



*KŪKULU KE EA A KANALOA*  
**KAHO'OLAWÉ ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION**

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**Testimony of  
MICHAEL K. NĀHO'OPT'I  
Executive Director**

**Before the House Committee on**

**WATER, LAND & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**Wednesday, January 29, 2020  
10:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1880  
RELATING TO KAHO'OLAWÉ ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION**

House Bill 1880 appropriates funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for the operations of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission and for 2 full time equivalent positions on the Commission. The Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) strongly supports this measure.

Since the end of the Navy's unexploded ordnance cleanup in 2004, the KIRC has begun a race against time to stem erosion and further degradation of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve. The KIRC has since initiated numerous restoration projects, financed by state funds and various grant opportunities, that has made significant changes to transforming the desolate hardpan into vibrant living landscapes.

The KIRC first began receiving state general funds in the administration's budget in the fiscal year 2018-2019 biennium budget. The initial funding supported 15 FTE staff and operating funds for our Maui office and Kihei Boathouse. In fiscal years 2019 and 2020, the KIRC Cultural Resource Project Coordinator position was restored and \$100,000 in operating funds were added. The provided support has helped our efforts, but in order to effectively continue on-island operations, additional funds are necessary. The KIRC is requesting additional operating funds and personnel to support our efforts to restore the island, protect endangered and rare flora and fauna and ensure the safety of visitors to Kaho'olawe.

The key to the KIRC's restoration efforts is the many volunteers that we bring to Kaho'olawe to help with native out plantings, erosion control construction and invasive weed eradication. The additional funds will finance key support services such as operating the Kaho'olawe base camp facilities, generating power and water, and maintaining vital infrastructure, equipment and vehicles. The additional funds will also support critical safety systems such as medical supplies, safety equipment and emergency transportation.

The additional KIRC positions are critically vital as the KIRC has observed a recent increase in unpredictability and severity of weather and ocean conditions in the waters surrounding Maui and Kaho`olawe most likely due to climate change and global warming, which has resulted in an increase need for additional manpower to safely and effectively operate the KIRC ocean vessel. Additionally, our Kaho`olawe field teams also need additional field support as we have been successful in expanding our restoration efforts to create more native dryland forest habitats, expand beach restoration and shoreline protection efforts, cultivate food sustainability and increase on-island water generation, collection, storage and distribution systems.

Testimony of Carmen Hulu Lindsey  
Commissioner of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission

Before the House Committee on Water, Land, & Hawaiian Affairs  
Wednesday, January 29, 2020  
10:00 A.M.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

In consideration of  
**HOUSE BILL 1880**  
**RELATING TO KAHO‘OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION**

Aloha e Chair Yamane and Vice Chair Todd:

My name is Carmen Hulu Lindsey and I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1880, which appropriates funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for the operations of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission (“KIRC”) and for two (2) full-time equivalent positions on the Commission. **These additional operating funds and personnel will assist in supporting our efforts to restore the island, protect endangered and rare flora and fauna, and ensure the safety of visitors to Kaho‘olawe.**

In June 1993, the Hawai‘i State Legislature enacted Chapter 6K of the Hawai‘i Revised Statutes, which established Kaho‘olawe and the waters surrounding it as part of the public land trust. The transfer and control of Kaho‘olawe was placed under the responsibility of KIRC in the Department of Land and Natural Resources. Chapter 6K enumerates four exclusive and perpetual purposes and uses of the island: (1) the preservation and practice of traditional and customary Native Hawaiian rights for “cultural, spiritual, and subsistence purpose”; (2) the preservation of the island’s “archaeological, historical, and environmental resources”; (3) “rehabilitation, revegetation, habitat restoration, and preservation”; and (4) education. Since that time, KIRC has initiated multiple restoration projects, financed by state funds and various grant opportunities that have made significant changes to transforming Kaho‘olawe into a pu‘uhonua with vibrant, living landscapes.

To fulfill its high fiduciary duties, the State must use reasonable skill to make Kaho‘olawe productive. Although KIRC was created to administer the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve, the State remains ultimately responsible for the fulfillment of its trust duties and must, at a minimum, provide KIRC with sufficient resources to do its job. Although the State created KIRC to fulfill its responsibilities, the previously KIRC relied substantially on the Kaho‘olawe Rehabilitation Trust Fund (“KRTF”), composed of the \$44 million appropriated by Congress back in 1993 to carry out long-term planning, environmental restoration, and other archaeological and educational activities relating to Kaho‘olawe. KIRC used KRTF to pay for the salaries of operational and administrative employees, base camp operations, and other high expenses (e.g., safety issues related to unexploded ordinance) related to its restoration and cultural programs. Although KIRC has reduced its costs in the past, the reduction could not prevent the continued depletion of the KRTF. Additionally, as Commissioners, we must be wary of reducing our goals

and expectations and instead, must focus on balancing our financial constraints with what is necessary to continue progress against the erosion Kaho‘olawe faces.


In 2015, Hawai‘i state representatives introduced bills in both the Senate and the House of Representatives to appropriate general funds to KIRC for the fiscal year to “effectively meet the unique challenges of restoring, preserving, and determining the appropriate uses of Kaho‘olawe” for the people of Hawai‘i through restoration processes. KIRC first began receiving state general funds in the administration’s budget in the fiscal year 2018-19 biennium budget, with initial funding supporting 15 FTE staff and operating funds for our Maui office and Kīhei Boathouse. General funds provided in the fiscal years of 2019-20 allowed us to restore our cultural Resource Project Coordinator position and add \$100,000 in operating funds.

Additional funds will finance key support services, such as operating the Kaho‘olawe base camp facilities, generating power and water, maintaining vital infrastructure and equipment, and support critical safety systems. **Additional positions are critically needed as KIRC has observed a recent increase in unpredictability and severity of weather and ocean conditions in the waters surrounding Maui and Kaho‘olawe most likely due to climate change, which has resulted in an increased need for additional manpower to safely and effectively operate the KIRC ocean vessel. Additional field support will assist in our ongoing expanded restorations to create native dryland forest habitats, expand beach restoration and shoreline protection efforts, cultivate food sustainability, and increase on-island water generation, collection, storage, and distribution systems.**

Although these supports have helped our efforts, KIRC seeks financial support from its trustee, the State, to continue operation for restoration. KIRC needs State support for its basic administrative and operating costs. As its designated trustee, the State is entrusted to use reasonable care in making the trust property productive. The State’s failure to financially support KIRC will represent a breach of that duty. With a reduced budget, KIRC will have less money for restoration projects and progress will suffer accordingly.

Given the historical and cultural importance of Kaho‘olawe and its role in the future Native Hawaiian governing entity, I stand in strong support for the creation of these two positions. Increased general appropriates will assist in providing for KIRC’s administrative and operational needs so that administrative staff can focus on funding restoration projects that can target erosion control and ordinance cleanup necessary to make the island safe and accessible. The general public and native Hawaiians have entrusted the State with moral responsibilities of the highest degree, and the State has the kuleana to fulfill this obligation to assist in bringing back to the island.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,



Carmen Hulu Lindsey  
Commisisoner, Kaho‘olawe Islnad Reserve Commission

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 12:40:57 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michele McLean	County of Maui / former KIRC commissioner and chair	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice-Chair Todd, and Members of the Committee on Water, Land and Hawaiian Affairs,

Please support HB1880 to provide \$500,000 in operating funds to the Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) and \$72,000 for two additional personnel.

As a former KIRC chairperson, commissioner and staff member, I can attest that any funding for the KIRC is money well spent. It is amazing how much the KIRC can do with so little money and so few staff. By relying on volunteers, meaningful restoration work continues on Kahoolawe each month, while hundreds of people from throughout Hawaii each year are able to experience the rewards of helping to transform a former bombing range to thriving native ecosystems. Even more important is the opportunity that Native Hawaiians have to connect with their culture, many for the first time.

Thank you for your support of Kahoolawe, KIRC and HB1880.

Mahalo,

Michele McLean, AICP

Plannign Director, Maui Count

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 7:04:10 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mark Hyde	South Maui Citizens for Responsible Growth	Support	No

Comments:

Kao'olave is a unique island providing all of us with a Hawaiian cultural preserve, one which has been abused in the past but is now under inspiring rehabilitation which should continue with your support.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/26/2020 10:02:39 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ronald S. Fujiyoshi	Ohana Ho`opakele	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, representatives!

Although I truly believe that the US military bears the fundamental responsibility for cleaning up Kahoolawe Island, due to climate change every bit of land in Hawai`i is precious.

We all have a responsibility to protect the Aina. We should continue to allow KIRC to restore the island so the land can restore itself. Until then, please use our financial resources to help restore this island.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in favor of this bill!

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/26/2020 6:10:46 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kylee Mar	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.



**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/26/2020 6:24:05 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members,

My name is Benton Kealii Pang. I support HB1880. I worked on Kaho'olawe Island from 1997-1999 as part of the military contractor charged to clean the island of unexploded ordnance and protect both its native habitats and historic sites. The funding being requested will provide additional financial support and staff for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. Funding for KIRCs programs will help to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

Please pass HB1880.

Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/26/2020 7:46:50 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anela Evans	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island. As both a volunteer and formwe staff member of the KIRC, I can attest to the diligent care and hard work of the KIRC and their staff.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/26/2020 7:52:25 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Farron Cabral	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha!

I had the awesome opportunity to visit Kaho'olawe for the very first time in late 2019. It was truly an amazing life changing experience. The work being done on the island is phenomenal despite the island not even being completely cleared of ordinances. The work being done by KIRC, contractors, and volunteers is simply phenomenal and should be supported. It's just plainly our kuleana. By "our" I mean everyone living in Hawai'i to restore Kaho'olawe to a greater state. Please, I humbly ask you all, to support this bill to continue funding for KIRC. I also encourage everyone to experience the awesomeness that is Kaho'olawe with KIRC if you haven't already!

Mahalo for your time!

Farron Cabral

Wailuku, Maui

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/26/2020 8:14:55 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jeeyun Lee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. I have been there first hand and have seen first hand how they have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

Mahalo,

Jeeyun Lee

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/26/2020 8:47:33 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Andrew Fox	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha! I am writing in support of HB 1880 in order to continue the important work that KIRC has begun to restore the ecology of Kahoolawe. It is now abundantly clear that all of Hawaii is suffering from the impacts of climate change, and the easiest and most affordable action we can take is reforestation. The environment on Kahoolawe has been abused for decades, and KIRC is leading the way on demonstrating effective counter measures. All the islands have the same issues, but to a lesser degree than Kahoolawe, including erosion, degradation of the watersheds and marine environment- reforestation addresses all of these!

Please vote yes for HB 1880 for our future!

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 5:55:45 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael McCoy	KIRC	Support	No

Comments:

I'm not Hawaiian nor am I a resident of Hawaii, but like many non-natives and non-residents, I've found myself completely at the mercy of these beautiful islands and their culture and history. Not just from the time of Captain Cook on, but before that as well.

Driving around Mau'i a few years back, I never saw Kaho'olawe in the distance but that I didn't immediately felt a pang of sorrow and regret for such an historic and holy place to be abused like that. While Hawaii now stands a mecca of sorts for cultural and ethnic plurality living in harmony, it's been done at so much expense to the indigenous population and much of its land and ecosystem.

I'm sure it wasn't the blind intent of the US Government to use Kaho'olawe in such a way as it did, but what's done and done, and maybe it can't all really be undone, but we owe it as a people to do the best that we can to restore it to its original character, both because it's the right thing to do and as a debt of gratitude that these wonderful islands has given the wider world.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/26/2020 11:59:23 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
johann winkler	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 5:30:29 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Bob Law	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members,

On my volunteer work party week, I have personally seen the positive affect that KIRC has made in reversing the ecological damage to Kahoolawe. I support this measure and truly believe that the additional staff and financial support will help not only Hawaii residents, but also volunteers all over America, understand the importance of healing and preserving Kahoolawe as an important part of Hawaii's cultural history.



**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 5:59:02 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lewis Weil	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 7:11:33 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Robert Cole	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission.

This is an important step to take for all the people of Hawaii, and indeed for all mankind.

They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

Mahalo,

Robert Cole

Pukalani, HI

My name is Terri Gavagan and I am writing in support of HB1880, Relating to the Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission.

I ask you to support this important measure to provide financial support and stability of the restoration and protection of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve, which will benefit all of Hawai'i's people for generations to come. My family has been greatly changed by Kaho'olawe. It has influenced my teenage daughter's decision to eventually become a marine biologist and eventually work to protect Kaho'olawe's precious marine resources. She is currently working toward her dream at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.

This funding and the requested positions of KIR Specialists will help the KIRC maintain its current operations to protect and restore Kaho'olawe as well as to provide safe and meaningful access to the Reserve.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 8:30:12 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Carmela Noneza	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 8:42:16 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Hawkins Biggins	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members,

I have been lucky enough to attend two volunteer work experiences on Kaho'olawe and have seen and experienced the benefit to the Aina and the participants. Their program is a key to the healing of both the history and island of Kaho'olawe. Therefore, I strongly support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho'olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

Mahalo,

S. Hawkins Biggins

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 9:13:45 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shannon Kaneko	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 10:46:21 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Arragon Kekoawiwaole Mowat	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members,

I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

Mahalo,

Kekoa Mowat

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 11:05:02 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
James Bruch	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I, James Bruch, support HB 1880.

Kaho'olawe is not only an island but it is also a special place for the people of Hawai'i. One of the KIRC missions is to manage and preserve the island for future generations. The KIRC has been fulfilling this duty since inception but limited funding has not only hampered this ability but has threatened the overall mission.

There is a deep spiritual connection of people to the island as the restoration of the land is akin to a healing. The restoration process is paramount to a place that has been desecrated by many years of overgrazing, bombing, target practice and fires. Since the end of the UXO Clearance Project the KIRC has brought out thousands of volunteers to the island with the intention of not only restoring the island but to educate the people of Hawai'i of the significance of the island in Hawaiian culture. The connection of people and place cannot be understated for the island of Kaho'olawe. The island is a showcase for sustainable technology, environmental awareness, restoration and Hawaiian learning. The proposed bill will help maintain the infrastructure to continue this effort.

HB1880 will add two full time positions and assist in the management of the Reserve and the restoration of Kaho'olawe, thus helping fulfill the overall mission of the KIRC to manage and preserve the island for future generations. Please support HB 1880.



**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 2:46:03 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Larry Lee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1880

1/27/2020

Dear Chairs and committee members:

In October 2019, fourteen of us trail clearers from the Hawaii Trail and Mountain Corp. were privileged to spend a 4-day service trip to Kaho’olawe as guests of the Kaho’olawe Island Reserve Commission (“KIRC”). Please be informed that we fully support HB 1880. We are extremely impressed with the professionalism, dedication, cultural knowledge, enthusiasm, ingenuity, frugality, performance and hospitality of the KIRC staff. Mr. Paul Higashino was an outstanding example of those qualities.

Before the trip, we attended an excellent orientation to educate us about Kaho’olawe and to prepare us for the service trip. It was conducted by Mr. Mike Nahoopii, KIRC’s executive director. On the first day of the trip, we participated in a brief chant to show our respect for the island. This was an interesting start. During our stay, we removed (by the roots) a large grove of invasive koa haole trees. We were also shown historical sites, learned about the island’s native culture and witnessed innovative plant restoration techniques. The staff’s knowledge and resourcefulness are impressive. Old donated china dishes, remnant rope, rocks and branches are used as windbreaks and as soil and moisture catchments for newly planted seeds and seedlings on extremely hard, barren and windswept grounds. It was amazing to see how these seemingly simple techniques could restore plant life in such a hostile environment. We are impressed by how the staff constantly strives to improve and develop new plant growing methods using simple materials coupled with a big dose of creativity, hard work and common sense.

The entire operation is also an excellent example of how self-sufficiency can work. Solar power, desalination for potable water, composting outhouses, water catchments, recycling waste, etc. Nothing seems to go to waste. Very impressive and encouraging.

Finally, we would like to thank the Legislature for creating and supporting such a worthwhile and valuable KIRC program. You have every reason to be proud of what you are accomplishing through KIRC. Not only are you having a positive impact in restoring

Kaho'olawe's environment and culture, but many of the agricultural techniques being used and developed by the program will someday, if not already, be useful throughout the state particularly in arid and denuded areas. The same can be said of its self-sufficiency example.

Very truly yours,

Larry Lee

[larrycylee@aol.com](mailto:larrycylee@aol.com)

(808) 263-4690

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 1:35:50 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Fern Duvall II	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chairs and all Committee members, I strongly support this legislation that would provide for new additional funding. It will allow for the much needed staff support for the Kahoolawe Island reserve Commission. This will allow for advancement of needed restoration initiatives, for example to remove predators of seabirds, and eventual re-establishment of native Hawaiian biota to more of Kahoolawe.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 2:39:08 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Serafina Gajate	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support the continued restoration of Kaho'olawe Kanaloa. This site is critically important ecologically, culturally and historically, and it should be returned to its former pre-desecration state, from before widespread ranching and bombing activities were carried out on the island.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 3:11:22 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cassandra L. Smith	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

- Cassie Smith

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 4:01:07 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Carissa Holley	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

I had the once in a lifetime opportunity to visit the island with KIRC in December. I expected to work hard, to see baren land, and to see little vegetation. This experience went far beyond my expectations. There was progress, greenery, and a sense of connectedness to the land once I planted native plants. I was not expecting to have such a strong emotional connection to Kaho`olawe, but this island speaks to those who are open to listening.

Please let Kaho`olawe speak to your heart. More resources are necessary to restore this island, to continue to bring staff on to make progress. This island has so much to teach our keiki to kupuna. It feeds us knowledge, and we must reciprocate.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 8:17:05 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Paul Hanada	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairman Yamane, Vice Chairman Todd and Members of the WHL committee,

I have been a Kula resident of Maui for 69 years. As kids, my parents used to take my two brothers and I fishing at Oneloa Beach at Makena. We would see and hear the bombs drop on Kahoolawe while fishing and/or at home. There were times when the dishes would rattle and the whole house would shake.

Several years ago I was fortunate to visit the island as a guest of two friends who were with the original PKO (Protect Kahoolawe Ohana). As we traveled the island with an escort, my two friends would explain the history and describe their experiences. It was an incredible trip that I wish everyone could experience.

The one thing that I did notice was that KIRC (Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission) is in dire need of funding to help with all the necessary functions to restore/heal the island.

Please support HB1880.

Thank you.

Paul Hanada Kula, Maui, Hawaii

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 9:18:33 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lopaka White	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



**Chair Mr. Ryan Yamane**  
**Water, Land, & Hawaiian Affairs (WLH)**

<b>BILL</b>	<b>HB1880</b>
HEARING	Wednesday, January 29th, 2020 at 10:00am
LOCATION	State Capitol, 415 South Beretania St. Conference room 325

**IN SUPPORT of HB1880:**  
**RELATING TO THE KAHO`OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION**

Chair Mr. Yamane, Vice Chair Mr. Todd, and members of the committee of Water, Land, & Hawaiian Affairs, thank you all for being here today and for providing an opportunity to hear testimony on HB1880 “Relating to the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission.” My name is Sarah Balmilero and I am a graduate student in UH Mānoa’s Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. I am here as an individual to testify in support of HB1880, which will provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission, also known as KIRC.

In past history, as we know, the entire island of Kaho`olawe was used as a training ground and bombing range by the Armed Forces of the United States for half a century. Out of the innumerable tests and detonations, the three conducted in 1965 during Operation Sailor Hat were certainly the most damaging. While trying to determine the effects of a nuclear weapons blast, three explosions were set off, each containing 500 tons of conventional TNT. With an effect equivalent to a 1 kiloton TNT nuclear weapon, the blasts created huge craters on the island and most likely cracked the island’s water table, causing extensive groundwater loss (McGregor, 2007). Year after year, topsoil eroded away and endemic flora and fauna were lost. Along with ecosystem decimation, Native Hawaiian cultural sites, shrines, and petroglyphs were also destroyed and access to the land or ocean around the island was not safe.

After the death of two activists and the arrests of many others, live firing on Kaho`olawe ceased in 1990 and an effort to remove unexploded ordnance and environmental hazards was initiated (McGregor, 2007). Since this clearance did not completely remove all hazardous materials from the island and surrounding water, a level of danger still remains. Despite this and by state law, Kaho`olawe and its waters can now be used only for Native Hawaiian cultural, spiritual, and subsistence purposes, with all commercial uses prohibited (McGregor, 2007). With this access came the discovery that over 544 archaeological and historical sites had survived the years of bombing, which qualified the island to be added to the Nation Register of Historical Places.

During my high school years, I have had the incredible opportunity to attend access trips to Kaho`olawe with both the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission and Protect Kaho`olawe Ohana. The purpose of these accesses was to protect both natural and historical resources on the island through erosion control tactics, planting endemic vegetation, and revitalizing cultural

practices. These opportunities had truly helped me to understand various protocols and nature-based connections that are central to the well-being and cultural sustainability of the Hawaiian people. All in all, these experiences have allowed me to begin to find my place within our community and discover my own connection with spirituality.

The Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission has displayed leadership and initiative by demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage, even after years of neglect and abuse. KIRC is dedicated to preserving Native Hawaiian history and helps to connect residents like me with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work that integrates a culturally competent perspectives into all programs and activities. Kaho`olawe is a sacred place that needs to be protected and I believe that HB1880 will help to ensure that the island is preserved and accessible for future generations to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sarah Balmilero  
Individual

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 11:16:23 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ruth A. Ravina-Koethe	KIRK	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRK). I have experienced first hand the work done on island, where individuals and groups have come together guided by the vision of KIRK and others to continue the growth of the aina and the people. If it were'nt for our leaders demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on this sacred island we would all be at a great loss. I urge you to help give all of Hawaii's people this gift, show support for HB 1880. Mahalo, Ruth Ravina-Koethe

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 5:46:39 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kelvin Ho	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Commitee Members

I'd like to submit testimony in favor of supporting this measure. As an individual and 30 yr member of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, I am voicing strong support for the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve commision. I have seen first hand the dedication and comittement they have in the restoration of a sacred place, the countless results in their labors. They have and continue to play a very major role in the restoration and healing of a place and people. Please support this measure for very justified finacial support that will enable then to continue and expand in their noble efforts.

Mahalo, Kelvin Ho

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 7:39:07 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Margaret Pulver	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

House Bill 1880 appropriates funds to support the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. As a long time volunteer with both the KIRC and the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, I strongly supports this measure.

This funding is necessary for the KIRC to effectively meet the unique challenges of restoring, preserving and managing the appropriate, safe uses of the Reserve for the people of Hawai'i. Funding will enable the continuation of innovative KIRC land and ocean restoration programs for the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve and entrust a unique and critical opportunity to introduce, encourage and develop the next generation of land, ocean and cultural resource managers through an integrated mauka to makai volunteer program. Through immersive, hands-on experiences within a cooperative natural and cultural resource management system, these opportunities incorporate both traditional indigenous practices and modern scientific methods.

This request includes funding to support current KIRC staffing and operations for Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021, as well as two full-time positions. The KIRC's management and control of Kaho'olawe is not only restoring the ecological damage on Kaho'olawe and protecting its endangered and rare flora and fauna, but ensuring the meaningful and safe use by the people of Hawai'i that fortify the Reserve.

This funding will support the KIRC's efforts to restore the island's Dryland Forest and coastal ecosystems, protect the endangered and rare flora and fauna that can be found on Kaho'olawe, and ensure safe and meaningful access to the Reserve.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 8:41:54 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dean Tokishi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 10:28:49 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Matt Hatakeyama	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

House Bill 1880 appropriates funds to support the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. As a long time volunteer with both the KIRC and the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, I strongly supports this measure.

1. funding most critical in the continuation of KIRC's restoration, preservation and management of the Reserve. Ultimately returning the Reserve to the safest possible us for the people of Hawaii. Through this round of funding, KIRC will continue the cutting edge land and ocean restoration programs. funding is a key cog in the integration of mauka to makai; past, past, present and future. Thus leaving the next 12 generations with a brighter legacy, bridging modern scientific methods with traditional indigenous practices.

This request includes funding to support current KIRC staffing and operations for Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021, as well as two full-time positions. The KIRC's management and control of Kaho'olawe is not only restoring the ecological damage on Kaho'olawe and protecting its endangered and rare flora and fauna, but ensuring the meaningful and safe use by the people of Hawai'i that fortify the Reserve.

This funding will support the KIRC's efforts to restore the island's Dryland Forest and coastal ecosystems, protect the endangered and rare flora and fauna that can be found on Kaho'olawe, and ensure safe and meaningful access to the Reserve.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 3:15:00 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Phil Herres	Individual	Support	No

**Comments:**

Aloha Chairs and committee members,

I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

I found the work I did on the island to be much more meaningful than expected, and experienced both the success of what has been accomplished and the very large task ahead to complete it. This is a public good well worth supporting.

Thank you,

Phi Herres



**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 5:51:14 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM



<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Amy Fonarow	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and Committee Members,

I support increasing the funds and personnel available to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission, and I ask respectfully that you consider doing the same. Please choose to move HB 1880 forward.

I have been one of the lucky few to experience firsthand the diligent, practical, and inspirational work the KIRC is doing to restore the island. This kinolau of Kanaloa has been known to be sacred ground for hundreds of years, but to see it begin to come back now - and for we volunteers to be able to aid in the transformation safely guided by the KIRC - is extremely important.

Thank you for all that you've done so far for the KIRC and its volunteers. Thank you for continuing to support Kaho'olawe and the KIRC by moving forward HB 1880.

Mahalo nui,

Amy Fonarow



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

**LATE**

Testimony of  
Leimana DaMate, Executive Director

Before the House Committee on  
Water, Land and Hawaiian Affairs

Wednesday, January 29, 2020  
10:00 A.M.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

In **SUPPORT** of  
House Bill 1880  
**Relating to the Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission**

House Bill 1880 appropriates funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for the operations of the Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) and for 2 full-time positions on the Commission.

The traditional and cultural families who have historically been connected to Moku O Kanaloa, Island of Kahoolawe, are part of the Hawaii State Aha Moku and strongly support the restoration of life on the Island. This includes their on-going efforts of bringing volunteers, many of whom are native Hawaiians, to help with plantings, erosion, invasive weed eradication. Together, we work to restore Moku O Kanaloa to what it should be. A place of great significance to the Hawaiian people, it needs the kokua of the legislature in operating the base camp, safety measures, medical supplies and many other areas that are needed to continue restoration.

We support this measure and ask this committee to adopt it. Mahalo nui loa!

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 6:22:53 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM



<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sarah Wiebe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 7:23:41 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

**LATE**

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Caitlin Garcia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I had the pleasure of participating in a volunteer service trip with KIRC back in October 2019 with the Hawaiian Trail and Mountain Corp. It was a paradigm shifting experience for me to say the least. As someone who has lived on Oahu for the last 20 years, Kaho'olawe can sometimes feel like the "forgotten island". It was only after my visit that I understood what a special place it truly is.

I believe you'd be hard pressed to find a more dedicated and welcoming crew than the staff of KIRC. Even though we were there to work, they really took the time to explain the history and cultural significance of the island, as well as explain the hardships and successes they are encountering in the restoration process.

I am reminded of the popular quote from Jacob Riis: "When nothing seems to help, I go and look at a stonecutter hammering away at his rock perhaps a hundred times without as much as a crack showing in it. Yet at the hundred and first blow it will split in two, **and I know it was not that blow that did it, but all that had gone before**"

While progress may seem slow and efforts may feel insignificant, with time and diligence the island can thrive once again. The evidence is already appearant.

Thank you for your consideration,

Caitlin Garcia

**LATE**

Aloha Chairs and Committee Members,

I fully support HB #1880 which would provide financial and staff support for the Kaho‘olawe Island and Reserve Commission. The restoration and preservation of Kaho‘olawe’s cultural, archaeological, and ecological environments is imperative in assuring its existence for future generations.

I would like to share a personal story coming from the perspective of an aerial photographer currently working on a large photographic body of work documenting the anthropogenic impact and climate change happening here in Hawai‘i.

In August 2019 I received permission from the KIRIC commission to visit Kaho‘olawe in order to historically document from the air the archaeological, cultural and environmental landscapes of the island. During our over flight, photographer Bruce Omori and I were accompanied by Eric Brudage ZAPATA’s General Manager Manager, Pacific division. Mr. Brudage provided us with insight on the historical perspective and landmarks, as well as the current restoration efforts that were in the process. We were amazed to see how effective the planned plantings were in fighting the erosion and abuse that was inflicted on Kaho‘olawe. In my research I knew what Kaho‘olawe looked like in the 1990’s just as the restoration was beginning. The abuse of the land was haunting, and the restoration was indeed a daunting one. As I looked at Kaho‘olawe that August day, I was astonished and filled with hope at what I was documenting. I could see if given more time and resources how Kaho‘olawe could once again be restored to its former beauty.

It is very clear that the KIRIC has been diligent in taking the lead in reversing the ecological damage/abuse that has been inflicted on its sacred landscapes. Kaho‘olawe is a story of hope and what can be accomplished when we work together. It is my hope that you will vote to support the financial and staffing needs to continue the important work that KIRIC is doing on Kaho‘olawe - for its future and for future generations.

For Kaho‘olawe,

Leslie Gleim

Below are images photographed from that day.



**HB-1880**

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 6:06:09 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/29/2020 10:00:00 AM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Joshua Kaakua	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Todd, and members of the Committee on Water, Land and Hawaiian Affairs;

Please accept this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1880.

Funding for this bill is needed to provide for the safety of Kaho'olawe volunteers and the hardworking staff of the reserve. From my perspective as Chair of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission and kua with Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, Kaho'olawe is a model of Aloha 'Aina stewardship that many in our community deserve and that the State should support with confidence. I encourage legislators to exercise courage in their advocacy for KIRC, Kaho'olawe lands and waters, and the values that honor our island home's past, current and future generations. Aloha 'Aina, MĀ• lama 'Alna.