

Michael G. Buck – Confirmation
Legacy Land Conservation Commission

1. Why do you wish to serve as a member of the Legacy Land Conservation Commission?

I have a unique set of knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences to contribute to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. In almost 16 years of my professional life in Hawaii serving the public sector, I have been humbled and privileged by the opportunities, responsibilities, and challenges faced in sustaining Hawaii's environment. Hawaii has given a lot to me, and I want to give back.

2. What is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Legacy Land Conservation Commission?

The general role and responsibilities of a member of the LLC Commission is to do your homework, listen carefully, be respectful of others, and provide meaningful input. Specifically, Hawaii Revised Statutes 709A_8 states the responsibilities of the commission shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) Advising the department and the board on any proposal, public or private, for the acquisition of any interest or rights in land having value as a resource to the State;

(2) Advising the department and the board on any requests for grants from the fund to a qualifying state or county agency or nonprofit land conservation organization for the preservation of lands having value as a resource to the State; and

(3) Recommending to the board the acquisition of interests or rights in certain lands having value as a resource to the State.

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 Commission and how they would inform your decision-making.

I am a capable leader and effective collaborator, bringing strategic vision and practical implementation skills to my work. I have a deep commitment to Hawaii's natural and community resources as the foundation for Hawaii's economy and quality of life. I have had diverse and extensive experience creating and implementing a variety of multi-stakeholder natural resource and community development programs at local, state, national and international levels.

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These experiences have required and enabled me to develop:

- Extensive facilitation and conflict resolution experience dealing with natural resource public policy, water allocation, and traditional indigenous rights issues.
- Knowledge in a diverse range of natural resource fields such as wildlife and watershed management, forest health and sustainability, invasive species, and conservation biology; and
- Knowledge of Federal and State of Hawaii environmental, natural resource, and property laws and regulations.

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

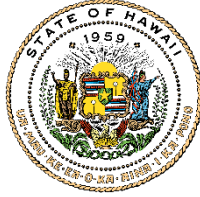
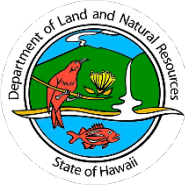
I would like to raise the level of awareness and increase funding for this important program which partners engaged community groups with the stewardship of land and related natural resources;...It is one of the best investments of public taxpayer dollars I have experienced? offering significant multiplier effects? often performing functions that the government is currently not providing or could not afford;.. There could be some structural improvements in the funding criteria to involve more legislative support and involvement in the program as the current level of funding is inadequate to meet the demands of an increasing active community clamoring for active participation in the stewardship of precious land in Hawaii;

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 Legacy Land Conservation Commission? If so, please explain.

I do not believe there will be any conflict of interest or questions regarding my character? judgment? or ability to serve impartially on the Legacy Land Conservation Committee;.. I would note that during my four decade tenure with the Department of Land and Natural Resources and eight years of service on the Hawaii Water Commission? there are people who did not always agree with the positions that I took;..

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**

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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
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 648
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE
LEGACY LAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
MICHAEL BUCK, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE JUNE 30, 2029**

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports Governor's Message 648, nominating Michael Buck to continue serving on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission (Commission). Mr. Buck resides in the County of Honolulu and possesses the scientific qualifications required under sections 173A-2.4(a) and 173A-2.4(a)(1), Hawai'i Revised Statutes.

Mr. Buck's lifelong commitment to mālama 'āina and community well-being demonstrates his strong suitability for service on the Commission. During his tenure as an interim appointee, he quickly developed a thorough understanding of the Commission's decision-making processes and provided valuable insights and recommendations during the recent review of land acquisition grant applications. His expertise and leadership in natural resource management, environmental education, and public-private partnerships complement the experience of fellow commissioners and enhance collaboration and effectiveness in Commission operations.

The Department strongly supports Governor's Message 648 and respectfully recommends that the Senate confirm the appointment of Michael Buck to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this nominee.

LATE

GM-648

Submitted on: 4/14/2026 7:01:54 PM
Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
sherry broder	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairman Lee and Members of the Committee, I give Michael Buck the highest recommendation possible for the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. I have known him for 50 years and he has more knowledge than most people about the flora, fauna and lands of Hawaii Nei. He has spent all these decades devoting his time and skills to protecting and improving the lands of Hawaii. He is a wonderful person and will be a great asset to the Commission. He seeks consensus. I know he will serve with honor and distinction.