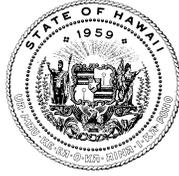


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII  
*Ke Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina 'o  
Hawaii'i*

SYLVIA J. LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII  
*Ka Hope Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina  
'o Hawaii'i*



KALI WATSON  
CHAIRPERSON, HHC  
*Ka Luna Ho'okele*

KATIE L. LAMBERT  
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIR  
*Ka Hope Luna Ho'okele*

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**  
*Ka 'Oihana 'Āina Ho'opulapula Hawaii'i*

P. O. BOX 1879  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF KALI WATSON, CHAIR  
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION  
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
ON FEBRUARY 12, 2026 AT 2:00PM IN CR 325

**HB1982, HD1, RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**

February 12, 2026

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) **supports** this bill which appropriates funds to DHHL for certain geothermal resource exploration and development activities and the hiring of consultants.

This legislative proposal was approved by the Hawaiian Homes Commission (HHC). DHHL is currently in the exploration/investigation phase of development of geothermal resources on its trust lands. Earlier work done at the University of Hawai'i has identified several sites where the probability of finding viable geothermal resource warrants further investigation. By island, these sites include:

- Hawai'i: Humu'ula/Upper Pi'ihonua, Pu'ukapu, Kawaihae and Kamā'oa/Pu'u'eo (South Point)
- Maui: Kahikinui and Wākiu/Hāna
- Moloka'i: Ho'olehua/Nā'iwa
- O'ahu: Lualualei/Wai'anae Valley, Waimānalo, Ha'ikū Valley, Waiāhole
- Kaua'i: Upper Wailua

The customary exploration process would be to first conduct on-site inspections and certain geoscientific surveys including non-invasive geophysics testing (e.g., gravity and magnetotellurics), geochemistry and conceptual modelling. If the results of that testing warrant further investigation, then slim-hole exploratory well drilling and analysis would be called for. The preliminary estimate of the expense of geoscientific surveys at all 12 sites would fall in the \$4M - \$5M range. The preliminary estimate of the expense of slim-hole drilling at 6 (assuming a 50% rate of advancement) of the sites would fall in the \$40M - \$50M range. DHHL would look to contract with the University of Hawai'i and its Hawai'i Groundwater & Geothermal

Resources Center (HGGRC) for this work but anticipates needing to additionally hire industry drilling consultants and crews to meet the anticipated demand for services.

DHHL is currently preparing to conduct in-person and virtual beneficiary informational briefings at homestead communities throughout the state. These opportunities to share information and receive feedback regarding DHHL's geothermal exploration program and the potential benefits of geothermal development to the trust and our beneficiaries are scheduled to commence in April/May 2026.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 8:51:20 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case	Na Wai Ho'ola Nui La'au Lapa'au Foundation, Truth for the People	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Bill number(s): HB1982 HD1 (with amendments)

Position: STRONG OPPOSITION To HB1982 HD1

RE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO INDUSTRIALIZED GEOTHERMAL DEVELOPMENT AND DRILLING INTO KŪPUNA PELE ON PUBLIC TRUST AND DHHL LANDS — MOKU O KEAWE AND STATEWIDE

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case, Co-founder of Na Wai Ho'ola Nui La'au Lapa'au Foundation along with Kuha'o Kawaauhau-Case, in collaboration with Keaukaha Action Network and Truth For the People grassroots initiative standing in protection of Aloha Aina to protect our "Natural resources" otherwise known to Kanaka as our Na Akua, elemental beings from invasive developments such as geothermal in the name of "Renewable Energy". 'O Mauna A Wakea no ku'u Mauna, 'O Waimea Moku 'O Keawe mai au. I respectfully submit this testimony in STRONG OPPOSITION to HB1982 HD1 with amendments, a bill that would authorize geological subsurface characterization activities under the guise of research, while undermining the cultural, environmental, and public health concerns deeply felt by many Native Hawaiians and community members.

As a Lineal Descendant of our Hawai'i, I submit this testimony in strong opposition to any bill or measure authorizing industrialized geothermal exploration and development that would result in drilling into Kūpuna Pele within and throughout Moku o Keawe and equally in opposition to its statewide initiative on public trust lands and Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) Crown trust lands on any of our Moku of Hawai'i Nui Akea.

Geothermal is not merely an "energy resource." It is Kūpuna Pele. For Kanaka or by definition in legislative matters Native Hawaiians, geothermal activity is the physical manifestation of a living ancestral presence, inseparable from our genealogies, ceremonies, and spiritual obligations to 'āina. To authorize industrialized geothermal development is to authorize drilling into the body of Kūpuna Pele herself. This act constitutes desecration of a sacred elder and severs an enduring cultural relationship that predates the State of Hawai'i. No economic valuation can replace this relationship, and no regulatory framework can render such desecration acceptable.

Because of this cultural reality, industrialized geothermal development and drilling into Kūpuna Pele are fundamentally incompatible with the State's constitutional and statutory duties. Article XI, Section 7 of the Hawai'i State Constitution establishes that natural resources are held in public trust for the benefit of present and future generations. The public trust doctrine imposes an affirmative obligation upon the State to protect these resources and to prevent their impairment. Authorizing industrial drilling into geothermal systems prioritizes commercial extraction for monetary gain over protection and violates this constitutional mandate. There is no balance with invasive desecration of our already limited resources, and Akua PELE is not a resource to be tampered with.

These obligations are further reinforced by the Hawai'i Admissions Act of 1959, which transferred former Crown and Government Lands to the State to be held in trust for specific public purposes. Those lands — often referred to as ceded lands — are subject to fiduciary duties that require their management for the benefit of the public and Native Hawaiians. Industrialized geothermal development and drilling into Kūpuna Pele on these lands constitutes a misuse of trust assets and a breach of the State's fiduciary responsibilities under both federal and state law.

The history of geothermal development in Hawai'i, particularly in Wao Kele o Puna, illustrates this constitutional failure. In the late 1980s and 1990s, Native Hawaiian practitioners and community members engaged in sustained protests to protect Wao Kele o Puna from industrialized geothermal development and drilling into Kūpuna Pele. Despite clear evidence of cultural, ecological, and spiritual significance, the State advanced geothermal drilling in the area, resulting in arrests of protectors, prolonged litigation, and irreversible disruption of a living forest ecosystem. These actions demonstrated the State's prioritization of industrial extraction over its public trust duty to protect trust resources and Native Hawaiian traditional practices.

Rather than serving as a cautionary example, current geothermal proposals repeat the same pattern of constitutional disregard. The State now seeks to expand industrialized geothermal exploration under a statewide initiative, including on DHHL lands and former Crown and Government Lands, once again elevating energy policy and projected revenue generation — including claims of 100% royalties — over its constitutional and fiduciary obligations. This initiative would further entrench the practice of drilling into Kūpuna Pele as a matter of public policy. This is not a localized land-use issue; it is a systemic threat to the trust corpus across all islands.

Industrialized geothermal development and drilling into Kūpuna Pele further endanger interconnected trust resources, including groundwater, air quality, and geologic stability. These risks are especially acute on the Moku o Keawe, where volcanic and aquifer systems are inseparable from subsistence practices, burial grounds, and ceremonial sites. The State cannot lawfully authorize degradation of these resources under Article XI, Section 7 of the Hawai'i State Constitution or under the fiduciary standards imposed by the Admissions Act of 1959 in the name of speculative energy benefit or promised 100% royalty revenues.

With respect to DHHL lands, the breach is even more severe. These lands are held in trust under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act for the exclusive benefit of Native Hawaiian beneficiaries. Legislation proposing industrialized geothermal exploration or development that

authorizes drilling into Kūpuna Pele on DHHL lands without prior beneficiary authorization already constitutes a violation of fiduciary duty. Beneficiary consultation cannot be treated as a procedural afterthought or a remedy for an unlawful act.

Consultation does not cure desecration. The proposal of industrialized geothermal development and drilling into Kūpuna Pele on trust lands without consent reflects a failure to honor both the cultural foundations of these lands and the legal obligations attached to them. Beneficiaries are not merely stakeholders; they are trust beneficiaries whose rights must guide, not follow, legislative action. WE DONT CONSENT TO GEOTHERMAL IN OUR HAWAII.

Accordingly, I urge this Committee to reject any geothermal-related legislation that:

1. Treats geothermal as a commodity rather than Kūpuna Pele;
2. Authorizes industrialized geothermal exploration, development, or drilling into Kūpuna Pele on public trust lands, former Crown and Government Lands, or DHHL lands within the Moku o Keawe and statewide;
3. Violates the State's duties under Article XI, Section 7 of the Hawai'i State Constitution and the fiduciary obligations imposed by the Admissions Act of 1959;
4. Repeats the historic failures exemplified by Wao Kele o Puna; or
5. Substitutes delayed consultation for prior consent by beneficiaries.

WE DO NOT CONSENT TO ANY GEOTHERMAL DEVELOPMENT IN HAWAII. DHHL HAS FAILED TO CONSULT WITH OUR PEOPLE!

Energy policy must not override culture. Revenue — even when framed as 100% royalties— must not override constitutional and fiduciary law. Industrialized development must not override ancestral relationship.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that this Committee uphold their fiduciary obligations and Public Trust duty and decline any measure authorizing industrialized geothermal exploration or development that would result in drilling into Kūpuna Pele on public trust, former Crown and Government, and DHHL lands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case

Moku O Keawe

Founder of Na Wai Ho'ola Nui La'au Lapa'au Foundation  
Co-Collaborator with Truth for the People



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HO`OMANA PONO, LLC  
***Mamua Kānaka***

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**ATTENTION:**

**COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair  
Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair,  
Rep. Member of the Committee

February 10, 2026

Re: **HB1982 HD1 (HSCR30-26) RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**

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Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs!

We **STAND IN STRONG SUPPORT** of this Bill.

**§101(a)** of the Hawaiian Homes Commissions Act expressly states:

*(a) The Congress of the United States and the State of Hawaii declare that the policy of this Act is **to enable native Hawaiians to return to their lands in order to fully support self-sufficiency for native Hawaiians and the self-determination of native Hawaiians in the administration of this Act, and the preservation of the values, traditions, and culture of native Hawaiians.***

Practicing “Self-Determination” is one of the bedrock purposes of the ACT. Therefore, it would stand to reason that DHHL should also practice “Self-Determination”!

There is no direct, express ruling from Hawaii appellate courts specifically stating that the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) has authority over Hawaiian Home Lands trust lands.

Furthermore, the recent Hawaii Supreme Court decision in *Kanahele v. State*, 154 Hawai'i 190, 550 P.3d 997 (2024), have affirmed that the State (including agencies like DOT and, by extension, other departments) must honor the high trust duties owed to beneficiaries under the HHCA, often finding that other state agencies violated this trust by exercising unauthorized control over HHCA lands.

Once again, when checking the HICRIS website for SHPD, we're greeted by a WARNING that says:

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HO`OMANA PONO, LLC  
***Mamua Kānaka***

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“We are having technical issues. DO NOT check “One or More Resources in Project Area” box.

I recently testified before the SPEED task force, where I explained the frustration of the HICRIS not accepting “New Projects”. If SHPD can’t get website to be functional, how are they able to manage another agency through its Kuleana. SHPD is incapable of taking care of its own Kuleana.

DHHL, which is governed by a highly competent and highly effective Executive Board, to wit: Hawaiian Homes Commission. Together, they have the ability to ensure that as the oldest native Hawaiian agency, DHHL and HHC are more than capable of practicing “Self-Determination” just as **§101(a)** of the HHCA allows Trust Beneficiaries to do.

Please pass this Bill as Ameded. Aloha!

*De Mont Kalai Manaole*

---

De MONT Kalai Manaole, Co-Manager  
Ho`omana Pono, LLC  
86-044 Hoaha St.  
Wai`anae, HI 96792  
Phone: (808) 726-5753  
Email: [hoomanaponollc96792@gmail.com](mailto:hoomanaponollc96792@gmail.com)

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 9:13:33 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nakoolani Warrington	Kupuna for the Moopuna	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**OPPOSED to HB 1982 HD1**

We, Kūpuna for the Mo‘opuna, a hui of Hawaiian Homes Commission Act kūpuna beneficiary farmers from Pana‘ewa, Hawai‘i, **testify in OPPOSITION to HB 1982 HD1.**

*“DHHL is currently preparing to conduct informational briefings at homestead communities throughout the state. These opportunities to share information and receive feedback regarding DHHL’s geothermal exploration program and the potential benefits of geothermal development to the trust and our beneficiaries are scheduled to commence in April/May 2026.” – DHHL testimony 2/3/2026 on HB 1982*

Beneficiary consultation must take place **before** any additional appropriation of funds. DHHL must hear from the beneficiaries first.

Mahalo.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE

REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

**Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs**

**Rep. David Tarnas - Chair**

**Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa – Vice Chair**

**Committee members: Rep. Gregg Takayama, Della Belatti, Elle Cochran, Diamond Garcia, Mark Hashem, Mahina Poepoe, Garner Shimizu**

**HB 1982, RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOMELANDS**

**February 11, 2026**

Aloha Chair David Tarnas, Vice Chair Kirstin Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

Truth for the People (TFTP) **oppose** this bill No. HB1982 which appropriates funds to the Department of Hawaiian Homelands for certain geothermal resource exploration and development activities and the hiring of consultants.

The legislative proposal that was approved by the Hawaiian Homes Commission (HHC), lacks several important components. The push to harness Geothermal Resources on Moku‘o Keawe is not new, 50 years to be exact. Many who experienced the first push in the early eighties, realized that they were up against the biggest push the Federal, State and County could create to ensure that Development projects for Geothermal would be successful. The Feds Daniel Inouye even tried his best to eliminate the leader of Pele Defense Fund, by placing agents on his property to arrest him. They did arrest him for a mere ounce of weed, put him in jail. But the people persevered. Donald Thomas Geochemist may not be familiar to many of you on the committee, but he is to many of the people in Puna and Moku‘o Keawe, who have had to endure his continue political push to raise the funding he needed to accomplish his endeavor as a scientist. We have his first subsurface thermal mapping from the early eighties and knew that someday Government will be revitalizing his initiatives to continue his endeavor to harness what is being marketed as

“renewable energy.” The dismissal of testimonies from people who have firsthand experiences with these initiatives within the 50 years are in awe, as to why harnessing Geothermal Energy is so important to Government agencies and “Green” organizations, because it is not **renewable and clean.**” The people have managed to halt many Geothermal initiatives on our island because the operations were detrimental to the environment and the health and safety of the people. The emissions were **so bad** that community had no choice but to stand up and fight! Because of their fight the emissions are no longer emitted into the air and toxic ponds are re-injected into the ground. Since then, no one has initiated a water quality study of the aquifers in Puna near PGV. Councilwoman Ashley Kirkerwitz initiated conversations about this subject, but it has not been fulfilled. They are mandated to re-inject the waste into the ground by EPA and DOH. The bills produced by Nicole Lowen HB1981 and HB1983 that implements a pivot or elimination of an Environmental Review is LUDICROUS and would never have made it without a JUDICIAL CHALLENGE!

Nicole Lautze HGGRC is Donald Thomas’s protégé and is doing the same initiatives, he has done in the past. She received a FONSI in 2014 to drill several sites up on the Saddle of Maunakea, Pohakuloa, Mauna a Wākea State Park, and Waiki‘i, for ground water. At the same time UH submitted applications for permits at BLNR to do 22 exploration bore holes in Hualalai. We attended the hearing at the Board of Land and Natural Resources and contested the case, and it was the first case in the Environmental courts. UH HGGRC (Donald Thomas) intended to drill exploration bore holes to seek Geothermal resources on Hualalai without and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We had 9 plaintiffs ready to be heard by Judge Ibara on Hawaii Island (Environmental Courts). Permits for drilling ground water are completing different from drilling Geothermal resources. Please see below:

- Air Pollution Control Permit
- Biosolids Treatment Works Notice of Intent
- EIS/EA (OEQC)
- Hazardous Waste TSD Permit
- Individual Wastewater Management Permit
- HEPCRA
- Underground Injection Control
- Underground Storage Tank
- Variance From Pollution Control
- Noise Permit
- Section 401 Water Quality Certification
- Site Assessment and Cleanup Programs for Contaminated Sites

Environmental reviews were put in place for a reason, and the people on our island are not ignorant of what a Geothermal Development initiative will need to do. The people of Moku ‘o Keawe are living experts and to dismiss their testimonies as if they do not have a place in oversight, is poor

decision making by Government. We were able to achieve standing in court, because of one component that you all fail to research, learn and respect. The Native Hawaiian Component of Religious Practice. The resource that you choose to dismiss as a religious component will bite you in the “okole! Mauna a Wākea has always been in controversy with UH and DLNR, because it is deemed a Sacred Mountain. DHHL the State of Hawaii Agency proposes to drill in several sites on Humu‘ula or the “saddle,” which are gathering and ceremonial areas for Hawaiian cultural practitioners, “Pele Defense Fund vs. Patty.” All of Hawaii, especially the home of a deity that you propose to desecrate will be challenged!

The Government including “Congressman Senator Daniel Inouye lost \$80 million dollars of taxpayers’ dollars in the 80’s.

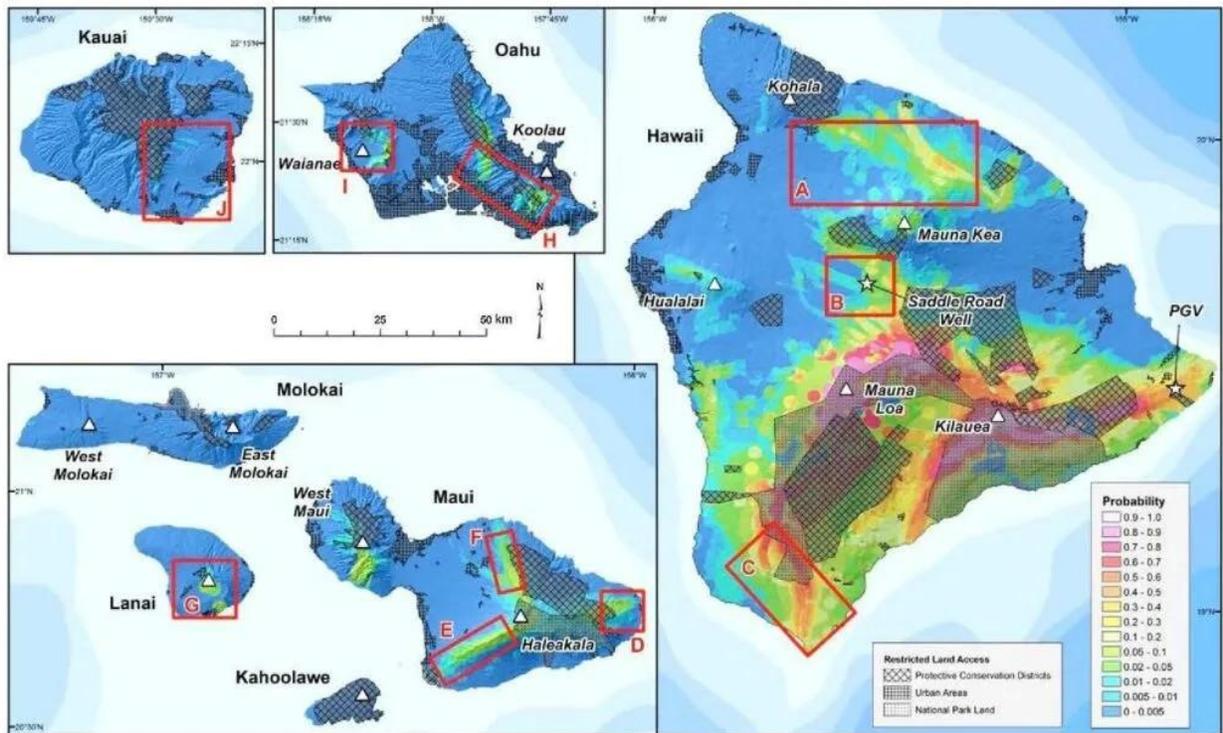
Please do not make the same mistake all over again! This will be a poor investment!

Description:	Appropriates funds to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands for water well development for geophysical investigation, exploration, and <u>identification of geothermal resources</u> on Hawaiian home lands. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD2)	
Companion:		
Package:	None	
Current Referral:	<del>EEP, JHA, FIN</del>	
Introducer(s):	HOLT, EVSLIN, KAHALOA, KUSCH, LAMOSAO, LEE, M., LOWEN, MARTEN, MATAYOSHI, MIYAKE, SOUZA, TARNAS, Kila	

Sort by Date	Status Text
2/20/2025	<p>H The committee on FIN recommend that the measure be <u>PASSED, UNAMENDED</u>. The votes were as follows: 13 Ayes: Representative(s) Yamashita, Takenouchi, Grandinetti, Holt, Hussey, Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Kitagawa, Kusch, Lamosao, Lee, M., Miyake, Morikawa, Templo; Ayes with reservations: none; 1 Noes: Representative(s) Reyes Oda; and 2 Excused: Representative(s) Alcos, Ward.</p>

A year ago, you tried to pass these bills and have amended them this year because you were probably told that you will be challenged if you eliminate community oversight and ignore TCP

(traditional customary practices). The map you see above is what Donald Thomas did in the early 80's.



This is the map that Nicole Lautze from HCCRC is proposing. These are **probability** maps. Probability means “**maybe.**” Do you want to take a chance on “maybe?” The first push in the 80's was to do 25 Geothermal Plants on the rift of Puna to generate 20 megawatts, a total of 500 megawatts. This resource was to be transported via undersea cable to Oahu. The estimated amount for the undersea cable was in billions of dollars. To do this they would have had to generate at least 25 Geothermal plants in Puna. This initiative FAILED! \$80 million dollars failure of your constituent's tax paying dollars.

UH and HGGRC will lose your money! DHHL will lose your money! They have received MILLIONS and have nothing to SHOW! The resource is in Puna and DHHL does not have land in Puna! This is a money-making initiative for everyone with their hands in the COOKIE JAR!

I implore you members of this committee not to give them the money!

“Laulima i ka hāpai pōhaku!”

Terri L. Napeahi

Truth for the People

tnapeahi@yahoo.com

Figure 1



**HANA HOU! 'E Kū ana kapai'ā!**  
**'E Kū!**

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 2:44:08 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire	KIngdom of The Hawaiian Islands	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

HB1982 HD1 - Relating to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands

SUPPORT

Aloha,

I support HB1982 HD1, appropriating funds to DHHL for geothermal exploration, development, and consultants on trust lands. Geothermal offers sustainable energy, economic self-sufficiency, and resilience for beneficiaries amid rising costs and climate challenges. DHHL-led efforts respect cultural sites while creating opportunities. This empowers homelands without general fund burdens. Approve for pono development.

Mahalo,  
Pikachu Shelby Billionaire



KIA'I IWI ALAKA'I

James J K C Maioho

Kahu of Mauna Ala | Founder, Kiai Iwi Alakai

808-459-1313 | James@HoilinaStrategies.com

### **Testimony in Opposition to HB1982 HD1**

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

My name is James Jay Kaleimamahu Crowningburg Maioho, and I submit this testimony in strong opposition to HB1982 HD1, relating to geothermal resource exploration on Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) trust lands.

While the measure is framed as an appropriation for “exploration” activities, including slim hole drilling, water well development, geophysical testing, and consultant procurement, the practical effect is to advance geothermal industrialization on Hawaiian Home Lands. Exploration is not neutral. It is the pre-development phase that creates financial, political, and infrastructural momentum toward full resource extraction.

Hawaiian Home Lands were not set aside to become energy sacrifice zones for the State of Hawaii’s renewable portfolio mandates. These lands are a federal trust, held for the rehabilitation and benefit of Native Hawaiian beneficiaries under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Any use that encumbers, degrades, or industrializes these lands absent clear, informed beneficiary consent is a breach of that fiduciary duty.

Geothermal development carries well-documented risks, including:

- Subsurface disturbance and seismic instability
- Groundwater contamination and aquifer disruption
- Cultural landscape desecration, particularly in volcanically sacred regions

- Risk to iwi kupuna and undiscovered burial sites
- Industrial zoning encumbrances that limit homestead use and expansion

This bill contains no requirement for beneficiary referendum, no cultural impact assessment mandate, no burial inventory survey requirement, and no revenue guarantee structure directly benefiting homestead lessees. It instead funds consultant studies that historically serve to justify predetermined development outcomes.

We must be clear: DHHL lands exist to place Native Hawaiians back onto the land in meaningful, residential, agricultural, and cultural ways — not to host industrial energy projects for statewide consumption grids.

If geothermal is to be pursued anywhere, it should occur on lands expressly zoned and consented for industrial energy production — not on trust lands already burdened by federal and state mismanagement.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge this Committee to HOLD HB1982 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-2584**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 9:42:44 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Luana Jones	Geothermal Neighbors - Puna	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Geothermal neighbor for over 40 years. Pilau industry ~ very toxic! Little to no government Regulation for Public Protection; only on paper! Millions of gallons of Our precious Wai used in production, then re-injected (with brine and other toxic additives) into the ‘Aina. Hewa!

Solar is more Pono (neighborly) and cheaper, quieter, cleaner, and sustainable for Aloha ‘Āina in Hawai‘i ~ the Land of Aloha!

Ua mau ke Ea o ka ‘Āina i ka Pono! E kala mai ~ please, no offense intended. Just my pure unfiltered truth.

I strongly oppose.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 6:03:41 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dee Green	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB1982 HD1 for the following reasons:

- Hawaiian Home Lands are trust lands meant to return Native Hawaiians to the land; industrial geothermal drilling is inconsistent with that purpose.
- Geothermal exploration and drilling permanently alter the land through excavation, road building, well pads, and subsurface disturbance.
- Drilling slim holes and developing wells risk groundwater contamination, which threatens drinking water, agriculture, and cultural practices.
- Geothermal activity can release hazardous gases and toxic substances that impact nearby communities and the environment.
- Subsurface drilling can trigger seismic activity and destabilize fragile ecosystems.
- Many Hawaiian Home Lands contain culturally significant areas; drilling and industrial activity risk disturbing burial sites and sacred landscapes.
- The bill does not require clear, binding consent from affected beneficiaries before moving forward with exploration.
- Beneficiaries may bear environmental and health risks without guaranteed, direct benefits to their homestead communities.
- DHHL already faces severe housing backlogs and infrastructure shortages; diverting resources to speculative energy development delays justice for beneficiaries.
- Hiring consultants to advance geothermal development signals a shift toward industrial land use rather than homestead-focused development.
- Once land and aquifers are damaged, the harm cannot be undone; the trust responsibility requires precaution, not experimentation.
- Advancing geothermal development on trust lands prioritizes energy production over the protection of Native Hawaiian land, water, and well-being.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Legislature to reject HB1982 HD1.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 6:16:48 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl burghardt	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members

I **strongly oppose** HB1982 HD1. Allocating funds for geothermal exploration on Hawaiian Home Lands is wrong and misuses trust resources meant to return Native Hawaiians to the land. These lands are intended for housing, cultural practices, and community well-being—not industrial energy development.

Geothermal drilling and well development permanently alter the land, risk contaminating groundwater, release hazardous gases, and can disturb culturally significant sites and fragile ecosystems. Beneficiaries face environmental and health risks without guaranteed benefits, while DHHL resources are diverted from urgent housing and infrastructure needs.

Hawaiian Home Lands must be protected for the people they were set aside to serve. For these reasons, I urge the Legislature to reject HB1982 HD1.

Cheryl Burghardt

Nuuanu Oahu

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 7:17:08 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Leona Leialoha	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill especially due to the fact that NO BENEFICIARY CONSULTATION was done in our homestead communities. We DO NOT APPRECIATE ANY MORE COMMERCIAL TOXIC entities!

mahalo for your consideration on this matter

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 7:24:43 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

We've given millions to the geothermal issue over the years with nothing to show for it. It seems more like it's a renewable 'consultants' resource.

I remember reading on an investor website a while back that said geothermal was a risky investment, and maybe that's why investors aren't beating our door down to explore, yet the state always seems willing to throw more money at consultants, year after year.

Other places are beating our pants off with much less toxic wind and solar for a lot less money and a cleaner environment.

The further you live from geothermal, the better it sounds. Not the case at all, if you live closer.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 8:10:01 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kehau Garvey	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Highly opposed to the allocation of any funds for the proposed geothermal exploration.

DHHL needs to focus on housing Kanaka Maoli.

The harm that this proposed exploration could cause is very real and moving forward with funding at this time before there has been clear consent from DHHL beneficiaries and cultural stewards is grossly irresponsible.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 11:35:55 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Summer P Noland	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am testifying in opposition. Hawaiian home lands are trust lands intended to place Hawaiians on land, not to serve as sites for speculative energy development. Geothermal exploration and drilling carry serious risks, including groundwater contamination, toxic gas releases, seismic activity and ecosystem damage. It undermines the state's trust responsibility by prioritizing energy exploration over beneficiary-driven land use.

Mahalo!

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 1:16:10 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
M. Leilani DeMello	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I KĀKO‘O ‘OLE this bill, no funding for geothermal exploration now or ever.

Mahalo,

M. Leilani DeMello

‘Ōla‘a, Puna, Hawai‘i

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 7:02:18 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary Christa SMith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I firmly oppose the use of Hawaiian Homelands for energy exploration. This is not consistent with the intent of HHL. There is great risk of harm to the environment, our air, drinking water and land. Thank you for your consideration. Do NOT bow to the pressures of development.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 7:13:11 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jan K Baldado	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I OPPOSE HB1982 HD1. Mahalo.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 8:05:50 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alice Kim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Historically, the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) has been underfunded, and many eligible Native Hawaiians have died while waiting for homestead lands. DHHL needs more money to fulfill its obligation to Native Hawaiian housing. As DHHL’s lands may hold high geothermal potential, the geothermal resource can potentially provide DHHL a revenue stream, can lower electricity costs for homestead beneficiaries, and can pay for home construction.

Under DHHL’s oversight, the Hawaii Groundwater and Geothermal Resources Center at the University of Hawaii at Manoa should execute the geothermal resource characterization. Through HGGRC, the state’s most prominent earth scientists research Hawaii’s groundwater and geothermal resources. HGGRC obtained land access for research from dozens of landowners across the state. For research equipment, HGGRC has access to \$1 million worth of geophysical equipment and a \$3 million drill rig (Notably, Puna Geothermal Venture is the only other geothermal-focused organization in Hawaii that has a suitable drill rig).

When DHHL was considering geothermal development on Hawaiian home lands, HGGRC’s senior researchers Donald Thomas and Nicole Lautze freely shared their knowledge. Collectively, these preeminent Hawaii geothermal scientists presented at least 5 presentations relating to their findings about geothermal resources on DHHL lands and have advised DHHL officials for years.

Historically, native Hawaiians have used volcanic heat directly for bathing and cooking, and so did the Maoris of New Zealand, another group of Pacific Islanders. Geothermal energy now provides more than 17 percent of New Zealand’s energy and serves as one of New Zealand’s cheapest energy sources. Indigenous Maori tribes are benefitting from the geothermal power plants on their tribal lands.

New Zealand has demonstrated that geothermal energy can be produced while improving the quality of life for its residents including Maoris, respecting the Maori culture, and caring for the environment. Hawaii can do the same for the betterment of the native Hawaiians.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 8:07:13 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Chloe Pua'ena Vierra-Villanueva	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and committee members,

I stand in opposition to this bill as a native Hawaiian and Hawai'i resident. I am very concerned that this bill will take away housing resources and cause harm to our ecosystem. Please do not pass this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in opposition. Me ka ha'aha'a,

Pua'ena Vierra-Villanueva

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 8:36:44 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
cheryl hendrickson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please oppose HB1982. These lands are not for speculative energy development. Geothermal exploration and drilling carry serious environmental risks. It undermines the States trust responsibility by prioritizing energy exploration over beneficiary driven land use. It advances funding before transparent environmental and cultural review.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:02:34 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sheela Sharma	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaiian homelands should not be used for these energy goals

Hawaii House of Representatives  
Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii

Subject: HB 1982 HDI Relating to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and Geothermal

Dear Chairman David A. Tarnas and Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe

I oppose allowing the Department of Hawaiian Homes the authority to appropriate funds for certain geothermal resource exploration and development activities and the hiring of consultants.

There are insufficient funds currently to reduce the number of entitled beneficiaries on the wait list so scarce dollars should not be earmarked for purposes than that.

Thank you

William L. Kapaku Jr  
DHHL Wait List

## **HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:38:56 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
J. Kehau Lucas	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members,

I oppose HB 1982 HD1 because it advances State energy development on Hawaiian Home Lands (HHL) in a manner that conflicts with the trust purpose of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA), risks irreparable cultural and environmental harm, and diverts scarce trust resources away from the urgent mandate to place beneficiaries on the land. The bill’s own findings frame HHL primarily as a venue for geothermal exploration and drilling rather than homesteading and rehabilitation, contrary to the HHCA, the Hawai‘i State Constitution, and federal oversight responsibilities. [\[A BILL FOR...hawaii.gov\]](#), [\[data.capit...hawaii.gov\]](#)

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## **1) HB 1982 HD1 Conflicts with the HHCA’s Trust Purpose and the State’s Constitutional Duties**

The HHCA establishes a federally rooted land trust whose proceeds and uses must align with Native Hawaiian rehabilitation through homesteading. Article XII, Section 1 of the Hawai‘i Constitution incorporates the HHCA into state law and requires that “proceeds and income from Hawaiian home lands shall be used only in accordance with the terms and spirit of [the HHCA].” That constitutional command is not a discretionary policy preference—it is a binding fiduciary limitation. [\[lww-hawaii.com\]](#), [\[law.justia.com\]](#)

Federal oversight also constrains State actions affecting HHL. The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) maintains a comprehensive HHCA reference guide and federal rules (e.g., 43 C.F.R. Part 47 on land exchanges) that reflect the federal trust relationship and oversight over key HHCA amendments and land dispositions. Any State initiative that functionally repurposes trust lands for State energy aims—especially industrial exploration and drilling—must be scrutinized against those federal trust parameters. [\[doi.gov\]](#), [\[ecfr.gov\]](#)

HB 1982 HD1 reframes the trust’s use toward State energy goals. The bill’s text appropriates funds to drill slim holes, develop wells, and hire consultants for geothermal development “on Hawaiian home lands,” with no guardrails ensuring primacy of homesteading or beneficiary-driven control. That policy orientation elevates State RPS implementation over the trust’s core rehabilitation mission. [\[A BILL FOR...hawaii.gov\]](#), [\[HB1982 HD1...hawaii.gov\]](#)

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## **2) The State Has an Affirmative, Enforceable Duty to Protect Native Hawaiian Traditional and Customary Rights Before Approving Actions That May Harm Them**

Ka Pa‘akai requires agencies to do specific, on-the-record cultural due diligence. The Hawai‘i Supreme Court’s decision in *Ka Pa‘akai o Ka ‘Āina v. Land Use Commission* created a binding, three-part framework: identify valued cultural resources/practices; assess how the action will affect them; and adopt feasible protective measures. Agencies cannot delegate this duty to project proponents or reduce it to box-checking. [[Ka Pa`akai...Hawaii.gov](#)], [[nativehawa...alcorp.org](#)]

HB 1982 HD1 contains no statutory assurance that Ka Pa‘akai will be satisfied at the front end. Industrial geothermal exploration and drilling are not culturally neutral; they can fragment landscapes, affect hydrology, and disrupt access to and integrity of cultural sites and practices. Without explicit Ka Pa‘akai compliance and enforceable cultural protections, HHL beneficiaries and practitioners bear disproportionate risks. [[Ka Pa`akai...Hawaii.gov](#)], [[nativehawa...alcorp.org](#)]

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## **3) HEPA (HRS Chapter 343) Applies to HHL Projects; Courts Have Confirmed It**

Hawai‘i’s environmental review statute (HEPA) applies when State lands or funds are used. Hawai‘i courts have expressly held that Chapter 343 applies to actions on Hawaiian Home Lands and voided actions taken in contravention of HEPA. Rushing exploratory drilling and related development on HHL without rigorous HEPA review would violate statute and fiduciary obligations. [[files.hawaii.gov](#)], [[sammade.github.io](#)]

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## **4) The State’s Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) Does Not Justify Encumbering HHL**

Hawai‘i’s RPS requires 40% renewable generation by 2030, 70% by 2040, and 100% by 2045. That mandate is utility-facing and can be—and is being—met through diverse resources and siting pathways that do not require prioritizing HHL for industrial development. The Public Utilities Commission and the Hawai‘i Natural Energy Institute report steady progress toward RPS goals under the revised methodology (Act 240), demonstrating viable alternatives for achieving decarbonization. [[puc.hawaii.gov](#)], [[hnei.hawaii.edu](#)]

In short, the RPS is not a license to subordinate trust lands to State energy aims. Siting renewable infrastructure on non-trust public lands, brownfields, rooftops, and utility-scale projects outside HHL remains available; indeed, utilities' annual filings show continuing RPS advancement without defaulting to HHL as primary energy zones. [\[hawaiianelectric.com\]](http://hawaiianelectric.com), [\[kiuc.coop\]](http://kiuc.coop)

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## **5) HB 1982 HD1 Undermines Act 279's Waitlist-Reduction Imperative**

In 2022, the Legislature enacted Act 279, appropriating \$600 million to reduce the DHHL waitlist—an historic commitment to the HHCA mission. DHHL and legislative oversight reports emphasize deploying those funds for homestead lots and acquisitions near infrastructure to accelerate placements. Redirecting attention, personnel, and political capital to geothermal prospecting on HHL dilutes capacity and conflicts with the very reason Act 279 was passed. [\[dhl.hawaii.gov\]](http://dhl.hawaii.gov), [\[civilbeat.org\]](http://civilbeat.org)

DHHL's own updates show the \$600M is being encumbered for housing outcomes, yet far more is needed; energy projects on HHL threaten to crowd out that priority. Legislative briefings and media coverage underscore the scale of the backlog and the need to preserve focus on homesteading, not expand industrial encumbrances on trust lands. [\[hawaii.tribuneherald.com\]](http://hawaii.tribuneherald.com), [\[hawaii.publicradio.org\]](http://hawaii.publicradio.org)

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## **6) The State's Fiduciary Obligations and Public Trust Duties Require Beneficiary-Centered Decision-Making—Not Energy-First Development on HHL**

The Constitution (Article XII) and the Admission Act establish the State's fiduciary duties toward Native Hawaiians and public trust lands; OHA's role and the trust framework require that the beneficiaries' interests are paramount. Using HHL as a proving ground for State energy strategy reverses that duty and exposes the trust corpus to long-term encumbrances. [\[ballotpedia.org\]](http://ballotpedia.org), [\[oha.org\]](http://oha.org)

DOI's HHCA guidance and federal trust oversight further reinforce that State actions must align with trust purposes and beneficiary welfare, not external policy goals. Energy projects that compromise homesteading opportunities and cultural integrity are antithetical to the HHCA's "terms and spirit." [\[doi.gov\]](http://doi.gov), [\[lww-hawaii.com\]](http://lww-hawaii.com)

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## 7) The Bill's Own Record Shows the Intent to Scale Geothermal Across Multiple HHL Sites, Magnifying Risk

DHHL testimony in recent hearings lists multiple HHL tracts statewide under consideration for geophysical surveys and slim-hole drilling. Scaling exploration across HHL multiplies cumulative cultural and environmental risk, increases management burden, and entrenches an energy-first land use precedent within the trust. [\[HB 1982, R...HOME LANDS\]](#)

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## 8) Policy Alternatives that Respect the Trust and Advance Climate Goals

If the Legislature wishes to support decarbonization while honoring the HHCA, it should:

1. Expressly exclude Hawaiian Home Lands from State-driven energy siting unless (a) the project is initiated by beneficiaries, (b) is demonstrably incidental to homesteading (e.g., community-scale microgrids serving homesteads), and (c) includes binding Ka Pa'akai findings and HEPA compliance before any field activity. [\[Ka Pa`akai...Hawaii.gov\]](#), [\[files.hawaii.gov\]](#)
  2. Prioritize non-trust public lands and built environments (rooftops, parking canopies, brownfields, post-industrial parcels) for utility-scale renewables that count toward RPS without encumbering HHL. Utilities' filings and PUC materials show such pathways are available and underway. [\[puc.hawaii.gov\]](#), [\[hawaiianelectric.com\]](#)
  3. Fund beneficiary energy self-determination (efficiency, rooftop solar + storage for homestead households, and community microgrids) through existing agencies and programs—without converting HHL into industrial zones—and ensure any revenues derived from energy uses are secondary to and supportive of homesteading. [\[STATE OF H...RECTOR ...\]](#)
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## Conclusion

Hawai'i can and must meet its climate and energy goals. But we cannot do so by repurposing Native Hawaiian trust lands for industrial exploration and drilling in ways that compromise homesteading, erode cultural practice, and breach fiduciary obligations. HB 1982 HD1 in its present form asks the HHCA trust to bear disproportionate risks so the State can advance energy policy faster. That flips the law and the kuleana on its head.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to OPPOSE HB 1982 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha 'āina,  
J. Kēhau Lucas

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 11:43:41 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kapulei Flores	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in OPPOSITION to HB1982 HD1 that plans to use Hawaiian Homes lands for state energy use. These lands are Trust Lands intended to place Native Hawaiians on the land that they are rightfully owed, not to serve as sites for speculatie energy development. This would divert DHHL's focus and limited resources away from its core mission of housing, infrastructure, and beneficiary services. Geothermal exploration and drilling carry serious risks including groundwater contamination, toxic gas releases, seismic activity, and ecosystem damage. All of those things we can not afford to cause on any of our islands and any of our land in Hawai'i but especially not on Hawaiian Homes land. With the many years of DHHL failing to provide for Native Hawaiians, with hundreds dying on the waitlist, it is beyond irresponsible and disrespectful to suggest this type of project and bill to be conducted on those lands. Please focus on protecting and providing for the people of Hawai'i, especially Native Hawaiians, instead of trying to start up and suggest new projects like this that are not in aliance with the function and purpose of DHHL.

Mahalo, Kapulei

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 12:10:51 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ginger Hamilton	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1982 using Hawaiian Homelands for geothermal due to toxicity, use of millions gallons of water, the re-injection of polluted effluent back underground, noisy drilling, no effective regulations, etc.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 12:27:45 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ronald Fujiyoshi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Members of the JHA Committee

My name is Ronald Fujiyoshi and I am in strong OPPOSITION to HB1982 HD1.

I am a retired Christian missionary and retired pastor of the Olaa First Hawaiian Church. In 1889 I was among those arrested at the Wao Kele O Puna action against geothermal, so I have been keeping track on geothermal development for quite some time. First of all, geothermal development in Hawaii is not CLEAN. It is very toxic. That is probably why the bill tries to dodge an EIS requirement. Second, and probably the most important of all, it is an affront to Kanaka Maoli who believe that drilling for geothermal is against their spiritual and religious beliefs. Those who are not Kanaka Maoli should not be leading in arguing for the passage of this bill. I am aware that there are Kanaka Maoli who are seeking financial benefits from geothermal.

Please vote against the passage of HB1982 HD1.

Mahalo for allowing me to testify!

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 12:46:10 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Christopher M Burt	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my opposition to HB1982 HD1. While the transition to renewable energy is a critical goal for the State, the use of Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) funds and acreage for geothermal exploration presents significant risks to cultural sites, natural resources, and the primary mission of the Department: returning native Hawaiians to the land

There are currently thousands of native Hawaiians on the DHHL waitlist. Appropriating \$5 million for "geothermal exploration" and "consultants" diverts resources and attention away from the Department's core mandate: infrastructure for residential, pastoral, and agricultural homesteading.

Geothermal development often occurs in areas of high volcanic activity, which are of deep spiritual and cultural significance to many practitioners. Industrializing these sacred landscapes can cause irreparable harm to the mana of the land and the cultural heritage of the Lāhui.

Geothermal drilling, even "slim holes," carries risks of groundwater contamination and the release of harmful gases like hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S). For communities already struggling with environmental justice issues, adding industrial geothermal sites near potential residential homesteads is a health risk.

As currently drafted, the bill focuses on "exploration and development" but lacks concrete guarantees that the energy produced or the profits generated will directly lower the cost of living for DHHL beneficiaries specifically, rather than simply feeding the statewide grid

Large-scale energy projects should not be fast-tracked on Hawaiian home lands without an exhaustive, beneficiary-led vetting process. Until there is a clearer plan to ensure that this project does not delay residential waitlists or desecrate cultural resources, I urge the Committee to cancel this bill

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 12:57:58 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Momi Wheeler	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha ‘Āina,

Oppose HB1982 HD1.

‘Āina Aloha,

Momi Wheeler

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 1:20:42 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anuheia Lee	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Welina mai kākou. ‘O Anuheia Lee ko‘u inoa, no Hilo mai au. I am a kanaka maoli and a resident of the fake “State of Hawai‘i”.

I stand in firm opposition to House Bill 1982, which would appropriate an additional \$5 million under Act 205 (2022) to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands for geothermal resource exploration and related activities.

Hawaiian Home Lands are trust lands established to return Native Hawaiians to the land and support self-sufficiency — not to serve as sites for large-scale energy development. DHHL is already responsible for over 200,000 acres, more than 10,000 leases, and over 47,000 applicants still waiting for land. The department is struggling to fulfill its core mission. This bill would further divert its limited time, funding, and attention away from placing beneficiaries on the land.

Additionally, the bill’s language is vague in critical areas. It does not clearly state who will benefit from the energy produced. While the development would occur on DHHL lands, there is no guarantee that beneficiaries would receive direct benefit. The inclusion of hydrogen as a potential resource raises even more questions about the scale and intent of this development. When legislation lacks clarity in its most consequential provisions, that should concern all of us.

We must also consider DHHL’s recent track record. In 2022, the department received \$600 million to move applicants into leases. Yet much of what has been delivered are “paper leases,” meaning families are still waiting for infrastructure and the ability to actually live on the land. Public information on progress remains limited, and many beneficiaries may wait years before they can move into their homes. If DHHL has not yet demonstrated the ability to effectively execute its primary responsibility, it should not be tasked with expanding into energy development.

In summary, allocating additional funds for geothermal exploration does not align with DHHL’s trust mission and risks further delaying justice for Native Hawaiian beneficiaries who are still waiting for land. DHHL should focus on its foundational responsibility: placing our people on the land.

Mahalo nui.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 2:58:39 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dana Keawe

Truth For The People & Keaukaha Action Network

Bill number(s): HB1982 HD1 (with amendments)

Position: STRONG OPPOSITION To HB1982 HD1

RE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO INDUSTRIALIZED GEOTHERMAL DEVELOPMENT AND DRILLING INTO KŪPUNA PELE ON PUBLIC TRUST AND DHHL LANDS — MOKU O KEAWE AND STATEWIDE Aloha Chair and Members of the JHA Committee:

My name is Dana Keawe and I am standing in protection of Aloha 'Āina to protect our "Natural Resources" otherwise known to Kānaka as our Nā Akua, elemental beings from invasive developments such as geothermal in the name of "Renewable Energy". I respectfully submit this testimony in STRONG OPPOSITION to HB1982 HD1 with amendments, a bill that would authorize geological subsurface characterization activities under the guise of research, while undermining the cultural, environmental, and public health concerns deeply felt by many Native Hawaiians and community members.

I submit this testimony in strong opposition to any bill or measure authorizing industrialized geothermal exploration and development that would result in drilling into Kūpuna Pele within and throughout Moku o Keawe and equally in opposition to its statewide initiative on public trust lands and Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) Crown trust lands on any of our Moku of Hawai'i Nui Akea.

Geothermal is not merely an “energy resource.” It is Kūpuna Pele. For Kānaka or by definition in legislative matters Native Hawaiians, geothermal activity is the physical manifestation of a living ancestral presence, inseparable from our genealogies, ceremonies, and spiritual obligations to ‘āina. To authorize industrialized geothermal development is to authorize drilling into the body of Kūpuna Pele herself. This act constitutes desecration of a sacred elder and severs an enduring cultural relationship that predates the State of Hawai‘i. No economic valuation can replace this relationship, and no regulatory framework can render such desecration acceptable.

Because of this cultural reality, industrialized geothermal development and drilling into Kūpuna Pele are fundamentally incompatible with the State's constitutional and statutory duties. Article XI, Section 7 of the Hawai'i State Constitution establishes that natural resources are held in public trust for the benefit of present and future generations. The public trust doctrine imposes an affirmative obligation upon the State to protect these resources and to prevent their impairment. Authorizing industrial drilling into geothermal systems prioritizes commercial extraction for monetary gain over protection and violates this constitutional mandate. There is no balance with invasive desecration of our already limited resources, and Akua PELE is not a resource to be tampered with.

These obligations are further reinforced by the Hawai'i Admissions Act of 1959, which transferred former Crown and Government Lands to the State to be held in trust for specific public purposes. Those lands — often referred to as ceded lands — are subject to fiduciary duties that require their management for the benefit of the public and Native Hawaiians. Industrialized geothermal development and drilling into Kūpuna Pele on these lands constitutes a misuse of trust assets and a breach of the State's fiduciary responsibilities under both federal and state law.

The history of geothermal development in Hawai'i, particularly in Wao Kele o Puna, illustrates this constitutional failure. In the late 1980s and 1990s, Native Hawaiian practitioners and community members engaged in sustained protests to protect Wao Kele o Puna from industrialized geothermal development and drilling into Kūpuna Pele. Despite clear evidence of cultural, ecological, and spiritual significance, the State advanced geothermal drilling in the area, resulting in arrests of protectors, prolonged litigation, and irreversible disruption of a living forest ecosystem. These actions demonstrated the State's prioritization of industrial extraction over its public trust duty to protect trust resources and Native Hawaiian traditional practices.

Rather than serving as a cautionary example, current geothermal proposals repeat the same pattern of constitutional disregard. The State now seeks to expand industrialized geothermal exploration under a statewide initiative, including on DHHL lands and former Crown and Government Lands, once again elevating energy policy and projected revenue generation — including claims of 100% royalties — over its constitutional and fiduciary obligations. This initiative would further entrench the practice of drilling into Kūpuna Pele as a matter of public policy. This is not a localized land-use issue; it is a systemic threat to the trust corpus across all islands.

Industrialized geothermal development and drilling into Kūpuna Pele further endanger interconnected trust resources, including groundwater, air quality, and geologic stability. These risks are especially acute on the Moku o Keawe, where volcanic and aquifer systems are inseparable from subsistence practices, burial grounds, and ceremonial sites. The State cannot lawfully authorize degradation of these resources under Article XI, Section 7 of the Hawai'i State Constitution or under the fiduciary standards

imposed by the Admissions Act of 1959 in the name of speculative energy benefit or promised 100% royalty revenues.

With respect to DHHL lands, the breach is even more severe. These lands are held in trust under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act for the exclusive benefit of Native Hawaiian beneficiaries. Legislation proposing industrialized geothermal exploration or development that authorizes drilling into Kūpuna Pele on DHHL lands without prior beneficiary authorization already constitutes a violation of fiduciary duty. Beneficiary consultation cannot be treated as a procedural afterthought or a remedy for an unlawful act.

Consultation does not cure desecration. The proposal of industrialized geothermal development and drilling into Kūpuna Pele on trust lands without consent reflects a failure to honor both the cultural foundations of these lands and the legal obligations attached to them. Beneficiaries are not merely stakeholders; they are trust beneficiaries whose rights must guide, not follow, legislative action.

**WE DO NOT CONSENT TO ANY GEOTHERMAL DEVELOPMENT IN HAWAII. DHHL HAS FAILED TO CONSULT WITH OUR PEOPLE!**

Accordingly, I urge this Committee to reject any geothermal-related legislation that:

1. Treats geothermal as a commodity rather than Kūpuna Pele;
2. Authorizes industrialized geothermal exploration, development, or drilling into Kūpuna Pele on public trust lands, former Crown and Government Lands, or DHHL lands within the Moku o Keawe and statewide;
3. Violates the State's duties under Article XI, Section 7 of the Hawai'i State Constitution and the fiduciary obligations imposed by the Admissions Act of 1959;
4. Repeats the historic failures exemplified by Wao Kele o Puna; or
5. Substitutes delayed consultation for prior consent by beneficiaries.

**WE DO NOT CONSENT TO ANY GEOTHERMAL DEVELOPMENT IN HAWAII. DHHL HAS FAILED TO CONSULT WITH OUR PEOPLE!**

Energy policy must not override culture. Revenue — even when framed as 100% royalties — must not override constitutional and fiduciary law.

Industrialized development must not override ancestral relationships.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that this Committee uphold their fiduciary obligations and Public Trust duty and decline any measure authorizing industrialized geothermal exploration or development that would result in drilling into Kūpuna Pele on public trust, former Crown and Government, and DHHL lands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Dana Keawe  
T.4.T.P. & K.A.N.  
Moku o Keawe



**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 6:30:52 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Keolamauloahawaiiloa Mowat	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee. Mahalo for the opportunity to give my testimony. My name is Keolamauloahawaiiloa Mowat. I am a DHHL beneficiary who was literally born and raised on my ohana's Hawaiian Homestead of Kapa'akea, Molokai. I respectfully submit testimony in opposition to HB1982, HD1.

While framed as "exploration" this bill appropriates millions of dollars toward geothermal resource investigation and potential development on Hawaiian Home Lands across the state including Ho'olehua/Nā'iwa on Moloka'i which I strongly oppose.

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands was established under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920 to return aina to Indigenous Hawaiians for homesteading, rehabilitation, and self-sufficiency. DHHL is a land trust with a fiduciary obligation to its beneficiaries. It is not an energy development agency.

DHHL's primary duty is to provide homesteads and improve the economic and social conditions of Native Hawaiians. Redirecting trust lands toward speculative geothermal exploration raises serious concerns about mission drift and fiduciary risk.

If geothermal projects fail, stall, or become economically nonviable, beneficiaries bear the consequences not private developers. Trust lands should not be used as testing grounds for high risk industrial energy ventures.

Before pursuing geothermal development, DHHL must demonstrate that beneficiaries statewide have provided informed consent, homestead needs are fully met and prioritized and that exploration does not compromise future residential, agricultural, or cultural land uses in those targeted areas. DHHL's obligation is to people first and not resource extraction.

The testimony estimates \$4-5 million for initial surveys, \$40-50 million for slim hole exploratory drilling at only half the sites. That is potentially \$50+ million in trust directed spending before even confirming viability. Those funds could instead support much needed things like Homestead infrastructure, Water systems, Roads, Agricultural development, Land distribution and housing to reduce the waitlist. Exploration alone does not generate revenue. It introduces financial risk to a trust already struggling to meet core obligations.

Molokai is a small rural island with limited infrastructure, limited emergency response capacity, and a fragile aquifer dependent ecosystem. Geothermal exploration and drilling pose risks that includes Groundwater contamination, Hydrogen sulfide gas release, Seismic activity or induced micro earthquakes, Surface land disturbance, habitat fragmentation and Industrialization of rural homestead communities. Molokai does not have the industrial buffer capacity of Hawai'i Island. A failed or problematic well could have outsized consequences for drinking water and subsistence agriculture. Most of Nā'iwa and especially Ho'olehua are not industrial zones. They are homestead communities rooted in cultural and subsistence life styles.

Hawaiian Home Lands are not vacant extraction zones. They are culturally significant lands held in trust for Indigenous beneficiaries. Geothermal development could restrict access to culturally important areas, Alter sacred landscapes, Introduce noise, heavy truck traffic and long term industrial presence and like many other project ideas in the past create divisions within small island communities. For Molokai especially an island that has consistently resisted industrialization such development threatens the very identity of our community.

DHHL states that informational briefings will begin in April/May 2026. Respectfully informational briefings are not the same as beneficiary consent. True trust governance requires full environmental impact transparency, independent risk analysis, clear revenue projections, contractual structures and binding beneficiary consultation prior to exploration funding. Exploration should not begin before beneficiaries have meaningfully decided whether they even want geothermal pursued on their lands.

Geothermal is not risk free "Green Energy" While often labeled renewable, geothermal is not impact free. It involves drilling and subsurface disturbance It can emit greenhouse gases and hydrogen sulfide, It requires significant water use and creates industrial footprints in rural areas. Small islands have unique carrying capacities. What may be viable on large volcanic systems does not automatically translate responsibly to smaller islands like Molokai.

I would like to end my testimony by reminding you all that DHHL was created as part of a trust obligation to Native Hawaiians. Its mandate is rehabilitation through land, not conversion of trust lands into energy production assets. If the State of Hawai'i wishes to pursue geothermal expansion it has other public lands and agencies to do so. Hawaiian Home Lands should not become a fallback energy portfolio.

Mahalo and have a blessed day.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 7:00:24 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elizabeth Mowat	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly oppose HB1982. As a homesteader on Kapaakea Molokai I know wholeheartedly that we need sustainable food practices. This bill will not support homesteaders as the risks are too great and the alternatives are abundant.

Mahalo,

Elizabeth Ohi'a Lehua Mowat

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 7:18:07 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Andrew Gomes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I,Andrew Gomes, as a beneficiary of Hawaiian homelands strongly oppose HB1982 in its entirety. I believe the land(A'ina) needs to be lived on,farmed,or both of the mentioned. Let's put Hawaiians back on the land.

we do not have forever we live once! Let's make it worth a life living. Mahalo for your time and I pray we focus on our beneficiaries and getting them on the land first and foremost. Mahalo nui loa

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 7:29:56 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wanette K Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject: Testimony in Opposition to HB1982 HD1 – Relating to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my opposition to HB1982 HD1, which proposes appropriating funds to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) for geothermal resource exploration and development activities, including the hiring of consultants.

While I recognize the importance of energy development and economic opportunity, I have serious concerns about this measure. First, geothermal exploration and development can pose significant environmental and cultural risks, particularly on lands that hold deep historical, spiritual, and ancestral significance to Native Hawaiian beneficiaries. Activities such as drilling and subsurface testing may disturb fragile ecosystems, impact groundwater systems, and create the possibility of damaging or contaminating underground aquifers that communities rely on for drinking water and agriculture. These risks warrant far greater scrutiny and community consultation than this bill appears to guarantee.

Second, allocating public funds for exploratory projects without clear, enforceable safeguards, transparency standards, and long-term accountability measures raises concerns about fiscal responsibility. Beneficiaries of Hawaiian Home Lands deserve assurance that any development pursued on their lands directly serves their interests, protects their rights, and reflects their informed consent.

Third, decisions affecting Hawaiian Home Lands should prioritize the voices and self-determination of beneficiaries. Advancing geothermal initiatives without robust beneficiary engagement risks undermining trust and repeating historical patterns in which development occurs without adequate consultation or consent.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to vote NO on HB1982 HD1 unless and until stronger protections, clearer accountability, and meaningful beneficiary-driven decision-making processes are incorporated.

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

Respectfully,  
Wanette K Lee  
PO Box 801 Kaunakakai Hi 96748

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 7:32:39 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Taye Mowat	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill. The project will cause unnecessary destruction to land and could negatively impact our natural resources(water, air, etc). It would also allow for new development on land that could and are meant to go toward Hawaiian people; land that Hawaiians have been waiting years to be granted. The development would also interfere with sacred sites. No to this bill!

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 7:51:39 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bridget A. Mowat808	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this measure because per hawaiian homestead act, lands were for the hawaiian people. There are many on wait list and are dying on the list. DHHLs are for homes as promised land. I have children and grandchildren who will inherit this lease. This is legacy lands. A'ole to this ridiculous idea and I feel again, hawaiians are being threatened!! !

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 7:57:35 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ashlyn-Jade Aniban	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Ashlyn-Jade Aniban and this is my formal testimony in opposition to HB1982 relating to geothermal exploration on DHHL lands.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 8:39:15 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Laura Safranski	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am not kanaka maoli.. I do not support this measure

refer to the 1991 Puna Geothermal incident for any questions as to why we should all oppose this..

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:59:27 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha JHA Chair & Committee Members,

We respectfully submit this testimony in STRONG OPPOSITION to HB1982 {HD1} with amendments, a bill that would authorize geological subsurface characterization activities under the guise of research, while undermining the cultural, environmental, and public health concerns deeply felt by many Native Hawaiians and community members.

We submit this testimony in strong opposition to any bill or measure authorizing industrialized geothermal exploration and development that would result in drilling into Kupuna Pele within and throughout Moku o Keawe and equally in opposition to its statewide initiative on public trust lands and Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) Crown trust lands on any of our Moku of Hawai'i Nui Akea.

Please say "a'ole."

Mahalo,

Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros

Earle Medeiros, Sr.

Earle Medeiros, Jr

Megan Medeiros

& ohana

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 11:15:03 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ayanna Pelekai	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose to this idea because Hoolehua is a area for families to thrive in, to grow in & to be able to grow their own food in the rich soil it has to offer. Hoolehua is NOT a project site for energy & should not be used for public or scientific use. Leave these lands alone.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 12:10:39 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jade Alohalani Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose. No geothermal exploration or development activities. Research is a front for what is destructive in the true work that will harm our environment, land, ocean, human and animal consequences. The quality in our aina's health needs to continue to be safe at all times and not be compromised for subtle devastation.

Man cannot even direct themselves in a healthy life style, let alone a healthy environment that we see failed in many different ways. Where is its protection from the laws? Learn from the mistakes. The future is getting worst and still there are these constant ideas of ripping at our resources away from people/HHCA beneficiaries in the communities that are affected. Leave our land intact the way Iehovah, God has given as his gift to us. No drilling, fracking or any deteriorating processess to our aina(s).

As a Beneficiary, leave our Crown Trust Lands alone. Instead, put a cap on population growth with people moving into Hawaii (excluding the aboriginal/indigenous Kanaka Maoli). Our islands are always being abused and raped in many different ways. Malama Aina means State/DHHL should Malama the kuleana of the aina not contribute pilikia that damage our aina. Stop! A'ole!

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 1:17:30 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lucille N Lecker	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We respectfully submit this testimony in

STRONG OPPOSITION to HB1982 HD1 with amendments, a bill that would authorize geological subsurface characterization activities under the guise of research, while undermining the cultural, environmental, and public health concerns deeply felt by many Native Hawaiians and community members.

We submit this testimony in strong opposition to any bill or measure authorizing industrialized geothermal exploration and development that would result in drilling into Kupuna Pele within and throughout Moku o Keawe and equally in opposition to its statewide initiative on public trust lands and Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) Crown trust lands on any of our Moku of Hawai'i Nui Akea.

BILL #: HB1982 HD1

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 2:16:47 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

I submit this testimony in **STRONG OPPOSITION** to HB1982 HD1.

NO is NO.

Hawaiian Home Lands are trust lands under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA). These lands exist for one primary purpose: to return Native Hawaiians to the land. They were not established to serve as sites for industrial geothermal exploration, drilling, or consultant-driven energy development.

This bill appropriates funds for:

- Slim hole drilling
- Water well development
- Geophysical exploration
- Consultant hiring

These are not housing activities. These are industrial preparatory actions.

The Department itself admits beneficiary informational briefings will not even begin until April/May 2026. Yet this Legislature is being asked to appropriate millions now.

**Consultation must come BEFORE appropriation - not after.**

Additionally, community concerns are not theoretical. In 2023, during well testing in Puna (April 14–16), residents publicly raised alarms about exposure to emissions including hydrogen sulfide and heavy metals. Community members demanded access to monitoring data and questioned oversight transparency.

Whether one agrees with every allegation or not, the fact remains:

**Trust lands should not be used for activities that generate unresolved public health, environmental, and monitoring disputes.**

HB1982 HD1 prioritizes:

- Exploration over housing
- Industrial risk over beneficiary consent
- Consultants over kūpuna on the waitlist

DHHL already carries:

- Tens of thousands of applicants
- Infrastructure backlogs
- Undeveloped lots

Diverting energy, funds, and focus into geothermal exploration undermines the trust mission.

The HHCA and Article XII of the Hawai'i Constitution require that trust lands be administered in accordance with their original purpose. Energy development is not the core mandate. Housing Native Hawaiians is.

But this bill does not represent that.

This bill moves money first.

NO is NO.

I respectfully urge you to reject HB1982 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 6:51:23 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nomana Angelo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Nicole Lowen, Vice Chair Amy Perruso, and Members of the Committee, I respectfully submit this testimony in strong opposition to the above-referenced measures, which would require the Hawai‘i State Energy Office to conduct a statewide environmental assessment and administer a Geothermal Resources Characterization Program under the direction of the University of Hawai‘i Groundwater and Geothermal Resources Center, with appropriated funds for that purpose.

These bills represent a fundamental shift toward institutionalizing geothermal exploration under the guise of research, weakening environmental safeguards and diminishing public oversight. Of particular concern, the University’s Groundwater and Geothermal Resources Center has repeatedly advanced proposals seeking to bypass or dilute existing environmental review processes—including those addressing seismic monitoring for geothermal exploration on Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) and other public trust lands.

Geothermal exploration is not a neutral scientific activity. It involves intrusive testing, drilling, and seismic work that can directly affect groundwater systems, geologic stability, and culturally significant landscapes. Simply labeling these actions as “characterization” does not change their physical or legal consequences. Authorizing such programs without full environmental review violates Hawai‘i’s precautionary principles and undermines protections long established for trust resources.

I also strongly oppose the proposed amendments that would shorten the period for judicial proceedings on environmental assessments and impact statements, require such cases to be filed directly with the Supreme Court, and prohibit the awarding of attorneys’ fees. These changes unduly restrict the public’s ability to hold the State accountable.

Public trust and DHHL lands are not appropriate locations for experimental or industrial geothermal activity. These lands are held for the benefit of Native Hawaiian beneficiaries. Any activity that risks contamination, destabilizes formations, or disrupts cultural sites constitutes a breach of fiduciary duty under Article XII, Section 7, of the Hawai‘i State Constitution.

It is deeply troubling that DHHL would consider advancing industrialized geothermal development in violation of its trust responsibilities. The absence of beneficiary consultation eliminates community oversight and concentrates decision-making power in the hands of project proponents—a model incompatible with transparency and accountability.

Moreover, drilling into Kūpuna Pele threatens interconnected natural and cultural systems—groundwater, air quality, volcanic stability, and subsistence practices—particularly across Moku O Keawe, where these elements are inseparable from ancestral and ceremonial sites. The State cannot lawfully sanction the degradation of such resources under Article XI, Section 7, of the State Constitution or the fiduciary standards established by the Admissions Act.

With respect to DHHL lands, the breach is particularly severe. These lands must serve Native Hawaiian beneficiaries exclusively. Authorizing geothermal drilling without their prior consent violates both legal and moral obligations. Consultation after the fact does not remedy desecration. Beneficiaries are not mere stakeholders—they are lineal descendants and trust holders whose rights and voices must guide legislative action, not follow it.

For these reasons, I urge this Committee to reject these measures because they:

1. Authorize geothermal exploration disguised as research while undermining environmental review;
2. Threaten groundwater, seismic, and cultural integrity;
3. Expose DHHL and public trust lands to intrusive industrial activity; and
4. Prioritize energy policy over environmental law and trust duties.

Energy planning must not come at the expense of environmental integrity, public trust principles, or Native Hawaiian rights. Any geothermal-related actions must remain subject to full environmental review and occur only with meaningful beneficiary and community consent.

Much Love and Aloha,

Nomana Angelo

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 8:31:33 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sheena Lopes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

AOLE LOA TO GEOTHERMAL! Hewa!!! DHHL lands are not meant for exploring energy options, it is for returning Hawaiians back to aina and to live for generations. The beneficiaries do not want geothermal, it goes against everything as a Hawaiian and as a worshipper of Pele. This is an absolute insult to the Hawaiian people. ENOUGH ALREADY!

**HB-1982-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 8:34:30 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
pahnelopi mckenzie	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB 1982 HD1

Utilizing Hawaiian Homelands funds to support anything other getting people on their lots is ridiculous. How much land is stolen by the state and military, how much money our taxes go to the entities and still this bill suggests to then take money and land from the Hawaiian Homelands is obsured. This is money that would be used for more pillaging and desecration out side of taking care of the very people that are the only ones who should be guaranteed financial support and land to live. This undermines trust and responsibility as stated for DHHL. I am not sure who wrote this bill but how dare you continue to capitalize of what you call research and progress for new forms of energy. This bill is a further slap in the face to generations of people waiting to get home but cannot because of the baseline failures of DHHL requirements and slow speed to get people home. This Bill is a evil slide of disenfranchisement of a system and of people upholding occupation. This bill bypasses consent from beneficiaries, EIS, and the land itself.

Please kill this bill as it is harmful at baseline to even suggest such and intrusion.

Thank you Pahnelopi McKenzie