

The Honorable Senator Laura H. Thielen
Chair, Senate Committee on Water and Land
State Capitol, Room 231
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

March 20, 2015

Aloha mai e Senator Thielen:

Re: Governor's Message No. 515, Nomination of Kekoa Kaluhiwa
Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources

Mahalo for your letter dated March 9, 2015 providing questions in which to assist the Senate with its constitutionally mandated responsibility to confirm gubernatorial nominees. In response, I humbly submit the following answers and attached resume as part of my public testimony.

1. Please provide a list of the core State values that the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) is charged to protect.

- To enhance, protect, conserve and manage Hawai'i's unique and limited natural, cultural and historic resources including land, water, air, minerals and energy sources. The State (by way of DLNR) shall also promote the development and utilization of these resources in a manner consistent with their conservation and in furtherance of the self-sufficiency of the State. All public natural resources are held in trust by the State for the benefit of the people.
- To preserve and protect customary and traditional practices of native Hawaiians.
- To maintain the public's right to access ancient trails. Under the public trust doctrine, all public lands and interests in such lands are held in trust for the benefit of the people and must be preserved and maintained for public purposes. Today, this includes public thoroughfares and easements, by means of roads, bridges, streets, etc. The doctrine also applies to navigable waters, shoreline lands below the upper reaches of the wash of waves, lava extensions, and water resources.
- To hold lands resulting from the Admissions Act as a public trust for native Hawaiians and the general public.

2. What is your assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of DLNR? Please include an explanation of how the strengths may be best utilized, as well as how the department/agency's weaknesses may be improved.

STRENGTHS:

- Dedicated and knowledgeable staff. Some have many years of service at DLNR with great institutional knowledge.
- Hawaii's natural and cultural resources are the State's most important physical asset and legacy. They affect both residents and visitors, making the fulfillment of DLNR's mission an important issue and rallying point for other organizations and the general public.

CHALLENGES:

- Public awareness and understanding of DLNR's vast responsibilities in resource management may be limited.
- Budget reductions and lack of adequate funding for programs.
- Staffing vacancies in various Divisions.
- Heavy workloads that require some staff to regularly work beyond a 40 hour work week.
- Being a large department with 10 Divisions with varying missions can be challenging for staff to collaborate on issues.
- With nearly 900 employees, it can be difficult for staff to understand and appreciate the extent of services provided by DLNR beyond their own Division.
- DLNR staff positions for the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Whale Sanctuary are federally funded and have been severely affected by sequestration that threatens the State's representation in the management of these programs.
- The Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission has exhausted its federal funding to continue restoration and educational programs on Kaho'olawe.

HOW STRENGTHS CAN IMPROVE AGENCY CHALLENGES:

- Staff focus groups and/or administrative staff retreats should be organized to discuss the challenges in filling staff vacancies, as well as to identify methods in which to create work flow efficiencies within DLNR.
- To encourage stakeholder understanding and appreciation of DLNR, project site tours should be arranged for legislators, policy makers and partner organizations to meet the dedicated and knowledgeable staff.

- Use of video production and social media should be encouraged as integral tools for public education and outreach.
- Opportunities for staff to collaborate or witness the work of other Divisions besides their own should be encouraged. Such opportunities will lead to greater self-awareness of DLNR's many responsibilities and contribute towards building employee morale.

3. Please explain the efficiencies you mean to bring to DLNR.

I will work collaboratively with the Chair to do the following:

- DLNR has a number of staff vacancies. I will consult with the Chair, Human Resources staff of DLNR and the Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD) to better understand the challenges that prevent the timely filling of staff vacancies.
- Many DLNR offices on O'ahu and the outer islands have video conferencing capability. I wish to encourage staff to utilize the technology where possible.
- The state Department of Health (DOH) created new programming software that simplifies and streamlines the drafting and review process of general contracts they issue. I will coordinate a discussion with the Chair and pertinent staff to verify if such software can be used at DLNR.

4. What is your plan to help DLNR's many different divisions work more fluidly together, and would any particular divisions be an initial priority for you?

As Deputy Director, I will encourage the Chair to continue a weekly meeting of Division Administrators to identify projects that require collaboration among Divisions. I will also seek the advice of support staff within the Chair's office to assist with cross division project coordination and to ensure that traditional and customary practices are considered when initiating and/or reviewing matters before me. After consulting with the Chair to identify my areas of responsibility, I plan to meet with Division Administrators on a regular basis to discuss issues of concern and identify how I can best support their efforts at the legislature or in coordination with the Administration.

Based on my preliminary discussions with staff, my initial priority will be to work with the Chair in filling the Deputy Director position for the Commission on Water Resource Management and administrative position(s) within the Division of Aquatic Resources.

The 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress being hosted by the State of Hawai'i is a priority for me. With DLNR as the host state agency, I expect to be intimately involved in the fundraising and logistical planning for the conference.

5. According to your resume, you were the principal of a consulting firm. Please provide a list of your clients and a description of the services you provided each client.

Hawai'i Pilots Association

Proofread legislative language for submittal to the 2015 Hawai'i State Legislature that would require periodic training for pilot license renewal.

Horizon Lines, Inc.

Attended monthly Hawai'i Harbors Users Group meetings and provided meeting minutes to company executives; helped to plan milestone groundbreaking events; assisted with proofreading company correspondence to the Department of Transportation Harbors Division regarding an added line of business in processing the transport of military vehicles in and out of Hawai'i; assisted company executives in strategizing campaign contributions and necessary reporting to the Hawai'i Campaign Spending Commission; assisted in monitoring legislative bills that could impact the local maritime industry; registered as a lobbyist for Horizon Lines, Inc.

Ku'iwalu Consulting

Assisted with logistics planning for public hearings held by the U.S. Department of Interior regarding federal recognition of Native Hawaiians. My duties were to set-up the sound system and serve as timekeeper for the meetings.

NextEra Energy

Retained to assist with community consultation efforts specific to the development of an electric transmission cable between O'ahu and Maui. In January 2014, I attended two Public Utilities Commission (PUC) public meetings on O'ahu and Maui to observe and report back to company executives. Since the PUC did not select a developer nor release a finding in favor of a cable, I did not conduct any community outreach. As an independent consultant, I was not aware of nor did I participate in strategy discussions regarding NextEra's other interests in Hawai'i including solar and wind development and the pending proposal to purchase Hawaiian Electric Company.

Young Brothers, Inc.

Provided legislative monitoring during the 2014 state legislative session; primary bills of interest related to funding for invasive species inspections and possible restructuring of the Public Utilities Commission; registered as a lobbyist for Young Brothers, Ltd.

6. You served as Director of External Affairs for First Wind Energy:

- **Please describe your role in the community outreach and any other efforts you were involved in during the company's effort to develop three utility-scale wind farms on two islands.**

As Director of External Affairs, I assisted the project developer with community consultation efforts, government relations, legislative monitoring, and the handling of local media communications. Much of my time was spent on hosting tours of the projects on Maui and O'ahu, giving presentations at energy conferences and to energy policymakers, and providing project updates to neighborhood boards and community associations.

In respect to the Hawaiian concept of caring from "mauka to makai", I always viewed my role to be that of advocating a holistic approach to renewable energy development that provided benefits beyond just building a clean, local energy supply. I advocated that the company commit to long-term community benefit opportunities and partnerships with local environmental and cultural groups to ensure native plants and cultural resources in the project areas are protected and respected. I also encouraged company staff to engage with communities surrounding the wind projects, to have an appreciation for Hawai'i's host culture, and to volunteer their time and expertise to help schools and nonprofit groups in the local community.

While I may have been an employee of First Wind Energy, I believed my role was to serve as an advocate for the host communities where the projects were built. This meant being willing to consult with as many individuals and organizations as I could, to truly listen to their input whether for or against the project, and to provide honest feedback to company executives.

7. The announcement of your appointment stated that you have "the education and skillset to carry out his kuleana in an ever changing world", and states that you will make a difference.

- **Please describe the skillset you would bring to DLNR.**

From an early age, my kūpuna and parents taught me the importance of being humble, compassionate, respectful, and to lead by example. As I join the DLNR 'ohana, I aspire to be a good listener, a collaborator, and a servant leader.

My college undergraduate and graduate education included coursework in political science, management theory, economics, climate change, land tenure and wildlife management. This cross section of coursework gives me a broad foundation in which to understand the work of DLNR and the necessary management and people skills needed to effectively support the department.

In working for the Honorable U.S. Senator Daniel Akaka for 11 years, I dealt with many constituents who were disgruntled with the federal government. I was able to assist many of them in resolving their issues of concern, and through the years, I was able to hone my listening skills and remain compassionate for people in need. Today, I maintain a positive relationship with Members of Hawai'i's congressional delegation and staff that could be helpful to DLNR as we seek federal funding or agency partnership opportunities.

- **Please describe any specific differences you would like to make at DLNR.**

While at DLNR, I would like to assist in creating greater public awareness of the work done by the dedicated staff. I would also encourage employees to seek out innovative opportunities to engage with the public. It is my understanding that a number of employees regularly work beyond a 40 hour work week to keep up with their workload. I want to find ways in which to improve workflow processes and help the Chair to fill staff vacancies so that current employees can have work-life balance and more time to be with their families.

- 8. Provide a description of any volunteer activities, especially those pertinent to the mission of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, including any service on boards or other positions in organizations, or other community service projects or activities. Please include your time commitment.**

Hunter Education Program, Department of Land and Natural Resources
Volunteer Instructor
2007 - 2011

Agribusiness Development Corporation
Board Member
May – July 2014

Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club
Member
2009 - Present

Kualoa-He'eia Ecumenical Youth (KEY) Project
Board Member
Jan. 2012 – Dec. 2014

Kāne'ohe Neighborhood Board
Board Member
March 2011 – August 2012

Policy Advisory Council for Weatherization, Office of Community Svcs, DLIR
Member
Jan. 2010 – Dec. 2012

Hawai'i Academy of Recording Arts
Member
2005 - Present

Holunape, Nā Hōkū Hanohano award winning Hawaiian music band
Group Leader
1999 – Present

9. Is there any other information regarding your experience and background that you believe should be considered by the committee?

I was born and raised in Kāne'ohe, and I intend on living in these islands for the rest of my life. Therefore, I am committed to ensuring that my 'aina hānau is properly cared for and that the outdoor activities I experienced as a child will be available for my children and future generations.

As an avid outdoorsmen and accomplished Hawaiian musician who has travelled the world to share songs inspired by Hawai'i's unparalleled beauty and cultural heritage, being in public service in this capacity would be a true privilege. I believe that my personal and professional experiences allow me a greater understanding of the cultural and environmental significance of DLNR's kuleana.

I believe that fear is the result of misunderstanding, and that it is important to listen intently and seek to understand others before wanting to be understood. And so throughout my life journey, I have tried to maintain an open-mind, and an open heart. Seeking balance in any conversation, honoring the wisdom of our

kūpuna, and encouraging the voices of those who may not always be heard are ways in which I commit to support DLNR and the people of Hawai'i.

10. Are there any situations where you can foresee recusing yourself from a decision as the Chair of DLNR on the grounds that you have, or there is an appearance of, a bias or favoritism?

As Deputy Director, it is my understanding that I am ineligible to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources and Water Commission in the absence of the Chair. Therefore, I do not expect to have decision-making authority in such a capacity.

If there is a matter before the DLNR involving any of the clients I served, I would consult with the Chair and/or Attorney General for guidance. If there appears to be a conflict or if there is an undue advantage for the company, I would recuse myself.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to these questions. I look forward to the opportunity of serving our cherished Hawai'i nei.

Na'u me ka mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kekoa Kaluhiwa". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Kekoa Kaluhiwa

Attachment: KWK Resume

Kekoa W. Kaluhiwa

Employment History

Principal, Kuano'o Communications LLC

Honolulu, HI
Dec. 2012 – Jan. 2015

- Provided government and public relations strategies to help clients achieve desired outcomes
- Detailed services included legislative lobbying, bill tracking, drafting of testimony, media monitoring, state permitting facilitation and strategic community outreach planning
- Helped clients to understand the unique cultural and environmental challenges in doing business in Hawai'i

Director of External Affairs, First Wind Energy

Honolulu, HI
Feb. 2010 – Dec. 2012

- Served as government, community and media relations representative for the largest renewable energy provider in Hawai'i
- Maintained positive relationships with federal, state and county officials, tracked legislation, drafted testimony and managed campaign contributions and ethics reporting
- Organized community outreach strategies which led to the successful construction of three utility scale wind farms on O'ahu and Maui with a combined investment of nearly \$500 million
- Successful development strategies led First Wind to receive the prestigious 2012 Honua Award from the Blue Planet Foundation

Executive Assistant, Office of U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka

Honolulu, HI
June 1999 – Feb. 2010

- Served as a constituent services liaison with issues including veterans and social security benefits, immigration and housing
- Served as energy and natural resources liaison between 2008 - 2010; participated as a member of the Hawai'i Energy Policy Forum
- Participated as a member of the PJKK Federal Building Tenant Security Committee and the PJKK Federal Building Tenant Board
- Selection committee member for the U.S. Senate Youth Scholarship and Robert C. Byrd Scholarship

Graduate Intern, Land Assets Division of Kamehameha Schools

Honolulu, HI
May – August 2008

- Researched easement variances for Bishop Estate properties in Punalu'u, O'ahu
- Educated staff on hunting regulations/nuisance control laws in Hawai'i; assisted in drafting a hunting application for Bishop Estate properties in an effort to minimize liability for the organization
- Monitored ungulate control efforts for Bishop Estate property in He'eia, O'ahu

Fellow, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Seattle, WA
June 1998 – May 1999

- 3 month work rotations with the Seattle Housing Authority, Seattle Samoan Center and Pacific American Foundation

Intern, Office of U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka

Washington, D.C.
June – September 1996

- Assisted staff with legislative research and drafting of responses to constituent concerns
- Drafted a report on the roles and responsibilities of a congressional member's staff
- Answered constituent inquiries and led constituent tours of the U.S. Capitol

Education

Master's Degree in Public Administration
with an emphasis in Environmental Planning and Management Theory
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

May 2008

Master's Degree *Candidate* and HUD Fellow
Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs
University of Washington

June 1998 – May 1999

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a Minor in Society & Justice
University of Washington

June 1998

High School Diploma
Kamehameha Schools

May 1994

Community Involvement

- Agribusiness Development Corporation, Board Member May - July 2014
- Kualoa-He'eia Ecumenical Youth (KEY) Project, Board Member 2012 - 2014
- Kāne'ohe Neighborhood Board, Board Member 2011 - 2012
- Policy Advisory Council for Weatherization, Office of Community Services
DLIR, State of Hawai'i, Member 2010 - 2012
- Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, Member 2009 - present
- Hunter Education Program, DLNR, State of Hawai'i, Volunteer Instructor 2007 - 2011
- Hawai'i Academy of Recording Arts, Member 2005 - present
- Holunape, Nā Hōkū Hanohano award winning band, Group Leader 1999 - present

References

Available Upon Request

