



ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS

P.O. Box 1135 Honolulu, Hawaii 96807

TESTIMONY OF LEIMOMI KHAN, PRESIDENT
ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS
IN SUPPORT OF

LATE TESTIMONY

HB 949 – RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION ACT

**HOUSE COMMITTEES ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS AND
WATER, LAND, AND OCEAN RESOURCES**

February 11, 2009

Chair Carroll, Chair Ito and Members of the Committee:

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (AHCC) supports HB 949. We are a proponent of this legislation that would enhance the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands ability to generate income and long-term economic growth in support of its trust and homestead communities.

At its recent convention, the AHCC adopted a resolution in support of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands initiatives to diversify its funding sources, recognizing that current resources are insufficient to address the growing needs of the Department. It has been estimated that the Department will need in excess of \$1.5 billion to meet the homeownership needs of those native Hawaiian families most in need, that is, at or below 80% of the median family income.

Currently, the Department receives \$8.5 million per year in federal housing block grant funds and those funds are cut annually and only restored with strong intervention by Hawai'i's Congressional delegation, and it receives \$30 million per year through Act 14, SpSLH 1995, a settlement with the State of Hawai'i which will end in 2013. It also derives approximately \$12 million annually from its set aside landholdings of less than 1%.

Thus, there is no one source of funding, whether Federal, State, or the Department itself, that can satisfy the projected needs. Accordingly, it is important to provide the DHHL the ability to diversify its sources of funding; allowing the Department to extend its general leases to 99 years will help to achieve this end.

The Association is a growing national confederation of fifty-five Hawaiian Civic Clubs, located throughout the State of Hawai'i and in the States of Alaska, California, Colorado, Illinois, Nevada, Utah, Virginia, Washington State, and Tennessee. It initiates and works to support actions that enhance the civic, economic, educational, health and social welfare of our communities, and in particular, the culture and welfare of the Native Hawaiian community. Of particular note, our organization was instrumental in assisting Prince Kūhiō in passing the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920.

We respectfully urge you to support House Bill 949.

TESTIMONY OF CRAIG "BO" KAHUI, DIRECTOR
KANIOHALE COMMUNITY HOMESTEADERS ASSOCIATION
ON **HOUSE BILL 949**
BEFORE THE JOINT HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS AND
WATER, LAND AND OCEAN RESOURCES

February 11, 2009

LIVE TESTIMONY

Chair Carroll, Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee:

Mahalo for this opportunity to **testify in support** of this bill that enables the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to extend the terms of its non-homestead land use agreements from 65 years to 99 years. My name is Craig "Bo" Kahui, and I am a lessee residing in Kaniohale, in Kealakehe, Kona, Hawai'i. I am also the Executive Director of La'i 'Opua 2020, a 501C-3 corporation whose mission is to plan, design, and construct community facilities to include a preschool, medical & clinic, community center, inter-generational day care facility, gymnasium, aquatic center, and social services center.

As a leader of a Hawaiian homestead community association, I respectfully urge that you pass this bill. Through its various non-homestead land dispositions, the department generates revenue that supports programs that reach all the beneficiaries of the Hawaiian Home Lands trust, including all the lessee families in the Villages of La'i 'Opua in Kealakehe.

I support this bill for two primary reasons. First, by being able to extend the terms of the lease to 99 years, the department can attract the best lessees, commercial and others, to maximize the revenue generated on these lands. This change in policy means more revenue for the trust to continue to build more homes and means DHHL applicants are a step closer to opportunities for homeownership. These revenues can also be used by DHHL to help fund homestead community centers and facilities which build stronger and healthier Hawaiian communities.

Second, these extended lease terms can attract larger commercial projects that bring jobs to nearby communities, like Kaniohale and other neighborhoods in Kealakehe. Jobs close to home can mean a higher quality of life and less traffic within our community.

I respectfully ask that you approve this bill and thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Craig "Bo" Kahui
Director
Kaniohale Community Association.



KO'OLAUPOKO HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB

February 11, 2009

LATE TESTIMONY

TO: Rep. Mele Carroll, Chair
And Members
House Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Rep. Ken Ito, Chair
And Members
House Committee on Water, Land & Ocean Resources

FROM: Mahealani Cypher, President
Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club

SUBJECT: H. B. 949, Relating to the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act

The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club has concerns about House Bill 949, which would authorize the department of Hawaiian Home Lands to issue long-term commercial leases on homestead lands. We urge that this bill be amended to address the following concerns.

While we find the intent of the bill commendable, we note that there are inadequate safeguards to protect the interests of native Hawaiians – for whom the Act was passed by the U.S. government – as beneficiaries of this legislation. We do not believe the DHHL should have “carte blanche” authority without the oversight of the Legislature to grant 100-year leases for large tracts of land for commercial development.

There are notable potential auxiliary concerns as well, and we urge caution and full accountability as to what lands would be leased and who benefits from the transaction. In our view, it is insufficient to claim that this new authorization would provide sufficient economic stimulus to benefit those for whom the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act was established.

Mahalo for this opportunity to share our mana'o.

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