



Ka Moku'aina 'O Hawai'i Aha Moku O Pae'Aina

State of Hawai'i Aha Moku

P. O. Box 621

Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

Testimony of the Hawaii State Aha Moku

Before the House Committee on

Water and Land

Thursday, February 12, 2026

9:00 A.M.

Conference Room 411

IN OPPOSITION of House Bill 2047

Relating to the Aha Moku Advisory Committee

House Bill 2047 amends the process for the hiring of the Executive Director of the Aha Moku Advisory Committee. Specifies that the Chairperson of Board of Land and Natural Resources is responsible for the appointment, oversight, and administrative authority over the Executive Director of the Aha Moku Advisory Committee. Requires any formal position, recommendation, or advisory action of the Aha Moku Advisory Committee to be adopted at a duly noticed public meeting at which a quorum is present. Amends the reporting requirements of the Aha Moku Advisory Committee.

The Hawaii State Aha Moku (Aha Moku) OPPOSES this measure.

On behalf of the Po'o and native Hawaiian practitioners of the eight main Hawaiian Islands – Moku O Keawe (Hawai'i), Moku O Pi'ilani (Maui), Nana'i Kaula (Lana'i), Moku O Kanaloa (Kaho'olawe), Moloka'i Pule O'o (Moloka'i), Moku O Kakuhihewa (O'ahu), Manokalanipo (Kaua'i) and Moku O Kawelonakala (Ni'ihau) we offer our mana'o as to why we oppose this measure.

This measure as written, specifically takes the autonomy of the Aha Moku process away from the native Hawaiians with generational and traditional knowledge of their ahupua'a, and puts the Aha Moku, including the Luna Alaka'i (Executive Director) and the Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) under the jurisdiction of the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR).

Aha Moku has never been under the jurisdiction of the state. Rather, Kupuna and cultural practitioners from every island authored the Aha Moku Act and stressed that it be advisory only to BLNR and to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). Aha Moku collaborates with government and private entities and connects those with generational knowledge of a site-specific place (ahupua'a) while protecting that knowledge and the families who hold it. Over the years, there has been many attempts to take over the Aha Moku. The people have always protected it.

This Bill will destroy the Aha Moku, and its purpose and mission which is to bring the voices of the native Hawaiian people forward in regard to the protection and perpetuation of each island's natural and cultural

Pae'Aina: Moku O Keawe, Moku O Piilani, Moku O Kanaloa, Nana'i Kaula, Moloka'i Pule O'o, Moku O Kakuhihewa, Manokalanipo, Ka'Aina O Kawelonakala

resources. AMAC is the legal entity through Act 288, SLH 2012. The selection of the Po’o of each island is done through the ancient traditional ahupua’a process. The Po’o selects the Luna Alaka’i, or in western terms, the Executive Director who answers to the people, and purposely is not, under the jurisdiction of a state entity. The Aha Moku was authored by 187 Kupuna and expert native Hawaiian natural and cultural practitioners of the eight main Hawaiian Islands (see attached).

Each island is unique with their own natural and cultural resources. The Aha Moku system is the Hawaiian process of sustainability that was brought forward from the 9th century through ancient chants and mo’olelo, and translated by our last founder, Frank Kawaikapuokalani Hewett (Kawaikapu). Kawaikapu is our Kahu and guide.

Further, the Aha Moku Act, originally called the Aha Kiolo Act was supported by, and introduced to the legislature in 2006 by the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, a confederation of 67 native Hawaiian civic clubs nationwide. The Hawaii State Legislature solidified Aha Moku through the Aha Moku Act 288, SLH 2012, by creating an implementation purpose and process.

The whole purpose of the Aha Moku and AMAC is to protect and perpetuate the generational knowledge of the natural and cultural practices held by the lineal families of each ahupua’a and moku on each island. This knowledge is handed down from Kupuna to each generation. It is protected by the families, and normally not shared publicly. However, ‘ohana knowledge can be shared with government with the permission of these Kupuna and families. This sharing would be lost if the families, through AMAC become part of the state jurisdiction.

One insolent part of this attempt, through HB2047 is to put the executive director (Luna Alaka’i) under the jurisdiction of the Board of Land and Natural Resources (Land Board) through its Chair. The Luna Alaka’i is selected and hired by the AMAC and has no decision-making power in any issue. This is important because the AMAC works with the people, in issues of leases and revocable permits that come before the BLNR. When these issues come forward, the Luna Alaka’i connects the Po’o and Moku Representative of each island with the government department or division, the Counties and private entities who are mandated by the Hawaii Supreme Court Law (Ka Pa’akai O Ka’Aina vs Land Use Commission NO. 21124 (CIV.NO. 96-189K)) to complete the Ka Pa’akai Analysis, the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law.

Ka Pa’akai Analysis

1. Identify the cultural, historical, and natural resources in which traditional and customary Native Hawaiian practices or rights are exercised in the project are, which includes area impacted by changes to the flow of water or changes to the flood inundation area;
2. Assess the extent to which those resources, including traditional and customary Native Hawaiian rights, will be affected or impaired by the proposed project;
3. What feasible action, if any, could be taken to reasonably minimize the impacts to Native Hawaiian practices and rights.

The Hawaii State Aha Moku is very successful because it protects the natural and cultural resources of site-specific ahupua’a and protects and perpetuates the unique knowledge of each place by bringing those peoples voices forward in the decision-making process of the state. Aha Moku also works with the Public Trust.

Mahalo Ke Akua! Our God that watches over all of us.



Ka Moku'aina 'O Hawai'i Aha Moku O Pae'Aina

State of Hawai'i Aha Moku

P. O. Box 621

Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

Respectfully and Humbly Yours,

Kawaikapuokalani Hewett, Kahu
Hawaii State Aha Moku
Kawaikapuokalanihewett@gmail.com

Leialoha (Rocky) Kaluhiwa, Chair
Hawaii State Aha Moku
Aha Moku Advisory Committee
Po'o, Kakuhihewa,
rockykaluhiwa1122@gmail.com

Charles Young, Po'o, Moku O Keawe
Aha Moku Advisory Committee
Youngc042@hawaii.rr.com

Kalei Luuwai, Po'o, Moku O Pi'ilani
Aha Moku Advisory Committee
rluuwai@gmail.com

Manuel Kuloloio, Po'o, Moku O Kanaloa
Aha Moku Advisory Committee
Manuel.kuloloio@gmail.com

Walter Rawlins, Po'o, Moloka'i Pule O'o
Aha Moku Advisory Committee
walterkrawlins45@gmail.com

Winifred Basques, Po'o, Nana'i Kaula
Aha Moku Advisory Committee
winnie@aloha.net

Lewellyn Kaohelaui'I, Po'o, Manokalanipo
Aha Moku Advisory Committee
terrihayes@gmail.com

Keith Robinson, Po'o, Ka Aina O Kawelonakala
Aha Moku Advisory Committee
niihauisland@hawaiian.net

Leimana DaMate, Luna Alaka'i
Hawaii State Aha Moku
Leimana.k.damate@hawaii.gov

*Pae'Aina: Moku O Keawe, Moku O Piilani, Moku O Kanaloa, Nana'i Kaula, Moloka'i Pule O'o, Moku O Kakuhihewa,
Manokalanipo, Ka'Aina O Kawelonakala*

HB-2047

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 7:51:01 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/12/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keith Robinson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Keith Robinson, the Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) representative for Niihau Island.

I oppose HB2047. The Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) was never intended to function as any legislative or administrative part of the Hawaii State Government.

Instead, it's sole intended mission was (1) to listen to the concerns of the Native Hawaiians living in every part of Hawaii and then (2) to submit an annual report of those concerns to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Chairperson of the DLNR.

I do not know if that mission has ever been carried out. I assume it has, although I know nothing about that activity.

But what I DO know, is that the AMAC was always supposed to be a free and independent information-gathering service, keeping the state government informed about the needs and opinions of Hawaii's native Hawaiian communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Robinson

HB-2047

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 11:13:33 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/12/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Keali‘i Pang, and I am a member of the Hawaiian Civic Club movement. I am writing today to express my strong support for HB 2047, which seeks to strengthen the ‘Aha Moku Advisory Committee through improved accountability, transparency, and administrative structure.

A Legacy of Vision and Purpose

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs has long held a vision for a system that bridges the gap between traditional Hawaiian ecological knowledge and modern resource management. The ‘Aha Moku system is the realization of that vision—a framework rooted in the ancestral wisdom of our *kupuna* that ensures our *‘āina* and *wai* are managed according to the specific needs of each *moku*.

For over two decades, we have supported the evolution of this work. We recognize that for indigenous management to be truly effective within a state government framework, it must be supported by a structure that is both resilient and transparent.

Why HB 2047 is Necessary

As we move forward, it is vital that the Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) operates at its highest potential. I support the provisions in this bill for the following reasons:

- **Clarified Leadership:** Establishing clear procedures for the recruitment and evaluation of the Executive Director ensures that the position is held by individuals with the deep cultural knowledge and administrative expertise required to navigate both worlds.
- **Operational Excellence:** By strengthening reporting requirements and ensuring compliance with open meeting laws, this bill protects the integrity of the *aha* process. Transparency does not hinder our traditions; rather, it honors the community by ensuring their voices are documented and heard.
- **Institutional Stability:** Aligning the AMAC’s administrative oversight with the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources provides the necessary structural support to ensure the committee’s recommendations are integrated effectively into state policy.

Conclusion

The Aha Moku system is a vital link to our past and a necessary tool for our future. To ensure this system thrives for the next twenty years and beyond, we must provide it with the legislative clarity found in HB 2047. This bill does not change the *mission* of the ‘Aha Moku; it strengthens the *vessel* so that the mission can be successfully carried out.

I respectfully urge your committee to PASS HB 2047.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important matter.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Keali‘i Pang, Ph.D. Member, Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu



Ko'olau Foundation

P. O. Box 4749 / 46-005 Kawa St., #205
Kane'ohe, HI 96744

February 10, 2026

To: Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair
& Members, Water & Land Committee

From: Mahealani Cypher, President
Ko'olau Foundation

Re: H.B. 2047 – Relating to the Aha Moku Advisory Committee - OPPOSE

Aloha Chair Hashem and Committee Members:

The Ko'olau Foundation strongly opposes House Bill 2047 which eliminates the autonomous nature of the Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) by shifting the power to appoint its executive director away from members of the committee to the director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

This is deeply troubling to us as a Native Hawaiian-focused organization. The Aha Moku was established primarily to provide the State of Hawai'i with guidance on DLNR's decisions regarding 'aina and kai under its jurisdiction, to provide such guidance with a foundation in traditional Hawaiian cultural practices and knowledge. As such, the AMAC was established to be semi-autonomous, free from the control of political forces which can deflect away from the purpose of AMAC, which was formed to help the State government avoid decisions which could create conflicts and have adverse effects upon Hawaiian cultural places, practices and people.

The Ko'olau Foundation is dedicated to the preservation of Hawaiian historic places, cultural practices and heritage. This bill actually threatens the success of AMAC, which was established by this Legislature and strongly supported by the largest Hawaiian organization – the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, .

We urge your rejection of this bill and halt its movement forward. Please defer.

Mahalo for your consideration of our mana'o.

Me ke aloha pumehana,

Handwritten signature of Mahealani Cypher.

MAHEALANI CYPHER

President

malamapono744@aol.com

Ph. (808) 226-4195



TESTIMONY
IN SUPPORT TO HOUSE BILL 2047
RELATING TO THE AHA MOKU ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

HOUSE COMMITTEE on WATER AND LAND
Hawai'i State Capitol

February 12, 2026

9:00 a.m.

Room 411

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of House Committee on Water and Land,

Ho'āla Kealakekua Nui, Inc. (HKN) is in **SUPPORT for HB2047**, which amends the process for the hiring of the Executive Director of the Aha Moku Advisory Committee. Specifies that the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources is responsible for the appointment, oversight, and administrative authority over the Executive Director. Requires any formal position, recommendation, or advisory action of the Aha Moku Advisory Committee to be adopted at a duly noticed public meeting at which a quorum is present. Amends the reporting requirements of the Aha Moku Advisory Committee.

HKN is a collaborating partner for the Hawai'i Island Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC), organizing place-based generational Native Hawaiian traditional ecological knowledge holders, customary, and religious practitioners for the benefit of advising the Board of Land and Natural Resources. The foundation to this bill is to reaffirm the Chair's (State's) obligation to Native Hawaiians as stated in the Hawai'i's Admission Act of 1959¹. This bill outlines provisions reaffirming a trust relationship requiring the state to manage ceded and submerged lands for the benefit of Native Hawaiians, along with public education, home ownership, and public improvements.

This measure further implies accountability and transparency to include consistent annual reporting and compliance with open meeting laws. HKN is in strong support for the amendments outlined in this measure, and support the State's recognition to receive, analyze, and process Native Hawaiian voices appropriately.

Mahalo for hearing this measure and urge this committee to pass HB2047 and recommend the referral to be heard in the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs.

Mahalo Nui,

Shane Akoni Palacat-Nelsen, Executive Director

¹ Act of March 18, 1959, Pub. L. No. 86-3, 73 Stat. 4, §5(f), 86th Cong., 1st Sess. (1959); transferred management of over 1.2 million acres of former territorial "ceded and submerged lands" to the State of Hawai'i, establishing a public trust that mandated these lands be used for five purposes, specifically including the "betterment of the conditions of Native Hawaiians".



KO`OLAUPOKO HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB

February 10, 2026

TO: Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair
& Members, Water & Land Committee

FROM: Charles Naumu & Members
Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club

RE: H.B. 2047 – Relating to the Aha Moku Advisory Committee - OPPOSE

Aloha Mai Kakou:

The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club expresses its strong opposition to House Bill 2047, which removes the power of the Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) members to appoint its own executive director and transfers this authority to the director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, at its national convention in 2007, overwhelmingly supported adoption of a resolution calling for the establishment of the Aha Moku system to advise the State government on decisions that could affect Hawaiian people, places and culture.

As one of the strongest advocates for this system, the Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club urges all of you to vote against this bill and restore your faith in and support for the current AMAC process which empowers the committee members cultural practitioners to select their own executive director.

We urge you to vote against this bill.

Mahalo.

The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club was established in 1937 and is a not-for-profit community organization dedicated to preserving and perpetuating the history, heritage and culture of Native Hawaiians. One of the largest of the Hawaiian Civic Clubs, its membership is open to people of Hawaiian ancestry and those who are "Hawaiian at heart".

P. O. Box 664 * Kaneohe, HI 96744 * Ph. (808) 235-8111 * www.koolaupoko-hcc.org



Date of Hearing: 12 February, 2026

To: Chair Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair Dee Morikawa and the House Committee on Water & Land

Subject: **HB2047**, Relating to the Aha Moku Advisory Committee

Aloha,

Hawai'i Food+ Policy **supports HB2047** and is interested in the community response to this bill. We look forward to listening to committee deliberations as well as reviewing the testimony submitted by other state departments, organizations, and community members.

Currently, under HRS §171-4.5, the Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) is composed of eight members appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate from a list of nominations. Each member is from a different island. The committee members are then responsible for selecting the committee chairperson from among the members. This committee may advise the chairperson of the board of land and natural resources (BLNR).

The AMAC holds responsibilities regarding the integration and identification of indigenous resource management, fostering the use and understanding of these practices, sustaining our island's resources, providing and fostering education and awareness around these practices, and developing an administrative structure.

As-is, the AMAC may hire an executive director (ED), however, HB2047 would amend bill language to allow the chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources as responsible for appointment, oversight, and administrative authority over the ED of the AMAC. This amendment transfers the power of the council in appointing their own director to the chairperson of the BLNR. We provide comments on this in order to raise the question as to whether or not this amendment impedes/infringes upon the AMAC's ability to self-govern in the process of advising the chairperson of the BLNR and what the impact in this transfer of power implies.

Beyond the transfer of power in selecting the ED, we do support the explicit and public eligibility requirements with current minimum qualifications not appearing to be listed for the position and we also do support the consideration of the current members suggestions – this consideration potentially alleviating concerns about the transference of power as the AMAC is still able to self-appoint their committee chairperson. We are also in support of the explicit term limits with ability to reinstate the incumbent ED; clauses justifying for-cause removal of the ED; and, the addition of annual reviews.

Given the above, we support HB2047 and look forward to committee deliberations.

Mahalo,
Brandon Kinard & the Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2026, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

Kāloakūlua, Kaulua – 11th, Pepeeuali 2026

SUBJECT: Testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **HB2047 - Relating to the ‘Aha Moku Advisory Committee**

Aloha Members of the Committee on Water and Land,

My name is Kēhau Springer, and I am a kanaka ‘ōiwi practitioner and researcher residing in Kea‘au, Moku o Keawe. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **HB2047**, which seeks to amend the structure and oversight of the ‘Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) to enhance its effectiveness and accountability.

History and Origins of ‘Aha Moku:

The ‘Aha Moku is not a modern invention. It reflects a restoration of traditional place-based governance that organized stewardship through moku and ahupua‘a systems, grounded in ‘ike kūpuna and reciprocal relationships between people and ‘āina.

In the modern era, this work was first advanced through the ‘Aha Kiole Advisory Committee (Act 211, 2007), which gathered community knowledge and documented best practices for cultural resource management. That foundation led to the formal establishment of the ‘Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) under Act 288 (2012), creating a state-recognized pathway to integrate Indigenous resource management with contemporary governance.

The Legislature itself recognized that the ‘Aha Moku was created to bring together traditional Hawaiian knowledge and modern natural resource management practice based on the earlier work of the ‘Aha Kiole work.

Importance of ‘Aha Moku Today:

The ‘Aha Moku system remains critically important because it provides a mechanism to:

- Restore ecosystem balance through ‘ike based observations and management.
- Support intergenerational ‘ike transfer and community-based stewardship.
- Strengthens mālama and aloha ‘āina grounded in pono.
- Help agencies better understand place-specific cultural and ecological relationships.

Healthy ecosystems and healthy communities are inseparable. When ‘āina and kai are cared for, culturally grounded relationships, food systems, coastal resilience, and stewardship are strengthened.

Acknowledging Recent Challenges and Discourse:

In recent years, there has been increasing discussion among island councils, networks, practitioners, and community members about the need for stronger structural support, clearer accountability and consistent reporting from the AMAC. The Legislature itself notes that statutory requirements — including reporting and open meeting compliance have not always been consistently fulfilled.

This does not diminish the importance of the ‘Aha Moku system. Rather, it highlights why strengthening the structure is necessary to ensure the original intent — community-informed stewardship and ‘ike based governance — can be fully realized.

Why HB2047 is Important:

HB2047 strengthens the system by:

1. Establishing Clear Executive Director Accountability
 - Clarifies appointment and oversight authority
 - Establishes performance review processes
 - Sets minimum qualifications rooted in community and cultural competency
2. Strengthens Transparency
 - Reinforces reporting requirements
 - Requires formal actions to occur in properly noticed public meetings
3. Supports Program Integrity
 - Ensures alignment with natural resource management priorities
 - Strengthens trust between communities, the AMAC and state agencies.

These updates help ensure the 'Aha Moku system can function effectively while maintaining fidelity to its cultural foundations.

Need for Continued Support:

The 'Aha Moku system has historically operated with limited structural and administrative support. If the State truly values Indigenous knowledge integration then accountability must be paired with: stable funding pathways; administrative infrastructure; capacity support for island-level councils; and clear agency integration pathways. Accountability and support must move together.

Closing:

The 'Aha Moku system embodies a valuable fusion of traditional knowledge and contemporary governance. By passing HB2047, the Legislature will strengthen this system, ensuring it continues to serve as an effective bridge between Indigenous practices and state resource management.

Mahalo nui loa to this committee for your consideration and for your commitment to Hawai'i.

Na'u



na Shauna Kēhaunani Springer
Kea'au, Moku o Keawe, Hawai'i
Founder & Executive Director, Ka Pa'akai Consulting
Member of Nā Kai 'Ewalu
PhD Candidate, Te Whare Wānaga o Waikato (The University of Waikato)

HB-2047

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 3:21:09 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/12/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Young	CARES	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Support.

Aloha to the House Committee on Judiciary/Hawaiian Affairs and the Committee on Water and Land, and to Chairs Tarnas and Hasham, and Vice Chairs Poepoe and Dee

We are in strong and enthusiastic support for HB 2047 Relating to the Aha Moku Advisory Committee. We find that this bill provides transparency and structure to an organization that is increasingly vital to the State of Hawai'i's management of the public lands to which it is entrusted. HB 2047 will enable the Aha Moku to bring expertise and experience from people who actually manage our 'āina, and who carry with them the cultural practices and knowledge of kūpuna who thrived on our lands for millenia.

The promise of this agency has not been realized these past few years and that is due, we believe, to a lack of oversight and regulation. The current advisory committee does not actually represent the appropriate knowledge and skills of the Kānaka Maoli and is thus ineffective in guiding the state to make better use of our 'āina. This bill will not only require the state exercise consistent review, but requires that the Executive Director will have credibility with Native Hawaiian communities, cultural practitioners, and resource managers.

That credibility is crucial for a rising number of people who are pressing for access to our public lands to mālama, to learn, and to make the 'āina productive again. This trend is also crucial if Hawai'i is to provide economic alternatives to tourism and military spending and provide some relief from the increasing cost of living in Hawai'i.

We urge your committees to pass this legislation forward

Rediscovering Hawai'i's Soul, an initiative of the Hawai'i Eexecutive Collaborative

Governor John Waihe'e, Kona, O'ahu

Corbett Kalama, Ko'olaupoko, O'ahu

Jonathan K Osorio, Waialua, O'ahu

Kamana'opono Crabbe, Ewa, O'ahu

Walter Ritte, Kona, Molokai

Duane Kurisu, Kona O'ahu

John de Fries, Waialua, O'ahu

Lynelle Marble, Ko'olaupoko, O'ahu

HB-2047

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 7:46:22 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/12/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry Support

2047 HB RELATING TO THE AHA MOKU ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HB-2047

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 10:31:49 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/12/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jenny Yagodich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support for HB2047

Rather than dissolving Aha Moku because it is not functioning as intended, HB2047 takes the responsible approach of fixing what is not working so the system can succeed. The bill clarifies the role and oversight of the executive director and improves basic governance through clear leadership, transparency, and consistent procedures. This will help ensure Aha Moku can do the work it was created to do: advise DLNR using ‘ike kupuna and moku-based perspectives that support ecosystem health and resilience, with voices from every island’s ahupua‘a represented.

Mahalo

HB-2047

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 11:00:16 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/12/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Uilani Naipo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure. It makes clear who has oversight authority over the Executive Director, the hiring requirements and reporting duties which will creates more transparency.

HB-2047

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 4:14:52 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/12/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Nakachi	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Support

HB-2047

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 7:56:05 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/12/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keomailani Hanapi Hirata	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha 'aina kakou, my name is Keomailani Hanapi Hirata, I am a Kupa'aina of Molokai and I am sharing testimony in stornng SUPPORT of HB2047, specifically for the island of Molokai.

I humbly submit this testimony from a shared perspective of our Molokai 'aina kūpuna, our fishermen, our farmers, and our families who actively live the `Aha Moku system every day within our ahupua`a. This bill is a healthy step towards tightening the relationship between our grassroots, place-based knowledge holders and the State of Hawai`i, specifically the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

For too long, the voices from our moku and our ahupua`a, the very voices the `Aha Moku Advisory Committee was created to uplift, have felt disconnected from the bureaucratic processes that oversee lands and waters in Hawaii. HB2047 helps to address this by creating a structure of clarity, legitimacy, and respect for our mana`o.

Under the current vague structure, the Executive Director's loyalty and reporting lines are unclear, creating a filter that can dilute or misrepresent the committee's grassroots mana`o. By making the BLNR Chair directly responsible for appointing and overseeing the Executive Director, this bill creates a clear, unbroken line from our community discussions to the highest decision-maker at DLNR.

It ensures that the person hired to facilitate our work is explicitly accountable to the leadership of the agency that needs to hear us. It means our shared mana`o, raised with our sea & land, won't get lost in mid-level bureaucracy. It signals that the State takes our advisory role seriously enough to have its top official directly linked to it.

The heart of the `Aha Moku system is, "Pono" and inclusive deliberation. The requirement that formal positions must be adopted at a duly noticed, public meeting with a quorum protects the integrity of our process. It prevents any single individual or small group from claiming to speak for the entire Committee without the proper, transparent consensus of the representatives from the moku. When we, the community members, attend these meetings or read the minutes, we will know that the positions sent to DLNR truly reflect the hard-fought, collective wisdom of our recognized advisors. This builds trust within our communities and gives legitimate weight to our recommendations. It honors the Hawaiian tradition of open council.

Focused Reporting Amplifies Our Impact. An annual report that simply lists meetings held is an empty exercise. We want our work to lead to action. By amending the reporting requirements to focus on key advisory positions and their outcomes, the bill ensures that DLNR and the Legislature must directly engage with the substance of what we are saying. It moves us from being a “check-box” committee to being a source of critical, place-based guidance. When a recommendation from the Kona Moku or Ko‘olau Loa is documented as leading to a change in policy and/or stewardship, it validates generations of knowledge and shows our children that their kulāiwi wisdom has power in shaping the future.

HB2047 is a pono step forward. It is about ensuring that the humble, daily Loea and rising practitioners; the ones who read the rain, who know the fish spawning cycles, who care for the makai to mauka systems, have a clear, respected, and effective channel to the state. This bill strengthens the bridge between the wisdom of our Ahupua‘a and the stewardship role of DLNR.

By passing HB2047, you are not just adjusting administrative procedures; you are affirming that the foundational Hawaiian governance system of the moku has a rightful, dignified, and powerful place in the stewardship of Hawai‘i today.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify and for your commitment to a better, more integrated future for our ‘āina.

Keomailani Hanapi Hirata, Kupa'aina, East Molokai

HB-2047

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 9:28:43 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/12/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Walter Ritte	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha I am in strong support of this bill. The Aha Moku has potential to provide strong guidance and positive impacts through the ability of Hawaiian inputs that can guide the State's kulia to Aloha Aina. The existing laws and staffing needs to be carefully examined with inputs from the community to increase the participation and benefits of having Hawaiian mana'o in the management of our natural resources. This bill will increase the output and positive results that is being sought by the State of Hawaii through DLNR.