

April 21, 2026

To: Senator Chris Lee
Chair of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

From: Richard Matsuda

Subject: GM741- Nomination to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority

Dear Chair Lee,

Here are my responses to the five questions posed in your letter to me dated April 10, 2026.

1. Why do you wish to serve as a member of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority?

The Legislature created the MKSOA to “protect Mauna Kea for future generations and manage the lands contained therein for the purpose of fostering a mutual stewardship paradigm in which ecology, the environment, natural resources, cultural practices, education, and science are in balance and synergy.” This paradigm is founded on a community-based, culturally grounded framework. I support the legislature’s intent and believe the Authority’s work is critically important to Mauna Kea and the people of Hawai’i.

Leadership continuity is especially important at this critical stage of the Authority transition, with multiple initiatives in process. Serving a second term helps to ensure these initiatives reach completion as effectively as possible.

2. What is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority?

The Authority collective responsibility is to provide strategic and policy guidance to the Executive Director and staff in carrying out the Authority’s statutory responsibilities under Chapter 195H. This includes completing and implementing a management plan, developing a new lease framework, establishing a sustainable financial plan, and the administrative formation of this new agency.

As the observatories’ representative, my role also includes serving as a connector between the observatories and the Authority, and by extension the broader community, ensuring open communication and assuring alignment with the Authority’s stewardship mission.

3. Why do you believe you are qualified to serve?

I have 32 years of experience at the W. M. Keck Observatory, including roles in engineering, operations, management, community relations, and executive leadership. I’ve spent extensive time on Mauna Kea experiencing the practical realities of stewardship and compliance. I’ve also spent significant time in the community listening to and learning from a wide range of community perspectives.

In my first term on the MKSOA, I drew upon my experiences as a kama'āina grounded in local values, as an astronomy professional, and in community service including non-profit leadership and civic engagement, to build mutual understanding and trust – which are necessary for the mutual stewardship paradigm to succeed.

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

My primary goal would be to help complete the work already underway and support the Authority's transition into a stable, effective governing body. Key priorities include fostering greater mutual understanding and trust in the community, supporting completion of the management plan with meaningful community engagement, developing a clear and responsible lease framework, and standing up the Authority administratively.

5. Do you believe there is anything that could reasonably be perceived as a conflict of interest?

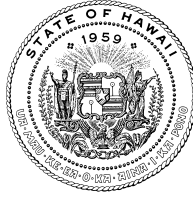
By design, the Authority brings together representatives of different communities and constituencies to support the mutual stewardship of Maunakea. I proudly serve as the observatories' representative, while fully recognizing that the Authority's responsibility is to protect Maunakea and serve the people of Hawai'i holistically.

I take my ethical obligations seriously and am committed to transparency, disclosure, and impartial decision-making. I believe I fulfill this role fairly and responsibly, contributing my perspective while respecting and weighing the diverse viewpoints represented on the Authority.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard H. Matsuda". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard Matsuda



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

Thursday, April 23, 2026
1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225 and Videoconference

In consideration of
Governor's Message No. 741

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. 741**, regarding the reappointment of **Richard Matsuda** to serve on the **Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Committee** for a term to expire on June 30, 2029.

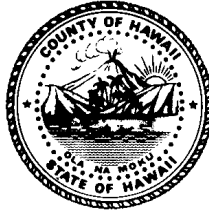
Richard Matsuda, an electrical engineer, has served as Director of the W. M. Keck Observatory since 2024. He began his career there working on the Keck II telescope and previously served as Chief of Operations and Associate Director of External Relations.

As Second Vice Chair of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Committee, he has taken a collaborative approach to stewardship, informed by his experience managing complex operations on Mauna Kea.

I am confident that Mr. Matsuda's experience and record of service clearly demonstrate his qualifications for this reappointment, and I am pleased to offer my support.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HEATHER L. KIMBALL
COUNCIL DISTRICT 1
(North Hilo, Hāmākuā, and portion of
Waimea)



Phone: (808) 961-8828
Fax: (808) 961-8912
Email: Heather.Kimball@hawaiicounty.gov

HAWAI‘I COUNTY COUNCIL
25 Aupuni Street, Ste. 1402, Hilo, Hawai‘i 96720

April 21, 2026

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
Honorable Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Honorable Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
Submission via online testimony only

RE: Support of GM 741; Richard Matsuda to Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority

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

I am writing to express my support for the confirmation of Mr. Richard Matsuda to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA). As a Hawai‘i County Council Member representing a district closely connected to Mauna Kea, I appreciate the importance of appointing individuals with the experience, judgment, and commitment necessary to help guide its future stewardship.

Mr. Matsuda brings over three decades of distinguished leadership and technical expertise from his tenure at the W. M. Keck Observatory, where he currently serves as Observatory Director. His extensive experience overseeing complex operations, advancing world-class scientific research, and managing critical infrastructure on Mauna Kea uniquely positions him to contribute meaningfully to the Authority’s important work.

Equally significant is Mr. Matsuda’s demonstrated commitment to community engagement and collaborative leadership. Having served in key roles in external relations and as a mentor and volunteer throughout Hawai‘i Island, he understands the importance of thoughtful stewardship that reflects both scientific advancement and community values. His current service as a member and Second Vice-Chair of the Authority further reflects his dedication and effectiveness in helping to guide the transition to a new management framework under Act 255.

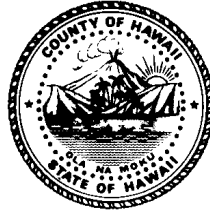
Mr. Matsuda’s depth of experience, steady leadership, and longstanding ties to Hawai‘i make him exceptionally well-qualified to continue serving on the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. I respectfully urge your favorable consideration of his confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important issue.

Sincerely,

HEATHER L. KIMBALL

James E. Hustace
Council Member
District 9
North & South Kohala



Waimea: (808) 887-6077
Hilo: (808) 961-8564
james.hustace@hawaiicounty.gov

HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

25 Aupuni Street | Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 22, 2026

Testimony of James E. Hustace
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council

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

On
GM741, Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority, gubernatorial nominee, Richard Matsuda

Thursday, April 23, 2026, 1pm
Conference Room 225

Chair Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair Senator Lorraine Inouye, and Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and esteemed members of the Committee,

I write in strong support of the nomination of Richard H. Matsuda to continue serving as the Maunakea Observatories representative on the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA).

Mr. Matsuda has played a direct and meaningful role in shaping Hawai'i's new management framework for Mauna Kea under Act 255 (HRS 195H). As a member of the 2021 State House Mauna Kea Working Group, he contributed to the foundational policy discussions that led to the establishment of the MKSOA. Since his confirmation in 2023, he has served on the Authority, currently as 2nd Vice-Chair, helping guide its work during this critical transition period.

Continuity in leadership is especially important as the Authority advances key priorities, including the development of a comprehensive management plan, the establishment of a framework for future observatory leases, and the ongoing administrative transition. Mr. Matsuda's continued service ensures institutional knowledge and stability, while supporting the Authority's efforts to build and maintain trust with the broader community.

With more than 30 years of experience at W. M. Keck Observatory, including his current role as Observatory Director, Mr. Matsuda brings deep expertise in engineering, operations, and executive leadership. His career reflects a thorough understanding of the technical, environmental, and operational complexities of managing world-class scientific facilities on Mauna Kea. Notably, he has led large teams, overseen critical infrastructure and safety systems, and managed both internal operations and external relations with government and community stakeholders.

Equally important, Mr. Matsuda is a kama'āina, born and raised in Hawai'i, with longstanding ties to the community. His extensive record of service—including mentorship through the Akamai Workforce Initiative, leadership roles with the Hawai'i Community Foundation, and years of youth coaching—demonstrates a deep commitment to giving back and investing in future generations. His recognition as one of Hawai'i's Most Admired Leaders further reflects the respect he has earned across sectors.

The work of the MKSOA carries significant cultural, environmental, and scientific responsibility. Mr. Matsuda's experience, leadership, and balanced perspective make him exceptionally well-qualified to continue serving in this role at a pivotal time for Mauna Kea.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts to confirm Richard H. Matsuda to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this nomination.

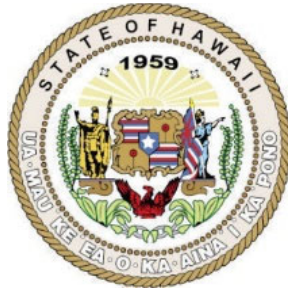
Mahalo nui,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J E HUSTACE', written in a cursive style.

James E. Hustace
Hawai'i County Council Member
District 9 (North & South Kohala)

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JOHN KOMEIJI
Chairperson

KIMO ALAMEDA
POMAI BERTELMANN
NEIL HANNAHS
PAUL HORNER
*BONNIE IRWIN
RYAN KANAKA'OLE
KALEHUA KRUG
BEN KUDO
LANAKILA MANGUIL
RICH MATSUDA
NOE NOE WONG-WILSON

*ex-officio

MAUNA KEA STEWARDSHIP AND OVERSIGHT AUTHORITY

688 Kino'ole Street #212, Hilo, HI 96720
Telephone (808) 272-0259
Website: <http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/maunakea-authority/>

April 22, 2026

Committee On Water, Land, Culture, and the Arts

Senator Chris Lee, Chair

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

Senator Stanley Chang, Member

Senator Rachele Lamosao, Member

Senator Samantha DeCorte, Member

Submitted Electronically

SUBJECT: GM 741: Letter of Support for the Consideration and Confirmation of Nominee, RICHARD MATSUDA to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA) for a Term to Expire on 06.30.2029

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Distinguished Committee Members:

The effectiveness of Richard Matsuda as an Authority Member is evidenced by his actions during his first term including his preparation and full engagement at each of our monthly meetings. In May 2021 Mr. Matsuda was appointed to the Mauna Kea Working Group whose final set of recommendations proposed a new governance structure for the Mauna Kea lands, which led to the formation of MKSOA. In addition, Mr. Matsuda is MKSOA's 2nd Vice Chair and serves on MKSOA's four-member Permitted Interaction Group for Performance and Oversight, which brings him in frequent contact with the operational staff of MKSOA.

As the Director of the W.M. Keck Observatory, he is the voice and heart of Hawaii's astronomy industry among MKSOA's twelve members: offering great insights into the importance and value of the elite level of astronomical research on Mauna Kea. Mr. Matsuda is also an exemplary model in fostering the mutual stewardship paradigm that is described and mandated in MKSOA's enabling legislation referred to as Act 255 SLH 2022. This paradigm seeks balance and a synergy among operational and programmatic elements such as ecology, the environment, natural resources, cultural practices, education, and science. In choosing to pursue this high standard, Mr. Matsuda is a pioneer within the Hawaii astronomy industry.

In the nine years that I have known Richard Matsuda, he has demonstrated an authenticity about his own being and he is empathic, he is curious and has the motivation to keep learning new ways and seek new knowledge. Mr. Matsuda is both a leader and a team player. He also knows that he is fully accountable to the community in which he lives while he carries a deep sense of responsibility as a steward and guardian of Mauna Kea.

In closing I urge this committee to advance the nomination of Richard Matsuda toward confirmation by the full Senate for a term at MKSOA that will expire on 06.30.2029.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John De Fries". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "D".

John De Fries

Executive Director



To: **Senate Committee on Water and Land**
Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine Inouye, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water, Land, Arts and Culture

From: Jean-Gabriel Cuby, Canada-France-Hawai'i Telescope Executive Director

Date: April 21, 2026

GM: 741

GM Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, RICHARD MATSUDA, for a term to expire 06-30-2029.

Subject: **SUPPORT for GM741**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **strong support** of Rich Matsuda's confirmation to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA) for a term ending June 30, 2029.

An engineer at the W.M. Keck Observatory for more than 30 years and its director since early 2024, Rich Matsuda is one of the most experienced figures in the leadership of the Maunakea Observatories. As a *kamai'āina*—the only one among the directors of the Maunakea Observatories—Rich Matsuda has demonstrated that he possesses the cultural competencies required to serve on MKSOA, whose core values and guiding principles are deeply Hawai'i-rooted. Rich Matsuda served on the Maunakea Working Group established by the legislature in 2021, which ultimately led to Act 255 and the creation of MKSOA.

Rich Matsuda's extensive background in astronomy and Hawaiian culture and practices makes him the ideal person to represent Maunakea's Observatories and help bridge the gap between Indigenous and scientific knowledge. Rich Matsuda has demonstrated this leadership since the creation of MKSOA - and long before that - by serving as MKSOA's Second Vice Chair. As Maunakea Observatories representative on MKSOA, Rich Matsuda acts as the liaison between the Authority and the Observatories, reporting to us on a regular basis. In this capacity I witness Rich Matsuda's leadership and dedication to the MKSOA process on a continuous basis, serving as a model for Maunakea Observatories' directors.

I offer my full confidence in Rich Matsuda's continued service and strongly support his confirmation, along with that of other MKSOA members up for confirmation, to carry forward the work initiated over the past three years toward a pono and enduring framework for Maunakea stewardship.

Mahalo for the the opportunity to testify.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Cuby', is written over a horizontal line.

Jean-Gabriel Cuby, Executive Director, Canada-France-Hawai'i Telescope

GM-741

Submitted on: 4/22/2026 1:59:34 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqui Hoover	Testifying for Hawaii Island Economic Development Board	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As one of Hawaii Island's most vital economic drivers, it is essential that issues surrounding the management of Mauna Kea and astronomy are thoroughly addressed and resolved. This endeavor demands a comprehensive understanding of a complex system that includes cultural and indigenous concerns, scientific and technological advancements, educational opportunities, workforce development, funding considerations, land use policies, and environmental impacts. Only through careful integration of these diverse elements can sustainable solutions be achieved, honoring the cultural heritage while fostering scientific progress and economic growth.

Rich Matsuda is a seasoned individual whose extensive experience, expertise, and kama`aina perspective, combined with his emotional intelligence and deep understanding, uniquely position him to effectively shape, navigate, and implement the processes and outcomes necessary for the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA). Since 2022, he has consistently demonstrated his commitment and capability as a member of MKSOA. The Hawaii Island Economic Development Board strongly endorses this nomination and respectfully requests the confirmation of Mr. Matsuda to continue his valuable work on the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority.

GM-741

Submitted on: 4/22/2026 3:01:26 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqui Hoover	Testifying for Hawaii Leeward Planning Conference (HLPC)	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawai`i Leeward Planning Conference (HLPC), established in 1974 as a private, member-based 501(c)(3) organization, was founded by visionary business and community leaders who recognized the vital need for an entity dedicated to collaborating with government agencies to advocate for sound planning decisions on Hawai`i Island. HLPC's mission has always been to promote long-term benefits for the island's diverse communities through thoughtful and sustainable development.

In this spirit, HLPC is honored to strongly endorse the nomination of Mr. Rich Matsuda to continue his service on the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA), on which he has served since 2022.

As one of Hawai`i Island's most vital economic drivers, it is essential that issues related to the management of Mauna Kea and astronomy be thoroughly addressed and resolved. This endeavor demands a comprehensive understanding of a complex system that encompasses cultural and indigenous concerns, scientific and technological advancements, educational opportunities, workforce development, funding considerations, land use policies, and environmental impacts. Only through the careful integration of these diverse elements can sustainable solutions be achieved—solutions that honor the cultural heritage of Mauna Kea while fostering scientific progress and economic growth.

Rich Matsuda is a seasoned professional whose extensive experience, expertise, and kama`āina perspective, combined with his emotional intelligence and profound understanding of these multifaceted issues, uniquely position him to effectively shape, navigate, and implement the critical processes and outcomes necessary for the MKSOA. He has consistently demonstrated unwavering commitment and capability as a member of the Authority.

Hawai`i Leeward Planning Conference strongly endorses this nomination and respectfully requests the confirmation of Mr. Matsuda to continue his invaluable work on the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. His continued leadership will be instrumental in ensuring that Mauna Kea's stewardship reflects the balanced and sustainable vision that Hawai`i's future demands.



Hawai'i State Senate
Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

RE: Strong support of GM741

April 23, 2026

Hawaiian Council writes in **strong support of GM741** for consideration and confirmation of Richard Matsuda to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority.

Matsuda brings extensive experience in land management, natural resource stewardship, and public service, all of which are critical to the responsibilities of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA). His professional background reflects a longstanding commitment to the careful management of Hawai'i's lands and resources, with a strong understanding of the balance between environmental protection, public access, and responsible governance.

These experiences have contributed to the perspective he offers to MKSOA. His expertise in land use, regulatory processes, and strategic planning enables him to effectively support the Authority's efforts in managing Mauna Kea. Since the establishment of MKSOA in 2022, its goal "to protect Mauna Kea for future generations and manage the lands for the purpose of fostering a mutual stewardship paradigm in which ecology, the environment, natural resources, cultural practices, education, and science are in balance and synergy" is a mission that Matsuda has supported through his service and commitment.

In 2022, Matsuda was selected to serve on MKSOA, entrusted to apply his knowledge and experience toward the stewardship of Mauna Kea on behalf of the broader community. In addition to his professional qualifications, he demonstrates the values of responsibility, collaboration, and transparency that are essential to the Authority's work. If reappointed, we are confident that Matsuda will continue to contribute meaningfully to the community, the lāhui, and the future of Mauna Kea.

For these reasons, Hawaiian Council respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS GM741**. Mahalo for your continued efforts in supporting the lāhui.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Kūhiō Lewis
CEO, Hawaiian Council

HAWAIIANS ADVANCING HAWAI'I

91-1270 Kinoiki Street, Building 1, Kapolei, HI 96707

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Testimony to the Committee on Water, Land, Arts and Culture on

Governor's Message 741

**Nomination of Richard Matsuda to the
Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority**

Thursday, April 23, 2026, 1:00 p.m.

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

The undersigned leaders of the Maunakea Observatories appreciate the opportunity to share our **strong support of the confirmation of Richard Matsuda** to continue serving on the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA).

We are in full support of the MKSOA and its members, including Second Vice Chair Richard Matsuda. We believe that Richard Matsuda and the MKSOA board as a whole are on the right path and have made considerable progress to date in developing a management plan for Maunakea and acting in accordance with the intent of Act 255, which calls for mutual stewardship in the governance of Maunakea. The MKSOA's engagement of Kua O Wākea to support strategic planning, as evidenced by the series of community workshops held in January and February of this year illustrate the commitment and competence of Second Vice Chair Matsuda and the current MKSOA board.

To continue this forward momentum, continuity in the make-up of the MKSOA board is critical. The relationships Second Vice Chair Matsuda has built with key stakeholders and the community, as well as contextual knowledge he has developed over his first term, are invaluable at this juncture. To search for a new Second Vice Chair and go through the appointment process at this time would create serious delays in the MKSOA process and jeopardize progress made to date.

We are grateful for your consideration of this testimony and strongly urge that you recommend Second Vice Chair Matsuda for reappointment.

With aloha,



Geoff Bower, Director
East Asian Observatory



Mark Chun, University of Hawai'i 2.2-meter
Telescope



Jean-Gabriel Cuby, Director, Canada-France-
Hawai'i Telescope



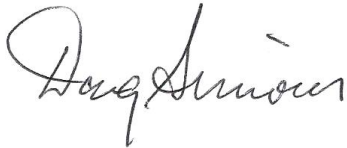
Satoshi Miyazaki, Director, Subaru
Telescope, National Astronomical
Observatory of Japan



John O'Meara, Deputy Director & Chief
Scientist, W. M. Keck Observatory



John Rayner, Director, NASA Infrared
Telescope Facility



Doug Simons, Director, University of Hawai'i,
Institute for Astronomy



Warren Skidmore, Deputy Director, NASA
Infrared Telescope Facility



Watson Varricatt, Head of Science
Operations, United Kingdom Infrared
Telescope



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

In Support of Governor’s Message 741

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority, Richard Matsuda, for a term to expire June 30, 2030

Thursday, April 23, 2026

1:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 224

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

My name is Micah Kāne, and I serve as President and CEO of Parker Ranch, Inc. in Waimea, Hawai‘i. I am pleased to submit this testimony in strong support of GM 741, confirming Mr. Richard Matsuda to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA).

I have known Rich for many years in both my personal and professional capacities. Born and raised in Hawai‘i, his commitment to our home is evident in his longstanding leadership roles and community engagement. In his 32 years of engineering and executive leadership at Keck Observatory, he has worked to strengthen relationships between the observatories and the communities they operate within, particularly here in Waimea.

As Parker Ranch approaches its 180th year of ranching on Hawai‘i Island — managing over 130,000 acres of land on and around Mauna Kea — we understand the responsibility and challenges of effective land stewardship and deep kuleana to our culture.

Rich is a public servant at his core and brings the compassion, integrity and steady leadership necessary to continue building a thoughtful and long-awaited management framework for Mauna Kea lands. His continuity on the Authority is especially important at this critical time.

I am honored to submit this letter of support and humbly request Mr. Matsuda’s confirmation.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Micah Kane President and CEO
Parker Ranch, Inc.



Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Hawaii

LATE

April 22, 2026

Via Hawaii State Legislature Portal

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

ATTN: Support for GM741 – Nomination of Richard Matsuda to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority

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

I provide this testimony **IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM741 RELATING TO THE NOMINATION OF RICHARD MATSUDA TO THE MAUNA KEA STEWARDSHIP AND OVERSIGHT AUTHORITY** on behalf of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Hawai'i (JCCIH). JCCIH's mission is "[t]o promote the well-being of our community through business and personal relationship" and we have been representing the interests of our 300+ business and individual members through education and advocacy. As President of JCCIH, I advocate for the advancement of our Priorities as selected by our members. One of JCCIH's priorities is:

Economic Development (Agriculture, Tourism, Technology, & Astronomy):

We support efforts to grow new and existing industries on Hawai'i Island, especially in areas that make our community more competitive and secure including agriculture, tourism, technology and astronomy. We support the Thirty Meter Telescope.

As the Observatory Director for the W. M. Keck Observatory, Mr. Matsuda has overseen one of the premier astronomical observing telescopes in the world. The Keck Observatory puts into practice our Chamber's priority to support technology and astronomy, while providing numerous high-paying "living wage" jobs for members of our community. Mr. Matsuda has already served on the MKSOA board and we have no doubt that he will continue to serve our state's and community's interest in allowing Hawaii to remain at the forefront of astronomy by strongly supporting responsible, ground-breaking science on Mauna Kea.

We STRONGLY SUPPORT RICHARD MATSUDA'S NOMINATION and urge the Committee to vote in favor of GM741.

Mahalo for considering our testimony,

Mitchell Dodo

President of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Hawai'i

4123935v1



Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce

1321 Kino'ole Street - Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Phone (808) 935-7178 - Fax (808) 961-4435 - Email exec@hicc.biz - www.hicc.biz

Executive Officer

Carla Kuo

2025-2026

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Randy Kurohara

Geoli Ng

Matthew Pickett

James Staub

Jase Takeya

Nimr Tamimi

Jennifer Tobey

Joni Waltjen

Irene Yamanaka

Tracie Yoshimoto

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

Senator Chris Lee, Chair

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

LATE

Thursday, April 23, 2026 at 1:00 PM

RE: GM741 Mauna Kea Stewardship and Authority
Gubernatorial Nominee RICHARD MATSUDA

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

On behalf of the Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce, I am writing in support of the confirmation of Richard Matsuda to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA) for a term to expire June 30, 2029.

As MKSOA advances its responsibilities under Act 255, it has begun laying important groundwork toward a comprehensive and balanced management framework for Maunakea. Sustaining this progress will require individuals who bring both subject matter expertise and a commitment to collaboration.

Richard Matsuda offers decades of experience within Hawai'i's astronomy community. His professional background provides a deep understanding of the operational and scientific aspects of astronomy, as well as the importance of building relationships across diverse perspectives.

We also recognize the Authority's continued efforts to engage the broader community through public workshops and outreach. These efforts are essential to fostering transparency and ensuring that decision-making reflects a wide range of voices and values.

At this stage, maintaining consistency and institutional knowledge within the board is especially important. Richard Matsuda's experience and familiarity with the landscape will help support thoughtful, informed decision-making as MKSOA continues its work.

Mahalo for your consideration and for your commitment to the responsible stewardship of Maunakea.

Sincerely,

Carla Kuo
Executive Officer
Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce



Kona-Kohala
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

April 22, 2026

RE: GM 741 - Gubernatorial Nominee Rich Matsuda for the Maunakea Stewardship and Oversight Authority

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture, and the Arts,

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce works to enhance the quality of life for our community through a strong, sustainable economy on Hawai'i Island. With 460 member businesses and organizations, our mission is to provide leadership and advocacy for a successful business environment in West Hawai'i.

The Kona-Kohala Chamber **strongly supports** the confirmation of nominee Rich Matsuda for the Maunakea Stewardship and Oversight Authority.

We believe that Mr. Matsuda's experience demonstrates a deep understanding of Maunakea's importance to Hawai'i and globally. This includes over 32 years of experience at W.M. Keck Observatory. Its twin telescopes are the most scientifically productive optical and infrared telescopes in the world. He has served in various leadership roles at Keck, focusing on operations and community engagement, and is now the observatory director.

Since 2023, Mr. Matsuda has served on the Maunakea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. With a humble approach, he creates space for respectful, genuine dialogue for stakeholders with varied perspectives. On several occasions, we've witnessed Mr. Matsuda clearly communicating the complexities surrounding the mauna. He's masterful at guiding mutual understanding to build relationships and support collective interests.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that you confirm Rich Matsuda's service on the Maunakea Stewardship and Oversight Authority.

Sincerely,

Wendy J. Laros, President and CEO
Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce

GM-741

Submitted on: 4/20/2026 5:24:20 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kalani Kaanaana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am writing in strong support of the confirmation of Richard (Rich) H. Matsuda.

Rich brings over three decades of leadership at the W. M. Keck Observatory on Maunakea, where he currently serves as Observatory Director, overseeing operations, maintenance, and the advancement of one of the world’s leading astronomical research facilities and a team of more than 130 staff members. His career reflects not only technical excellence, but a deep commitment to responsible stewardship, operational integrity, and community engagement.

What distinguishes Rich is his ability to operate effectively across these intersections. His experience spans engineering, operations, external relations, and executive leadership. Paired with a grounded understanding of Hawai‘i’s unique context, having been born and raised here and deeply engaged in community service throughout his life. From mentoring through the Akamai Workforce Initiative to serving on nonprofit and education boards, he has consistently invested in the next generation and the broader community.

Rich is known for steady, thoughtful leadership. He listens carefully, approaches challenges with humility, and works to build alignment across diverse perspectives. At a time when balanced leadership is essential, he brings the right combination of experience, temperament, and values.

I respectfully urge the Committee to support his confirmation.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

GM-741

Submitted on: 4/21/2026 6:05:28 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support, necessary to the continuity of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority,

GM-741

Submitted on: 4/21/2026 12:50:24 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane U Chadwick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support confirming Richard Matsuda to continue service for another three-year term on the MKSOA. Rich has participated in numerous forums regarding the community's concerns regarding the Mauna Kea observatories in addition to serving on the Mauna Kea Working Group in 2021 and as Vice Chair for MKSOA. Rich is an active and trusted voice in the Waimea community both as director at Keck Observatory and as a kama'aina resident of the community. He has good relationships with people representing varying perspectives and is committed to finding solutions that serve both the scientific and cultural protector sectors. His knowledge of the issues and the work that is in progress is valuable for continuity as the management plan is developed. I strongly encourage his confirmation to serve in this role. Mahalo!

Patti Cook

Box 6960 * Kamuela, HI 96743 *
cookshi@aol.com *

April 21, 2026

To: State Senator Chris Lee, Chair; Vice Chair Senator Lorraine Inouye and Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

Hearing: Thursday, April 23, 2026 1PM

Agenda Item: GM741 – Consideration and Confirmation to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee RICHARD MATSUDA - SUPPORT

Aloha, I'm Patti Cook from Waimea and am active in numerous community groups and projects but am submitting this testimony on my own behalf.

I have followed the legislative process that established the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority and have attended several of their recent community meetings in Waimea.

I strongly support Rich Matsuda's nomination because of his thoughtful leadership and technical skill and expertise as well as his long-standing connections to and within our Waimea and Hawai'i Island community.

He approaches this very complicated, controversial governance process with years of working experience on the mauna that has involved learning about and balancing the needs, concerns and expectations of our very diverse island community.

Thank you for considering his nomination – please vote to support a second term for Mr. Matsuda.

A hui hou -

Patti Cook

Waimea, Island of Hawai'i

GM-741

Submitted on: 4/22/2026 1:09:17 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachael Wong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Chris Lee

Vice Chair Lorraine R. Inouye

Members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

Hawai'i State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

April 22, 2026

SUBJECT: GM 741 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority, RICHARD MATSUDA

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of the confirmation of Mr. Richard Matsuda for a three-year term as the Mauna Kea Observatories representative to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA). He has dedicated his career to promoting a healthy and thriving Mauna Kea.

Rich and I met nearly a decade ago through a local leadership program, and we've had the opportunity to get to know each other in small groups, shared activities, and meaningful conversations. His genuine compassion is coupled with his love for Hawai'i: 'āina, waters, cultures, and people.

Rich is committed to listening and creating safe space for dialogue and mutual understanding, and this is demonstrated by the effort he's given to nurturing relationship on MKSOA and throughout the community, building trust, and deepening partnerships. This is how Rich collaborates and leads, and I've witnessed how he invests in and lifts up his work team members, too.

There has been great intentionality in setting up MKSOA and building foundations to last through generations. This is why continuity and confirming Rich to another term is so vital. This is for the now and for the future.

Mahalo for your serious consideration of the confirmation of Richard Matsuda for this volunteer role.

Respectfully,

Rachael Wong, DrPH

GM-741

Submitted on: 4/22/2026 8:06:17 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brialyn Onodera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I would like to submit testimony in support of the continued tenure of Rich Matsuda as the representative for the Maunakea Observatories (MKO) on the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA). I believe Rich's experience speaks for itself as the first kama'āina director of the W.M. Keck Observatory, his service on the Mauna Kea Working Group, and 32 years of direct experience working for Keck Observatory on Maunakea. I was also a member of the Mauna Kea Working Group and I know that Rich possesses unique insight on observatory leadership and operations that are essential for the MKSOA to succeed as it transitions to an independent entity that represents the mauna. The mauna is a symbol to many, a pinnacle of cultural significance and scientific achievement for the people of Hawai'i. Rich understands the delicate balancing act that is required of a representative of MKO to communicate with and receive feedback from those of a cultural perspective and those of a scientific perspective. He has shown that he is well guided by his experiences and mana'o and I know he will continue to be attentive to the needs of our community

Mahalo for your time

Brialyn Onodera

GM-741

Submitted on: 4/22/2026 8:38:11 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephany Vaioleti	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I would like to submit testimony in support of Rich Matsuda as he is very qualified to serve. His work and MKSOA experience along with strong community networks/service makes him an ideal candidate.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Stephany Vaioleti

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM741

Confirmation of Richard Matsuda to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Arts and Culture

Thursday, April 23, 2026

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to support Richard Matsuda.

In my role as Director of Community Relations at the Canada-France-Hawai‘i Telescope, I have had the opportunity to meet and engage with Rich Matsuda through Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority meetings and workshops, as well as through his leadership at W. M. Keck Observatory.

What stands out to me is the way he shows up with aloha. He is approachable, grounded, and intentional in how he engages with others. In spaces that can sometimes feel formal or structured, his presence helps create a sense of openness and ease, while still maintaining professionalism and focus.

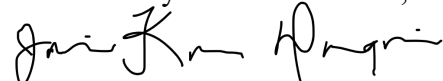
Through my interactions with him, I have seen a willingness to listen and to engage with others in a respectful and thoughtful way. He does not position himself above the work but instead participates in it alongside others. That approach builds trust and allows for more meaningful conversations to take place.

In the context of Maunakea, where relationships, history, and differing perspectives all carry weight, that kind of presence matters. It reflects a leadership style that is not only informed by position but grounded in values.

The work of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority requires individuals who can contribute to a process that is steady, respectful, and accountable to community. From my perspective, Rich Matsuda brings that presence and approach.

I respectfully urge the Committee to support his confirmation.

Mahalo for your consideration,



Janine “Kara” Dumaguin

Director of Community Relations, Canada-France-Hawai‘i Telescope

Testifying as an individual

GM-741

Submitted on: 4/22/2026 11:32:13 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Samuel Ainslie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Rich Matusuda as a representative for the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority.

He has an unique combination of skills and experience to best help further this important effort. He has both the professional and technical expertise combined with a keen local community sensibility.

April 22, 2026

To: The Water, Land, Culture and the Arts committee (GM741)

Re: Testimony in Support of continuing Richard Matsuda's membership on the MKSOA

As a Hawaii Island resident, I have participated in two of the MKSOA community talk story meetings which gave me hope for Hawaii's future. Prior to the existence of MKSOA the community meetings regarding Mauna Kea were contentious and unproductive. The MKSOA led meetings have been successful in bringing people of differing opinions and perspectives together to exchange thoughts and ideas in a manner that is respectful and insightful. The process that MKSOA has implemented could be Hawai'i's answer for how land decisions are made by balancing natural resource protection, preservation of culture with people of varied interests and pursuits. I encourage all members of the Hawaii legislature to attend a MKSAO community meeting to see how decisions could be made collaboratively in our state.

If I were selecting members for the MKSAO, I would want individuals who are:

- Knowledgeable in the areas or groups they represent,
- Adhere to core aspects of Aloha Āina
- Respected in their careers and interactions with others
- Passionate about the work of MKSAO and the future of Hawai'i

As a colleague and friend, I can attest that Rich Matsuda embodies all of these traits and characteristics. Rich was a member of the working group that recommended the establishment of MKSAO and he has demonstrated his commitment to the work through his attendance and active participation since being appointed one of it's first members. Changes in MKSAO membership at this critical juncture of transition could be detrimental to the trust that has been developed with the community to date.

I worked alongside Rich for nearly 20 years and know first-hand that he is highly respected by astronomy staff and colleagues, by the Mauna Kea observatory directors and by the local community at large. Rich is a man of integrity who is passionate about his career and Hawai'i nei and who is committed to finding a positive path forward.

I am honored to submit this testimony on his behalf.



Leslie Kissner
734349 Old Government Mauka Road
Kailua, Kona Hawaii. 96740