1 without delay. The future of our lāhui depends on investments in housing, education, and economic opportunity, and this bill provides the necessary foundation for Native Hawaiians to thrive. By passing this legislation, we honor the legacy of Queen Emma and take a crucial step toward a self-sufficient, empowered Native Hawaiian people. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Me ka ha'aha'a,



Josann Meyer Parker Jenks
President, Queen Emma Hawaiian Civic Club

HB-410-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2025 9:36:54 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/18/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
M. Leilani DeMello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

KĀKO‘O au i kēia pila! I SUPPORT this bill.

Mahalo,

M. Leilani DeMello

‘Ōla‘a, Puna, Hawai‘i