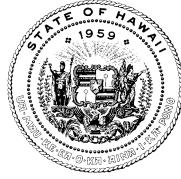


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII

JOSH GREEN
LT. GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII



WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.
CHAIRMAN
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION

TYLER I. GOMES
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRMAN

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**

P. O. BOX 1879
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM J. AILA, JR, CHAIRMAN
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
HEARING ON MARCH 10, 2022 AT 1:00PM VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**SCR 15/SR 9 REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME
LANDS IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT VERY LOW INCOME NATIVE
HAWAIIAN BENEFICIARIES**

March 10, 2022

Aloha Chair Shimabukuro, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Hawaiian Home lands (DHHL) submits comments on these resolutions requesting that DHHL implement programs to support very low income native Hawaiian beneficiaries. DHHL appreciates the motivation behind these resolutions, but notes that any proposed “non-traditional” programs designed to provide beneficiary applicants with awards quickly recognizing the financial constraints should consider first the Non-Traditional Awards Evaluation that was completed and shared with the Hawaiian Homes Commission at its meeting in November 2019 that can be accessed here: [file:///P:/Shared/HHC%20Packets/2019/11%20November%20\(Kula%20Community%20Ctr\)/November%2018%20&%2019,%202019%20HHC%20Meeting%20Agenda,%20Kula,%20Maui%20PACKET.pdf](file:///P:/Shared/HHC%20Packets/2019/11%20November%20(Kula%20Community%20Ctr)/November%2018%20&%2019,%202019%20HHC%20Meeting%20Agenda,%20Kula,%20Maui%20PACKET.pdf). The evaluation notes that while the number of lessees receiving awards increased significantly, the most significant weaknesses of the programs are that it took much longer than expected for lots to be improved and lessees to be able to move into their awards.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



**Department of Land and Natural Resources
Hawaii State Aha Moku
State of Hawaii
Post Office Box 621
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809**

Testimony of
Hawaii State Aha Moku

Before the Senate Committee on
Hawaiian Affairs

Thursday, February 10, 2022
1:00 P.M.
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

**In SUPPORT of
SCR 15 / SR 9**

SCR 15 AND SR 9 REQUESTS THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT VERY LOW-INCOME NATIVE HAWAIIAN BENEFICIARIES.

The Hawaii State Aha Moku (Aha Moku) supports this measure.

The Hawaii State Aha Moku System encompasses the eight main Hawaiian Islands and supports the traditional and generational knowledge of the people who are connected to each of the 46 moku and 606 ahupua'a. The system was brought forward from the 9th century, a time where sustainability and protection of resources ensured existence. It was a time where the focus of the people of the land was on survival.

Today the host culture of Hawaii, the native Hawaiians, many of whom are Hawaiian Homes beneficiaries are in complete and critical survival mode. Many beneficiaries who are lessees have multi-generations living in one house. These are the beneficiaries who are fortunate enough to have leases. Many of those who continue to be on the waiting list are cultural practitioners who depend on the natural and cultural resources to survive.

Programs that are designated to support very low-income beneficiaries are truly needed as soon as possible.

Respectfully yours,

Kawaikapuokalani Hewett, Ka Mea Ho'okumu, kahalelehua@outlook.com
Rocky Kaluhiwa, Kahu Nui O Pae'Aina, rockykaluhiwa1122@gmail.com
Leimana DaMate, Luna Alaka'i/Executive Director, leimana.k.damate@hawaii.gov

Hawaii State Aha Moku

SCR-15

Submitted on: 3/7/2022 11:20:49 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/10/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kellii w. ioane jr.	Testifying for M.A.H.A Homestead Association	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha kākou, ‘o Skipito Ioane kēia.

I am writing in support of bill SCR 15 because of the spiraling cost of home ownership in Hawai'i. The Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL), is federally charged to place its beneficiaries, Hawaiians of 50% blood quantum, on the land for the purpose of re-establishing their familial connection to the land, i.e; keiki o ka ‘āina. At present, the economic migration of Hawai'i's residents to Las Vegas is evidence that we cannot afford the present rate of home ownership in Hawai'i. When Prince Kuhio created the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HCCA) in the 1920's, the primary requirement was the koko i loko (blood). Financial ability was not entered into the frame of thought, the thinking was, to live without fear. Presently, the beneficiaries living on the beaches or on the sidewalks in tents, live with fear of re-location by State and County officials daily. It is my belief, that a larger percentage of the beneficiaries on the waiting list may never qualify for a bank loan, therefore, effectively denying them the journey back home. Living in a tent is the economic velocity that they can afford, and, they should not be penalized. The waiting list will not change unless our thinking changes. The creation of tent cities on Hawaiian Home Lands in my opinion, may not change the economic velocity of the people in poverty, but will create a safe zone living area for raising their families. Examples and proof can be found within the experience of my village, King's Landing, in settling Hawaiian Home Lands since 1975. For example, community management plans, sanitation, building codes, democratically chosen organization, etc.

Mahalo.

Kūpuna for the Mo'opuna
committed to the well-being of Hawai'i for the next generations to come
kupuna4moopuna@gmail.com



SCR15 / SR9 - REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT VERY LOW INCOME NATIVE HAWAIIAN BENEFICIARIES. Committee on Hawaiian Affairs 3-10-22 1:00p

COMMENTS

We, Kūpuna for the Mo'opuna, a hui of homestead kūpuna farmers from Pana'ewa, Hawai'i, remind the Hawaiian Homes Commission and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands of their fiduciary duty to faithfully administer the provisions of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) on behalf of the native Hawaiian beneficiaries of the Act.

The Hawaiian Homes Commission (HHC) / Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) have authority over HHCA lands. They must exercise their decision-making powers now to protect these trust lands for all beneficiaries – those on the waitlist and those on the land – of every economic level.

The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act gives authority to the HHC and the DHHL to place native Hawaiians on the land in a prompt and efficient manner and to prevent alienation of HHCA lands so that these lands will always be held in trust for continued use by native Hawaiians in perpetuity. These principal purposes are in the Act; place beneficiaries on the land now and stop legal thievery!

While the 28,000 waitlisters continue to wait, the state legislature continues to give away HHCA / DHHL lands in 99-year long-term leases to **non-beneficiaries** (just a very few examples: 2018 - SB3058, Act 149 ... 2020 - HB2191... 2021- HB499, Act 239) which include leases for commercial, industrial, and hotel or resort purposes eligible for “**disposition by negotiation**”... “**backdoor deals**” (2022- SB 3133) **giving away our beneficiary lands to non-beneficiaries when the DHHL waitlist is over 28,000. Auē!**

The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act is clear. Put native Hawaiian beneficiaries on the land now and stop legal thievery.

~ Kūpuna for the Mo'opuna, Pana'ewa, Hawai'i



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

To: The Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Chair
The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair
Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Re: **SCR 15 / SR 9 – REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS IMPEMENT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT VERY LOW INCOME NATIVE HAWAIIAN BENEFICIARIES**

Hearing: Thursday, March 10, 2022, 1:00 p.m., Conference Room 016 and Via Videoconference

Position: Strong Support

Aloha, Chair Shimabukuro and Vice Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i strongly supports SCR 15 / SR 9 and requests that these measures be PASSED by your Committee. This bill requests the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to implement programs to support very low income native Hawaiian beneficiaries.

The Environmental Caucus supports these measures as support is seriously needed by very low income native Hawaiian beneficiaries, many of which have been on the residential or agricultural waitlists for many years. Hawaii has one of the worst homeless rates in the country, historically being the No. 1 state per capita having the highest rate of homelessness, when measured by the number of homeless per 10,000 people. Further, Hawaii's homeless population contains a disproportionately high number of native Hawaiians.

The request for flexibility in allowing tents or other temporary structures on 99-year leases; Puuhonua O Waianae or other village-style living; temporary structures on vacant lots; and payment of land taxes for those who had to seek other residence outside of DHHL lands while on its waitlist are all viable options for very low-income native Hawaiian beneficiaries during the interim while seeking resources to build permanent residential homes.

Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity to testify. Please pass these resolutions.

Respectfully submitted,

Melodie Adyja and Alan Burdick

Co-Chairs, Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i

SCR-15

Submitted on: 3/5/2022 9:32:01 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/10/2022 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I especially like the idea of more pu'uhonua.

SCR-15

Submitted on: 3/8/2022 2:51:39 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/10/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexandra Ruiz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaiian Home Lands program claims it exists to “provide native Hawaiians with several benefits that [will] assist [Hawaiian] ‘ohanas for generations,” according to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands government site. By applying to the program, native Hawaiian applicants must prove their blood quantum and supply documents in the hopeful exchange of securing a stable future and “ownership” of affordable land that they can care for as their own. Often, Native Hawaiian families who apply and are approved must relocate from where they have lived for generations to a new piece of land, one which often cannot be developed. All the while, thousands of native Hawaiians die while on the waitlist and Native Hawaiian families who receive land are unable to afford the cost of living on that land within the rules and regulations

There is currently a disproportionate number of Native Hawaiians who are experiencing houselessness, all while land remains undistributed. I am in support of this bill and its suggestion that the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands consider purposing land and funds to better serve families who need financial support or accommodations to those who have been given land to enable better care of ‘ohana. When the resources are available to a government body that is purposed to help Native Hawaiian families, I believe is the responsibility of the government entity to make those resources more readily available to those in need.