

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

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'  
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  
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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  
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ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the House Committee on  
FINANCE**

**Thursday, April 2, 2026  
2:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 2001, SENATE DRAFT 1, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO THE BANYAN DRIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

Senate Bill 2001, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1 proposes to establish the Waiakea Community Development District and the Waiakea Community Development District Special Fund. It also specifies the powers and duties of the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) as it relates to the new development district. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates and supports this measure.**

The Department recognizes that the Waiakea peninsula area, which includes Banyan Drive, is underutilized, but has an exceptional potential for revitalization. Further, the Department acknowledges the frustration over the current state of the area and recognizes the need for and importance of revitalizing and redeveloping the area. The Department notes that it is actively working with HCDA on a master plan for the proposed development district.

As a majority of the lands within the proposed development district are owned by the State, the Department supports this measure due to its potential to address significant costs associated with the redevelopment of the area and appreciates that this measure incorporates comments we provided on a similar measure last session.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

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

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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The Department recognizes that the Waiakea peninsula area, which includes Banyan Drive, is underutilized, but has an exceptional potential for revitalization. Further, the Department acknowledges the frustration over the current state of the area and recognizes the need for and importance of revitalizing and redeveloping the area. The Department notes that it is actively working with HCDA on a master plan for the proposed development district.

As a majority of the lands within the proposed development district are owned by the State, the Department supports this measure due to its potential to address significant costs associated with the redevelopment of the area and appreciates that this measure incorporates comments we provided on a similar measure last session.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



# Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce

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Carla Kuo

**2025-2026**

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Joni Waltjen

Irene Yamanaka

Tracie Yoshimoto

## **Testimony to the House Committee on Finance**

**Representative Chris Todd, Chair**

**Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair**

**Thursday, April 2, 2026 at 2:00 PM**

### **RE: SB2001 SD1 HD1 Relating to the Banyan Drive Community Development District - SUPPORT**

Aloha e Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce, representing more than 350 businesses and individual members primarily on the east side of Hawai'i Island, we respectfully submit testimony in **strong support of SB2001 SD1 HD1**.

Banyan Drive is a key gateway to Hilo and holds significant cultural and economic importance. Anchored by landmarks such as Lili'uokalani Gardens and Coconut Island (Moku Ola), and located near Hilo International Airport, the area shapes first impressions for visitors and serves as an important space for our community. Yet it continues to face aging infrastructure, safety concerns, and underutilized properties.

SB2001 SD1 HD1 establishes the Banyan Drive Community Development District and Special Fund under the Hawai'i Community Development Authority, creating a coordinated and accountable framework for responsible action forward. The bill also establishes a one full-time position within the authority. This structure will help align infrastructure improvements, cultural preservation, and economic revitalization in a thoughtful and community-focused manner.

Revitalizing Banyan Drive is essential to strengthening Hilo's economy, supporting local businesses, and ensuring this important corridor reflects the best of our island. We respectfully urge your support of SB2001 SD1 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Carla Kuo  
Executive Officer  
Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce



**TESTIMONY WITH COMMENTS ON SENATE BILL 2001 SD1 HD1**  
RELATING TO THE BANYAN DRIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Ke Kōmike Hale o ka ‘Oihana ‘Imi Kālā  
(House Committee on Finance)

Ke Kapitala ‘o Hawai‘i  
(Hawai‘i State Capitol)

Apelila 2, 2026

2:00PM

Lumi 308

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Aloha e Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) provides **COMMENTS** on SB2001 SD1 HD1, which would create a new Waiākea Community Development District (District) within the Hawai‘i Community Development Authority (HCDA), and establish a special fund “for costs to administer and operate the district.”<sup>1</sup>

OHA respectfully recommends amendments to ensure a more accurate reflection of the District’s history, and representation of Native Hawaiian interests given that the bulk of this district is comprised of crown and government lands of the Hawaiian Kingdom (also known as “ceded” lands). Specifically, OHA requests that the Committee amend the bill to: (1) name OHA as a member of the HCDA with jurisdiction over the District; (2) rename the district to include “Makaokū,” specific to the bounds outlined in the bill; (3) clarify that the Waiākea lineal or cultural descendant member should be, more specifically, a Makaokū lineal<sup>2</sup> or cultural descendant; and (4) name OHA as a consulting party on the nomination of the lineal or cultural descendant member. The proposed amendments are more closely aligned with the language in HB2616 HD2.

OHA Must Be Consulted On Disposition of Crown and Government Lands

To carry out the requirements of the Hawai‘i Admission Act, Article XII Section 4 of the Hawai‘i State Constitution makes clear that the public land trust must be administered

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<sup>1</sup> OHA prefers the language in HB2616 HD 2 at p.3 designating the special fund “to improve and safeguard the cultural, economic, and social value of this vital area.”

<sup>2</sup> Consistent with definitions in Hawai‘i Administrative Rules Chapter 13-300, OHA understands a lineal descendant to be a descendant of iwi kūpuna interred on specific lands. Here, a lineal descendant would have specific kupuna interred within Makaokū, as opposed to a cultural descendant, who would have genealogical ties to the area.

for the betterment of the conditions of native Hawaiians and for the general public. OHA was created and charged with managing proceeds derived from the public land trust, pursuant to under Art. XII Secs. 5 and 6, for the benefit of native Hawaiian beneficiaries. Accordingly, OHA has a constitutional mandate to ensure that the state upholds its fiduciary obligations under the public land trust, including by acting with prudence and due diligence in making its trust corpus productive and maximizing its benefits for Native Hawaiian beneficiaries. Thus, insofar as the new District is made up of public land trust lands, OHA should be included as a member of the HCDA with jurisdiction over the District, to protect the right of its beneficiaries.

Moreover, the vast majority of land managed held by the state in the public land trust, including land in the proposed District, is government or crown land that was unlawfully seized in 1893 and then “ceded” by the Republic of Hawai‘i to the United States in 1898, “without the consent of or compensation to the Native Hawaiian people of Hawaii or their sovereign government[.]”<sup>3</sup> Given that Native Hawaiians have never relinquished their claims to this land corpus, and that “ceded” land may eventually serve as a land base for a Native Hawaiian self-governing entity, OHA has long sought to ensure that the state does not alienate these lands, and that it maintains these lands to ensure the corpus’ viability and availability for the future lāhui.

Accordingly, because much of the new District consists of crown and government lands, providing OHA with a seat on the HCDA with jurisdiction over the District will help ensure that Native Hawaiian claims and interests are protected and that the environmental, cultural, economic, and other values of these and adjoining lands receive appropriate consideration.

#### The District Name Should Reflect The Lands Most Affected: Makaokū

As reflected in the ‘ōlelo noeau, “Ua hilo ‘ia ke aho a ke aloha”<sup>4</sup> (“Braided with the cords of love), the ‘āina of Hilo carries a beloved history and cultural significance that should be thoughtfully uplifted in any redevelopment of the District, including through the choice of a culturally appropriate name. Currently, however, the place name Waiākea, encompasses a much larger area than the proposed district, as illustrated below. OHA recommends the Committee acknowledge the area’s significant cultural and historical importance by reverting to the original language of HB2616, and in alignment with the bill title, to name this the “Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District.”

Recognition of Makaokū as distinctive lands is particularly salient when viewed alongside the more recent experiences of nearby Hawaiian homestead communities,

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<sup>3</sup> *Joint Resolution to Acknowledge the 100th Anniversary of the January 17, 1893 Overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i*, P.L. 103-150 (1993).

<sup>4</sup> Historic Hawai‘i Foundation Story Map (Dec. 10, 2021), <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b378b80d74054f51816d820581905ba4>.

which have borne disproportionate environmental and social impacts over time. The construction of the Hilo airport, which divided long-standing community connections, and the subsequent industrialization of surrounding areas continue to shape lived experiences today. A redevelopment approach that acknowledges this history offers an opportunity not only to honor place, but also to move forward in a way that is more balanced, restorative, and responsive to community well-being.



Figure 1 –Lands proposed to be part of the new District (outlined in orange).

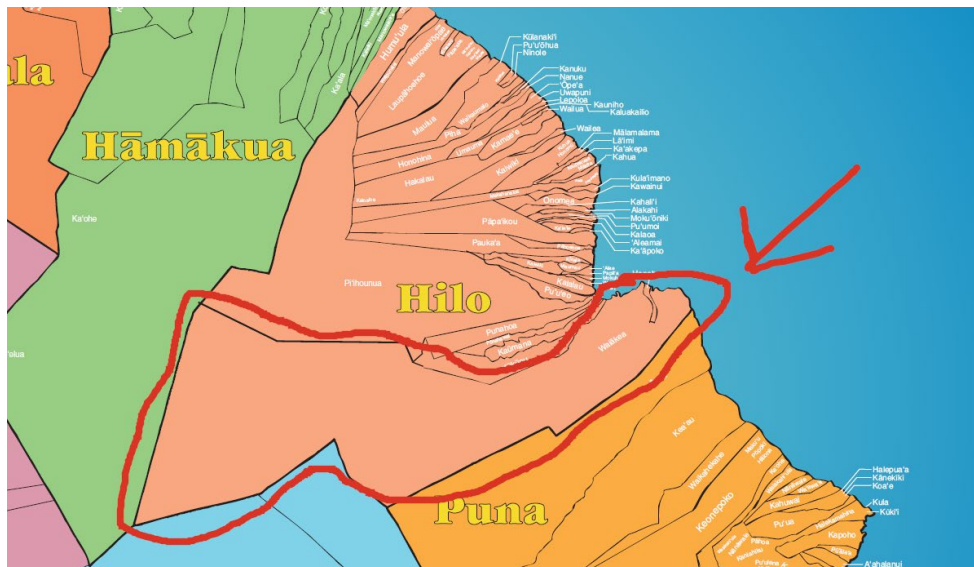


Figure 2- Ahupua‘a of Waiākea.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Kamehameha Schools, “Nā Ahupua‘a a Moku o Hawai‘i,” available at <https://blogs.ksbe.edu/kmslc/files/2014/11/aaahawaii1.pdf>.

A Makaokū Descendant Should Have Voting Membership.

OHA appreciates the inclusion of the “two representatives of the Waiākea community development district” one of whom is identified as a lineal or cultural descendant of Waiākea. (Page 9 line 20- page 10 line 3). However, the broadened geographical area associated with “Waiākea” dilutes the purpose of this seat to inform the redevelopment of the Makaokū area. The broader inclusion of “Waiākea” could include individuals with no ties or expertise related to the lands being redeveloped.

A truly community-driven process will involve appropriate representation by Native Hawaiian communities who know this area best, are most impacted by this redevelopment, and reside in the neighboring communities. Building off the unique nature of these lands being crown and government lands, and the rich history of this place, OHA reiterates its support for the inclusion of OHA and a Makaokū lineal descendant as voting members of the HCDA with jurisdiction over the District. Moreover, OHA proposes it have a consulting role on nomination of the lineal descendant to help ensure community-driven representation with respect to this seat.

Accordingly, should the Committee choose to advance this measure, OHA recommends including the following amendments:

**Amendment 1 & 2: Adding OHA and a Makaokū descendant as voting members:**

(1) Revising the language at page 9 line 20 to page 10 line 3 to read:

a representative of the Waiakea community development district who is a resident of the Waiakea ahupuaa (zone 2, sections 1, 2, or 4 of the third tax map key division) and who is also a lineal or cultural descendant with ties to the [Waiakea] Makaokū [ahupuaa] peninsula.

(2) Adding language at page 18 line 8 to read:

“(j) The chairperson of the office of Hawaiian affairs, or the chairperson’s designee; and

**Amendments 3 & 4: Exempting OHA and Makaokū descendant from HRS § 26-34 and proposing alternative appointment process for descendant seat:**

(3) Adding language at page 11 line 4 to read as follows:

“...the county of Hawaii or the chairperson’s designee, chairperson of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, or a designee; and the Makaokū lineal or cultural descendant member.”

(4) Adding language at page 12 line 9, to read as follows:

“For the Makaokū lineal or cultural descendant member, the governor shall appoint this member following consultation with the office of Hawaiian affairs, and shall consider any recommendations submitted by the office of Hawaiian affairs.”

**Amendment 5: Changing the District Name:**

Changing the name Waiākea Community Development District to Banyan Drive-Makaokū District throughout.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify. OHA respectfully urges this committee to incorporate our recommended amendments if it chooses to move forward with SB2001 SD1 HD1.





**HAWAII COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

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JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR

STERLING HIGA  
CHAIRPERSON

CRAIG K. NAKAMOTO  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Statement of  
**CRAIG K. NAKAMOTO**  
**Executive Director**  
Hawai'i Community Development Authority  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Thursday, April 2, 2026  
2:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

In consideration of  
**S.B. 2001, S.D.1, H.D.1**  
**RELATING TO THE BANYAN DRIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT.**

Chairperson Todd, Vice Chairperson Takenouchi and members of the Committee. The Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) **supports S.B. 2001, S.D.1, H.D.1**, which seeks to establish the Waiākea Community Development District and the Waiākea Community Development District Special Fund. This measure is a critical step toward revitalizing the Waiākea peninsula area, including Banyan Drive, and addressing longstanding issues of underutilization and inadequate public facilities.

The Waiākea peninsula is a unique and culturally significant area with immense potential for economic, cultural, and community development. Its proximity to key attractions such as the cruise ship terminal, Merrie Monarch Festival sites, and Hilo town makes it an ideal location for fostering tourism, cultural activities, and sustainable economic growth. However, the area currently suffers from poor lighting, deteriorating infrastructure, and a lack of public facilities, which hinder its ability to thrive and serve both residents and visitors.

This bill provides a comprehensive framework to address these challenges and unlock the potential of the Waiākea peninsula.

Last year, HCDA commenced a multi-year effort to develop a community-driven master plan for the Waiākea Peninsula in Hilo, Hawai'i. This reflects the Legislature's intent to initiate plans for the purpose of redeveloping the State lands in the Waiākea

peninsula as enabled by an appropriation in Act 230, Session Laws of Hawai'i, 2024. HCDA is invested in this planning process, especially in anticipation of a bill passing the legislature this session that will establish the district within the HCDA.

This bill represents a significant opportunity to transform the Waiakea peninsula into a vibrant, safe, and culturally rich area that benefits both residents and visitors. By addressing infrastructure needs, promoting economic development, and preserving cultural heritage, this measure will create a sustainable and thriving community for generations to come.

To effectively implement the provisions of this measure, the HCDA requires the resources to promulgate rules, conduct an environmental impact statement, and Ka Pa'akai analysis.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



*Testimony of  
Mufi Hannemann  
President & CEO  
Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association*

*Committee on Finance  
Thursday, April 2, 2026*

SB 2001 SD1 HD1– RELATING TO THE BANYAN DRIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association (HLTA), representing hotels and lodging operators statewide, submits this testimony in strong support of efforts to revitalize Banyan Drive and the surrounding Waiākea Peninsula area.

As the state's largest private sector tourism organization, representing nearly 50,000 hotel rooms, and 40,000 lodging employees, HLTA is committed to maintaining a strong and flourishing tourism industry to keep our economy strong and our state moving forward.

Banyan Drive has long been recognized as one of Hilo's most iconic visitor corridors and a gateway to East Hawai'i. Its location adjacent to Hilo Bay, the cruise ship terminal, and major cultural and community events such as the Merrie Monarch Festival makes it uniquely positioned to serve as both a welcoming entry point for visitors and a vibrant gathering place for residents. However, years of underinvestment and deteriorating infrastructure have left the area underutilized and unable to meet its full potential.

From a tourism industry perspective, revitalizing Banyan Drive is essential to strengthening Hilo's visitor economy and ensuring the Big Island remains competitive with other destinations. A safe, attractive, and well-maintained waterfront district encourages longer stays, greater visitor spending, and repeat visitation. Improvements to landscaping, lighting, walkability, and public amenities will directly enhance the visitor experience while also improving quality of life for the surrounding community.

Importantly, thoughtful redevelopment of Banyan Drive can achieve multiple public goals at once. With appropriate planning and oversight, revitalization can support small businesses, create local jobs, promote cultural and recreational uses, and foster sustainable economic growth. The area's proximity to historic and cultural sites presents an opportunity to highlight Native Hawaiian culture, local arts, and community programming in ways that are authentic and respectful.

HLTA also emphasizes that revitalization should be guided by long-term planning and coordination among state and county agencies, community stakeholders, and private sector partners. Establishing a clear framework for redevelopment will help ensure that improvements are resilient, culturally sensitive, and responsive to climate and environmental challenges facing coastal areas.

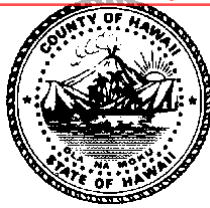
For the visitor industry, Banyan Drive represents more than just a roadway or hotel district, it is a symbol of Hilo's identity and a critical link between tourism and the local community. Reinvesting in this area will help restore pride in place, improve safety and accessibility, and reinforce tourism as a driver of opportunity for East Hawai'i residents.

For these reasons, HLTA strongly supports initiatives that advance the revitalization of Banyan Drive and urges the Legislature to continue prioritizing this area as part of the State's broader economic recovery and destination management strategy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support.

Mufi Hannemann  
President & CEO  
Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association

**C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.**  
*Mayor*



**William V. Brillhante, Jr.**  
*Managing Director*

**Merrick Nishimoto**  
*Deputy Managing Director*

## *County of Hawai'i ~ Office of the Mayor*

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Testimony of  
**C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.**  
Mayor, County of Hawai'i

Before the House Committee on  
**Finance**  
Rep. Chris Todd, Chair  
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

**Thursday, April 2, 2026, 2:00 p.m.**  
State Capitol Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

In consideration of  
**Senate Bill 2001 SD1, HD1**  
**Relating to the Banyan Drive Community Development District**

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 2001, SD1, HD1. This measure establishes the Waiākea Community Development District and its Special Fund. Outlines the powers and duties of the Hawai'i Community Development Authority regarding the new district and authorizes the Authority to establish rules. Creates one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) position within the Authority and appropriates necessary funds.

Banyan Drive and the Waiākea Peninsula is a key gateway to Hilo with significant cultural and economic importance. The area has long faced ongoing challenges with infrastructure, safety, and underutilization. This measure establishes a redevelopment framework through the Hawai'i Community Development Authority. This aligns with our urgency to emphasize cultural preservation and responsible redevelopment.

Senate Bill 2001, SD1, HD1, presents a real opportunity to revitalize the Waiākea Peninsula. We respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure and appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FINANCE COMMITTEE  
Legislative Session 2026

Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Honorable Chair House of Representative Christopher Todd  
Honorable Vice Chair House of Representative Jenna Takenouchi  
House of Representative Finance Committee Members:

My name is Terri Napeahi a lineal descendant of the Waiākea Ahuapua'a, Hilo, Hawai'i. I am writing to you today to urge **support** of Senate Bill SB2001, relating to the Banyan/Makaokū Community Development District. HCDA; Waiākea Community Development District; Special Fund; Rules; Position; Appropriation (\$).

We appreciate all those who supported our endeavors to ensure that a lineal descendant be represented as a voting member to the Hawai'i Community Development Authority. Although we rejected the idea of an Advisory Group, we would entertain the idea with conditions. We hope to be able to continue to move forward with this reasonable *ask* through this legislative session. The Waiākea Ahupua'a Crownland Heirs have regular meetings with lineal descendants interested in sharing historical information and genealogy to this area.

Makaokū is very significant to this area because anciently it was a complex where important decision making was made by Ali'i for Governance. It worked side-by-side with Mokuola (Pu'u honua). The heiau stood 60 feet tall and its function was maintained by the ancients who ensured order. The Napeahi ohana were surely participants of its function and care takers of the main pohakū named "Maka'okū'ikalani."

We have participated many years sharing knowledge of this Ahupua'a and its significance to Ali'i Nui Keoua, Keawemauhili, Kalaniopu'u, Kamehameha 1, Kamehameha 2 and Kamehameha 3<sup>rd</sup>. We see the future to be phenomenal for Hilo "one," with a "piko" revitalized and reconstructed in Waiākea, Makaokū. I have also worked with the County of Hawai'i Parks and Recreation to use the ancient names of the area, and they have begun to work with the community to do research and revitalize the significant ancient names. The Charter School Ke Ana Lā 'a hana of Keaukaha will be working closely with P&R to accomplish this endeavor.

My Kupuna saved the ceremonial stones of Heiau Kūaka‘anau‘u of Makaokū, before it was dismantled during the plantation era and used as filler for the parking lot, boat ramp and roads in that area. It stood 60 feet tall, and was a heiau built in pyramidal form. I found the main stone “Maka‘okū‘ikalani” in 2010, with the help of recording documents left by Theodore Kelsey, after a 25-year search, it is now in my possession. They placed ceremonial stones on their alodial land near the Wailoa River, and the State of Hawai‘i Parks gave the ceremonial stones a SHPD registered number and placed a wahipana sign in front of the stones protected by horse hitches. We have been preparing for a few years and hope to obtain a space in Makaokū to reconstruct Kūaka‘anau‘u. We have the contractors to build the Heiau and the architects working on the site-plan, floor plan, elevation plans etc. We have a team and we meet every week.

I am a business/economics graduate an entrepreneur and see what the market would do if Hawaiian “authenticity” is revitalized in the market for Hilo. Give visitors a reason to visit Hilo and give our people the opportunity to honor and care for the area of Waiākea.

“Laulima I ka hāpai pohakū!” Build it and they will come!

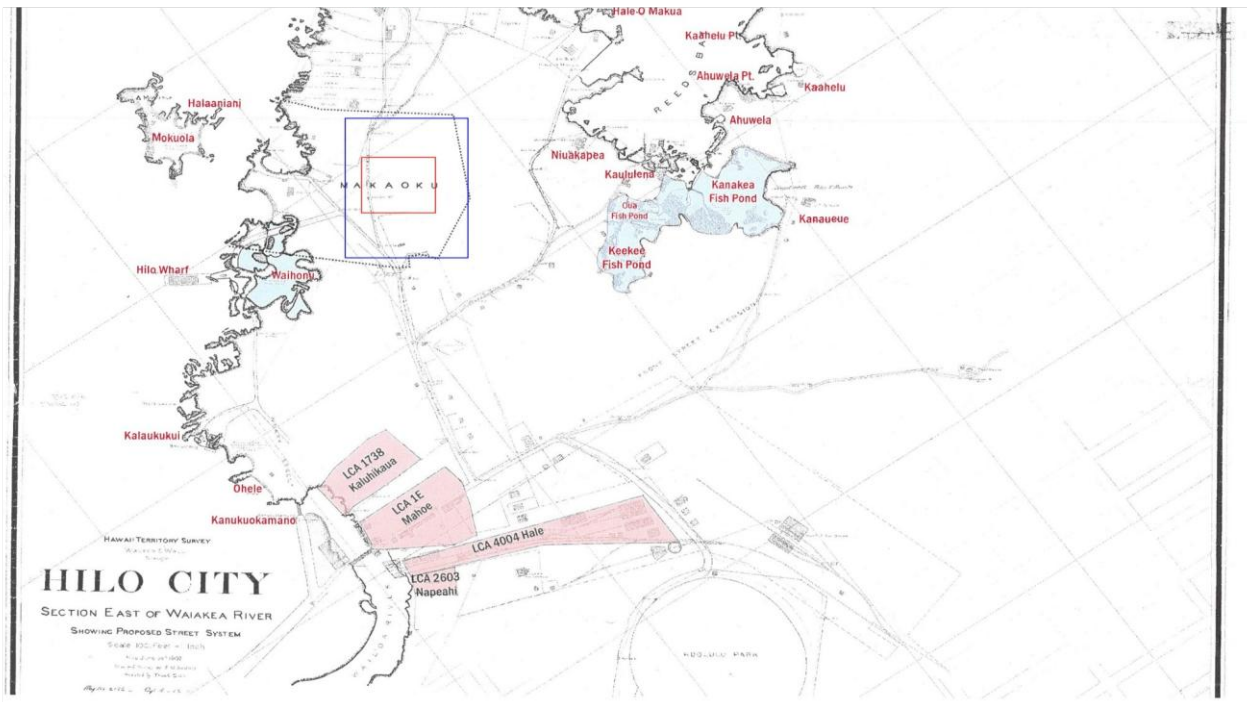
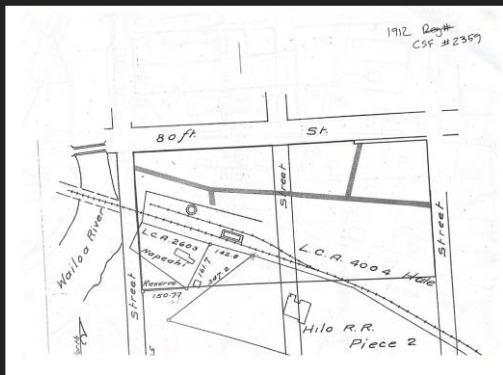
Terri Napeahi

Waiakea Ahupua‘a Crown Land Heirs

POINT: (I have attached a few power point slides that I have presented to HCDA and HFF). PBR Hawai‘i in their report stated in their Waiākea Peninsula Site Assessment and Strategic Market outlook page 7:

“Cultural and Historical Uses PURSUE WITH HIGH PRIORITY: Cultural and historical uses are considered the foundation of nearly all other land uses considered – from a market as well as a community standpoint. Together with various published information, lineal descendants and other cultural informants indicate that very significant cultural facilities and practices occurred in the Study Area. These include those associated with Kūaka‘anau‘u Heiau at Makaoku, which is understood to have been located near the bridge to Mokuola, also known as Coconut Island (Historic Hawai‘i Foundation, Cultural Surveys Hawai‘i, and University of Hawai‘i at Hilo, 2021) (ASM Affiliates, 2015) (Warshauer, 2011). Recalling and supporting such cultural values are considered foundational to any re-envisioning of this Study Area, with great importance and meaning to Native Hawaiian communities. Such action would also enhance existing and future land uses considered for the Study Area. Cultural and historic uses are seen to have an educational, service, and regenerative focus. They could entail restoration of heiau or pu‘uhonua (places of refuge), interpretive walking or multimodal trails, creation of an outdoor pā hula (mound for practicing hula), and/or conservation of areas without improvements for cultural practices. The development and operating costs of cultural and historic uses are expected to require subsidy from other revenue-generating uses within the Study Area, and/or contributions from government or philanthropic sources. In some cases, kuleana for operations of such facilities could be assigned to private non-profit entities.”

# Napeahi & Waiakea Ahupua'a Crown Land Heirs





Kūaka'ananu'u Heiau in Maka'okū



<https://www.bigislandvideonews.com/2016/09/22/video-stones-from-lost-hilo-heiau-recovered-preserved/>

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FINANCE COMMITTEE  
Legislative Session 2026

Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Honorable Chair House of Representative Christopher Todd  
Honorable Vice Chair House of Representative Jenna Takenouchi  
House of Representative Finance Committee Members:

My name is Terri Napeahi a lineal descendant of the Waiākea Ahuapua'a, Hilo, Hawai'i. I am writing to you today to urge **support** of Senate Bill SB2001, relating to the Banyan/Makaokū Community Development District. HCDA; Waiākea Community Development District; Special Fund; Rules; Position; Appropriation (\$).

We appreciate all those who supported our endeavors to ensure that a lineal descendant be represented as a voting member to the Hawai'i Community Development Authority. Although we rejected the idea of an Advisory Group, we would entertain the idea with conditions. We hope to be able to continue to move forward with this reasonable *ask* through this legislative session. The Waiākea Ahupua'a Crownland Heirs have regular meetings with lineal descendants interested in sharing historical information and genealogy to this area.

Makaokū is very significant to this area because anciently it was a complex where important decision making was made by Ali'i for Governance. It worked side-by-side with Mokuola (Pu'u honua). The heiau stood 60 feet tall and its function was maintained by the ancients who ensured order. The Napeahi ohana were surely participants of its function and care takers of the main pohakū named "Maka'okū'ikalani."

We have participated many years sharing knowledge of this Ahupua'a and its significance to Ali'i Nui Keoua, Keawemauhili, Kalaniopu'u, Kamehameha 1, Kamehameha 2 and Kamehameha 3<sup>rd</sup>. We see the future to be phenomenal for Hilo "one," with a "piko" revitalized and reconstructed in Waiākea, Makaokū. I have also worked with the County of Hawai'i Parks and Recreation to use the ancient names of the area, and they have begun to work with the community to do research and revitalize the significant ancient names. The Charter School Ke Ana Lā 'a hana of Keaukaha will be working closely with P&R to accomplish this endeavor.

My Kupuna saved the ceremonial stones of Heiau Kūaka‘ananu‘u of Makaokū, before it was dismantled during the plantation era and used as filler for the parking lot, boat ramp and roads in that area. It stood 60 feet tall, and was a heiau built in pyramidal form. I found the main stone “Maka‘okū‘ikalani” in 2010, with the help of recording documents left by Theodore Kelsey, after a 25-year search, it is now in my possession. They placed ceremonial stones on their alodial land near the Wailoa River, and the State of Hawai‘i Parks gave the ceremonial stones a SHPD registered number and placed a wahipana sign in front of the stones protected by horse hitches. We have been preparing for a few years and hope to obtain a space in Makaokū to reconstruct Kūaka‘ananu‘u. We have the contractors to build the Heiau and the architects working on the site-plan, floor plan, elevation plans etc. We have a team and we meet every week.

I am a business/economics graduate an entrepreneur and see what the market would do if Hawaiian “authenticity” is revitalized in the market for Hilo. Give visitors a reason to visit Hilo and give our people the opportunity to honor and care for the area of Waiākea.

“Laulima I ka hāpai pohakū!” Build it and they will come!

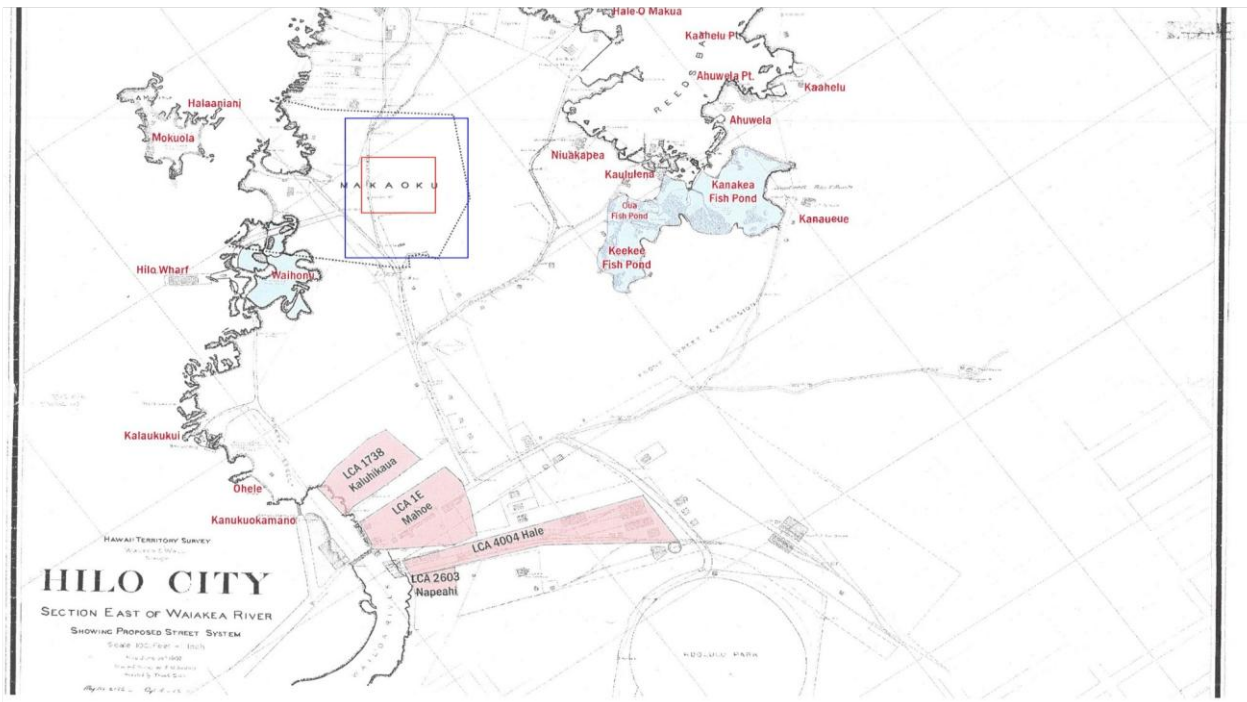
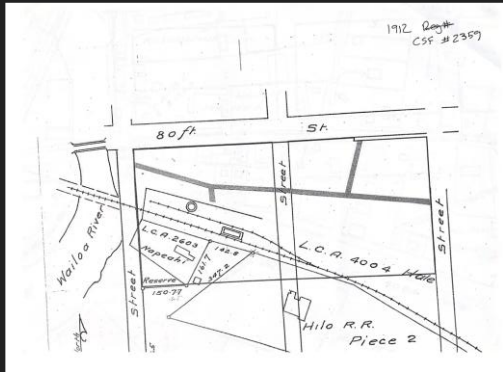
Terri Napeahi

Waiakea Ahupua‘a Crown Land Heirs

POINT: (I have attached a few power point slides that I have presented to HCDA and HFF). PBR Hawai‘i in their report stated in their Waiākea Peninsula Site Assessment and Strategic Market outlook page 7:

“Cultural and Historical Uses PURSUE WITH HIGH PRIORITY: Cultural and historical uses are considered the foundation of nearly all other land uses considered – from a market as well as a community standpoint. Together with various published information, lineal descendants and other cultural informants indicate that very significant cultural facilities and practices occurred in the Study Area. These include those associated with Kūaka‘ananu‘u Heiau at Makaoku, which is understood to have been located near the bridge to Mokuola, also known as Coconut Island (Historic Hawai‘i Foundation, Cultural Surveys Hawai‘i, and University of Hawai‘i at Hilo, 2021) (ASM Affiliates, 2015) (Warshauer, 2011). Recalling and supporting such cultural values are considered foundational to any re-envisioning of this Study Area, with great importance and meaning to Native Hawaiian communities. Such action would also enhance existing and future land uses considered for the Study Area. Cultural and historic uses are seen to have an educational, service, and regenerative focus. They could entail restoration of heiau or pu‘uhonua (places of refuge), interpretive walking or multimodal trails, creation of an outdoor pā hula (mound for practicing hula), and/or conservation of areas without improvements for cultural practices. The development and operating costs of cultural and historic uses are expected to require subsidy from other revenue-generating uses within the Study Area, and/or contributions from government or philanthropic sources. In some cases, kuleana for operations of such facilities could be assigned to private non-profit entities.”

# Napeahi & Waiakea Ahupua'a Crown Land Heirs



Kūaka'ananu'u Heiau in Maka'okū



<https://www.bigislandvideonews.com/2016/09/22/video-stones-from-lost-hilo-heiau-recovered-preserved/>

**SB-2001-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:29:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mar Ortaleza	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Position: Support SB2001 SB1 HD1

Aloha Chair Representative Chris Todd, Vice Chair Representative Jenna Takenouchi and members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Mar Ortaleza. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB2001 SD1 HD1. I am in solidarity with Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, Wāiākea Ahupua‘a Crown Land Heirs, Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners, and community advocates with deep ties to Hawai‘i Island. Many of us have worked closely with grassroots organizations, service providers, and the legislative process to uplift the voices of those most impacted by state-led proposed development.

The Lineal Descendants are the original stewards of Makaokū.

The appropriate place name, Makaokū—also known by the state-led proposed development as Waiākea Peninsula—is not merely a redevelopment area. Makaokū is honored as kūpuna, an ‘āina rich with cultural history, genealogy, and ongoing stewardship among the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, known as Wāiākea Ahupua‘a Crown Land Heirs. This relationship predates the establishment of the Hawai‘i Community Development Authority under Act 153, Session Laws of Hawai‘i 1976, and the State of Hawai‘i itself.

I acknowledge and appreciate that SB2001, as amended, now includes lineal descendant representation within the authority. This is a necessary and long-overdue step toward recognizing the ‘ike, kuleana, and genealogical ties of those who have maintained a living relationship with this ‘āina across generations.

Lineal Descendants:

- Maintain genealogical ties to the ‘āina
- Carry kuleana to protect cultural resources
- Hold ‘ike that cannot be replicated through consultants or advisory groups

The inclusion of lineal descendants must not be symbolic—it must be meaningful, empowered, and integrated into decision-making processes. True inclusion requires that Lineal Descendants of Makaokū have a direct and respected role in shaping the future of these Crown Lands. Thus upon our Support of SB2001 SD1 HD1 we request and ask you to consider a friendly

amendment to the title of this Bill to include Makaokū as well as implementing Makaokū within the name of the development project.

For this reason, I offer my SUPPORT for SB2001 SB1 HD1, as amended, with the suggested amendments regarding the name change, with the expectation that this inclusion will be upheld in practice, not only in policy. This is an opportunity to move away from historic patterns of exclusion and toward a model of governance rooted in ‘ike kūpuna, stewardship, and accountability.

Laulima i ka hāpai pōhaku. Many hands carry the stones.

Mahalo,  
Mar Ortaleza

**SB-2001-HD-1**

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 4:34:13 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Rojas	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Representative Mark Hashem, Vice Chair, and Members of the House Water and Land and Finance Committees,

I stand in STRONG OPPOSITION to SB2001 SD1 HD1.

I stand in solidarity with the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, Wāiākea Ahupua‘a Crown Land Heirs, cultural practitioners, and community members who have long carried the ‘ike, kuleana, and genealogical responsibility to this ‘āina.

Let me be clear:

This bill does not empower Lineal Descendants.

It removes them from decision-making power and reduces them to an advisory role with no authority.

According to your own committee report, this bill:

Eliminates the redevelopment agency structure

Consolidates power within HCDA

And only requires “at least one lineal or cultural descendant” on an advisory council, selected by the Authority in consultation with OHA

That is the HEWA.

One.

Selected.

Advisory only.

No vote.

No power.

This is not inclusion. This is containment.

Lineal descendants are not stakeholders.

They are not advisors.

They are not symbolic seats.



They are:

Genealogically tied to the 'āina  
Trust beneficiaries of Crown lands  
Holders of 'ike kūpuna that cannot be replaced

And yet this bill:

Excludes them from voting authority  
Places control in a state development agency  
And asks them to "advise" on decisions that will already be made

This raises serious constitutional and trust law concerns.

Under Article XII, Section 7 of the Hawai'i Constitution, the State is required to protect the customary and traditional rights of Native Hawaiians.

Advisory status does not meet that standard.

Further, these are Crown and ceded lands held in public trust.

To move forward with redevelopment while:

excluding lineal descendants from voting authority  
and consolidating control under HCDA

creates legal vulnerability for:

breach of trust  
failure of fiduciary duty  
and inadequate cultural protection

This has already been identified and corrected in HB2616 HD2, which includes lineal descendant voting authority.

So the question is:

Why remove that?

Why replace it with a weaker structure?

Why reduce Lineal Descendants to one advisory seat - selected, controlled, and outnumbered?

This is not progress.

This continues a pattern where:

‘ike is extracted  
voices are heard but not honored  
and decisions are made without those who carry the kuleana

Makaokū is not “underutilized land.”

It is:

Ancestral ‘āina  
A living cultural system  
A place of genealogy, mo‘olelo, and stewardship

To frame it as lacking infrastructure and therefore available for redevelopment ignores its true value and relationship to the people.

Lineal Descendants have already:

participated in EA, EIS, CIA, and Section 106 processes  
shared mo‘olelo and genealogy for decades  
and actively stewarded this ‘āina despite generations of harm

They are not asking to be included.

They are asserting their right to be decision-makers.

A cultural practitioner or consultant is not a substitute for a Lineal Descendant.

Advisory councils do not satisfy constitutional obligations.

And one selected seat does not equal representation.

CLOSING

If this body is serious about:

cultural integrity  
lawful governance  
and restoring trust

Then this bill must be corrected.

Restore lineal descendant voting authority.  
Adopt the language of HB2616 HD2.  
Do not move forward with a structurally deficient bill.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to OPPOSE SB2001 SD1 HD1.

Mahalo.

**SB-2001-HD-1**

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 4:34:13 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Rojas	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

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Mahalo.

**SB-2001-HD-1**

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 8:01:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**STRONG STRONG SUPPORT!!!**

SB2001 is needed urgently to improve the Banyan Drive / Waiakea Penninsula area, which has deteriorated to the point of an embarrassment to Hawaii Island and the state. It is a magnet for the dregs of society who endanger residents and visitors.

The WCDD and WCDD Special Fund can right this sinking ship and return the area to the prideful economic driver for tax revenue and jobs it has the potential to be.

Mahalo!

Glen Kagamida, Hilo



**SB-2001-HD-1**

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Mahalo!

Glen Kagamida, Hilo

**SB-2001-HD-1**

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 9:27:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

MUST INCLUDE Lineal Descendants as voting members on HCDA

**SB-2001-HD-1**

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 9:27:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

MUST INCLUDE Lineal Descendants as voting members on HCDA

**SB-2001-HD-1**

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 12:31:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Support Testimony HB Bill

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2001 SD1 HD1



WRITTEN TESTIMONY

(SB2001 SD1 HD1)

Position: STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Representative Chris Todd and Vice Chair Representative Jenna Takenouchi and members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case and I am a Lineal Descendant of Moku O Keawe. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB2001 SD1 HD1. I also stand here in solidarity with Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, Wāiākea Ahupua‘a Crown Land Heirs, Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners, and community advocates with deep ties to Hawai‘i Island. Many of us have worked closely with grassroots organizations, service providers, and the legislative process to uplift the voices of those most impacted by state-led proposed development.

The Lineal Descendants are the original stewards of Makaokū.

The appropriate place name, Makaokū—also known by the state-led proposed development as Wāiākea Peninsula—is not merely a redevelopment area. Makaokū is honored as kūpuna, an ‘āina rich with cultural history, genealogy, and ongoing stewardship among the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, known as Wāiākea Ahupua‘a Crown Land Heirs. This relationship predates the establishment of the Hawai‘i Community Development Authority under Act 153, Session Laws of Hawai‘i 1976, and the State of Hawai‘i itself.

I acknowledge and appreciate that SB2001, as amended, now includes lineal descendant representation within the authority. This is a necessary and long-overdue step toward recognizing the ‘ike, kuleana, and genealogical ties of those who have maintained a living relationship with this ‘āina across generations.

Lineal Descendants:

- Maintain genealogical ties to the ‘āina
- Carry kuleana to protect cultural resources
- Hold ‘ike that cannot be replicated through consultants or advisory groups

SB2001 SD1 HD1 will:

- Restore cultural recognition to Makaokū
- Protect sacred and historic sites
- Ensure decision-making authority includes Lineal Descendants directly connected to the land
- Align development practices with Hawai‘i’s constitutional and public trust responsibilities

Development that prioritizes Lineal Descendants in these developmental planning affirms cultural continuity, community well-being, and responsible stewardship for future generations.

The inclusion of lineal descendants must not be symbolic—it must be meaningful, empowered, and integrated into decision-making processes. True inclusion requires that Lineal Descendants of Makaokū have a direct and respected role in shaping the future of these Crown Lands. Thus upon our Support of SB2001 SD1 HD1 we request and ask you to consider a friendly

amendment to the title of this Bill to include Makaokū as well as implementing Makaokū within the name of the development project.

For this reason, I offer my SUPPORT for SB2001 SB1 HD1, as amended, with the suggested amendments regarding the name change, with the expectation that this inclusion will be upheld in practice, not only in policy. This is an opportunity to move away from historic patterns of exclusion and toward a model of governance rooted in ‘ike kūpuna, stewardship, and accountability.

Laulima I Ka Hāpai Pōhaku,

Many hands carrying the stones,

Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case

**SB-2001-HD-1**

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 12:50:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Seb Choe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Representative Chris Todd and Vice Chair Representative Jenna Takenouchi and members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Seb Choe. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB2001 SD1 HD1. I stand here in solidarity with Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, Wāiākea Ahupua‘a Crown Land Heirs, Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners, and community advocates with deep ties to Hawai‘i Island. Many of us have worked closely with grassroots organizations, service providers, and the legislative process to uplift the voices of those most impacted by state-led proposed development.

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Laulima I Ka Hāpai Pōhaku,

Many hands carrying the stones,

Seb Choe



**SB-2001-HD-1**

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 12:53:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rebecca Jimenez-Ward	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

(SB2001 SD1 HD1)

Position: STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Representative Chris Todd and Vice Chair Representative Jenna Takenouchi and members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Rebecca Jimenez-Ward. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB2001 SD1 HD1. I stand here in solidarity with Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, Wāiākea Ahupua‘a Crown Land Heirs, Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners, and community advocates with deep ties to Hawai‘i Island. Many of us have worked closely with grassroots organizations, service providers, and the legislative process to uplift the voices of those most impacted by state-led proposed development.

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Laulima I Ka Hāpai Pōhaku,

Many hands carrying the stones,

Bec Jimenez-Ward

**SB-2001-HD-1**

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 3:41:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Strong Support SB2001 SD1 HD1

Dana Keawe-Pe'a

Keukaha Action Network (KAN)

Moku O Keawe