

James Carpio

## Response to Chair Lee and the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

April 11, 2026

The Honorable Chris Lee Chair,  
Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts Hawai'i State Senate  
State Capitol Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha Chair Lee and Members of the Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this statement regarding my nomination to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources. I am honored by the nomination and grateful for your consideration.

I do not view this opportunity simply as an appointment. I view it as a serious kuleana to serve the people of Hawai'i with humility, good judgment, and respect for our lands, waters, and cultural heritage. With that in mind, I respectfully offer the following responses.

### 1. Why do you wish to serve as a member of the Board of Land and Natural Resources?

I wish to serve because I believe the stewardship of Hawai'i's land and natural resources is one of the most important responsibilities in public service. The decisions made by this Board affect not only the use of land and water today, but also what we leave behind for future generations.

My interest in serving comes from a genuine respect for the 'āina and for the communities whose lives are closely tied to it. I believe that service on this Board requires aloha 'āina, balance, and a willingness to listen carefully before making decisions. I would consider it an honor to contribute in a way that is thoughtful, responsible, and grounded in what is pono for Hawai'i.

### 2. What is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Board of Land and Natural Resources?

My understanding is that a member of the Board has a duty to act as a careful steward of public trust resources. That means making decisions that are lawful, transparent, fair, and guided by the long-term interests of Hawai'i.

The Board's responsibilities are broad and significant. They include oversight of public lands and natural resources, review of permits and leases, protection of environmental and cultural resources, and consideration of how decisions affect local communities, Native Hawaiian practices, public access, and economic activity. In my view, a Board member must come prepared, study the issues carefully, listen to testimony with respect, and make decisions independently and responsibly.

I also understand that this role carries a deep public trust. The work of the Board calls for humility, patience, and accountability, because its decisions can have lasting effects on people, places, and traditions throughout our islands.

### 3. Based on your understanding of the role and responsibilities of this position, please explain why you believe you are qualified to serve. Include a brief description of the skills, experience, expertise, or knowledge you would bring to the Board and how they would inform your decision-making.

I believe I am qualified to serve because my background has given me practical experience in conservation, agriculture, construction development, and housing. Through that work, I have seen firsthand how land use decisions can affect communities, livelihoods, natural resources, and long-term planning.

Over the years, I have developed an appreciation for the need to balance competing interests carefully and fairly. My experience has taught me the importance of preparation, listening, and understanding how decisions made at the policy level affect people on the ground. I have also learned that good decisions require both common sense and respect for process.

Living and working in Hawai‘i, and especially on Maui, has given me a strong understanding of how closely our communities are connected to the land. I would bring to the Board a practical perspective, a steady work ethic, and a commitment to making decisions that are informed, balanced, and mindful of both present needs and long-term stewardship.

### 4. If confirmed, what goals or priorities would you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

If confirmed, one of my main priorities would be to help strengthen public trust in the Board’s work by supporting decisions that are thoughtful, transparent, and well grounded. I believe the public should have confidence that matters before the Board are being considered carefully and fairly.

I would also want to support the protection of Hawai‘i’s natural and cultural resources while recognizing the need for practical and balanced decision-making. Where environmental, cultural, community, and economic concerns intersect, I would hope to contribute to outcomes that reflect lōkahi and remain faithful to the Board’s legal and public responsibilities.

More broadly, I would hope to serve in a way that reflects respect for the seriousness of the position and for the people of Hawai‘i who are affected by the Board’s decisions.

### 5. Do you believe there is anything that could reasonably be perceived by the public as creating a conflict of interest or otherwise raise questions regarding your character, judgment, or ability to serve impartially on the Board of Land and Natural Resources? If so, please explain.

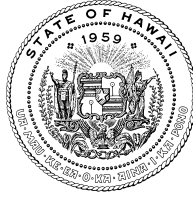
At this time, I am not aware of any matter that would prevent me from serving fairly, responsibly, and impartially on the Board. If confirmed, I would take seriously my obligation to identify any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest and to address them in accordance with applicable ethics requirements and Board procedures.

I understand that public confidence depends not only on fairness in fact, but also on the appearance of fairness. If any matter were to arise that could reasonably call my impartiality into question, I would disclose it promptly and take the appropriate steps, including recusal if necessary.

Mahalo again for the opportunity to submit this statement. If confirmed, I would be honored to serve with humility, diligence, and respect for the people, places, and traditions of Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

James J. K. Carpio



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

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

Testimony of  
**Josh Green, M.D.**  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

Before the  
**Senate Committee Water, Land, Culture and the Arts**

Wednesday, April 15, 2026  
1:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

In consideration of  
**Governor's Message No. 638**

Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture, and the Arts:

I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of Governor's Message No. 638, the appointment of James (Jay) John Kamealoha Carpio to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources for a term to expire on June 30, 2029.

James (Jay) John Kamealoha Carpio is a Native Hawaiian born and raised in Wailuku, Maui. He is a co-founder of Maui Nui Makai Network and The Limu Hui, and has played a key role in revitalizing the Maui Nui Marine Resource Council. As Chair of its Fish Committee, he also co-founded the Wailuku Coastal Managed Makai Area.

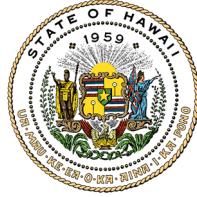
Mr. Carpio's experience in Hawai'i's land, water, and marine resource management, combined with his work as a hunter and guide, rancher, master fisherman, and farmer, reflects a lifetime of hands-on conservation and dedicated 'āina stewardship in service to the public.

I am confident that Mr. Carpio's experience and record of service demonstrate his qualifications for this appointment, and I am pleased to offer my full support for his nomination.

Mahalo for your consideration.

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

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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

Testimony of  
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
Acting Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on  
WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Wednesday, April 15, 2026  
1:00PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224

In consideration of  
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 638  
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO  
THE BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,  
JAMES CARPIO  
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE JUNE 30, 2029

Governor's Message 638 submits for consideration and confirmation, James Carpio, to the Board of Land and Natural Resources (Board). **The Department of Land and Natural Resources supports this nomination.**

Mr. Carpio, a Native Hawaiian born and raised in Wailuku, Maui, brings a lifetime of hands-on conservation experience and stewardship of Hawai'i's natural resources. He has worked as a hunter and guide, rancher, land manager, fisherman and farmer, providing him with a deep, practical understanding of the realities involved in caring for Hawai'i's land and marine environments. Mr. Carpio is a co-founder of the Maui Nui Makai Network and The Limu Hui, organizations dedicated to restoring nearshore ecosystems and advancing traditional resource management practices. As chair of the Maui Nui Marine Resource Council Fish Committee, he co-founded the Wailuku Coastal Managed Makai Area, helping expand community-based marine management across Maui Nui.

Mr. Carpio holds a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture and horticulture from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. His experience working closely with communities to mālama 'āina and manage natural resources will be a valuable asset to the Board.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of James Carpio.



Yamamoto | Hetherington  
a limited liability law company

April 13, 2026

Senator Chris Lee, Chair  
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Water,  
Land, Culture and the Arts

Writer's Direct Dial: (808) 540-4503  
Writer's Email: [jyamamoto@yamamotolaw.com](mailto:jyamamoto@yamamotolaw.com)

**Re: GM638 – James J K Carpio – Board of Land and Natural Resources**

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts:

My name is Jodi Yamamoto, and I am an attorney with Yamamoto Hetherington, LLLC, which practices in the areas of energy, telecommunications, finance, real estate, and health care. I have been practicing for 30 years, and for the past 18 years, have focused much of my practice in the energy and telecommunications space. I am pleased to submit this letter of support for Mr. Carpio to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources ("Board").

Mr. Carpio's distinguished career and deep commitment to Hawaii's land and marine environments make him exceptionally well-qualified for this appointment.

Mr. Carpio brings over 30 years of expertise in agriculture, conservation, and project management, with a proven track record in sustainable land and marine resource strategies, community building, and public-private partnerships. His background reflects precisely the breadth of knowledge that the BLNR requires.

As Managing Principal of Conservation Agriculture Services Hawai'i, LLC, Mr. Carpio has managed land resources and implemented conservation strategies, including protective measures to preserve critical agricultural areas. As Manager of the Wailuku Community Managed Makai Area, Mr. Carpio built community capacity for marine conservation. His hands-on experience directly informs the BLNR's core mission of stewardship over Hawaii's public land and natural resources.

Mr. Carpio's community service record is equally impressive. He has advocated for land preservation and sustainable practices through the Hawaii Land Trust since 2007 and has served in leadership roles with the Maui Nui Marine Resource Council, the National Marine Sanctuary Water Quality Working Group, the Maui Coral Reef Recovery Team, and numerous other organizations dedicated to Hawaii's coastal and marine environment.

Mr. Carpio holds a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, providing a strong academic foundation that complements his decades of practical experience.

Senator Chris Lee, Chair  
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts  
April 13, 2026  
Page 2 of 2

In summary, Mr. Carpio's unique combination of professional expertise, community leadership, and demonstrated commitment to environmental stewardship makes him an excellent candidate for the Board. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at the numbers listed above. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter of support for Mr. Carpio and for your consideration of my comments.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jodi S. Yamamoto', written in a cursive style.

Jodi S. Yamamoto  
for  
YAMAMOTO HETHERINGTON  
A Limited Liability Law Company



Yamamoto | Hetherington  
a limited liability law company

April 13, 2026

The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair  
The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Writer's Direct Dial: (808) 540-4501  
Writer's Email: [dyamamoto@yamamotolaw.com](mailto:dyamamoto@yamamotolaw.com)

**Re: GM 638 – James “Jay” Carpio, Nominee to the Board of Land and Natural Resources**

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee:

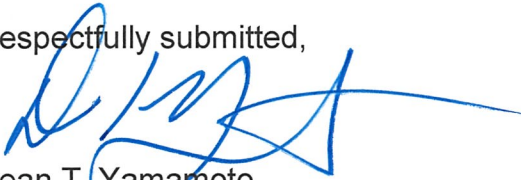
It is my pleasure to submit this letter in strong support of GM 638, the confirmation of James “Jay” Carpio to the Board of Land and Natural Resources. I am an attorney in private practice in Hawai'i, and my work regularly involves land use, infrastructure, agriculture, conservation, and natural resource matters that frequently come before the Board. Based on my familiarity with those issues and with Mr. Carpio's professional and community background, I believe he is exceptionally well qualified to serve on the Land Board.

Mr. Carpio brings more than thirty years of hands-on experience in agriculture, land stewardship, marine conservation, and community-based resource management in Hawai'i. Born and raised in Wailuku, Maui, his career reflects a deep, lived connection to the land and ocean, and to the working communities that depend on them. His professional experience spans ranching, farming, conservation agriculture, workforce housing initiatives, and leadership roles in community-managed makai areas and region-wide conservation efforts across Maui. This breadth of practical experience provides him with a grounded understanding of the complex and often competing interests the Board must weigh in carrying out its public trust responsibilities.

Equally important, Mr. Carpio has demonstrated integrity, sound judgment, and an ability to work constructively across sectors, perspectives, and communities. He understands that responsible resource management requires respect for culture and tradition, protection of natural resources, and support for sustainable local economies. His long record of public service and community leadership reflects a genuine commitment to mālama 'āina and to thoughtful, balanced decision-making. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to recommend confirmation of Mr. Carpio's nomination under GM 638.

The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair  
The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
April 13, 2026  
Page 2 of 2

Respectfully submitted,



Dean T. Yamamoto  
for

**YAMAMOTO HETHERINGTON**  
A Limited Liability Law Company

April 14, 2026

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President  
and Members of the Senate  
Thirty-Third Legislature  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

**Re:** *Strong Support for Confirmation of James John Kamealoha Carpio, Board of Land & Natural Resources (Gov. Msg. No. 638)*

Dear President Kouchi and Distinguished Members of the Senate:

I write today with deep conviction and personal knowledge to urge your confirmation of James John Kamealoha Carpio to the Board of Land and Natural Resources. I have had the privilege of working alongside Jay for more than fifteen years, side by side in the field and at the table, on efforts to restore the coastal resources, reefs, and fish populations that define who we are as a people of these islands. I can say without reservation that this appointment represents exactly the kind of leadership the Board needs at this critical moment for Hawai'i's land and ocean heritage.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources carries a profound kuleana, to protect, manage, and restore the natural and cultural resources of our state in trust for all the people of Hawai'i, present and future. That mission demands not just technical expertise, but a lived understanding of these 'aina and kai, a deep respect for the communities who depend on them, and the wisdom to balance competing demands with both fairness and aloha. James Carpio embodies all of these qualities in ways that are rare and invaluable.

### **A Proven Steward of Ocean and Land Resources**

Jay and I worked together through the Maui Nui Marine Resources Council, where he chaired policy discussions and helped guide our community toward grassroots, bottom-up approaches to coastal restoration. What set Jay apart was not just his knowledge; it was his method. He understood intuitively that the most durable conservation solutions are those that communities build themselves, honor cultural practices, and are grounded in the traditions of pono fishing and subsistence that have sustained Hawaiian communities for generations.

As Manager of the Wailuku Community Managed Makai Area (CMMA) from 2012 to 2019, Jay did not simply administer a program — he built a movement. Under his leadership, the CMMA successfully restored the endemic Nehu (*Engrasicholina purpurea*) population and its habitat, a tangible,

measurable victory that stands as a model for community-based conservation across the state. This kind of result does not happen without years of trust-building, scientific literacy, cultural sensitivity, and sheer dedication. Jay brought all of it.

### **Educating the Next Generation of Resource Managers**

One of Jay's most enduring contributions has been his investment in our keiki — the next generation of ocean stewards. Through his work with Kai Kuleana, Limu Hui, E Alu Pū, and the Maui Coral Reef Recovery Team, Jay has consistently prioritized environmental education and intergenerational knowledge transfer. He understands that we cannot simply manage our resources; we must inspire young people to love and protect them. A DLNR board member who thinks in generations, not just budget cycles, is exactly what our natural resources need.

### **The Breadth and Depth the Board Requires**

The DLNR's jurisdiction spans forestry, wildlife, water resources, coastal and marine management, state parks, historic preservation, and more. Jay's career reflects a similarly broad expertise. His agricultural education at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and work in Conservation Agriculture Services Hawai'i gave him a grounded understanding of land stewardship and the practical realities of working with the 'aina. His service on the National Marine Sanctuary Water Quality Working Group and the Hā'ena Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area demonstrates his ability to operate at the policy level with sophistication. And his project management work at the Maui Ocean Center shows he can execute complex initiatives on deadline.

Jay has also volunteered for the Hawai'i Land Trust for nearly two decades, 17 years of unpaid service advocating for land preservation and sustainable practices. This is not the résumé of someone who recently discovered conservation. This is the record of a person who has organized their entire life around the health of these islands.

### **A Voice for Community-Based, Culturally Grounded Solutions**

The DLNR board governs resources that touch the lives of every person in Hawai'i, but few topics carry more weight than the relationship between Native Hawaiian communities and the natural world. Jay Carpio brings lived experience with Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Areas, CMMAs, and traditional marine management systems, reflecting deep respect for indigenous resource governance. He does not approach these systems as an outsider looking in; he has been inside them, earning trust, solving problems, and delivering results. His confirmation would bring to the board a voice that is urgently needed: one that understands the land and sea not merely as resources to manage, but as 'aina and kai to care for in the Hawaiian sense of the word.

I have watched Jay show up, year after year, not because it was his job, but because he believes in this work with his whole heart. Serving on the Board of Land and Natural Resources would be a natural and meaningful extension of a lifetime of aloha 'aina, and the Board would be immeasurably strengthened by his presence.

I respectfully and enthusiastically urge the Senate to confirm James John Kamealoha Carpio. Hawai'i's lands, waters, and people will be well served.

Mahalo,

Mark Deakos, Ph.D.



President/Chief Scientist  
Hawaii Association for Marine Education and Research  
4993 Lower Honoapiilani Rd  
Lahaina, HI 96761  
808-280-6448



**LATE**

**TESTIMONY OF TRIOLOGY EXCURSIONS IN SUPPORT OF JAMES JOHN  
KAMEALOHA CARPIO**

April 14, 2026

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee:

Trilogy Excursions is pleased to submit this testimony in support of the reappointment of James John Kamealoha Carpio to the Board of Land and Natural Resources. As one of Maui's longest-operating ocean tour companies, we have a direct stake in the health of our coastal waters and nearshore ecosystems. Our business depends on healthy reefs, clean water, and thriving marine life, which Mr. Carpio has spent his career protecting. His prior service on the Board, combined with his deep roots in conservation, makes him well-qualified candidate for reappointment.

With over 30 years of experience in conservation and project management, Mr. Carpio brings proven expertise and genuine community commitment to the Board. His ongoing volunteer leadership with the Maui Nui Marine Resource Council, the Maui Coral Reef Recovery Team, the National Marine Sanctuary Water Quality Working Group, and numerous other organizations reflects a career-long dedication to Hawai'i's land and ocean resources. Mr. Carpio understands how to bring together communities, agencies, and industries around shared conservation goals.

We are confident that Mr. Carpio's continued service on the Board will benefit the people of Hawai'i, and we respectfully urge the Committee to support his appointment.

Sincerely,

Denver S. Coon

Trilogy Excursions, Co-Owner



**LATE**

## **COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

**Senator Chris Lee, Chair**

**Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair**

**DATE:** April 14, 2026

**RE: Testimony in Support of the Nomination of James Carpio to the Board of Land & Natural Resources (Term Expiring June 30, 2029)**

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kekoa McClellan, and I am testifying today in my capacity as the Hawaii Spokesperson for the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA). On behalf of our more than 160 members across the islands, we are proud to support the nomination of James Carpio to the Board of Land & Natural Resources (BLNR).

AHLA remains steadfast in its support of Hawaii's hospitality industry, but our focus extends far beyond the properties themselves. We represent the interests of the more than 222,000 *kama'āina* families whose livelihoods are inextricably linked to a healthy and vibrant tourism economy. These families depend on a balanced approach to governance—one that fosters economic opportunity while ensuring the rigorous protection of the natural environment that defines our home and sustains our industry.

The BLNR plays a pivotal role in curating this delicate balance. It requires leaders who are not only technically proficient but who also possess the temperament to weigh the needs of our workforce against the long-term mandate of environmental stewardship. We believe Mr. Carpio is such a leader for several reasons:

- **Understanding the "Human" Element:** Through his work in workforce housing and community-based conservation, Mr. Carpio has shown he understands the needs of our local families. He recognizes that "good ideas" must be sustainable both for the land and for the people who care for it.
- **Breadth of Industry Knowledge:** His expertise across agriculture, conservation, and project management reflects the diverse needs of our members—from large-scale resorts to smaller local operators—all of whom rely on the responsible management of Hawaii's public lands and coastlines.
- **Commitment to Service:** The role of a BLNR member is notoriously challenging, requiring a significant commitment of time and a willingness to tackle highly complex issues. We applaud and support Mr. Carpio's willingness to step into this arena and offer his expertise for the benefit of the state.

Our members and their thousands of employees look for balanced, thoughtful leadership in our state boards. We are confident that James Carpio will bring that perspective to the BLNR, ensuring that our natural environment and the families who depend on it can both thrive.

We respectfully urge your committee to support this nomination.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kekoa McClellan', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Kekoa McClellan**

Chief Advocate, Hawaii Hotel Alliance,  
& AHLA Hawaii Spokesperson

**LATE**

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/14/2026 6:59:53 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Samira Siale	Testifying for Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association- Kaua'I Chapter	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

**Senator Chris Lee, Chair**

**Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair**

**DATE:** April 14, 2026

**RE: Testimony in Support of the Nomination of James Carpio to the Board of Land & Natural Resources (Term Expiring June 30, 2029)**

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Samira Siale, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Kauai Chapter of the Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association (HLTA). We are pleased to offer our strong support for the nomination of James Carpio to the Board of Land & Natural Resources (BLNR).

In the hospitality and tourism industry, we recognize that the health of our natural resources is the bedrock of Hawaii's economy and our community's well-being. Mr. Carpio brings an exceptional and balanced perspective that is vital for the stewardship of our lands and waters. His background reflects a deep commitment to the "triple bottom line" of environmental restoration, community engagement, and sustainable economic development.

Several key factors make Mr. Carpio an ideal candidate for this role:

- **Diverse Technical Expertise:** With a degree in Agriculture and decades of experience in conservation and land management, he possesses the technical knowledge required to navigate the complex issues managed by the Department of Land and Natural Resources.
- **Proven Stewardship:** His track record with the Hawaii Land Trust and his leadership in marine conservation—specifically in restoring endemic populations like the *Nehu*—demonstrates a results-oriented approach to protecting Hawaii's unique biodiversity.
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Mr. Carpio has consistently worked across public and private sectors, from developing workforce housing financing to leading marine resource

committees. This ability to find common ground is essential for a Board member tasked with balancing competing interests.

- **Cultural & Community Alignment:** His involvement with community-based subsistence fishing areas and the Limu Hui shows a profound respect for the cultural practices and traditional knowledge that are inseparable from land and water management in our islands.

James Carpio's career is a testament to his dedication to Hawaii's future. We are confident that his expertise and collaborative spirit will serve the Board and the people of Hawaii well.

We respectfully urge your committee to advise and consent to his nomination.

Mahalo,

**Samira Siale**

**808-652-5425**

**[samira@hltakauai.org](mailto:samira@hltakauai.org)**

Executive Director

Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association, Kauai Chapter



**LATE**

**COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

**Senator Chris Lee, Chair**

**Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair**

**DATE:** April 14, 2026

**RE: Testimony in Support of the Nomination of James Carpio to the Board of Land & Natural Resources (Term Expiring June 30, 2029)**

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jerry Gibson, and I am writing to you today on behalf of the Hawaii Hotel Alliance (HHA) to express our firm support for the nomination of James Carpio to the Board of Land & Natural Resources.

In my years of experience within Hawaii's hospitality industry, I have seen firsthand that our state's success depends entirely on the delicate balance between a thriving economy and the preservation of our natural environment. Mr. Carpio is a leader who truly understands this interdependence. He possesses the rare ability to advocate for the growth and stability of local businesses while maintaining an uncompromising commitment to environmental stewardship and restoration.

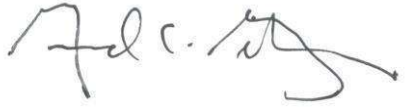
We believe Mr. Carpio is uniquely qualified for this appointment due to:

- **A Balanced Perspective:** Throughout his career, James has demonstrated that economic development—specifically in agriculture and workforce housing—and conservation are not mutually exclusive. He brings a pragmatic approach to land and marine management that respects both the needs of our local workforce and the protection of our resources.
- **Decades of Practical Experience:** His 30-year history in agriculture and project management provides him with the technical "dirt-under-the-fingernails" experience necessary to make informed, realistic decisions on the Board.
- **Community-Based Stewardship:** His leadership roles within the Maui Nui Marine Resource Council and various community-based subsistence fishing areas highlight his dedication to protecting the natural environment through collaboration and local empowerment.

The Hawaii Hotel Alliance believes that Mr. Carpio's appointment will bring a thoughtful, balanced voice to the Board—one that ensures our natural treasures are enhanced for future generations while supporting the economic engines that sustain our local families.

We strongly urge your committee to support the nomination of James Carpio.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Gibson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Jerry Gibson**

President, Hawaii Hotel Alliance



**LATE**

WLA 4/15/26 1:00P

**GM638** – James “Jay” Carpio for BLNR

In Support

Aloha WLA Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members,

Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea (MPW) is a Hawai'i non-profit organization founded on the North Shore of O'ahu in 2005. Our mission is “working to replenish and sustain the natural and cultural resources of the Pūpūkea and Waimea ahupua'a for present and future generations through active community stewardship, education, and partnerships.”

For twenty-one years, we have focused our collaborative stewardship and education efforts on the Pūpūkea Marine Life Conservation District (MLCD), one of only three MLCDs on O'ahu.

**MPW supports the nomination of Mr. Carpio to BLNR.**

Mr. Carpio provides a community conservation perspective that will assist DLNR to carry out its mission and help both the State and communities across the islands to more effectively achieve our collective goals for sustained protection of the 'āina.

Mahalo!

Denise Antolini  
President, MPW

Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea  
Post Office Box 188  
Hale'iwa, HI 96712

**Board of Directors**

*Denise Antolini  
Keelan Barcina  
Dr. Anne Chung  
Dr. Jamison Gove*

**Advisory Council**

*Athline Clark  
John Cutting  
Olan Leimomi Fisher  
Dr. Alan Friedlander  
Dr. Debbie Gowensmith  
Roberts “Bob” Leinau  
Maxx E. Phillips, Esq.  
Palakiko Yagodich*

**Staff**

*Jacqueline Leinau  
Executive Director*

*Jenny Yagodich  
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**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/10/2026 5:51:56 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Karen Ono	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators, I submit my strong support for Mr. James Carpio as a member on the BLNR. His experience has been a great asset to the Board in the past few months.

Mahalo for allowing me the opportunity to provide this input.

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/11/2026 10:09:09 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Doreen Canto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/12/2026 5:42:48 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Klayton Kubo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong Support for James Carpio

Klayton Kubo

Waimea, Kaua'i

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/12/2026 8:37:31 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Arragon Kekoawiwaole Mowat	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha President Kouchi and Members of the Senate,

I am writing in support of the nomination of James “Jay” Carpio to the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

I have known Jay for nearly 30 years. When I first started working at the Hyatt, Jay had just left, and although our paths crossed briefly then, we reconnected decades later following the Lahaina wildfires. During that difficult time, I saw firsthand the kind of person Jay is. He was on the ground helping wildfire victims access financial assistance, stepping in where help was urgently needed and making a real difference for our community.

Since reconnecting, we have stayed in touch, and I continue to be impressed by his genuine commitment to helping others and caring for our islands. His actions reflect not only leadership, but humility and a deep sense of responsibility to the people and places of Hawai‘i.

Jay brings lived experience, integrity, and a strong connection to community that cannot be taught. I respectfully urge you to confirm his nomination.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Mahalo,

Kekoa

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/13/2026 10:27:03 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
William Troy Pagaduan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good morning Board of Natural Land and Resources,

My name is William Troy Pagaduan. I am the Director of Operations for Logistics Plus Inc, Hawai'i Division, with over 20 plus years in Logistics and Transportation.

Having known James Carpio for the past several years, James will be a great asset to the committee for Board of Land and Natural Resources. James has tremendous leadership skills, community outreach and a true appreciation for the Aina, Kai, and Kama'aina. Growing up on the island of Maui, James has a demonstrated his experience as a land manager, community conservation leader, and fisherman giving him a better understanding of the challenges we face.

Adding great people with integrity and thoughtful leadership guiding Hawai'i's future will be key. James' understanding of the business sector and broad responsibility of our resources will make him an outstanding member of the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

Mahalo,

William Troy Pagaduan

Director of Operations

Logistics Plus Inc. Hawai'i

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/13/2026 1:19:29 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jimmy Gomes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support GM 638 to BLNR

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/13/2026 6:33:26 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kahealani Silva	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**TO:**

Chair Chris Lee

Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye

and Members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kahealani Silva, and I am writing in support of the nomination of James Kamealoha Carpio to the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR).

The work of the BLNR carries significant responsibility, especially as Hawai‘i continues to navigate complex decisions involving land, water, and resource management. These decisions directly impact our communities, our environment, and the future sustainability of our islands.

Mr. Carpio brings decades of experience grounded in agriculture, conservation, and community-based resource management. His work reflects a strong understanding of the importance of balancing environmental stewardship with the needs of local communities.

Through his involvement in conservation efforts and community-driven initiatives, Mr. Carpio has demonstrated a commitment to protecting Hawai‘i’s natural resources while supporting long-term sustainability. His experience working across sectors also highlights his ability to collaborate and bring people together in meaningful ways.

In addition, his work in addressing housing challenges through innovative approaches reflects an understanding of the broader issues facing our communities today. This perspective is important as the State continues to explore how land can be used responsibly to support local residents.

At a time when thoughtful and balanced leadership is needed, Mr. Carpio brings a valuable combination of experience, perspective, and commitment to stewardship. His background positions him well to contribute to the important work of the Board.

For these reasons, I respectfully support the nomination of James Kamealoha Carpio and urge the Committee to confirm him to the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,  
Kahealani Silva

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF THE NOMINATION OF JAMES KAMEALOHA  
CARPIO – GM 638  
TO THE BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES (BLNR)**

**TO:**

Chair Chris Lee  
Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye  
and Members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts (WLA)

**HEARING DATE:** April 15, 2026

**TIME:** 1:00 P.M.

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kammy Furtado, and I am a lifelong Maui resident and a member of a generational ‘ohana that has deep roots in our island’s land and community. I am writing in strong support of the nomination of James Kamealoha Carpio to the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR).

As someone who has lived through the challenges of land stewardship, loss, and the ongoing efforts to rebuild, I understand how important it is to have leaders on the BLNR who are grounded in both the land and the community. James Carpio is exactly that kind of leader.

His decades of experience in agriculture and conservation are not just professional—they reflect a lifelong commitment to caring for our ‘āina. His work protecting agricultural lands and supporting local food systems shows that he understands the importance of keeping our lands productive and sustainable for future generations.

What stands out most to me is his work with community-based marine management through the Wailuku Community Managed Makai Area. Building community capacity and restoring resources like the nehu fish population takes patience, trust, and true respect for both cultural practices and local knowledge. These are the kinds of values we need guiding decisions at the BLNR.

James also understands that our challenges today are interconnected. From housing to conservation, we need leaders who can think holistically and work collaboratively. His work in workforce housing solutions shows that he recognizes the need to ensure our people can continue to live here, not just protect the land but sustain the community that depends on it.

At a time when so many important decisions are being made about our lands and resources, it is critical that the BLNR includes individuals who bring both experience and heart. James Carpio brings both.

I respectfully urge the Committee to support and confirm his nomination to the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

Kammy Furtado

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/13/2026 11:17:22 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
tiare lawrence	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

My name is Tiare Lawrence, and I am writing in strong support of the appointment of James Carpio.

I had the opportunity to meet James through my time with the Maui Nui Makai network, and I was immediately struck by his deep commitment to our natural resources and the communities that depend on them.

James brings a rare and valuable combination of experience in both fisheries and agriculture—two sectors that are foundational to Hawai‘i’s sustainability and future. His understanding of these systems is not just academic—it is rooted in real-world experience and a genuine passion for stewardship.

What stands out most about James is his integrity and approach to decision-making. He is fair, thoughtful, and grounded. He takes the time to listen, gather information, and understand the full scope of an issue before making decisions. That kind of leadership is exactly what we need on the Board—especially at a time when our natural resources face increasing pressure and complex challenges.

Hawai‘i needs leaders who can balance environmental protection with responsible use, who respect cultural practices, and who are willing to do the hard work of informed decision-making. I truly believe James Carpio embodies those qualities.

I respectfully urge the Board to support his appointment.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Tiare Lawrence

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/14/2026 9:02:47 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ben Walin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**To Whom It May Concern:**

I am writing to offer my strongest recommendation for **James Carpio** for appointment to the Board of Land and Natural Resources for the State of Hawaii.

Mr. Carpio is a deeply committed steward of Hawai‘i’s natural and cultural resources, with a demonstrated history of leadership, integrity, and service to our community. His understanding of the delicate balance between environmental preservation, cultural protection, and responsible land use reflects both practical experience and a sincere respect for the unique heritage of our islands.

Throughout his work, Mr. Carpio has consistently shown an ability to bring diverse stakeholders together, fostering collaboration between local residents, government agencies, and private interests. His approach is thoughtful, measured, and grounded in ‘ike kūpuna (ancestral knowledge), while also embracing modern strategies for sustainability and resource management.

Mr. Carpio’s leadership style is characterized by transparency, accountability, and a strong ethical foundation. He approaches complex challenges with a solutions-oriented mindset and a willingness to listen—qualities that are essential for effective governance on the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

In addition to his professional qualifications, Mr. Carpio is known for his genuine dedication to the people of Hawai‘i. He understands that the decisions made by the Board carry long-term impacts for future generations, and he approaches this responsibility with the seriousness and care it deserves.

I am confident that James Carpio will serve with distinction and uphold the highest standards expected of a member of the Board of Land and Natural Resources. He will be a valuable asset in protecting Hawai‘i’s natural resources while ensuring thoughtful and balanced stewardship.

Please feel free to contact me if you require any additional information.

**Sincerely,**  
Ben Walin.



Aloha Senator Lee,

My name is Francine Aarona, also known as Aunty Mopsy of Pā'ia.

I am writing in strong support of James Carpio's appointment.

James brings a thoughtful and balanced approach to resource management. He understands the importance of both environmental stewardship and responsible use of the 'Āina.

I am confident that he will be an asset to the Board as well as to Maui and the state of Hawaii.

Mahalo for allowing me to provide testimony. Ke Akua bless all of you for taking care of the state of Hawaii.

Ke Akua pū,

Aunty Mopsy/Francine Aarona

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/14/2026 10:42:11 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alfred Perez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to submit my strong support for the consideration and confirmation of James “Jay” Carpio to the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

Jay brings a rare, invaluable, and much-needed perspective to public service in Hawai‘i. As a Native Hawaiian born and raised in Wailuku, Maui, his roots run deep. He has spent his entire life working directly with the people, lands, and waters of our state. His diverse background gives him a uniquely grounded understanding of the real, everyday challenges facing our islands.

Specifically, Jay’s expertise spans a multitude of critical areas, including:

- **Traditional and Practical Stewardship:** He is a master fisherman, a hunter and guide, a rancher, and a farmer.
- **Land Management:** He has extensive, hands-on experience as a land manager.
- **Conservation Leadership:** He has been instrumental in building community-based conservation initiatives, demonstrating a lifelong commitment to *mālama ‘āina*.

What makes Jay especially suited for the BLNR is the crucial balance he brings to the table. He serves as a bridge between all island business sectors and the broader, vital responsibility of resource stewardship. He intimately understands that Hawai‘i’s future depends on thoughtful, well-rounded leadership—leadership that:

- Respects and perpetuates our host culture.
- Supports our working communities and local economic sustainability.
- Protects and preserves our fragile natural resources.
- Recognizes the deeply interconnected needs of agriculture, conservation, fishing, and land management.

Jay’s life and service reflect absolute integrity and practical, on-the-ground knowledge. He is not just a theorist; he is a practitioner who has spent decades actively caring for Hawai‘i.

I urge this committee to confirm James "Jay" Carpio to the Board of Land and Natural Resources. His voice, experience, and dedication are exactly what the Board needs to navigate the complex environmental and economic challenges of our time.

Mahalo for your time and for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,

Alfred Perez

**LATE**

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/14/2026 7:04:45 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Amber Starr-Cook	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members and mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony today. I am in support of the confirmation to the Board of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAMES CARPIO.

I have personally known James for over two decades and appreciate his commitment to agriculture and land stewardship. His diverse experience in business and natural resource management will bring a breadth of insight to the Board and serve our State, people, and 'āina well.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Amber Starr-Cook

Maui, Hawai'i

**LATE**

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/14/2026 8:19:58 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
glenn tremble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the nomination of James Carpio for BLNR board.  
thank you

**LATE**

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 3:45:58 AM  
Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gary Grube	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a Maui farmer I can appreciate Jay's resume and intentions of stewardship expected for the position. In support, Gary Grube.

**LATE**

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 8:55:38 AM  
Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kai Nishiki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Senate,

I am writing in strong support of the appointment of James Carpio to serve as the Maui Nui representative on the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

Jay Carpio brings something that is too often missing in high-level decision-making: deep, lived, place-based experience. As a Wailuku native, his lifelong work as a hunter, fisherman, farmer, rancher, and land manager reflects a genuine and practiced understanding of Hawai‘i’s natural systems. His leadership in co-founding the Maui Nui Makai Network and the Limu Hui, as well as his role in advancing community-based fisheries management through the Wailuku Coastal Managed Makai Area, demonstrates a commitment to stewardship grounded in ‘ike kūpuna and community collaboration.

At a time when Hawai‘i faces accelerating coastal erosion, ecosystem degradation, and increasing pressure on our public trust resources, it is critical that the Board includes individuals who not only understand policy, but who have actively worked to restore and care for these resources on the ground and in the water.

Jay’s experience reflects the kind of balanced, conservation-minded leadership that aligns with the State’s kuleana to protect our natural and cultural resources for future generations. His voice will be especially important for Maui Nui, where decisions made by the Board directly impact our shorelines, nearshore ecosystems, and communities.

I respectfully urge the Senate to confirm Jay Carpio to the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Kai Nishiki

**LATE**

**GM-638**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 9:26:13 AM  
Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Calvin Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Senate WLA committee,

I write to support the nomination of James Carpio to be a member of BLNR. During the last few months, James has exhibited the character and strong work habits needed by a board member. James comes prepared to each meeting. His comments illustrate how deeply he cares for his home island of Maui and the entirety of Hawaii. I urge you to support his nomination.

Aloha Calvin Young