

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA  
P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of  
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
Acting Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
WATER & LAND**

**Tuesday, February 17, 2026  
9:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 411**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 2616  
RELATING TO THE BANYAN DRIVE-MAKAOKŪ COMMUNITY DISTRICT**

House Bill 2616 proposes to establish the Banyan Dive-Makaokū Community Development District and establish a special fund to provide the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) with the consistent resources necessary to improve and safeguard the area. It also specifies the powers and duties HCDA as it relates to the new development district and amends the composition of HCDA to include representatives of the new development district and appropriates funds. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates and supports this measure.**

The Department recognizes that the Banyan Drive area, historically known as Makaokū, is an area of significant cultural and historical importance and is in a strategic area that would make it a primary center for community activities and tourism that supports the State's cultural identity and economy. Further, the Department acknowledges the frustration over the current state of the area and recognizes the need for and importance of revitalizing and redeveloping the area. The Department notes that it is actively working with HCDA on a master plan for the proposed development district.

As a majority of the lands within the proposed development district are owned by the State, the Department supports this measure due to its potential to address significant costs associated with the redevelopment of the area and appreciates that this measure incorporates comments we provided on a similar measure last session.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

## **Cultural Specialist, Hawai'i Community Development Authority Board**

Before the House Committee on Water and Land

In consideration of **H.B. 2616 – Relating to the Banyan Drive–Makaokū Community**

Chairperson Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committee:

Aloha and mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on H.B. 2616. I serve as the Cultural Specialist on the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) Board, and I offer this testimony from the perspective of cultural stewardship, community engagement, and deep respect for place.

HCDA has begun a community-driven planning process for the Waiākea Peninsula. From a cultural standpoint, the success of this district will depend not only on governance, but on how well we listen to community, honor the history of the place, and ensure that cultural knowledge guides decisions from the beginning and throughout implementation.

### **Place Name**

I support HCDA's recommendation to use the name **Waiākea**. Names carry meaning, memory, and identity. Using a geographic Hawaiian place name helps strengthen connection to 'āina and reinforces a sense of place. At the same time, names such as Makaokū and Banyan Drive hold important layers of history. Their stories should be researched and shared through a cultural landscape or historic preservation process developed with community and cultural practitioners.

### **Organizational Structure**

Aligning this district within HCDA's existing structure will help ensure consistency in community engagement and cultural review. When cultural considerations are built into established processes, they are more likely to guide decisions early, rather than being addressed later after plans are already formed.

### **Cultural Representation**

I understand and appreciate the intent behind proposing a seat for a lineal descendant. However, I support HCDA's recommendation to remove this requirement. Cultural knowledge and responsibility are shared and collective. Meaningful cultural guidance comes through ongoing engagement with cultural practitioners, lineal families, and community members, rather than relying on a single designated seat. As the district moves forward, cultural advisory or design review processes can provide broader and more appropriate input.

### **District Boundaries**

Clarifying the district boundaries to include the full width of rights-of-way will support comprehensive planning and help ensure continuity in stewardship and design across the district.

### **Closing**

Ultimately, this district is about more than development. It is about relationship—relationship to place, to history, and to community. When planning is grounded in 'ike, community voice, and respect for 'āina, the outcomes are stronger and more enduring.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share this perspective and for your thoughtful consideration.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,

**Miki'ala M. Lidstone**

Cultural Specialist, HCDA Board



**HAWAII COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

547 Queen Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Telephone: (808) 594-0300 Fax: (808) 587-0299  
Web site: <http://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda/>

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR

STERLING HIGA  
CHAIRPERSON

CRAIG K. NAKAMOTO  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Statement of  
**CRAIG K. NAKAMOTO**  
**Executive Director**  
Hawai'i Community Development Authority  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND**

Tuesday, February 17, 2026  
9:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 411 & Videoconference

In consideration of  
**HB 2616**  
**RELATING TO THE BANYAN DRIVE-MAKAOKŪ COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
DISTRICT.**

Chairperson Hashem, Vice Chairperson Morikawa, and members of the Committee: The Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) respectfully offers **comments on H.B. 2616** ("Bill"). Last year, HCDA commenced a multi-year effort to develop a community-driven master plan for the Waiākea Peninsula in Hilo, Hawai'i. This reflects the Legislature's intent to initiate plans for the purpose of redeveloping the State lands in the Waiākea Peninsula as enabled by an appropriation in Act 230, Session Laws of Hawai'i, 2024. HCDA is invested in this planning process, especially in anticipation of a bill passing the legislature this session that will establish the district within the HCDA. HCDA's specific comments, for the committee's consideration, are as follows:

1. Adopt a simplified name for the proposed community development district by replacing all references to "Banyan Drive-Makaokū" with "Waiākea." HCDA understands the importance of nā inoa, or place names, in elevating history, promoting cultural awareness, and educating communities. HCDA's other community development districts have geographic place names in 'Olelo Hawai'i, including Kaka'ako, Kalaeloa, He'eia, and Pūlehunui. The name of this district should reflect its geographic location and also strengthen a sense of place in the community. HCDA also

understands that some names may not always be culturally appropriate or desirable. The history of important place names within the district, such as Makaokū or Banyan Drive, should be thoroughly studied and vetted through research and community processes. Appropriate methods to recognize the history and relative importance of these names can be addressed in a cultural landscape or historic preservation plan, which should be developed with input from the community, the State Historic Preservation Division, and other stakeholders as the district is revitalized.

2. Align the proposed district to be consistent with the organizational structure of HCDA's other districts by deleting Page 4, Lines 3 to 12. In HCDA's existing community development districts, the composition and jurisdiction of the authority members are established as a subset of the general authority board in §206E-3, HRS. Each community development district is not established as a separate agency, but the voting membership of each community development district is limited to a subset of the authority that includes the designated resident and small business representatives of that community.

In this Bill, H.B. 2616, the proposed community development district is established in Section 2 on Page 3, lines 12 to 14. The composition and jurisdiction of the authority members is established in Section 3 on Page 9, line 8 to Page 20, line 18, which amends §206E-3, HRS.

As such, the language on Page 4, Lines 3 to 7, which establishes a separate Banyan Drive-Makokū redevelopment agency, appears to conflict with these other provisions.

It is unclear if the establishment of this new district as a separate agency was intentional, but it would be more efficient for HCDA to manage the new district in the same manner as the other districts.

3. Replace references to the "chairperson of the Banyan Drive-Makaokū redevelopment agency" with "the chairperson of the Banyan Drive Hawai'i Redevelopment Agency, County of Hawai'i or designee." The Banyan Drive Hawai'i Redevelopment Agency (BDHRA) was created in 2016 by the County of Hawai'i pursuant to the Urban Renewal Law, §53, HRS, to redevelop the Banyan Drive

Peninsula. HCDA suggests that the BDHRA chairperson or designee should have an ex-officio position on the Authority and be eligible to vote on matters affecting this district. Relevant references that need to be changed include:

- Page 9, lines 17-18;
- Page 12, lines 3-4;
- Page 18, lines 14-15; and
- Page 19, lines 10-11.

4. Modify the composition of the Authority, Page 18, Line 18. The HCDA is undergoing a master planning process for the Waiākea Peninsula that will result in a community master plan. The community master plan will shape the future of the area. We suggest that instead of having a lineal descendent on the authority, that the lineal descendants have a place on the community advisory council that we are forming for the master planning effort. Having lineal descendants on the community advisory council will be more impactful on the future of the Waiākea Peninsula than if they were serving on the authority. In addition, HCDA's board already includes a cultural specialist, who provides guidance to the Authority.

Should the district be established, the intent of HCDA also suggests that the development permit review processes could allow for the establishment of design review advisory boards to provide for greater input into cultural considerations as specific projects are developed and permitted.

5. Clarify the district boundaries by amending the last sentence in Page 3, Lines 14-15 to state "The district shall include all lands makai of the following areas, inclusive of the entire width of any rights-of-way forming the boundary." The district should be inclusive of the streets which are intended to form the boundaries of the district.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



**TESTIMONY WITH COMMENTS ON HOUSE BILL**

**2616**

**RELATING TO THE BANYAN DRIVE-MAKAOKŪ  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

Ke Kōmike Hale o ka Wai a me ka 'Āina  
(House Committee on Water & Land)

Ke Kapitala 'o Hawai'i  
(Hawai'i State Capitol)

Pepeluali 17, 2026

9:00AM

Lumi 411

Aloha e Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committee on Water & Land:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) provides **COMMENTS** on HB2616, which will create a new Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District (District) within the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA), and establish a special fund "to improve and safeguard the cultural, economic, and social value of this vital area." The bill also establishes the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Redevelopment Agency (Agency) that will have authority to engage in "planning, design, and construction activities within and outside the district." OHA respectfully recommends amendments: (1) adding OHA as a member of the HCDA with jurisdiction over the District and Agency; and (2) designating OHA to nominate individuals for the cultural specialist and lineal descendant seats for the District.

OHA's Constitutional and Statutory Mandates

There are several constitutional and statutory provisions that warrant OHA's inclusion in the new District, and that support OHA having a role in the nomination of the District's cultural specialist and lineal descendant authority members.

First, to carry out the requirements of the Hawai'i Admission Act, Art. XII Sec. 4 of the Hawai'i State Constitution makes clear that the public land trust must be administered

for the betterment of the conditions of native Hawaiians and for the general public. Meanwhile, under Art. XII Secs. 5 and 6, OHA was “created and charged with managing proceeds derived from the [public land trust],”<sup>1</sup> and to otherwise formulate policy relating to native Hawaiian and Hawaiian affairs. Accordingly, OHA has a constitutional interest in ensuring that the state upholds its fiduciary obligations under the public land trust, including by acting with prudence and due diligence in making its trust corpus productive and maximizing its benefits for Native Hawaiian beneficiaries.

Insofar as the new District is made up of public land trust lands, OHA is willing and able to assist the HCDA in fulfilling the state’s fiduciary obligations, by serving as a member of the HCDA with jurisdiction over the District.<sup>2</sup>

Second, the bulk of the land managed held by the state in the public land trust, including land in the District, is government or crown land that was unlawfully seized in 1893 and then “ceded” by the Republic of Hawai’i to the United States in 1898, “without the consent of or compensation to the Native Hawaiian people of Hawaii or their sovereign government[.]”<sup>3</sup> Given that Native Hawaiians have never relinquished their claims to this “ceded” land corpus, and that “ceded” land may eventually serve as a land base for a Native Hawaiian self-governing entity, OHA has long sought to ensure that the state does not alienate “ceded” land, and that it also maintains these lands to ensure the corpus’ viability and availability for the future lāhui, consistent with its constitutional and moral obligations.<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly, because much of the new District consists of “ceded” lands, providing OHA with a seat on the HCDA with jurisdiction over the District will help ensure that Native Hawaiian claims and interests are protected and that the environmental, cultural,

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<sup>1</sup> Office of Hawaiian Affairs v. State of Hawai’i, 96 Hawai’i at 401, 31 P.3d at 914.

<sup>2</sup> See also HRS § 10-1 (b) (“It shall be the duty and responsibility of all state departments and instrumentalities of state government providing services and programs which affect native Hawaiians and Hawaiians to actively work toward the goals of this chapter and to cooperate with and assist wherever possible the office of Hawaiian affairs.”), 10-3 (OHA’s statutory duties include “[a]ssessing the policies and practices of other agencies impacting on native Hawaiians and Hawaiians, and conducting advocacy efforts for native Hawaiians and Hawaiians.”).

<sup>3</sup> P.L. 103-150 (1993).

<sup>4</sup> Haw. Const. Art. XI Sec. 1; Haw Const. Art. XII Sec. 4; Ching v. Case, 145 Hawai’i 148 (2008)

economic, and other values of these and adjoining “ceded” lands receive appropriate consideration.

Finally, OHA has a statutory duty to “[a]ssess the policies and practices of other agencies impacting on native Hawaiians and Hawaiians, and conducting advocacy efforts for native Hawaiians and Hawaiians.”<sup>5</sup> This includes maintaining physical, spiritual, and cultural connections to ‘āina, which does not simply translate to “land,” but reflects a deeper familial relationship between people and the living systems that surround us—as embodied in the Hawaiian origin story connecting the birth of humans with kalo (taro). Accordingly, OHA has continuously endeavored to advance its beneficiaries’ interests in maintaining the integrity of and Hawaiian connections to ‘āina and to uplift the cultural significance of wahi pana throughout our islands.

As reflected in the ‘ōlelo noeau, “Ua hilo ‘ia kea ho a ke aloha”<sup>6</sup> (“Braided with the cords of love), the ‘āina of Hilo carries a beloved history and cultural significance that should be thoughtfully uplifted in any redevelopment of the District. The bill itself recognizes the District as an “area of significant cultural and historical importance” and appropriately seeks to “promote cultural activities” and preserve and protect “Hawaiian archaeological, historic, and cultural sites.” Such recognition and guidance are particularly salient when viewed alongside the more recent experiences of nearby Hawaiian homestead communities, which have borne disproportionate environmental and social impacts over time. The construction of the Hilo airport, which divided long-standing community connections, and the subsequent industrialization of surrounding areas continue to shape lived experiences today. A redevelopment approach that acknowledges this history offers an opportunity not only to honor place, but also to move forward in a way that is more balanced, restorative, and responsive to community well-being.

While the inclusion of a cultural specialist and Makaokū lineal descendant on the HCDA is critical to ensuring the cultural integrity vision of this bill, OHA believes that these provisions can be strengthened by allowing OHA to assist in nominating these individuals. OHA brings demonstrated expertise in recruitment, evaluation, and nomination of candidates to state board and commissions through its existing kuleana to

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<sup>5</sup> HRS § 10-3.

<sup>6</sup> Historic Hawai‘i Foundation Story Map, available at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b378b80d74054f51816d820581905ba4> (December 10, 2021).

nominate candidates for the Island Burial Councils.<sup>7</sup> Notably, because the OHA Board of Trustees is governed by HRS chapter 92, Hawai'i's Sunshine Law, all candidates nominated by OHA must be confirmed at a publicly noticed meeting - ensuring transparency and meaningful opportunities for community input.

Accordingly, should the Committee choose to advance this measure, OHA recommends including the following amendments to 1) allow OHA to serve as a member of the HCDA with jurisdiction over the District and 2) allow OHA to nominate to the Governor a list of candidates for the cultural specialist and lineal descendant members of the HCDA overseeing the District.

To accomplish the proposed amendments OHA respectfully recommends:

(1) Amending the language beginning at page 11 line 13 to read as follows:

"All members except the director of finance; director of transportation; county directors of planning or planning and permitting; director of business, economic development, and tourism; chairperson of the board of land and natural resources; the two experts on transit-oriented developed appointed by the president of the senate and speaker of the house of representatives, respectively; the chairpersons of the respective senate and house of representatives standing committees having jurisdiction over transportation; the chairpersons of the respective senate and house of representatives standing committees having jurisdiction over housing; or where relevant, their respective designees; ~~and~~ the chairperson of the Banyan

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<sup>7</sup> See HRS § 6E-43.5.

Drive-Makaokū redevelopment agency; ~~[-]~~ administrator of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; and the cultural specialists and lineal descendant member, shall be appointed by the governor pursuant to section 26-34.”

(2) Amending the language beginning on page 12, line 11, to read as follows:

“The president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives shall each submit a list of six nominees for each district to the governor to fill the two district representative position for each community development district~~[-]~~, with the exception of the cultural specialist and lineal descendant members. For the cultural specialist and lineal descendant members, the governor shall appoint these members following consultation with the office of Hawaiian affairs, and shall consider any recommendations submitted by the office of Hawaiian affairs.”

(3) Amending the language starting at page 18 line 20 to read:

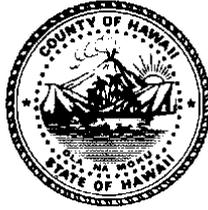
Makaokū community development district; and

“(K) The chairperson of the office of Hawaiian affairs, or the chairperson’s designee.”

For the reasons stated above, OHA respectfully provides these comments and urges this committee to incorporate our recommended amendments if it chooses to move forward with HB2616. Please note this testimony represents a recommendation by OHA leadership that is subject to full Board approval.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

**C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.**  
*Mayor*



**William V. Brillhante, Jr.**  
*Managing Director*

**Merrick Nishimoto**  
*Deputy Managing Director*

## *County of Hawai'i ~ Office of the Mayor*

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • Phone (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553  
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740  
Phone (808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

Testimony of  
**C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.**  
Mayor, County of Hawai'i

Before the House Committee on  
**Water and Land**  
Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair  
Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

**Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 9:00 a.m.**  
State Capitol Conference Room 411 & Videoconference

In consideration of  
**House Bill 2616**  
**Relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District**

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

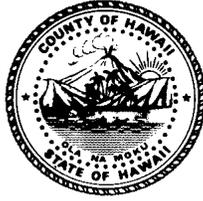
The County of Hawai'i strongly supports House Bill 2616. This bill establishes the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District as an entity within the Hawai'i Community Development Authority. It also establishes the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District Special Fund, specifies the Authority's powers and duties related to the new district, and amends the Authority's composition to include representatives from the new district. Additionally, it appropriates funds.

This measure is a key step toward planning and revitalizing Banyan Drive, traditionally known as Makaokū. By establishing a development district, state and county efforts can better align. These efforts aim to attract investment, create jobs, and foster responsible redevelopment that preserves our distinctive culture, environment, and unique community values.

We appreciate this committee's consideration of this forward-looking measure, which advances meaningful collaboration and ensures much-needed, long-term planning for East Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of House Bill 2616.

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.  
*Mayor*



Benson Medina  
*Director*

William V. Brillhante, Jr.  
*Managing Director*

Dennis Lin  
*Deputy Director*

## DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

25 Aupuni Street, Room 1301 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720-4252  
(808) 961-8366 • Fax (808) 935-1205  
E-mail: chresdev@co.hawaii.hi.us

February 17, 2026

### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Friday, February 17, 2026  
9:00 AM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 411

TESTIMONY ON  
HB 2616 Relating to Banyan Drive-Makaoku Community Development District

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

My name is Benson Medina, and I serve as the Director of the Department of Research and Development for the County of Hawai'i. I write today in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2616**, which would establish the **Banyan Drive–Makaokū Community Development District** under the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA), along with a dedicated special fund to support long-term planning, stewardship, and revitalization.

HB 2616 represents a rare and meaningful opportunity to align **economic development, cultural and historic preservation, and community enrichment** in one of Hawai'i Island's most iconic and historically significant corridors.

The Banyan Drive–Makaokū area is not only a place of scenic beauty and visitor appeal — it is also a space of cultural memory and community identity. For decades, this corridor has held great potential, yet it has faced persistent challenges related to long-term investment, coordinated planning, infrastructure needs, and stewardship responsibilities.

This bill provides a structure that can finally move the area forward in a way that is both **strategic and values-driven**.

From an economic development perspective, a thoughtfully revitalized Banyan Drive–Makaokū district can:

- Expand opportunities for **local job creation** and workforce participation
- Strengthen the visitor economy through a **higher-quality visitor experience**
- Support local entrepreneurs and small businesses tied to cultural, hospitality, and recreation sectors

- Increase the attractiveness of Hilo as a destination for **responsible, place-based tourism**

At the same time, HB 2616 supports what matters most to our residents — that redevelopment must protect and uplift the cultural and historic significance of the area. The bill’s approach creates an opportunity to balance **cultural enrichment, community uses, and economic activities**, rather than prioritizing one at the expense of the others.

This is the kind of long-term planning Hawai‘i Island needs: development that strengthens our economy while honoring place, preserving history, and ensuring community access and benefit.

For these reasons, the County of Hawai‘i Department of Research and Development respectfully urges the Committee to pass HB 2616.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your leadership on this important measure.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

**Benson Medina**  
Director, Department of Research and Development  
County of Hawai‘i

## **Relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District**

Submitted by: Bec Jimenez-Ward

### **Position: STRONG SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair Rep. Dee Morikawa, &

Members of the Committee on Water and Land

Rep. Della Au Belatti Rep. Justin H. Woodson

Rep. Linda Ichiyama Rep. Garner M. Shimizu

Rep. Kim Coco Iwamoto Rep. Kanani Souza Rep. Mahina Poepoe

I, Bec Jimenez-Ward, submit this testimony in Strong Support of House Bill HB2616 relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District / Waiākea Peninsula, which seeks to formally include Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in decision-making, restore cultural recognition and protection of this wahi pana.

I am also submitting a record of a signed petition in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB2616. As of Feb 12, 2026, there are **103 supporters (list of names at the end of the letter)**. You can view the petition at <https://tinyurl.com/protectmakaoku> .

The proper place name, Makaokū, also known by the state-led proposed development in Senate Bill SB2001-Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan, is not merely a redevelopment area and must be treated with respect and dignity.

Makaokū is honored as kūpuna, an ‘āina rich with cultural history, genealogy, and ongoing stewardship amongst the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū known as Waiākea Ahupua‘a Crown Land Heirs. This predates the Hawai‘i State Legislature Act 153, session laws of Hawai‘i 1976 codified in chapter 206E-3 of the Hawai‘i revised statutes establishment of the Hawai‘i Community Development Authority (HCDA) and the State of Hawai‘i itself.

I offer this testimony in solidarity with the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, cultural practitioners, and community advocates who maintain deep genealogical, cultural, and spiritual ties to this ‘āina.

House Bill HB 2616 represents an important and necessary corrective step toward restoring trust, honoring ‘ike kūpuna, and ensuring that development planning is grounded in place-based

stewardship on designated Crown Lands in which the HCDA has proposed this re-development. By including Lineal Descendants, HB2616 gives an opportunity for the State of Hawai'i to uphold its fiduciary duty and public trust obligations to protect our Crown Lands.

Makaokū is a culturally rich and historically significant landscape, recognized by Lineal Descendants as a place of genealogy, ceremony, and ongoing Kuleana to protect, restore, and re-establish hope while strengthening our communities at large.

This bill appropriately acknowledges that:

- Lineal Descendants of Makaokū maintain genealogical ties to the 'āina
- They carry kuleana to protect cultural and natural resources
- They hold 'ike that cannot be replicated through consultants or advisory groups

By formally including Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in governance, planning, and decision-making, this measure moves Hawai'i away from extractive and exclusionary development practices and toward a model of pono and restorative land management. Meaningful inclusion of Lineal Descendants in the deliberations of Crown Lands is not symbolic-It is Essential. Development that excludes them risks repeating historic patterns of dispossession and cultural erasure.

Development that prioritizes Lineal Descendants in these developmental planning affirms cultural continuity, community well-being, and responsible stewardship for future generations.

House Bill HB2616 represents an opportunity to:

- Restore cultural recognition to Makaokū
- Protect sacred and historic sites
- Ensure decision-making authority includes Lineal Descendants directly connected to the land
- Align development practices with Hawai'i's constitutional and public trust responsibilities

I respectfully urge the Legislature to advance this bill and demonstrate a commitment to cultural integrity, community inclusion, and long-term sustainability for the Banyan Drive-Makaokū / Waiākea Peninsula region.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support.

Laulima I Ka Hāpai Pōhaku,

Many hands carrying the stones,

Bec Jimenez-Ward

petition\_signatures\_jobs\_491002691\_20260212170926

<b>Name</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Postal Code</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Signed On</b>
<b>Rebecca Ward</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-01-30
<b>Bong Bong Ortaleza</b>	Pāhoā	HI	96778	United States	2026-01-31
<b>Seb Choe</b>	Kailua Kona	HI	96740	United States	2026-01-31
<b>Mar Ortaleza</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-01-31
<b>Dana Keawe</b>	pahoa	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-01
<b>Terri Napeahi</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-01
<b>David Evett</b>	Kailua-Kona	HI	96740	United States	2026-02-01
<b>Dea Rackley</b>	Pāhoā	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Allan Leite</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Leona Leialoha</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Kahaka Patolo</b>	Pearl City	HI	96816	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Yvonne Kahikina</b>	Keaau	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Kaanela Napeahi-Helenihi</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Nivan Agres</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Mathew Crowell</b>	Keaau	HI	6268	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Tara Rojas</b>	'Ewa Beach	HI	96706	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Willie Robello</b>	Honolulu	HI	96826	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Keone Smith</b>	Hana	HI	96713	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Jacelyn Auna</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Roseann Camp</b>	Lahaina	HI	96761	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Kristie Oshiro</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Davonne Pacheco</b>	Colorado Springs	CO	80922	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Eileen Rodrigues</b>	Pepeekeo	HI	96783	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Kale H Lehan</b>	Keaau	HI	96749	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Steven Kosches</b>	Keaau	HI	96749	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Kiana Manu</b>	Ewa Beach	HI	96706	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Rose Adare</b>	Keaau	HI	96749	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Vincent Zamora</b>	Pāhoā	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Kathleen Starr</b>	Rockwell	NC	28138	United States	2026-02-02

<b>Keahonui Hillen</b>	Pāhoa	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Mathew Jones</b>	Pahoa	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Catherine czerepak</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Kami Carter</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Lily Raabe</b>	Portland	OR	97214	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Paul Ellenburg</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Robert Gentzel</b>	Pāhoa	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-02
<b>Cheryl Kuilipule</b>	Mountain View	HI	96771	United States	2026-02-02
<b>David Dolph</b>	Wisconsin Rapids	WI	54494	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Mikilani Young</b>	Van Nuys	CA	91409	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Chris Wong</b>	Honolulu	HI	96817	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Pono Kealoha</b>	Honolulu	HI	96817	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Junko Nozawa</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Danielle Marriott</b>	Haleiwa	HI	96712	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Chedza Nasim</b>	Kailua-Kona	HI	96740	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Koko Johnson</b>	Kaunakakai	HI	96748	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Allison Shiozaki</b>	Mountain View	HI	96771	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Eliora Green</b>	Troy	OH	45373	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Kawehi Mahi-Roberts</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Aly Dove</b>	Kona	HI	28035	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Cadence Feeley</b>	Ocean View	HI	96704	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Keani Kahui</b>	Makawao	HI	96768	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Renate Gregory</b>	Honolulu	HI	96822	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Ellen Zanetos</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Patricia kroh</b>	Pāhoa	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Luana Keakealani</b>	Waimea	HI	96743	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Donna fischer</b>	Pāhoa	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Katherine Marchese</b>	Pahoa	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Moanike‘ala KT Muna</b>	Kailua	HI	96734	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Dawn Oh</b>	Waimea	HI	96743	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Kealani Berg</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-03

<b>Carol Remington</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Naeole Brian K</b>	Kahului	HI	96732	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Bowie Mandelbaum</b>	Waimea	HI	96743	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Casey McGrath</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Moana Chavez</b>	Kailua Kona	HI	96740	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Tiger Lily Tolleson</b>	Gresham	OR	97080	United States	2026-02-03
<b>kade hanson</b>	Holualoa	HI	96725	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Rachel Aragon</b>	Pahoa	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Kalena Stevens</b>	Kailua kona	HI	96740	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Shannon Rudolph</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Monique Ortiz</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Gregory Baker</b>	Pāhoa	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Nancy sellers</b>	Dawson Springs	KY	42408	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Catherine Velasquez</b>	Kula	HI	96779	United States	2026-02-03
<b>sam lee</b>	Keaau	HI	96749	United States	2026-02-03
<b>Matt Johnston</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-04
<b>Mariana m</b>	Kurtistown	HI	96760	United States	2026-02-04
<b>Kye Harford</b>	Honolulu	HI	96813	United States	2026-02-04
<b>Luna Shiva Animisha</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-04
<b>Priscilla May</b>	Kailua	HI	96734	United States	2026-02-04
<b>Dawn McSwain</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-04
<b>Donna Pabre</b>	Ocean View	HI	96737	United States	2026-02-04
<b>C conda</b>	Pāhoa	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-04
<b>Arnes Aragon</b>	Waimanalo	HI	96795	United States	2026-02-04
<b>Megan Seeley</b>	Honolulu	HI	96816	United States	2026-02-04
<b>Mohammad reza Bayat</b>	Zanjan			Iran	2026-02-05
<b>Maria Lopez</b>	Somerton	AZ	85350	United States	2026-02-06
<b>cynthia massa</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-06
<b>ken burch</b>	anahola	HI	96703	United States	2026-02-06
<b>Marion Imig</b>	Pahoa	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-06
<b>Adalina Doud</b>	Waianae	HI	96792	United States	2026-02-07
<b>Zoe M</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-07

<b>Skink Carrero</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-07
<b>Cheryl J De Lima</b>	Hilo	HI	96720	United States	2026-02-08
<b>Cynthia Henrie</b>	Haleiwa		96712	United States	2026-02-08
<b>Sara Steiner</b>	Pahoa	HI	96778	United States	2026-02-09
<b>Reza Bahari</b>	Orlando	FL	32825	United States	2026-02-10
<b>Ashlynn Overly</b>	Kailua-Kona	HI	96745	United States	2026-02-10
<b>Pokemaster Selders</b>	Baton Rouge	LA	70816	United States	2026-02-11
<b>Michael Williams</b>	Dolton	IL	60419	United States	2026-02-11
<b>Momi Greene</b>	Kailua Kona	HI	96740	United States	2026-02-12
<b>marsha seeley</b>	pahoa	AL	96778	United States	2026-02-12



*Hawaiian voices for Hawaiian lands!!! They really know how to take care of the Aina 🙏*

C



← Back to petition

heavenly



*This important historic cultural area needs to be maintained appropriately, and entrusted to kānaka maoli.*

Mathew



*Less is more! Keep it con3!!!!*

Willie



*It is critical that any legislation pertaining to the redevelopment of Banyan Drive / Waiākea Peninsula in Hilo includes lineal descendants in the decision-making process. HB2616 is a watershed opportunity to incorporate place-...  
[Read full comment](#)*

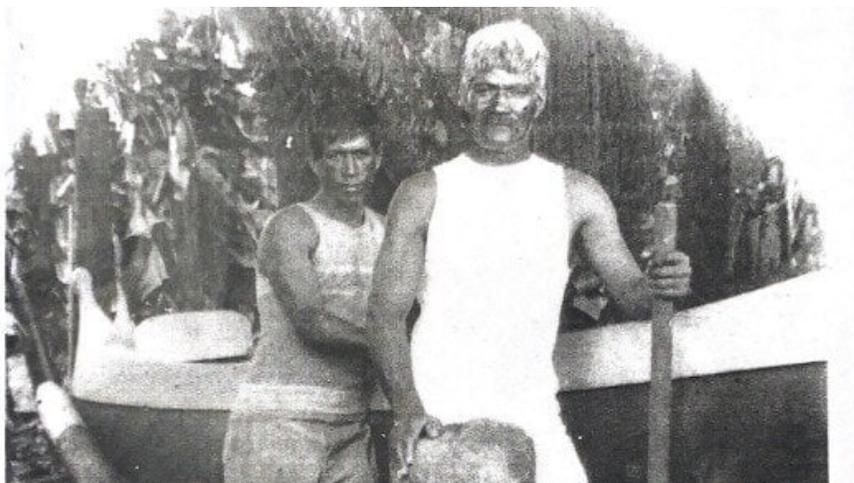
Seb





Here's how your petition looks live. Track signatures, view supporters, and get smart sharing recommendations.

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## Protect Banyan Drive - Makaokū!

Share this petition

103

Verified signatures

Let's get to 200 signatures!

Petitions with 1,000+ supporters are 5x more likely to win!

### Recent signers:

Momi G. • 17 hours ago

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Cynthia H. • 4 days ago

Cheryl D. • 4 days ago

Adalir



Decision Makers:  
Mahina Poepoe +14



5 Supporter Voices



1 Update

# The Issue

## The History and Redevelopment of Banyan Drive- Makaokū

Makaokū (commonly called Banyan Drive) is ancestral āina, and has been stewarded by Lineal Descendants long before the State of Hawai'i existed. Banyan Drive is up for redevelopment. Currently, NO Lineal Descendants have a seat at the table during the planning process. Makaokū is storied land. It holds centuries of genealogy, cultural practice, and relationships that require Lineal Descendant stewardship, NOT just state oversight.

### Support HB2616- Include Lineal Descendants in the decision-making process!

Any redevelopment of Makaokū must formally include Lineal Descendants as decision-makers.

Two Bills have been proposed during this current legislative session:

- HB2616 INCLUDES Lineal Descendants as decision makers. This Bill would:

- Restore cultural recognition to **Makaokū**
  - Protect sacred and historic sites
  - Ensure decision-making authority includes **Lineal Descendants** directly connected to the land
  - Align development practices with Hawai'i's constitutional and public trust responsibilities
- **SB2001 DOES NOT mention Lineal Descendants in the decision- making process. This Bill:**
- Fails to honor the **Lineal Descendants** of **Makaokū** as the original stewards of the designated **Crown Lands** in which the HCDA has proposed.
  - Repeats historic patterns of generational trauma, exclusion and harm.

House Bill HB2616 uplifts Lineal Descendants as essential decision-makers. It affirms:  
Redevelopment can happen without erasure! Ancestral Lands Need Ancestral Voices!

**Strongly Support HB2616 and Strongly Oppose SB2001 & ALL Bills that exclude Lineal Descendants!**

Sign this petition to signify you:

**STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2616 and STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2001!**

*Additional Ways to Take Action:*

1. Click here to read [Bill HB2616](#) and TESTIFY in STRONG SUPPORT when the comment period opens. See the [sample testimony here](#).

 Support now

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**Hui Kūākaʻananuʻu**  
Petition Starter

**Media inquiries**

## The Decision Makers



**Hawaii House of Representatives,**  
15 Members



**Mahina Poepoe**

Hawaii House of Representatives - District 13



Testimony of  
Pacific Resource Partnership

Hawai'i House of Representatives Committee on Water and Land (WAL)  
Tuesday, February 17, 2026

**Subject: Testimony in Strong Support of HB2616, relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District**

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the committee:

Pacific Resource Partnership (PRP), representing more than 6,000 union carpenters, over 250 signatory contractors, and community stakeholders statewide, respectfully submits this testimony in strong support of HB2616, which amends the Hawai'i Revised Statutes to conform county debt limit statements law, allowing counties to exclude housing infrastructure growth bonds from the debt limit of the counties, provided a constitutional amendment is ratified that authorizes such bonds and excludes them from funded debt calculations.

This measure establishes the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District and equips the Hawai'i Community Development Authority with the tools and stable funding needed to reverse decades of blight on the Waiakea peninsula. By creating a dedicated redevelopment agency, a special fund, and meaningful local representation on the HCDA board — including a Waiakea resident, a Hilo small-business or nonprofit leader, and a lineal descendant of the Makaokū area — the bill ensures that revitalization will be culturally grounded, community-driven, and economically sustainable.

The projects enabled by this district — infrastructure upgrades, drainage improvements, pedestrian enhancements, climate-resilient design, and new public facilities — will generate substantial construction employment for carpenters and contractors on Hawai'i Island. These jobs will support families, stimulate the local economy, and help restore Banyan Drive as a vibrant gateway for residents and visitors alike, especially in conjunction with the Merrie Monarch Festival and Hilo's



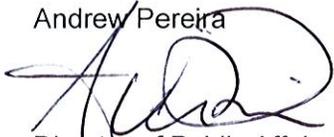
**(Continued From Page 1)**

broader tourism and cultural offerings. The special fund and initial appropriations provide the consistent resources necessary for long-term maintenance and stewardship — resources that general-fund appropriations alone have been unable to deliver.

PRP views HB2616 as a responsible, forward-looking investment that aligns perfectly with our mission of advancing fair, high-quality construction that strengthens Hawai'i's communities. We urge the committee to pass HB2616 without amendment so that this important revitalization effort can begin promptly.

Sincerely,

Andrew Pereira



Director of Public Affairs  
Pacific Resource Partnership  
1100 Alakea Street, 4th Floor  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: (808) 528-5557  
Email: [apereira@prp-hawaii.com](mailto:apereira@prp-hawaii.com)  
Website: [www.PRP-Hawaii.com](http://www.PRP-Hawaii.com)



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Hawaii Non-Profit Corporation  
Registered Native Hawaiian Organization  
Wailoa Small Boat Harbor, Wailoa River, Hilo



# Written Testimony in Support of HB 2616

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026  
STATE OF HAWAII

## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE BANYAN DRIVE-MAKAOKU COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Waiakea  
2 peninsula, which includes Banyan Drive and was historically  
3 known as Makaokū, is an area of significant cultural and  
4 historical importance to the island of Hawaii.

Aloha mai Kakou,

What we are basically addressing here is “Stewardship” and the beginnings and purpose for it. As we look back in Hawaiian Cultural History we find that the “**Kuleana**” is a foundational Hawaiian concept translating to responsibility, privilege, right, and duty, deeply rooted in reciprocal relationships with family, community, and the ‘āina (land). It signifies a personal, sacred obligation to care for something, emphasizing that with rights come responsibilities, and that as one cares for the land, the land provides for them.”

We know the early Hawaiians took the meaning of this “Kuleana” deep into their souls. We see this in how the land was divided also known as “The **Ahupua‘a** system” Land division in old Hawai‘i based on a sustainable, resource-management system. Typically a wedge-shaped land slice extending from the mountains (mauka) to the sea (makai). These, along with larger districts (moku) and smaller subdivisions ('ili), enabled self-sufficient communities to share resources from uplands to the ocean.

Recently, we have also been able to see this type of Stewardship observed by Terri Napeahi, click the link. <https://www.bigislandvideonews.com/2016/09/22/video-stones-from-lost-hilo-heiau-recovered-preserved/> with the setting of the Sacred Heiau Stones on Napeahi land at Wailoa. A **heiau** is an ancient Hawaiian temple, serving as a sacred place of worship, sacrifice, and community gathering, often built from stones on a hillside or near beaches.

The name of this ancient heiau was “**KUAKA’ANANU’U**”, as I learned in my Hawaiian Studies class, first set on the grounds of what is known today as the Hilo Hawaiian Hotel. This heiau was a pyramidal structure about sixty feet high. Unfortunately, due to colonization and the almost dissolving of the Hawaiian Culture, many of these sacred heiau stones were removed and used for other non-cultural and unimportant things.

### **In Support of HB 2616:**

It is because of this type of disregard for our Hawaiian Culture and what appears today as a blatant disrespect for the Hawaiian people, we as a Culture and People need to regain our Kuleana. This “Makaokū” area makes for a primary center for community activities and 7 tourism that supports the State’s cultural identity and economy. 8 However, the legislature finds that the area currently requires 9 focused revitalization to address conditions of blight. Issues 10 such as a lack of adequate cultural stewardship, public safety, 11 the declining health of historic banyan trees, poor lighting, 12 and a substandard pedestrian experience have hindered the area’s 13 potential and diminished its value to the community, establishing a community development district under the, 2 jurisdiction of the Hawaii community development authority, the 3 area can be revitalized in a way that fosters cultural 4 enrichment and enables cultural activities, events, and uses to 5 coexist effectively with standalone hotel, commercial, and 6 public uses. This transformation will include the development 7 of cultural and public facilities, including recreational, 8 educational, and entertainment spaces that enhance the 9 experience for residents and visitors.

### **In Conclusion:**

As the owner of a non-profit Hawaiian Cultural corporation and a registered Native Hawaiian Organization, I support this HB 2616, because we as a people with a culture, need to share our stories, our lives and our kuleana with the continuous generations, that we will always be remembered and never forgotten.

Mahalo,  
Kimo Kaulahea Field  
Captain Kimos Hawaiian Adventures



# Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce

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

Phone (808) 935-7178 - Fax (808) 961-4435 - Email [exec@hicc.biz](mailto:exec@hicc.biz) - [www.hicc.biz](http://www.hicc.biz)

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Carla Kuo

**2025-2026**

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**Testimony to the House Committee on Water & Land  
Representative Mark Hashem, Chair  
Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair**

**Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 9:00 AM**

## **RE: HB2616 Relating to the Banyan Drive - Makaokū Community Development District - SUPPORT**

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

The Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce, representing more than 350 businesses and individual members primarily on the east side of Hawai'i Island, **strongly supports HB2616**, which establishes the Banyan Drive–Makaokū Community Development District within the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA).

The Banyan Drive and Makaokū area is a vital economic and cultural asset for Hilo and East Hawai'i, yet for too long it has faced infrastructure challenges and fragmented oversight. It is our hope that placing the district under HCDA will provide coordinated planning, improved accountability, and a clear framework for long-term revitalization.

Establishing a dedicated special fund will support sustainable improvements, infrastructure upgrades, allowing for economic growth. **Strengthening this area within our community will not only enhance tourism, support small businesses, and create jobs, but will most importantly, improve quality of life for residents.**

HB2616 represents a strategic and community-focused step toward unlocking the full potential of Banyan Drive - Makaokū.

For these reasons, the Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce **respectfully urges your strong support of HB2616.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Kuo  
Executive Officer  
Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce

# McCully Works

69 Railroad A-19

Hilo, Hi. 96720

February 15, 2026

## **HB2616 - Relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaoku Community Development District**

**Chair, Rep. Mark Hashem (D-19)**

**Vice Chair, Rep. Dee Morikawa (D-17)**

Aloha from Hilo !

I strongly support HB2616 because it accomplishes something essential: it shifts the Waiākea Peninsula from fragmented land management under DLNR to coordinated redevelopment governance under the Hawaii Community Development Authority.

The bill expressly recognizes that “regaining state control over lands within the district is essential for successful renewal”. That finding is correct and long overdue.

For decades, Banyan Drive has been managed primarily as a series of individual ground leases. DLNR has fulfilled its minimal land management responsibilities. However, DLNR is not structured as a redevelopment agency, capital coordinator, or district-scale infrastructure manager. HB2616 corrects that structural limitation.

By placing the district within Chapter 206E:

- The State gains a redevelopment authority.
- A district-wide capital strategy becomes possible.
- Infrastructure can be phased and financed.
- Public realm improvements can be funded.
- Federal aid and bonding authority become usable tools.
- A district improvement and maintenance program can be implemented

This is not a criticism of DLNR. It is recognition that redevelopment requires different institutional tools than conservation and lease administration.

Under DLNR, parcels are managed...Under HCDA, communities can be built.

HB2616 also retains DLNR representation in governance, ensuring that natural and cultural resources remain protected while allowing redevelopment expertise to guide economic renewal. This governance shift:

- Aligns economic development with cultural stewardship
- Allows coordinated infrastructure investment
- Improves accountability
- Creates access to financing tools unavailable under traditional DLNR management

The result is not privatization. It is modernization. The Waiākea Peninsula requires a redevelopment authority, not just a land manager. HB2616 provides that authority.

Hilo wants both economic development and support for recreational, cultural, and sustainable practices. We believe with your support, and the tools available in Ch. 206e we could have it all !

I respectfully urge your support.

James McCully

Hilo, Hawaii

*'Always Something New'*

[www.mccullyworks.com](http://www.mccullyworks.com)

Mauna Kea Orchids - A Coffee Farm - Awa Pua Hale

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 11:24:35 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Napeahi	Waiakea Ahupuaʻa Crown Land Heirs / Team Makaoku	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Committee members of House Water and Land,

My name is Terri Napeahi a Lineal descendant who has participated in the Planning of Makaokū for a few years. Our Hawaiian Lineal Descendants want to be on the decision making of the HCDA Authority group being formed for the re-Development if Makaokū. We have progressed quite far with the plans to re-construct our ancient Heiau Kūakaʻananuʻu, a moʻolelo of great significant that our Kupuna saved before the dismantling of the stones were use as filler for the roads in the area.

We have met with the previous consultants PBR Hawaiʻi LLC last year, and in their report, they recommend priority to reconstruct the Heiau. We believe that prioritizing the build of the heiau can bring community together with great respect for the area as the projects move forward. We will call it the "Piko" or Center Core for the Development of revitalization and HCDA Authority Group.

Please consider this measure important and worth supporting.

mahalo,  
Terri Napeahi

Lineal Descendant of Waiākea Ahupuaʻa.  
tnapeahi@yahoo.com  
[\(808\)-769-9305](tel:8087699305)

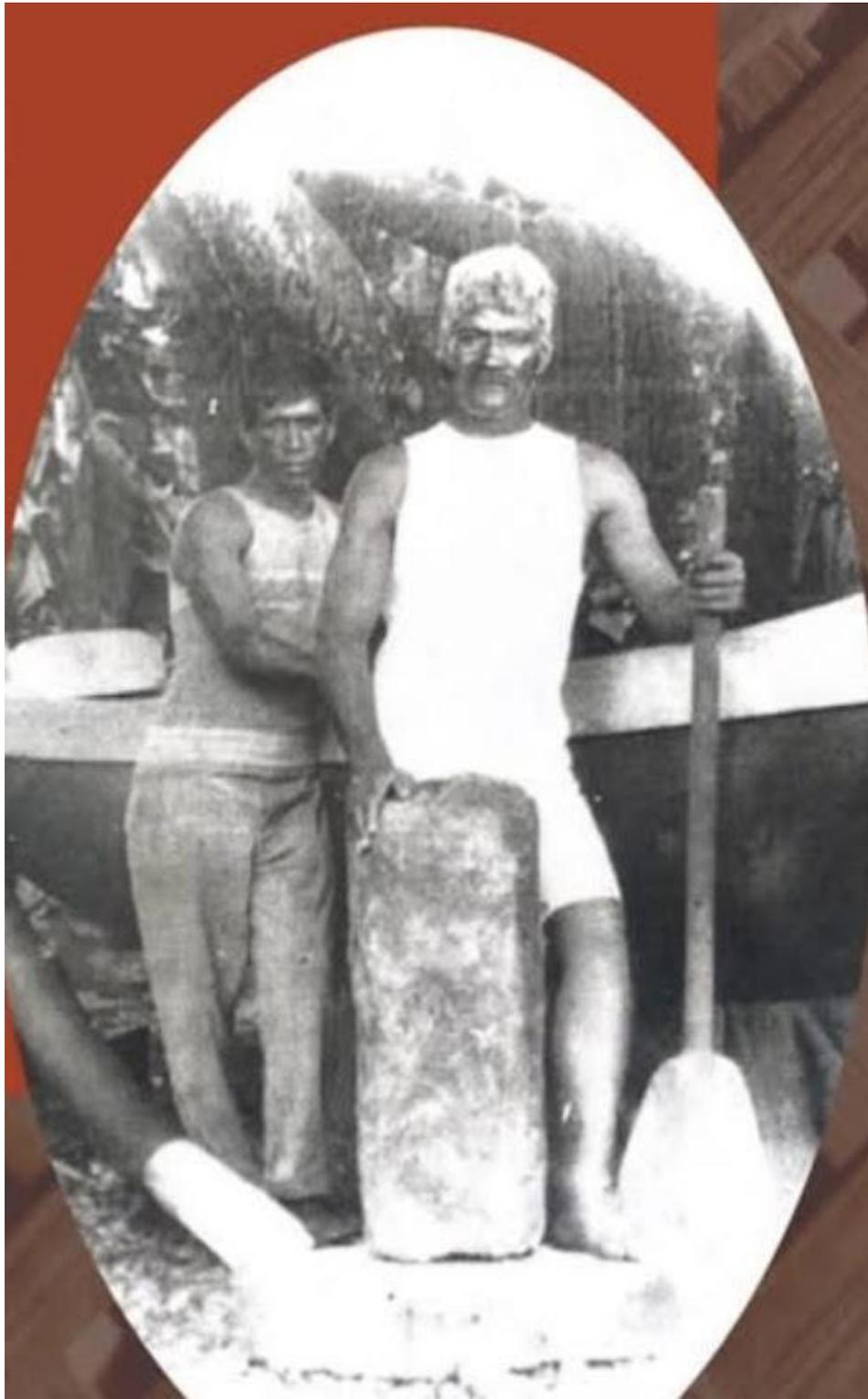
**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 12:18:18 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case	Na Wai Ho'ola Nui La'au Lapa'au Foundation	Support	In Person

Comments:



WRITTEN TESTIMONY

(House Bill HB2616)

Relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District

Submitted by: Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case

Position: STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair Rep. Dee Morikawa, &

Members of the Committee on Water and Land

Rep. Della Au Belatti                      Rep. Justin H. Woodson

Rep. Linda Ichiyama                      Rep. Garner M. Shimizu

Rep. Kim Coco Iwamoto                      Rep. Kanani Souza Rep. Mahina Poepoe

I, Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case, submit this testimony in Strong Support of House Bill HB2616 relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District / Waiākea Peninsula seeks to formally include Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in decision-making, restore cultural recognition and protection of this wahi pana. The proper place name, Makaokū, also known by the state-led proposed development in Senate Bill SB2001-Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan, is not merely a redevelopment area and must be treated with respect and dignity.

Makaokū is honored as kūpuna, an ‘āina rich with cultural history, genealogy, and ongoing stewardship amongst the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū known as Waiākea Ahupua’a Crown Land Heirs. This predates the Hawai’i State Legislature Act 153, session laws of Hawai’i 1976 codified in chapter 206E-3 of the Hawai’i revised statutes establishment of the Hawai’i Community Development Authority (HCDA) and the State of Hawai’i itself.

I offer this testimony as a Lineal Descendant of our Hawai’i in relation to Ahupua'a O Waiakea and Makaokū, and in alignment with Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners, and community advocates who maintain deep genealogical, cultural, and spiritual ties to this ‘āina. House Bill HB 2616 represents an important and necessary corrective step toward restoring trust, honoring ‘ike kūpuna, and ensuring that development planning is grounded in place-based stewardship on designated Crown Lands in which the HCDA has proposed this re-development. By including Lineal Descendants, HB2616 gives an opportunity for the State of Hawai’i to uphold its fiduciary duty and public trust obligations to protect our Crown Lands.

Makaokū is a culturally rich and historically significant landscape, recognized by Lineal Descendants as a place of genealogy, ceremony, and ongoing Kuleana to protect, restore, and re-establish hope while strengthening our communities at large.

This bill appropriately acknowledges that:

- Lineal Descendants of Makaokū maintain genealogical ties to the ‘āina
- They carry kuleana to protect cultural and natural resources
- They hold ‘ike that cannot be replicated through consultants or advisory groups

By formally including Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in governance, planning, and decision-making, this measure moves Hawai‘i away from extractive and exclusionary development practices and toward a model of pono and restorative land management. Meaningful inclusion of Lineal Descendants in the deliberations of Crown Lands is not symbolic-It is Essential. Development that excludes them risks repeating historic patterns of dispossession and cultural erasure.

Development that prioritizes Lineal Descendants in these developmental planning affirms cultural continuity, community well-being, and responsible stewardship for future generations.

House Bill HB2616 represents an opportunity to:

- Restore cultural recognition to Makaokū
- Protect sacred and historic sites
- Ensure decision-making authority includes Lineal Descendants directly connected to the land
- Align development practices with Hawai‘i’s constitutional and public trust responsibilities

I respectfully urge the Legislature to advance this bill and demonstrate a commitment to cultural integrity, community inclusion, and long-term sustainability for the Banyan Drive-Makaokū / Waiākea Peninsula region.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support.

Laulima I Ka Hāpai Pōhaku,

Many hands carrying the stones,

Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case

Moku O Keawe

Na Wai Ho'ola Nui La'au Lapa'au Foundation

LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

# WAI PACIFIC

A COMPASS REAL ESTATE GROUP

February 15, 2026

**HB2616 - Relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaoku Community Development District**

**Chair, Rep. Mark Hashem (D-19)**

**Vice Chair, Rep. Dee Morikawa (D-17)**

Aloha,

I'm writing in strong support of HB2616.

After decades of fragmented, site-by-site lease management by the Department of Land and Natural Resources, and a lack of coordinated long-term planning, Banyan Drive has effectively become a blighted area.

This is not by any means the fault of the department (DLNR) itself. The agency is tasked with managing an overwhelming array of geographies and assets, and is simply not properly staffed or structured for complex, long-term redevelopment projects. They fulfill their conservation mission nobly and admirably, but areas that need coordinated redevelopment are best served via other mechanisms. HB2616 provides one, via a well-proven model.

By shifting the Waiākea Peninsula's redevelopment governance to the Hawaii Community Development Authority under Chapter 206E, the area will be able to benefit both from the proper expertise needed for revitalization, and access to critical resources.

For example,

The bill expressly recognizes that "regaining state control over lands within the district is essential for successful renewal". That finding is correct and long overdue.

DLNR should absolutely be involved, and this bill does a good job of preserving their critical role in conservation resource management.

Nathan Gaddis

Hilo, Hawaii

RS-75971  
+1 808 937 2663  
[nate@waipacific.com](mailto:nate@waipacific.com)

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# KA LĀHUI HAWAI‘I

**Comments for H.B. 2616  
Relating to the Banyan Drive–Makaokū Community Development District  
Committee on Water & Land**

February 17, 2026

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

My name is Healani Sonoda-Pale, and I submit comments on behalf of Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i.

Makaokū in the Waiākea Ahupua‘a is ancestral land of deep cultural and historical significance. This district is not is a place that hosts community gatherings and welcomes the world each year during the Merrie Monarch Festival. Proper stewardship of this area is essential to protecting both its cultural integrity and its public trust.

We strongly support the inclusion of a lineal descendant of the Makaokū area as a voting member on the HCDA Authority for matters affecting this district. Cultural specialists are important, but genealogical connection carries a different level of kuleana and accountability to ‘āina. Lineal descendants bring lived responsibility, intergenerational knowledge, and a direct relationship to place that strengthens decision-making.

To truly preserve archaeological, historic, and cultural resources as envisioned in the bill, descendant voices must be part of the governing body — not simply consulted after decisions are made.

Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i respectfully urges the Committee to pass H.B. 2616 and ensure that stewardship of Makaokū reflects the people whose ancestors come from that land.

Respectfully submitted,

Healani Sonoda-Pale  
On behalf of Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:00:21 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mar Ortaleza	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

(House Bill HB2616)

Relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District

Submitted by: [Your Name]

Position: STRONG SUPPORT

I, Maurie Ortaleza, submit this testimony in Strong Support of House Bill HB2616 relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District / Waiākea Peninsula seeks to formally include Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in decision-making, restore cultural recognition and protection of this wahi pana. The proper place name, Makaokū, also known by the state-led proposed development in Senate Bill SB2001-Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan, is not merely a redevelopment area and must be treated with respect and dignity.

Makaokū is honored as kūpuna, an ‘āina rich with cultural history, genealogy, and ongoing stewardship amongst the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū known as Waiākea Ahupua’a Crown Land Heirs. This predates the Hawai’i State Legislature Act 153, session laws of Hawai’i 1976 codified in chapter 206E-3 of the Hawai’i revised statutes establishment of the Hawai’i Community Development Authority (HCDA) and the State of Hawai’i itself.

I offer this testimony in solidarity with the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, cultural practitioners, and community advocates who maintain deep genealogical, cultural, and spiritual ties to this ‘āina. House Bill HB 2616 represents an important and necessary corrective step toward restoring trust, honoring ‘ike kūpuna, and ensuring that development planning is

grounded in place-based stewardship on designated Crown Lands in which the HCDA has proposed this re-development. By including Lineal Descendants, HB2616 gives an opportunity for the State of Hawai'i to uphold its fiduciary duty and public trust obligations to protect our Crown Lands.

Makaokū is a culturally rich and historically significant landscape, recognized by Lineal Descendants as a place of genealogy, ceremony, and ongoing Kuleana to protect, restore, and re-establish hope while strengthening our communities at large.

This bill appropriately acknowledges that:

- Lineal Descendants of Makaokū maintain genealogical ties to the 'āina
- They carry kuleana to protect cultural and natural resources
- They hold 'ike that cannot be replicated through consultants or advisory groups

By formally including Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in governance, planning, and decision-making, this measure moves Hawai'i away from extractive and exclusionary development practices and toward a model of pono and restorative land management. Meaningful inclusion of Lineal Descendants in the deliberations of Crown Lands is not symbolic-It is Essential. Development that excludes them risks repeating historic patterns of dispossession and cultural erasure.

Development that prioritizes Lineal Descendants in these developmental planning affirms cultural continuity, community well-being, and responsible stewardship for future generations.

House Bill HB2616 represents an opportunity to:

- Restore cultural recognition to Makaokū
- Protect sacred and historic sites
- Ensure decision-making authority includes Lineal Descendants directly connected to the land
- Align development practices with Hawai'i's constitutional and public trust responsibilities

I respectfully urge the Legislature to advance this bill and demonstrate a commitment to cultural integrity, community inclusion, and long-term sustainability for the Banyan Drive-Makaokū / Waiākea Peninsula region.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support.

Laulima I Ka Hāpai Pōhaku,

Many hands carrying the stones,

Maurie Ortaleza

13-926 Kahukai Street

Pahoa HI 96778

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 7:03:23 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jacelyn Auna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair Rep. Dee Morikawa, & Members of the Committee on Water and Land; Rep. Della Au Belatti Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Rep. Linda Ichiyama Rep. Garner M. Shimizu, Rep. Kim Coco Iwamoto, Rep. Kanani Souza, Rep. Mahina Poepoe

My name is Jacelyn Auna from Keaukaha, Hilo, Hawai'i. I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB2616 relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District / Waiākea Peninsula seeks to formally include Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in decision-making, restore cultural recognition and protection of this wahi pana.

My ancestors protected Makaoku for many years. As their descendant, it is my right to be part of this development plan. All descendants should be given the opportunity to have a say in all of this.

Do the right thing by including all of us descendants and respect our love and support of protecting our wahi pana.

Please hear our pleas and support HB2616!

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 12:18:56 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mathew Crowell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Skip to main cRelating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District

Submitted by: Mathew Crowell

Position: STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair Rep. Dee Morikawa, &

Members of the Committee on Water and Land

Rep. Della Au Belatti Rep. Justin H. Woodson

Rep. Linda Ichiyama Rep. Garner M. Shimizu

Rep. Kim Coco Iwamoto Rep. Kanani Souza Rep. Mahina Poepoe

I, [Your Name], submit this testimony in Strong Support of House Bill HB2616 relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District / Waiākea Peninsula seeks to formally include Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in decision-making, restore cultural recognition and protection of this wahi pana. The proper place name, Makaokū, also known by the state-led proposed development in Senate Bill SB2001-Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan, is not merely a redevelopment area and must be treated with respect and dignity.

Makaokū is honored as kūpuna, an ‘āina rich with cultural history, genealogy, and ongoing stewardship amongst the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū known as Waiākea Ahupua’a Crown Land Heirs. This predates the Hawai’i State Legislature Act 153, session laws of Hawai’i 1976 codified in chapter 206E-3 of the Hawai’i revised statutes establishment of the Hawai’i Community Development Authority (HCDA) and the State of Hawai’i itself.

I offer this testimony in solidarity with the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, cultural practitioners, and community advocates who maintain deep genealogical, cultural, and spiritual ties to this ‘āina. House Bill HB 2616 represents an important and necessary corrective step toward restoring trust, honoring ‘ike kūpuna, and ensuring that development planning is grounded in place-based stewardship on designated Crown Lands in which the HCDA has proposed this re-development. By including Lineal Descendants, HB2616 gives an opportunity for the State of Hawai‘i to uphold its fiduciary duty and public trust obligations to protect our Crown Lands.

Makaokū is a culturally rich and historically significant landscape, recognized by Lineal Descendants as a place of genealogy, ceremony, and ongoing Kuleana to protect, restore, and re-establish hope while strengthening our communities at large.

This bill appropriately acknowledges that:

- Lineal Descendants of Makaokū maintain genealogical ties to the ‘āina
- They carry kuleana to protect cultural and natural resources
- They hold ‘ike that cannot be replicated through consultants or advisory groups

By formally including Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in governance, planning, and decision-making, this measure moves Hawai‘i away from extractive and exclusionary development practices and toward a model of pono and restorative land management. Meaningful inclusion of Lineal Descendants in the deliberations of Crown Lands is not symbolic-It is Essential. Development that excludes them risks repeating historic patterns of dispossession and cultural erasure.

Development that prioritizes Lineal Descendants in these developmental planning affirms cultural continuity, community well-being, and responsible stewardship for future generations.

House Bill HB2616 represents an opportunity to:

- Restore cultural recognition to Makaokū
- Protect sacred and historic sites
- Ensure decision-making authority includes Lineal Descendants directly connected to the land
- Align development practices with Hawai‘i’s constitutional and public trust responsibilities

I respectfully urge the Legislature to advance this bill and demonstrate a commitment to cultural integrity, community inclusion, and long-term sustainability for the Banyan Drive-Makaokū / Waiākea Peninsula region.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support.

Laulima I Ka Hāpai Pōhaku,

Many hands carrying the stones,

Mathew Crowell

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 2:06:17 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Greg "Pu'uwai Aloha" Baker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District**

**Submitted by: Greg Pu'uwai Aloha Baker**

**Position: STRONG SUPPORT**

**Aloha Chair Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair Rep. Dee Morikawa, &**

**Members of the Committee on Water and Land**

**Rep. Della Au Belatti Rep. Justin H. Woodson**

**Rep. Linda Ichiyama Rep. Garner M. Shimizu**

**Rep. Kim Coco Iwamoto Rep. Kanani Souza Rep. Mahina Poepoe**

**I, Greg Pu'uwai Aloha Baker, submit this testimony in Strong Support of House Bill HB2616 relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District / Waiākea Peninsula seeks to formally include Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in decision-making, restore cultural recognition and protection of this wahi pana. The proper place name, Makaokū, also known by the state-led proposed development in Senate Bill SB2001-Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan, is not merely a redevelopment area and must be treated with respect and dignity.**

**Makaokū is honored as kūpuna, an ‘āina rich with cultural history, genealogy, and ongoing stewardship amongst the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū known as Waiākea Ahupua’a Crown Land Heirs. This predates the Hawai’i State Legislature Act 153, session laws of Hawai’i 1976 codified in chapter 206E-3 of the Hawai’i revised statutes establishment of the Hawai’i Community Development Authority (HCDA) and the State of Hawai’i itself.**

**I offer this testimony in solidarity with the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, cultural practitioners, and community advocates who maintain deep genealogical, cultural, and spiritual ties to this ‘āina. House Bill HB 2616 represents an important and necessary corrective step toward restoring trust, honoring ‘ike kūpuna, and ensuring that development planning is grounded in place-based stewardship on designated Crown Lands in which the HCDA has proposed this re-development. By including Lineal Descendants, HB2616 gives an opportunity for the State of Hawai’i to uphold its fiduciary duty and public trust obligations to protect our Crown Lands.**

**Makaokū is a culturally rich and historically significant landscape, recognized by Lineal Descendants as a place of genealogy, ceremony, and ongoing Kuleana to protect, restore, and re-establish hope while strengthening our communities at large.**

**This bill appropriately acknowledges that:**

- Lineal Descendants of Makaokū maintain genealogical ties to the ‘āina**
- They carry kuleana to protect cultural and natural resources**
- They hold ‘ike that cannot be replicated through consultants or advisory groups**

**By formally including Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in governance, planning, and decision-making, this measure moves Hawai’i away from extractive and exclusionary development practices and toward a model of pono and restorative land management. Meaningful inclusion of Lineal Descendants in the deliberations of Crown Lands is not symbolic-It is Essential. Development that excludes them risks repeating historic patterns of dispossession and cultural erasure.**

**Development that prioritizes Lineal Descendants in these developmental planning affirms cultural continuity, community well-being, and responsible stewardship for future generations.**

**House Bill HB2616 represents an opportunity to:**

- **Restore cultural recognition to Makaokū**
- **Protect sacred and historic sites**
- **Ensure decision-making authority includes Lineal Descendants directly connected to the land**
- **Align development practices with Hawai'i's constitutional and public trust responsibilities**

**I respectfully urge the Legislature to advance this bill and demonstrate a commitment to cultural integrity, community inclusion, and long-term sustainability for the Banyan Drive-Makaokū / Waiākea Peninsula region.**

**Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support.**

**Laulima I Ka Hāpai Pōhaku,**

**Many hands carrying the stones,**

**Greg Pu'uwai Aloha Baker**

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 9:37:08 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

**(House Bill HB2616)**

Relating to the **Banyan Drive-Makaokū** Community Development District

**Submitted by: Dana Keawe-Pe'a**

**Position: STRONG SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair Rep. Dee Morikawa, & Members of the Committee on Water and Land

Rep. Della Au Belatti      Rep. Justin H. Woodson

Rep. Linda Ichiyama      Rep. Garner M. Shimizu

Rep. Kim Coco Iwamoto    Rep. Kanani Souza    Rep. Mahina Poepoe

**I, Dana Keawe-Pe'a, submit this testimony in Strong Support of House Bill HB2616 relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District / Waiākea Peninsula seeks to formally include Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in decision-making, restore cultural recognition and protection of this wahi pana. The proper place name, Makaokū, also known by the state-led proposed development in Senate Bill SB2001-Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan, is not merely a redevelopment area and must be treated with respect and dignity.**

**Makaokū is honored as kūpuna, an ‘āina rich with cultural history, genealogy, and ongoing stewardship amongst the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū known as Waiākea Ahupua’a Crown Land Heirs. This predates the Hawai’i State Legislature Act 153, session laws of Hawai’i 1976 codified in chapter 206E-3 of the Hawai’i revised statutes establishment of the Hawai‘i Community Development Authority (HCDA) and the State of Hawai‘i itself.**

**I offer this testimony in solidarity with the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, cultural practitioners, and community advocates who maintain deep genealogical, cultural, and spiritual ties to this ‘āina. House Bill HB 2616 represents an important and necessary corrective step toward restoring trust,**

**honoring ‘ike kūpuna, and ensuring that development planning is grounded in place-based stewardship on designated Crown Lands in which the HCDA has proposed this re-development. By including Lineal Descendants, HB2616 gives an opportunity for the State of Hawai‘i to uphold its fiduciary duty and public trust obligations to protect our Crown Lands.**

**Makaokū is a culturally rich and historically significant landscape, recognized by Lineal Descendants as a place of genealogy, ceremony, and ongoing Kuleana to protect, restore, and re-establish hope while strengthening our communities at large.**

**This bill appropriately acknowledges that:**

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- They carry kuleana to protect cultural and natural resources**
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- Restore cultural recognition to Makaokū**
- Protect sacred and historic sites**
- Ensure decision-making authority includes Lineal Descendants directly connected to the land**
- Align development practices with Hawai‘i’s constitutional and public trust responsibilities**

**I respectfully urge the Legislature to advance this bill and demonstrate a commitment to cultural integrity, community inclusion, and long-term sustainability for the Banyan Drive-Makaokū / Waiākea Peninsula region. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support.**

**Laulima I Ka Hāpai Pōhaku,**  
*Many hands carrying the stones,*

**Dana Keawe-Pe'a**

**Truth for the People**

**Moku o Keawe**

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 10:09:38 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ekini Lindsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I, Ekini Lindsey, wholeheartedly endorse House Bill HB2616, acknowledging the cultural and historical significance of Makaokū and providing for the involvement of lineal descendants in decision-making to ensure the protection of sacred sites and the preservation of ancestral heritage.

I urge the Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members to SUPPORT this initiative, which is crucial for preserving historical events, literature, and stories, that showcase Hawaii's distinctiveness, and resilience from other parts of the world.

Mahalo nui loa for your SUPPORT!

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 1:29:32 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Seb Choe	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair Rep. Dee Morikawa, &

Members of the Committee on Water and Land

Rep. Della Au Belatti Rep. Justin H. Woodson

Rep. Linda Ichiyama Rep. Garner M. Shimizu

Rep. Kim Coco Iwamoto Rep. Kanani Souza Rep. Mahina Poepoe

I, Seb Choe, submit this testimony in Strong Support of House Bill HB2616 relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District / Waiākea Peninsula seeks to formally include Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in decision-making, restore cultural recognition and protection of this wahi pana. The proper place name, Makaokū, also known by the state-led proposed development in Senate Bill SB2001-Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan, is not merely a redevelopment area and must be treated with respect and dignity.

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I offer this testimony in solidarity with the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, cultural practitioners, and community advocates who maintain deep genealogical, cultural, and spiritual ties to this ‘āina. House Bill HB 2616 represents an important and necessary corrective step toward restoring trust, honoring ‘ike kūpuna, and ensuring that development planning is grounded in place-based stewardship on designated Crown Lands in which the HCDA has proposed this re-development. By including Lineal Descendants, HB2616 gives an opportunity

for the State of Hawai'i to uphold its fiduciary duty and public trust obligations to protect our Crown Lands.

Makaokū is a culturally rich and historically significant landscape, recognized by Lineal Descendants as a place of genealogy, ceremony, and ongoing Kuleana to protect, restore, and re-establish hope while strengthening our communities at large.

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House Bill HB2616 represents an opportunity to:

- Restore cultural recognition to Makaokū
- Protect sacred and historic sites
- Ensure decision-making authority includes Lineal Descendants directly connected to the land
- Align development practices with Hawai'i's constitutional and public trust responsibilities

I respectfully urge the Legislature to advance this bill and demonstrate a commitment to cultural integrity, community inclusion, and long-term sustainability for the Banyan Drive-Makaokū / Waiākea Peninsula region.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support.

Laulima I Ka Hāpai Pōhaku,

Many hands carrying the stones,

Seb Choe

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 2:06:34 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Clair Mason	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, Members of the Committee,

My name is Clair Mason. I am a resident of Hawaii Island. **I am in strong support of HB2616.** Hilo is such a special place culturally and historically. The redevelopment of our public spaces should incorporate the voices of members of our community whose families have been rooted in these special parts of Hilo for generations. **Please vote yes on HB2616** to include lineal descendants in the decision making processes about the redevelopment of Hilo.

Mahalo!

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 11:08:59 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

SUPPORT!

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 11:58:49 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Allison Shiozaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair Rep. Dee Morikawa, & Members of the Committee on Water and Land, Rep. Della Au Belatti, Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Rep. Linda Ichiyama, Rep. Garner M. Shimizu, Rep. Kim Coco Iwamoto, Rep. Kanani Souza, and Rep. Mahina Poepoe,

I, Allison Shiozaki, community member of Hawai‘i Island, submit STRONG SUPPORT of HB2616.

This should go without saying, but unfortunately settler colonial and capitalist endeavors are always at it. I stand firmly with lineal descendants in having inclusion with what happens to the ‘āina, those who maintain geneological ties to the area and a kuleana to care for it.

Me ke aloha,

Allison Shiozaki

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 1:24:20 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rachel Singley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

(House Bill HB2616)

Relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District

Submitted by: [Your Name]

Position: STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair Rep. Dee Morikawa, &

Members of the Committee on Water and Land

Rep. Della Au Belatti                      Rep. Justin H. Woodson

Rep. Linda Ichiyama                      Rep. Garner M. Shimizu

Rep. Kim Coco Iwamoto                      Rep. Kanani Souza Rep. Mahina Poepoe

I, Rachel Singley, submit this testimony in Strong Support of House Bill HB2616 relating to the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District / Waiākea Peninsula seeks to formally include Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in decision-making, restore cultural recognition and protection of this wahi pana. The proper place name, Makaokū, also known by the state-led proposed development in Senate Bill SB2001-Waiākea Peninsula Community

Development Plan, is not merely a redevelopment area and must be treated with respect and dignity.

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I offer this testimony in solidarity with the Lineal Descendants of Makaokū, cultural practitioners, and community advocates who maintain deep genealogical, cultural, and spiritual ties to this ‘āina. House Bill HB 2616 represents an important and necessary corrective step toward restoring trust, honoring ‘ike kūpuna, and ensuring that development planning is grounded in place-based stewardship on designated Crown Lands in which the HCDA has proposed this re-development. By including Lineal Descendants, HB2616 gives an opportunity for the State of Hawai’i to uphold its fiduciary duty and public trust obligations to protect our Crown Lands.

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- Lineal Descendants of Makaokū maintain genealogical ties to the ‘āina
- They carry kuleana to protect cultural and natural resources
- They hold ‘ike that cannot be replicated through consultants or advisory groups

By formally including Lineal Descendants of Makaokū in governance, planning, and decision-making, this measure moves Hawai’i away from extractive and exclusionary development practices and toward a model of pono and restorative land management. Meaningful inclusion of Lineal Descendants in the deliberations of Crown Lands is not symbolic-It is Essential. Development that excludes them risks repeating historic patterns of dispossession and cultural erasure.

Development that prioritizes Lineal Descendants in these developmental planning affirms cultural continuity, community well-being, and responsible stewardship for future generations.

House Bill HB2616 represents an opportunity to:

- Restore cultural recognition to Makaokū
- Protect sacred and historic sites
- Ensure decision-making authority includes Lineal Descendants directly connected to the land
- Align development practices with Hawai‘i’s constitutional and public trust responsibilities

I respectfully urge the Legislature to advance this bill and demonstrate a commitment to cultural integrity, community inclusion, and long-term sustainability for the Banyan Drive-Makaokū / Waiākea Peninsula region.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support.

Laulima I Ka Hāpai Pōhaku,

Many hands carrying the stones,

Rachel Singley

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 3:44:43 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Regina Gregory	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 3:57:21 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG STRONG SUPPORT!!!

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 10:28:02 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ka'anela Napeahi-Helenihi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I Ka'anela Napeahi - Helenihi strongly support this bill. I am a lineal descendant of the Waiakea 'Ahupua'a crown lands. I believe lineal descendants should be at the decision making table for the redevelopment of Makaokū.

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 12:39:19 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joy Dillon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Hasem, Vice Chair Morikawa and members of the Water and Land Committee:

I am submitting testimony in strong support of passing HB2616 relating to Banyan Drive. The goal of improving and revitalizing Banyan Drive has gone on for too many years with no viable results. In the meantime, the area continues to erode and the area languishes with no progress to be seen. We must preserve and improve this historical and important area of the Island of Hawaii. I urge you to pass this measure.

Thank you for your consideration.

Joy Dillon

Hilo, HI Resident

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 9:46:15 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Wai'ala Ahn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony in strong Support to HB2616 lineal must be involved in the redevelopment of Makaok (aka Banyan Drive) in downtown Hilo. Taking into consideration the native stewards of this place, their vast knowledge of history, mo'olelo, and best practices that best care possible takes places and their inherit kuleana to the land and sea in these densely developed places deeply needing it rightfully stewards. As a native Hawaiian, a native to this island, a native practioner, mother and steward I urge to support this bill and prioritize native lineal descendants and their knowledge in any potential or future development or "progress".

Mahalo,

Wai'ala Ahn

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 7:09:09 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha! I fully support this bill to INCLUDE lineal descendants of Makaokū aka Banyan Drive in Hilo!

mahalo nui

Leona Leialoha

(Kahilihiwa descendant)

**HB-2616**

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 8:31:02 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Rojas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB2616, which establishes the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District within the Hawai‘i Community Development Authority (HCDA), creates a special fund for long-term stewardship, and updates HCDA’s structure to include representatives connected to this district.

HB2616 correctly recognizes that the Waiakea Peninsula / Makaokū, including Banyan Drive and Moku Ola, is a place of deep cultural and historic significance and a key gathering and visitor area for Hilo. The bill also acknowledges real, ongoing concerns to improve conditions that diminish the community’s ability to thrive.

I support this measure because it creates a dedicated framework for revitalization with cultural stewardship, including guidance policies that prioritize:

- preservation and protection of Hawaiian archaeological, historic, and cultural sites;
- planning that accounts for sea level rise, climate change, and inundation risk; and
- public facilities and mobility solutions that improve community access and experience.

I also support the bill’s recognition that long-term oversight and maintenance requires stable resources, which is why the creation of the Banyan Drive-Makaokū Special Fund is important. The general fund process alone often cannot sustain consistent stewardship from year to year.

Finally, I strongly support the inclusion of Lineal Descendants' district representation in HCDA’s governance for matters affecting the Banyan Drive-Makaokū district. Decisions affecting this area must reflect community connection, local knowledge, and cultural accountability-not distant, disconnected decision-making.

This is what is needed for all of Hawai‘i Nei - Lineal Descendants in all agencies and departments.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to PASS HB2616.

