

THE SENATE
KA 'AHA KENEKOA

INTERIM OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair
Senator Rachele Lamosao, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF INFORMATIONAL BRIEFING

DATE: Tuesday, October 13, 2026
TIME: 12:30 p.m.
PLACE: Conference Room 225 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

PHOTO ID REQUIRED FOR ENTRANCE TO THE STATE CAPITOL
BUILDING HOURS: 7AM TO 5PM, MONDAY - FRIDAY

A live stream of all Senate Standing Committee meetings will be available on the [Senate YouTube Channel](#).

A G E N D A

Informational Briefing on History of Native Hawaiian Programs and Institutions & Recent Lawsuits

The Senate Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committees, in conjunction with the Native Hawaiian Affairs Caucus, are holding an informational briefing on public and private programs and institutions intended to support Native Hawaiian participants and recent legal challenges to those programs and institutions. This briefing will explore the historical context of the programs and institutions and the current political environment driving the litigation as well as provide an overview of some of the lawsuits.

1. Welcome and Introductions – Senator Karl Rhoads, Judiciary Committee Chair; Senator Tim Richards, Hawaiian Affairs Committee Chair; Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Native Hawaiian Affairs Caucus Chair
2. Overview – Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Office of Hawaiian Affairs
3. Presentation on the Background of Native Hawaiian-Focused Educational Programs and the Context of Recent Lawsuits Challenging Kamehameha Schools (*Students for Fair Admission v. Trustees of the Estate of Bernice Pauahi Bishop dba Kamehameha Schools*) and the Native Hawaiian Health Scholarship Program (*Do No Harm v. U.S. Dept. of Human Services*) – Derek H. Kauanoe, Assistant Professor of Law, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, William S. Richardson School of Law
[Briefing Materials from Professor Kauanoe](#)

4. Presentation on the History of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and the Context of Recent Lawsuits (*Ryan v. Watson* and *Kalahiki v. Watson*) – Tyler Iokepa Gomes, Chief Administrator, Kilohana Collective, Hawaiian Council
[Briefing Materials from Administrator Gomes](#)
5. Questions from Committee and Caucus Members (limited to 5 minutes per Member for Questions and Answers)
6. Concluding Remarks – Chair Keohokalole; Chair Richards; Chair Rhoads

Background Materials

1. Office of the Governor, [Governor Green Statement on Lawsuit Challenging Hawaiian Homes Program](#) (6/3/2026)
2. Hawai'i Public Radio, [Federal lawsuit challenges Hawaiian Home Lands blood-quantum requirement](#) (6/4/2026)
3. Star Advertiser, [Federal lawsuit challenges Native Hawaiian health scholarship program](#) (4/20/2026)
4. AP, [Federal lawsuit challenges private school that gives preference to Native Hawaiians](#) (10/20/2025)
5. Civil Beat, [Native Hawaiian Benefits Face Sweeping Legal Attacks](#) (9/7/2026)

As is the norm for informational briefings, no public testimony will be accepted.

For special assistance: The cable TV broadcast and/or live stream of this meeting will include closed captioning. If you need an auxiliary aid/service or other accommodation due to a disability, please call the committee clerk at the telephone number listed below or email JDCcommittee@capitol.hawaii.gov. Requests made as early as possible have a greater likelihood of being fulfilled.

FOR AMENDED NOTICES: Measures that have been deleted are stricken through and measures that have been added are underscored. If a measure is both underscored and stricken through, that measure has been deleted from the agenda.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL THE COMMITTEE CLERK AT (808) 586-6130.

Senator Herbert M. Richards, III
Chair

Senator Karl Rhoads
Chair

Senator Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate