

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

DIVISION OF STATE PARKS
P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of
DAWN N.S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on
JUDICIARY

Wednesday, February 26, 2025
9:40 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 1517
RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS

Senate Bill 1517 proposes to authorize the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) to lease public lands for recreation-residence use by public lottery and restrict participation in the public lottery to residents of the county in which the leased land is located. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure and provides the following comments.**

The historic recreation residence community within Koke'e-Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i has been a cherished resource for local families for over a century. The mountain community is modeled on similar communities established on US Forest Service lands in wilderness areas on the mainland, which continues today as a thriving recreational program.

There are approximately 100 recreation residence (cabin) leases in Koke'e-Waimea Canyon State Parks on Kaua'i, and they are unique in Hawai'i – allowing no permanent residence, but instead intended for occasional use not to exceed 180 days of use per year. They were envisioned as a means of allowing families to gather and commune with nature, escape the summer heat, and keep forest roads and amenities open and accessible.

Due to a combination of enabling legislation and past BLNR approvals establishing rent amounts, there presently exists an inequity in annual rents charged for these mountain cabins. The majority (75%) were leased via direct negotiation with existing leaseholders, at appraised values, under Act 223 (2007). Appraised rents for this largest set of cabins ranged from \$5,000 to \$9,500 annually. Sixteen unencumbered cabins were auctioned in 2009, resulting in higher annual rents, up to \$18,000 annually. The most recent auction of just 7 cabins, held in 2024, resulted in winning bids ranging from \$15,500 to \$41,000 yearly, for cabins in severely neglected condition. This amounts to rents ranging

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY
CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER
AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

from three to ten times their appraised values, and effectively priced them well out of the reach of affordability for most local families. This also resulted in a stark inequity in pricing for access to similar state-owned recreational amenities.

This proposed bill seeks to (1) reward lessees who have been quality stewards of these unique park resources by allowing for current lessees in good standing to be granted new leases, (2) level the playing field in terms of affordability (by setting all rents at appraised value), and (3) allow a fair process for acquiring available cabins when they become available, by offering them via lottery rather than an auction.

While the Department supports SB 1517, it is also proposing the following amendments to SB 1517, Sections 2 and 4, to better align with the objectives sought under this measure.

The Department proposes that under Section 2, on page 1, line 5, replacing “a” with the “two” and add the letter “s” to the end of “definition.” Moreover, following the definition of “good standing,” include a definition for “recreation residence.” These amendments clarify that HRS §171-1 will be amended to include two new definitions and that a “recreation residence” is for occasional and not permanent occupancy to prevent confusion over which leases are subject to HRS §171-44. The proposed amendments read as follows:

SECTION 2. Section 171-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding [~~a~~] two new definitions to be appropriately inserted and to read as follows:

““Good standing” means the status of a lessee being in full compliance with the lessee’s obligations under the lease.”

““Recreation residence” means a part-time residence for occasional, recreational use and not for continuous occupancy by the lessee or lessee’s family, friends, and guests.”

The Department also proposes that under Section 4, pages 3 and 5, lines 10 and 1, respectively, replace “may” with “shall”; on page 3, line 10, omit “by direct negotiation or”; on page 3, line 18, replace “extend” with “renew”; on page 4, line 1, omit “extensions of a” and include the word “renewed” after “lease”; on page 4, line 6, replace “extend” with “renew”; and on page 5, line 1, replace “may” with “shall.” These amendments ensure that leases under HRS §171-44 must be issued only by public lottery to solidify the affordable and fair process of issuing leases for recreation-residence use under this section, that lessees in good standing may renew and not extend their leases, and that participation in the public lottery must be limited to residents of the same county in which the land to be leased is located. The proposed amendments read as follows:

SECTION 4. Section 171-44, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

“§171-44 Lease for recreation-residence use. [{] (a) [}] Notwithstanding any limitations to the contrary, the board of land and natural resources [~~may~~] shall lease, [~~by direct negotiation or~~] by public lottery and without recourse to public auction, lands within a state park or forest reserve and other lands set aside under executive orders, for recreation— residence use for a period not to exceed twenty years on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the board[~~;~~]; provided that:

- (1) A lessee determined to be in good standing by the board at the expiration of the lessee's lease may directly negotiate with the board to [~~extend~~] renew the lease for an additional term not to exceed twenty years;
- (2) Any [~~extensions of a~~] lease renewed shall be based on the fair market value of the leased land; and
- (3) A lessee shall notify the board in writing no less than sixty days prior to the termination of the lease if the lessee intends to [~~extend~~] renew the lease.

[{] (b) [{] The [{]board[{]of land and natural resources shall enforce all provisions of recreation-residence use lease agreements and shall establish a schedule of penalties and fines for any breach of the provisions of a recreation-residential use lease agreement unless penalties and fines are specified in the lease agreement.

(c) Recreation-residence use leases offered by public lottery shall:

- (1) Be offered at fair market value, to be determined by appraisal pursuant to section 171-17; and
- (2) Be limited to one person per recreation-residence; provided that if two or more lessees intend to jointly reside in the same recreation-residence, only one lessee may enter the public lottery.

(d) The board [~~may~~] shall limit participation in the public lottery of recreation-residence use leases to residents of the same county in which the land to be leased is located; provided that limiting participation in the public lottery to residents of the county will be for the benefit of the residents of the county; ensure premises leased will be properly maintained by the lessee; and preserve the environmental, cultural, and scenic values of the leased premises. If the number of county residents participating in the public lottery is fewer than the number of leases available, the board shall open the public lottery to all residents of the State, followed by nonresidents.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



CHIPPER WICHMAN, KLA PRESIDENT
HĀ'ENA, KAUA'I

February 25, 2025

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB1517 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS

Senate JUDICIARY Committee
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

I am the President of the Kōke'e Leaseholder Association and for the past five years we have been working closely with State Parks leadership and staff to come up with a system that is fair and equitable for both existing leaseholders and well as for the residents who don't yet have a lease but would like to secure a lease on a cabin up at Kōke'e.

SB 1517, and the proposed amendments, reflects a common vision that both our leaseholder community and State Parks supports. One of the most important changes being made to HRS 171-44 is that it will allow State Parks to award new leases via a lottery instead of an auction. In 2024, State Parks, with the strong support and assistance of KLA, held an auction for 7 dilapidated cabins and the results of that auction proved once and for all that the majority of our local residents will never have a

fair chance to get a lease if we continue to use an auction to lease out the cabins. Some of these run-down properties went for annual lease rents of \$30,000 to \$40,000!!!

This bill proposes to restrict participation in the lottery to the residents of the county where the recreational residences exist. This is only fair and again this is consistent with the system that the Territorial government set up – that is that the Kōke'e camp lots (e.g. cabins) would be a resource for the people of Kaua'i and Ni'ihau.

Very importantly, this bill also provides strong incentive for existing and future leaseholders to make the capital investments needed to maintain the integrity of these historic properties. By allowing only lessees in “good standing” to “directly negotiate with the board to extend the lease for an additional term not to exceed twenty years”. This is consistent with the U.S. Forest Service model which is what the Hawaii system was modeled after when it was set up in 1918.

An added benefit of this language is that by allowing only lessees in “good standing” to be able to renew their leases this bill will provide a VERY strong motivation to lessees to abide by all of the terms of their lease. This language helps retain the good stewards of this historic community and eliminate the bad apples that refuse to follow the rules that we all have agreed to.

While there is much more that I can say, I believe you can tell from what I have put in my testimony how important this legislation is for our community. I strongly encourage you to support SB 1517 and adopt the amendments being proposed by State Parks and help make the future management of this unique area a much more effective and fair and equitable process.

Me ke aloha a ka mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chipper Wichman", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Chipper Wichman, President
Kōke'e Leaseholder Association

Joanne Acoba
4571 Maile Road
Waimea, Kauai, Hawaii 96796

DATE: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 9:40 AM

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 1517 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS.

TO: Senate Committee on JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I strongly support SB 1517 and the amendments proposed by State Parks. This bill is essential to establishing a fair and equitable process for our community to secure leases for recreational residence cabins in Kōke'e and Waimea Canyon State Parks on Kaua'i. The proposed amendments are equally significant as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should employ a lottery system versus direct negotiation. It is crucial to eliminate any potential confusion for future DLNR leaders regarding the processes outlined in this bill.

Challenges with the Current Lease Process

The existing lease system has often been criticized for its lack of affordability, accessibility and fairness. The auction-based model disproportionately favors those with financial means, sidelining local families who have maintained these cabins for decades. Moreover, the process does not adequately account for the cultural and historic significance of these properties or the community's deep ties to them.

Lease Renewal for Lessees in Good Standing: Only lessees who are in "good standing" and have demonstrated responsible stewardship are allowed to directly negotiate lease renewals for up to 20 years. This creates a strong incentive for compliance with lease terms and proper care of the property.

Retention of Responsible Lessees: By rewarding those who abide by lease terms and contribute to the preservation of the properties, the bill ensures that responsible individuals remain stewards of these historic lands, while discouraging non-compliance.

I respectfully urge you to support SB1517 to protect this unique aspect of Kaua'i's heritage while fostering equity and affordability in access to public lands. These measures collectively promote accountability, incentivize care for the land, and ensure long-term preservation of the properties.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Joanne Acoba

Kaua'i native, Waimea High School Teacher (retired)

Cell: (808)652-2074 Email: jojotanaka4@gmail.com

Angel L. Miyake

3156 Hoolako Street

Lihue, HI 96766

angellmiyake@gmail.com

DATE: Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 9:40 AM

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 1517 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS

TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in **strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments proposed by State Parks**. This bill is **critical** as it will finally create a **fair and equitable** process for our community to acquire leases for the **recreational residence cabins in Koke'e and Waimea Canyon State Parks on Kaua'i**.

The **proposed amendments** by State Parks are **crucial** as they clarify when the **Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR)** should use a **lottery system** and when they should **directly negotiate leases**. These clarifications ensure that **future DLNR leadership** will have **no confusion** in implementing this process as intended.

Additionally, this bill allows residents who have **historically cared for and maintained these cabins** to continue doing so under **clear, fair guidelines**. Ensuring **the ability to renew leases** for those in **good standing** is essential for the stability of our community.

I urge you to **pass SB 1517 to support local families and protect fair access** to these historic recreational residences.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Angel L. Miyake

(808) 635-0342

Frank O. Hay
kokee@okauai.com

February 24, 2025

The Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, Oahu, Hawaii 96813

BY EMAIL ONLY

MEETING IN HONOLULU on February 26, 2025

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF THE PROPOSED SENATE BILL 1517, Relating to
Public Lands, As Amended

Aloha,

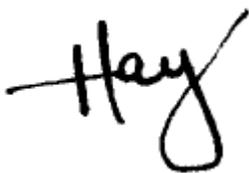
I have been a resident of Hawaii for more than sixty years, and a leaseholder at Kōke'e since 1975. I attended the first ever auction of our leases in 1985, where average lease rents increased by more than ten times. Fifty-one out of one hundred and eleven cabins changed hands in that bitter and disputed auction – again, the first in our now one hundred-year-old community.

I did not attend the 2011 auction of sixteen “orphan” cabins that had been abandoned by their former lessees, but note that the Chair of DLNR in her testimony reported “higher annual rents, up to \$18,000 annually”¹. I was among the leaseholders helping State Parks staff conduct the most recent auction, in April 2024. We were all greatly surprised that it “resulted in winning bids ranging from \$ 15,500 to \$ 41,000 yearly, for cabins in severely neglected condition” and “ranging from three to ten times their appraised values, that effectively priced them well out of the reach of affordability for most local families.”²

This bill authorizes the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) to lease recreational-residence cabins by public lottery and restrict participation in that lottery to residents of the county in which the leased land is located. This is the most fair and equitable way forward. It has historical precedent as a lottery was conducted in 1951 for the several “Water Tank Lots”.

I respectfully ask your strong support in passing the Bill. The amendments proposed by State Parks clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support.

Very truly yours,



¹ Testimony of Dawn N.S. Chang, Chairperson, DLNR, before the House Committee on Water & Land, 2/4/2025.

² Ibid.

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 1:26:48 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra Erwin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1517

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 1:27:49 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonathan Wichman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing. Mahalo, Jonny Wichman

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 1:57:00 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Richardson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to strongly support SB-1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is important and will make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon Park on Kauai. The Amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the Lottery and when they should use direct negotiations. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

As a life long resident of Kauai, I value the privilege of being able to use a recreational cabin in Kokee. The last auction was a disaster and the bidding prevented me from being able to secure a lease. I am fortunate to have family who let me use their home, which enables me and my family to enjoy the Park. For many years I have been a steward of the forest and feel it is my duty to preserve this gem of a resource for my family as my predecessors taught me to do. Kokee is my happy place and I am teaching my children and grandchildren to respect, preserve and enjoy the area. Some day my hope is that I, too, may be an owner of one of the leases which I could then pass on to future generations.

I thank you for considering Bill SB1517 and I encourage you to **please support and pass** this bill. This will be transformational to Kauai Residents.

Warmest Aloha,

Katherine G Richardson

Lihue, Kauai HI.

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 2:32:00 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Richards	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

12/24/2025

Testimony in support of SB1517

Relating to Public Lands

To: Senate Committee on JUDICIARY

Sen. Karl Rhoads, Chair

Sen. Mike Gabbard, V Chair

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary.

I am writing in support of SB 1517 and the ammendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill will make it a fair and equitiiable process for our communtiy to continue a lease or aquire a lease for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the Island of Kauai.

This clarifies Board and Land of Natural Resources when they should hold a lottery or use direct negotiалns with current lease holders. it is important that this is clear for future leaders of the DLNR.

Families in good standing with the DLNR are grateful for future negotiations as well as a lottery for open cabins in the future.

I want to thank you all for you work on SB1517 and hope you will agree with the submission as is. As a long time resident of our beautiful Kauai, I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Laura Richards

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 2:38:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurel brier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a Kauai resident and part of the Koke'e Leaseholders Association, I, along with the 5 families in our cabin hui strongly support SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill promotes an equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee, Kaua'i. Kokee is for everyone and the State needs reliable caretakers for the cabins in Kokee

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB1517 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS.

Report Title: Public Lands; Recreation-residence Use Leases; Public Lottery

TO: COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in **strong support** of SB1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks which amends HRS 171-44 to make it a fair and equitable process for our community to lease and maintain the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

SB1517 incentivizes lessees to remain in good standing and truly abide by the terms of their lease and be good stewards of the property as it allows for lessees in "good standing" to be able to renew their lease when the lease comes to an end. Lessees who have been good stewards of their cabins and the land, and who are in good standing, will be able to "directly negotiate with the board to extend the lease for an additional term not to exceed twenty years". This is consistent with the U.S. Forest Service model which is what the Hawaii system was modeled after when it was set up in 1918.

The State currently has little ability to enforce the terms of the recreational residence leases due to limited staffing but by allowing only lessees in "good standing" to be able to renew their leases this bill will provide a VERY strong motivation to lessees to abide by all of the terms of their lease. Additionally, SB1517 provides an incentive for lessees to continue to invest our own money to care for and improve these historic properties. Many lessees and their families have been maintaining these cabins for many decades, in some cases were the original builders of the cabins over a century ago and continue to pour sweat and cash into maintenance and improvements we no longer own. By excluding the value of any on-site improvements (made by the lessee during the term of their lease) in determining the fair market value of a lease when it is up for renewal as well as providing leaseholders the right to negotiate to extend at the end of the lease term this bill provides assurance that incentivizes lessees to re-invest in the continued maintenance and upgrades of these properties to ensure this historic community remains.

Thank you for your support of our community and the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this important bill.

Aloha,

R. McKibbin Mist

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 2:54:25 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Slaski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 28, 2025

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

"I strongly support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill will make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing."

David P Slaski RPh. LMT

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 3:14:56 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Stayton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

This bill corrects several problems caused by the current regulations that govern leasing of cabins in State Parks.

First, there have been several auctions in the recent past that caused extremely high bidding for leases. This forced out many local families with limited means, thus giving the appearance that cabins in Koke'e are only for the wealthy. This should not be the case as many local families were originally lessees, love and value Koke'e, and are excellent stewards of the land and parks. The lottery system with fixed reasonable lease increases is much fairer.

Second, this bill provides for some incentives to lessees to maintain or even improve the cabins (which used to belong to the lessees until the State took ownership in 2008). With no opportunity to recoup their investments by selling their cabins, many lessees simply left their cabins to fall apart. This was a tragedy for the State and for the community.

Thank you very much for your consideration,

Susan, Lawai, Kauai

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 3:27:42 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kuulei santos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 3:42:46 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kylie E Wilson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 4:42:08 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gaylord Wilcox	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony from Gaylord Wilcox (primary residence in Honolulu) for Senate Judiciary Committee on 2/26/25, SB 1517.

I support SB 1517 proposing the State incorporate fair market values for lotteries and negotiation with its recreational residential leases. As a current leaseholder of such a residence in Kokee I am aware that recent methods of assigning leases have often not worked for the betterment of the people of Kauai, resulting in problematic lease assignments, such as pricing out many locals who would make good use of the properties. The amendments proposed by State Parks are critical to assuring the bill is clear as to the intent and process.

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 5:12:34 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Williamson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments proposed by State Parks.

This bill is critical and will create a fair and equitable process for the Kaua`i community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Koke`e and Waimea Canyon State Parks. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

On behalf of our extended 'ohana, I thank you for taking steps to better manage, with greater fairness, the historic Koke`e cabins and upland community.

Our forebears built the cabin during the Great Depression and we are so grateful to have kept it in our family for almost 100 years, enjoying stay-cations, celebrating holidays, and hosting friends at this refuge through a World War, a pandemic, and decades of dramatic change in between. As generations have moved around — off island or to the continent for education, work, or marrying into families elsewhere — this wahi pana has been our only constant and common "family home" at which we gather, repeat all the old shared stories, and make new memories. Over the years, family members have given back to the area by serving on the Koke`e Museum / Hui o Laka board, helping maintain Faye road, pruning plum orchards, and organizing the annual Pedal to the Meadow bicycle race.

- We agree that DLNR should have the ability to make vacant cabins available via lottery, not auction;
- We agree that only residents of Kaua'i County would be able to participate;
- We agree that maintenance by lessees must be incentivized, so that properties do not fall into disrepair when the cost of a new roof, total rewiring/plumbing, septic systems, or other crucial projects is prohibitive;
- We agree with 'direct negotiation' for families that abide by lease terms (eg. never renting out, upholding design standards) and are good-faith stewards of cabins and mauka lands; and,
- We agree with amendments made by State Parks during recent hearings.

Mahalo for your consideration of these improvements.
Mary Williamson
Danford/Williamson family

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 5:23:55 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Kibble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 24,2025

Elizabeth Kibble and Nick Beck

5-5311 Kuhio Highway

Hanalei 96714

Kauai

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 1517 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS.

TO: Senate Committee on JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

We are writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

I thank you for your support and urge you again to support HB1348.

Sincerely

Elizabeth Kibble and Nick Beck

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 5:24:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Peter Watts	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

John Peter Watts

makaleha_arts@yahoo.com

BY EMAIL ONLY

February 24, 2025

TO:

The Honorable Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Hawai'i State Capitol

415 south Beretania Street

Honolulu, Oahu, Hawai'i 96813

RE:

MEETING IN HONOLULU on February 26, 2025

SUBJECT:

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF THE PROPOSED SB 1517, Relating to Public Lands

Aloha,

I have been a resident of the island of Kauai for more than forty-five years. My wife is a leaseholder at Koke'e. All three of my children were born here, as were two of my grandchildren.

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

I respectfully ask for your support in passing this Bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

Very truly yours,

Peter Watts

1751 Hulu Road, Kapaa, Kauai, 96746

Nancy J. Budd
1337 Puuopae Road
Kapa`a, Kaua`i, Hawai`i 96746

February 24, 2025

TO: COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 26, 2025
9:40 AM
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference State Capitol

Subject: **Testimony in Support of SB1517 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS**

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committee on the Judiciary,

I am writing to express my strong support of SB1517 *and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks*. SB 1517 amends HRS 171-44 to provide a fair and equitable process for the granting of recreational residence leases for cabins in Koke`e and Waimea Canyon State Parks.

I have been a resident of Kaua`i since 1979 and have a deep connection to the mountain and to the Koke`e and Waimea Canyon State Parks. Although I am not a leaseholder, I was appointed by the Senate to serve on the Koke`e-Waimea State Parks Advisory Council in 2009. In that capacity I worked for many years with the state and the Kaua`i community to finalize the master plan for Koke`e and Waimea State Parks with the intention that our cherished wilderness, native forests, flora, fauna, and historic buildings be managed and conserved for future generations.

As the term implies, the historic "recreational residence lease" program was designed a century ago to provide an opportunity for the people of Kaua`i and Ni`ihau to experience, on an occasional basis, the mountain wilderness and all that it has to offer. Every year this becomes more important as our community grows and the open space disappears. Consistent with this purpose, this bill limits participation to residents of the county where these recreational residences exist.

This bill also proposes setting rents at appraised value, ensuring that local residents have an opportunity to secure a lease regardless of financial status.

This bill further provides incentives for leaseholders to maintain and improve these historic properties by permitting only leaseholders in good standing to directly negotiate an extension of their lease and by excluding the value of any on-site improvements made by the lessee at the time of lease renewal.

At long last, this bill provides solutions to the very challenging issues built into the current process of lease allocation, giving our community a fair chance to be awarded cabin leases in Koke'e. Please support this bill and the amendments proposed by State Parks.

Mahalo for your kind consideration,

Nancy J. Budd

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 5:26:22 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell McCluskey II	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Russell McCluskey II, and I am born and raised on the island of Kaua'i. I am writing to express my strong support for SB 1517 and the proposed amendments by State Parks. This bill is vital because it will establish a fair and equitable process for our community to obtain leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are crucial, as they provide clear guidelines on when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should utilize the lottery system and when direct negotiation should be applied. It's important that future leaders in the Department of Land and Natural Resources have no confusion about the process laid out in this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration.

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 6:21:19 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wendy Wichman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 6:21:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cyndi and Jim Wilson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Cyndi and Jim Wilson

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 1517 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS.

TO: Senate Committee on JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. We support this bill to make it a fair process for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i.

The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation.

Our cabin holds special memories throughout the years. Knowing we have the ability to renew our lease will be of a great comfort to us.

We are in support to maintain our cabin which we have leased for almost 25 years.

We urge you to support HB1348

Thank you,

Cyndi and Jim Wilson

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:33:18 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Conrad	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i am support with the state park admendments . both for the island of kauai and future generations using the park and cabins

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:23:10 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jimmy Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:33:47 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ned Dana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in strong support of **SB 1517** and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

This bill corrects several problems caused by the current regulations that govern leasing of cabins in State Parks.

First, the most recent auction resulted in absurdly high bidding for leases. Local families with limited means had no chance of getting a lease, which was a travesty. The cabins in Koke'e are NOT and have never been only for the wealthy. Many cabins have been leased by local families whose love for Koke'e led to them being excellent stewards of the land and parks. The lottery system with fixed reasonable lease increases is much fairer.

Second, after the State's mistaken decision in 2008 to take ownership of the cabins, lessees no longer had the same incentives to maintain and improve their cabins. This bill provides some new incentives for the lessees, which is important so that some lessees don't simply let their cabins deteriorate. The community of Koke'e is much healthier when cabins are kept in good condition. Improvements in one cabin have a positive influence on the neighbors, and so forth.

Mahalo for your attention to this matter,

Ned, Lawai, Kauai

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:42:29 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Phillips	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

February 24, 2025
JoAnne Kaona
PO BOX 1289 Hanalei HI 96714

Subject: Testimony in Strong Support of SB 1517 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS.

Report Title:Public Lands; Recreation-residence Use Leases; Public Lottery

TO: Senate Judiciary Committee

Aloha Judiciary Committee, my name is JoAnne Kaona and I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 which amends HRS 171-44 to make it a more fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i.

I was born and raised here on Kaua'i. I am a fourth generation native Hawaiian wahine kalo farmer and also work at Waipa Foundation. At Waipa I get to work with keiki from our community and one of my favorite activities is bringing them up to Koke'e. We have worked with DOWFA doing trail maintenance and other malama 'aina projects, but the greatest value is disconnecting the keiki from the technology of today, and creating pilina and a real connection to Koke'e. I remember one keiki saying, "I can't wait to come hike here with my parents and show them all of the work that we did." My hope is to share these beautiful places all around our island with the keiki and inspire them to be the next generation of Aloha 'aina warriors.

Koke'e is a beautiful and special place and it was devastating to be a part of the auction last spring. I was part of a hui with four other local families hoping to lease a Koke'e cabin, but when the auction began it was clear that our budget was nowhere close to where it needed to be. I looked around the room and everyone was outraged and by the end I would describe it as disbelief and sadness, realizing I and many other local Hawaiian families would never be able to afford leasing a cabin. That is why I support this bill SB 1517 to change the process from a ridiculous auction where only the wealthy will be able to lease cabins, to a more fair lottery process giving us locals a chance at a cabin lease.

Mahalo for your time, and again please support SB 1517.

JoAnne Kaona
PO Box 1289
Hanalei HI 96714
jlkaona@gmail.com

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:16:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB1517 and the amendments which are being proposed to state parks. This bill is a fair and equitable process for kauai residents to finally be able to possibly acquire leases for recreational use. The amendments are also very important as they clarify when the BLNR should use lottery and when direct negotiation is necessary. There should be no confusion in the matter in the future!

Thank you for your time, Aloha

TESTIMONY
by
JoAnn A. Yukimura
before the
Senate Judiciary Committee
Re SB 1517

February 24, 2025

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members:

My name is JoAnn Yukimura. I was born and raised on Kaua'i and served as mayor or councilmember on Kaua'i for 28 years.

Today, I speak as a private citizen for myself and my family. We are strongly in favor of SB 1517 as modified by the amendments proposed by State Parks.

Such a bill will at last provide a clear and fair process by which the residential leases to Kōke'e cabins will be leased out. Importantly, it will also clarify when an auction is appropriate and when direct negotiation is appropriate.

Like many of the families who live on Kaua'i, my 'ohana loves Koke'e. It is a place of refuge and rest, where we can enjoy the beauty, peace and rejuvenating power of nature. We go there as often as we can. My husband and I were married there many years ago.

We support SB 1517's proposal of a lottery system among Kaua'i residents as a fair way to distribute the leases. It is the Kaua'i families who can most easily access Koke'e, and it is Kaua'i families for whom the recreational residence program was developed years ago. Kaua'ians love their island home, and most will take good care of the resource if given the proper framework in which to make it all work. SB 1517 with the State Park amendments provides such a framework.

Please pass a properly amended SB 1517 out of committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:25:56 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sami Loidl	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing. As a 24 year old Pacific Islander who won a lease in the 2024 auction, I truly hope another auction is never allowed to take place for a Kōke'e recreational residence cabin again. A fair lottery and solidifying the ability to renew our lease if in good standing will ensure that these cherished cabins stay in the hands of the people who know this land, who love this land, and who will continue to give back to this land. This bill is a step in the right direction for the people of Kaua'i and I ask that you please support SB 1517. Thank you very much. Sami Livé-Loidl, Lot 82.

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:28:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Kinney	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i.

Our family has been hunting Kokee and the surrounding regions of Kauai for generations. We believe in the ways that being on the land and the practice of hunting itself aids in the intergenerational transference of knowledge and traditional ecological knowledge. Unfortunately, as of yet we have not been able to become a leasee of a cabin. Our main goal would be to perpetuate and to care for the knowledge and the region as an embedded practice. It was a long shot in the prior auction, just seeing the type of wealth and resources we were up against. People who speak the language of this region, who know these places intimately and care for these places because it feeds them, could not even come close to winning those auctions. This system needs to find some balance.

The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

Mahalo,

Billy Kinney

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 3:32:04 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joanne Murphy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing."

Mahalo, Joanne Murphy

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 3:35:12 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorraine Wichman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing."

Sincerely,

Anthony and Lorraine Wichman

Koloa, Kauai 96756

Thank you for this opportunity.

I support SB 1517 as a reasonable way to address the inequities of the previous method for assigning leases for properties in the Kokee State Park.

--Jan TenBruggencate, Lihue, Kaua`i

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:59:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maile Walters	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Maile Walters, resident of Kauai and long time enjoyer of Kokee and her forests.

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:14:09 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Allison Guard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

Mahalo nui loa.

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:19:21 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maureen Hiramoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing."

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:29:13 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
marau beck	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing."

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:32:07 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jodie Kona	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Jodie Kona

PO Box 617

Hanapepe HI 96716

Tuesday February 25,2025 @ 7:29AM

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 1517 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS.

To: Senate Committe on JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard,. Vice Chair

"Aloha My Name is Jodie Kona I am writing in extreme strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing."

I am a born and raised local from Kauai I cant express how EXTREMELY important this bill is to the locals of Niihau and Kauai as it authorizes the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) to lease recreational-residence cabins by public lottery and restrict participation in the public lottery to ONLY residents that live in the county in which the leased land is located. This is the most fair and equitable way to do this! For myself I have grown up on the Westside where we spent majority of our time with families and friends up in kokee and I am fortunate to be a part of kokee. I wish to continue to share this with my family for generations to come. Without this bill, I believe that this will be another Piece of Kauai ripped away from the locals! The seven

auctioned cabins that took place 2024 is a prime example. To sit in that room, witness the disbelief, and defeat in local families was the most devastating and heartbreaking thing to ever witness. An auction will only allow the wealthy transplant local residents to get a cabin. Transplant locals have no ties to kokee and will have no interest in being good stewards of the land. Most cabins have been in generational families that have so much historical knowledge of kokee. This Auction should NOT have happened and should not happen again.

By keeping the appraisals for the lease as reasonable will allow cabin leaseholders to affordability continue caring and up keeping these cabins and if they are in good standing that should allow them to negotiate directly with the state to renew the leases I feel is the best way to go about this. Cabin leaseholders put SO MUCH of their hard-earned money and time investing in these cabin and maintaining the yards and surroundings why take this away from them. This would be a positive incentive to upkeep, maintain and financially be in good standing and in return, your lease will automatically be renewed. The one-time fee to transfer leases is also reasonable.

Kokee defiantly has a piece of my heart. My Grandfather, late Gabriel Silva was one of many young men that were housed at the Koke'e Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC camp) between years 1935 and 1942. Their mission was to plant trees for watershed retention and improve park infrastructure following devastation of a large fire in 1887 and subsequent decades of cattle pasturing and overgrazing by feral goats and cattle. Alaka'i Swamp Trail and Hā'ena-Kalalau Trail and Many remote roads were built to access planting areas that are used today as fire roads in case of wildfire. A satellite camp at Waialae was built and part is still used today. The C.C.C. gave the Territory's Board of Agriculture and Forestry a tremendous boast to accomplish forest management and natural resources conservation objectives on Kaua'i. My grandfather was fortunate to still be one of a few men still living to be recognized for these accomplishments up in kokee. Growing up my grandfather installed his knowledge to his family. Kokee will always hold a deep place in my heart. My hopes are that you have read every single testimony as it holds a special meanings to the people of Kauai and Niihau. I thank you for your time. Please do this for the people of Kauai & Niihau.

Mahalo,

Jodie (Silva) Kona

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:37:33 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James L. Cassel Jr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing."

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:39:20 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Sutton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in **strong support** of SB 1517 and the amendments proposed by State Parks.

As a fifth-generation kama‘āina, I have cherished Kōke‘e since childhood. Some of my fondest memories are of spending time in its cool mountain air, exploring its trails, and experiencing the beauty and peace that make it such a special place. Now, as a parent, I want my own children to have the same opportunity to connect with Kōke‘e as I did—to experience its unique charm, build lasting memories, and carry on our deep-rooted relationship with this treasured part of our island home.

This bill is critical to ensuring a **fair and equitable** process for our community to obtain leases for the recreational cabins in Kōke‘e and Waimea Canyon State Parks. Without it, the leasing process will remain unclear, leaving longtime leaseholders and local families at a disadvantage and making Kōke‘e yet another place in Hawai‘i that becomes unaffordable for residents. The amendments proposed by State Parks are also essential, as they provide much-needed clarity on when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery system versus direct negotiation. Ensuring this process is well-defined will prevent confusion for future DLNR leadership and protect fairness for all involved.

Please support SB 1517 and the proposed amendments to help preserve Kōke‘e as a place that local families like mine can continue to enjoy for generations to come.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Andrew Sutton

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:46:51 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Finberg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:56:20 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hikina Chock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing."

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:00:30 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pam Smith Chock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

We are submitting this testimony on behalf of our Smith Chock Ohana of Wailua Kaua'i We are in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also significant as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

Mahalo nui,

Pam Smith Chock

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:06:48 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Kocher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**John
Kocher**

Feb.9th, 2025

P.O. Box 1013

Kalaheo, HI 96741

808-639-2178

DATE: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 9:40 AM

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 1517 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS.

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

**Aloha Chair Rhoads & Vice Chair Gabbard, & members of the Senate
Committee on Judiciary,**

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua‘i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the

lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

I ask for you to support SB1517 and the lottery for Kauai and Niihau residence only and allow those in good standing with the State to negotiate their next lease.

Thank you very much for considering these thoughts.

Aloha,

Jed Kocher

Lot 7, Halemanu Kauai, Hawai'i

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:17:24 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sasha Doorish	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Sasha Doorish

P.O. Box 1023

Koloa, HI 96756

DATE: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 9:40 AM

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 1517 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS.

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. I truly believe this bill is critical to making a fair and equitable process for our Kauai Ohanas

to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. When attending the last 2 cabin auctions here on Kauai, it was such a difficult and heartbreaking situation to see countless locals be out bid, even when multiple families were trying to Hui together by poeple not of our community!

The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

I again humbly ask for you to support SB1517 and the lottery for Kauai and Niihau residence only and allow those in good standing with the State to negotiate their next lease.

Thank you all for your time and consideration in this matter that so many of us Kauaians hold so dear in our hearts.

Mahalo and Aloha,

Sasha Doorish

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:19:49 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pat gegen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing."

Lea Weldon
P.O. Box 1665
Hanalei, HI 96714

February 25, 2025

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 1517 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS.

TO: Senate Committee on JUDICIARY

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

My name is Lea Weldon and I grew up on the north shore of Kaua'i, have worked for Waipā Foundation for the past 20 years, and Halele'a is my home community. Kōke'e is my absolute very favorite place in the world. I have spent so much time up there, as a child, throughout my life, and now as a mother bringing my children to my favorite place multiple times a year. I was so excited a few years ago to hear about the auction that took place this past April. I knew this was my chance to get a cabin and be able to spend even more time in the place I love the most. I strategically put together a hui of friends that I knew were trustworthy, and had good skills to make the potential of reviving a dilapidated cabin into a life long dream come true. I was prepared to do whatever it took to take one of these cabins and turn it into a home away from home. Everything and anything, aside from the one thing that would make it impossible...paying way more than I or anyone I know could afford. The day of the auction came and I was so excited. The first cabin bidding rolled around and within seconds my heart was broken and my dreams shattered. As that first cabin went, I knew they all would be the same. I was in absolute shock and disbelief of the kind of money and people who were there to win most of the bids.

The auction system for the Kōke'e cabin leases need to be restructured so this NEVER happens again. The cabins should be in the hands of long term local Kaua'i families, not people who just moved here with deep pockets. The last thing our Kaua'i community needs is for the people moving here, buying up all the land and houses, and driving up housing costs to get all of our Kōke'e cabins too. If there is a lottery at least local families will have an equal chance to get a cabin.

I see now that it is equally important to keep the cabins in the hands of the lessees who have been good stewards, although it makes my personal chance lower to get a cabin. Most of the cabins are in the hands of local families and this is how it should be.

Mahalo for considering this bill and I strongly urge you to support SB 1517.

Mahalo piha,



Lea Weldon

LATE

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 11:20:44 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anne W English	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

Thank you very much for your consideration,

Anne English

PO Box 389

Lawai, Kauai, Hawaii

LATE

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 2:45:10 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Harvest Edmonds	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

Mahalo,

Harvest Edmonds

LATE

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 2:55:39 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patti Moana Huff	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by the state parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kauai. The amendments being propped by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board Of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Patricia and Kevin Huff

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 3:00:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Guard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing - Thank you for your kind consideration, Matt Guard

LATE

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:39:02 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Iao Edmonds	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing."

Thank you for your time,

Iao Edmonds

LATE

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 6:41:12 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter Baldwin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TO: SENATORS JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing.

My wifes family lost their cabin in 1985 auction, and were never paid for the cabin. It was stolen from them and the cost of litigation was more than the cabin was worth. Please support this bill to see that the animosity it created never happens again.

As current leaseholders, we love the area, share oure our cabin with family and friends, help who are lost, and are grateful to have the opportunity to do our part in maintaining such a unique community.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

LATE

SB-1517

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 8:20:45 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 9:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Fehring	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"I am writing in strong support of SB 1517 and the amendments which are being proposed by State Parks. This bill is critical and will finally make it a fair and equitable process for our community to acquire leases for the recreational residence cabins in Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks on the island of Kaua'i. The amendments being proposed by State Parks are also very important as they clarify when the Board of Land and Natural Resources should use the lottery and when they should use direct negotiation. We do not want future leaders in the DLNR to have any confusion over the process this bill is proposing."