

# Keep the North Shore Country

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Senator Chris Lee, Chair

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

DATE: Monday, March 16, 2026  
TIME: 1:00 PM  
PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE  
Conference Room 224  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street



HB 1881 HD1 - RELATING TO LAND USE

Prohibits passenger ropeways on mountain lands within all land use districts.

Keep the North Shore Country **supports the prohibition of passenger ropeways** on mountain lands in Hawaii.

As the endangered species capital of the world, Hawaii must remain especially vigilant against developments that may adversely impact our natural resources. Over 500 plant and animal species in our state are listed as endangered or threatened, with a great many of these residing in our upper watersheds, hillsides and mountains.

Passenger ropeways create an unnecessary risk to our endangered and threatened species in valuable habitat that deserves protection. They should not be allowed in Hawaii.

Thank you for moving forward HB1881 HD1.



*Hawaii's Thousand Friends*

335 Hahani Street #342132 \* Kailua, HI 96734 \* Phone/Fax (808) 262-0682 E-Mail: [htf3000@gmail.com](mailto:htf3000@gmail.com)

March 16, 2026

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS  
Senator Chris Lee, Chair  
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

**LATE**

HB 1881 HD1 - RELATING TO LAND USE

Hawaii's Thousand Friends, is a statewide non-profit water and land use planning organization dedicated to protecting the environment, human health, and cultural and natural resources. **We support HB1881.**

We agree that passenger ropeways should be prohibited on mountain lands in Hawaii. Culturally and environmentally, there is great opposition to this type of activity, as we clearly see with the controversial project proposed on the side of Mount Kaala.

Our mountains, slopes and hills provide essential habitat for native species, which are under continuous threat of invasive species, climate change and mismanagement of the land. Not all land is meant to be exploited for commercial purposes and passenger ropeways are inappropriate in Hawaii.

Thank you for supporting this bill.



**LATE**

March 15, 2026,

**RE: SUPPORT FOR HB 1881, HD 1, PROHIBITING PASSENGER ROPEWAYS ON MOUNTAIN LANDS IN ALL LAND USE DISTRICTS.**

Dear Members of the Senate WLA and JDC Committees:

Defend Oahu Coalition strongly supports HB1881, HD 1 in order to protect our natural resources from over development; maintaining respect for our aina for the betterment of our residents; and providing for future generations.

Foremost is respecting the aina, which is mother to us and sacred, it's what give us life. With this knowledge to honor our land and further documented in many State of Hawaii Departments' missions and directives, HB1881, HD1 will accomplish this kuleana.

Furthermore, the time to legislate this protection of our natural resources is needed to consistently uphold the management of our aina, Hawaii. Privatizing natural resources must be prohibited.

Mahalo,  
Margaret Primacio  
President

**LATE**

**HB-1881-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 4:31:28 PM  
Testimony for WLA on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John & Rita Shockley	Testifying for Free Access Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

The Free Access Coalition supports HB1881.

The LAST thing Hawaii needs is unsightly gondolas on our mountains. The tourist trade has enough gawdy scars on our aina as it is.

Mahalo for your time.



**LATE**

March 16, 2026

TESTIMONY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS  
To the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts  
In Support of

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**HB1881 HD1 - RELATING TO LAND USE**

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the committee:

The Association of Hawaii Civic Clubs **supports** HB 1881 HD1 Relating to Land Use, which would create a statutory prohibition on Passenger Ropeways on Hawai‘i mountain lands in all state land use districts.

Hawai‘i is home to some of the most ecologically diverse and sensitive lands in the world, especially within some of our mountain areas. Establishing the prohibition on Passenger Ropeways, including the proposed Ka‘ala gondola project, is an important step toward ensuring protection from commercial development intruding upon our fragile mauka environments under the guise of agricultural use.

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs supported adoption of a statutory kapu or prohibition on commercial and non-agricultural development of the entire Wai‘anae mountain range as noted in the attached Resolution No. 2025-83 adopted at our annual convention held in Keauhou, Hawai‘i last year.

HB 1881 provides clear definitions and enforcement framework for a statutory kapu on Passenger Ropeways on Hawai‘i mauka lands. The bill broadly defines “passenger ropeway” to include aerial lifts, aerial tramways, and funiculars, while expressly excluding elevators, and ties “mountain” lands to formally recognized geographic classifications, including those identified by the United States Geological Survey. By applying notwithstanding other land use laws, the statutory kapu supersedes conflicting permits or approvals and establishes objective, durable standards that protect Ka‘ala and Hawai‘i’s broader mauka lands statewide.

Founded by Prince Kūhiō in 1918, the Hawaiian Civic Club movement is the oldest Native Hawaiian community-based advocacy movement. The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs is a not-for-profit confederation of 60 individual and autonomous Hawaiian Civic Clubs and 3,500 members located across Hawai‘i and across the continental United States.

We appreciate your favorable consideration of this measure.

# ***ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS***

## ***A RESOLUTION***

NO. 2025 - 83

### **URGING THE HAWAI'I STATE LEGISLATURE TO PLACE A STATUTORY KAPU (PROHIBITION) ON COMMERCIAL AND NON-AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE WAI'ANAЕ MOUNTAIN RANGE TO PROTECT SACRED LANDS, BIODIVERSITY, AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN CULTURAL HERITAGE**

WHEREAS, the Wai'anae mountain range is the oldest mountain range on the island of O'ahu and includes Ka'ala, its highest peak, a wao akua and sacred place in Native Hawaiian worldview; and

WHEREAS, the mountain range holds profound cultural significance as a storied and revered landscape featured in oli, mo'olelo, mo'okū'auhau and 'aha; and

WHEREAS, the Wai'anae range is home to some of the most fragile and biodiverse ecosystems in the Hawaiian islands, including rare and endangered species such as the kāhuli, 'apapane, 'o'opu, 'ohe mauka, koli'i, 'ape'ape, and the pueo, among many others; and

WHEREAS, despite its ecological and cultural importance, the Wai'anae mountains continue to be targeted for commercial development under the guise of agricultural use, threatening permanent harm to both the 'āina and kānaka; and

WHEREAS, the concept of kapu reflects traditional Native Hawaiian systems of governance and protection, wherein specific places, species, and practices are safeguarded from disturbance or desecration in perpetuity; and

WHEREAS, placing a statutory kapu on development across the Wai'anae mountain range would align with the State's constitutional commitment to protect all rights customarily and traditionally exercised by Native Hawaiians, as stated in Article XII, Section 7 of the Hawai'i State Constitution; and

WHEREAS, the continued exploitation of sacred and ecologically sensitive mountain lands for short-term commercial gain undermines long-term sustainability, climate resilience, and the spiritual and cultural continuity of future generations; and

WHEREAS, this resolution has the full support of Ke One o Kākuhihewa, as affirmed by a vote of the Council at its duly noticed meeting held on August 9, 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs at its 66<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention in Keauhou, Hawai'i, in the malama of Welehu and the rising of Mōhalu, this 1<sup>st</sup> day of November 2025, urging the Hawai'i State Legislature to place a statutory kapu (prohibition) on commercial and non-agricultural development across the Wai'anae mountain range to protect sacred lands, biodiversity, and Native Hawaiian cultural heritage; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), the DLNR Division of Forestry and Wildlife, and the State Historic Preservation Division, as well as the Governor of the State of Hawai'i, President of the State Senate, Speaker of the State House of Representatives, Chair of the State Senate subject matter committee on Hawaiian Affairs, Chair of the State House subject matter committee on Hawaiian Affairs, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and all County Mayors.



The undersigned hereby certifies that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted in the malama of Welehu and the rising of Mōhalu, on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of November 2025, at the 66<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs in Keauhou, Hawai'i.

*DreanaLee Kalili*

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DreanaLee Kalili, President

**LATE**



**Ko'olauloa  
HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB**

**P.O. Box 532  
Hau'ula, Hawaii 96717**

March 14, 2026

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee.

RE:HB1881

My name is Raynae Fonoimoana, I am the President of the Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club.

Our moku covers Ka'a'awa through Wai'alua, we (our membership) is testifying today in opposition to any ropeways on mountains in Hawaii. Our Mountain Reserves are much more than a summit plateau. Most of the reserve's area consists of steep-sided gulches, ridges, and forests, rich in native species, and harbors some of Hawaii's rarest plants. We need to protect our Hawaiian plants, animals and ecosystems and ensure that the rich native resources will be protected for our future generations.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

*Raynae M Fonoimoana*

Raynae Fonoimoana, President  
Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club

**Aloha e Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe,  
and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs:**

**I am writing to express my strong support for HB2584, to ensure that Native Hawaiian beneficiaries of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) receive their fair share of state revenues from the public land trust.**

**OHA carries a large kuleana to better the conditions of Native Hawaiians. OHA has a proven track record of investing in strategic, innovative, and award-winning programs and services that advance systemic solutions to**

**challenges faced by Hawaiians and other Hawai'i residents.**

**As a snapshot, OHA-funded programs and services have launched small businesses, moved families off the streets, sent students to college, empowered grassroots groups to steward natural resources, and increased the capacity of Hawaiian language charter schools to serve their surrounding communities.**

**Without full funding, OHA's ability to fulfill its critical kuleana is compromised. This bill is not just about funding: it's also about fairness and justice. The public land trust consists primarily of crown and government lands that were seized during the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Native Hawaiians have legal as well as moral claims – not only to income, but also to governance over these lands. Despite these claims, OHA receives only \$21.5 million per year compared to the estimated \$80 million that a 2016 audit showed was due to OHA under state law.**

**As an OHA beneficiary and a voter, I urge the committee to pass HB2584 to help bring OHA's funding closer to \$80 million per year.**

**Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.**

***Raynae M. Fonoimoana***

**Hau'ula, Oahu**

**February 11, 2026**

**HB-1881-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 4:48:49 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

1881 HB RELATING TO LAND USE.

**HB-1881-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 12:53:39 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Malia Kamisugi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Ropeways in Hawaii should be prohibited, as they are very disruptive for the environment and have long-term ramifications. They would adversely affect our critically endangered flora and fauna by removal of native shrubs and trees, spread of invasive species by all activities, removal of critical habitat, interference in behavior and flight patterns for native birds and bats, and increased potential for wildfires.

There has been wide spread opposition to these activities by the community already shown.

**LATE**

**HB-1881-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 1:13:46 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kathleen M Pahinui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha –

I strongly support HB 1881, HD 1 and recommend the following amendments:

- P 3 Add definition of “mountain lands” as follows: “Mountain lands” means the area surrounding a mountain from the peak down to surrounding lands with elevation of 100 feet or more above sea level.
- §205-4.5 Permissible uses within the agricultural districts.

(a) Within the agricultural district, all lands with soil classified by the land study bureau's detailed land classification as overall (master) productivity rating class A or B and for solar energy facilities, class B or C, shall be restricted to the following permitted uses: . . .

- o (6) Public and private open area types of recreational uses, including day camps, picnic grounds, parks, and riding stables, but not including passenger ropeways, dragstrips, airports, drive-in theaters, golf courses, golf driving ranges, country clubs, and overnight camps; provided that overnight camps in operation before January 1, 1961, may be approved by special permit;

- Add the following for clarity:

- o The prohibition shall apply to any proposed passenger ropeway that has not received final approval of all permits required by all state and county agencies as of January 1, 2026.

It is critical that we protect our natural resources and not allow unfettered commercial use. Our islands should be open to rampant commercial activity that only really benefits the owner and desecrates our ‘āina.

Mālama ‘āina,

Kathleen M. Pahinui

Waialua, O‘ahu

**LATE**

**HB-1881-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 1:20:36 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Denise E Antolini	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I strongly support HB1881 but not HD1.

Unless exploitative "adventure" development of our iconic montains is stopped by the State Legislature now, it will proliferate across the islands and become a huge problem statewide.

However, I do NOT support HD1, which limits the ban on "funiculars" to "commercial" only. The House Committee report does not explain why this limitation makes sense.

The intent of the bill is to protect mountain landscapes - for cultural, social, environmental reasons. Exemption of private "funiculars" creates a huge loophole and undermines the clear intent of the bill.

Mahalo for moving this forward in the Senate and reversing the HD1 amendment,

Denise Antolini

Pūpūkea resident, O‘ahu

**LATE**

**HB-1881-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 2:04:15 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jan Ventura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of this bill HB1881, prohibiting passenger ropeways immediately and indefinitely. Thank you

**HB-1881-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 2:14:56 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM



<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sharryl Matsumoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mt. Ka'ala is a sacred mountain with deep cultural, historical, and spiritual significance, and it warrants the highest level of protection. For this reason, I support HB1881 which will prohibit passenger ropeways on Mt. Ka'ala and any mountain lands within all land use districts.

No construction of a mechanized gondola or passenger ropeway should be allowed on our sacred mountains. Infrastructures for mechanized passenger ropeways require land disturbance, construction, ongoing maintenance, and increased visitation pressure—all of which pose risks to fragile ecosystems and a culturally sacred landscape. A passenger ropeway fundamentally alters the character of our mountains and sets a troubling precedent for development on sacred lands.

Exploitation of our sacred mountain by land owners who wish to monetarily profit from the beauty and richness of our sacred mountains should be limited to activities that do not disrupt nature, such as farming or hiking.

**LATE**

**HB-1881-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 5:21:51 PM  
Testimony for WLA on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Metzger	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Katie Metzger, and I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of HB1881, which seeks to prevent the development of commercial gondola systems on Hawai‘i’s mountains.

Hawai‘i’s mountains are more than scenic backdrops. They are sacred landscapes, ecological refuges, and cultural touchstones that connect the people of Hawai‘i to their ancestors, their stories, and the natural systems that sustain life across the islands. Allowing large-scale infrastructure such as gondolas to be constructed on these fragile and revered landscapes risks permanently altering places that should remain protected for future generations.

Many of our mountain areas are home to unique native species found nowhere else on Earth. These ecosystems are already under immense pressure from climate change, invasive species, and development. Building gondola systems would introduce additional disturbance, increased human traffic, and further strain on delicate habitats.

Equally important is the cultural significance of these places. Mountains in Hawai‘i are not simply recreational assets; they are sacred spaces that hold deep meaning within Native Hawaiian traditions and practices. Protecting them honors the ‘ike (knowledge), stewardship, and spiritual relationships that have guided mālama ‘āina for generations.

Hawai‘i’s identity and economy are deeply tied to the natural beauty and integrity of its landscapes. Once large-scale commercial infrastructure is built on these mountains, the change cannot be undone. We have a responsibility to act with foresight and restraint.

HB1881 represents an important step toward ensuring that Hawai‘i’s mountains remain protected, respected, and free from unnecessary development. By supporting this bill, the legislature can help safeguard irreplaceable cultural landscapes, protect sensitive ecosystems, and uphold the values of stewardship that define Hawai‘i.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to pass HB1881.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your continued commitment to protecting Hawai‘i’s natural and cultural resources.

Respectfully,  
Katie Metzger

**LATE**

**HB-1881-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 8:21:21 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nani Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

For once and for all, let's ban these reckless eyesores from disrespecting our 'āina. Our mauna are sacred and not meant to be exploited for monetary or any selfish gain. I strongly support this bill.

**LATE**

**HB-1881-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 9:15:35 PM  
Testimony for WLA on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Malia Marquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kākou,

I strongly support HB1881, we do not need or want gondolas' or any other eye sore on our Mauna for commercial use. Our Mauna are sacred, please support HB 1881.

Mahalo,

Malia Lum-Kawaihoa Marquez

**HB-1881-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 2:36:29 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaylene Kauwila Sheldon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

My name is Kauwila Sheldon and I support HB1881 that prohibits passenger ropeways, aerial lifts etc... It defines and articulates the language that sends the message "No Gondolas on Mauna Ka'ala! " 'A'ole!

Mahalo nui loa,

Kauwila