

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
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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, March 17, 2026
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 411

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2001, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE BANYAN DRIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Senate Bill 2001, Senate Draft 1 proposes to establish the Waiakea Community Development District and the Waiakea Community Development District Special Fund. It also specifies the powers and duties of the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) as it relates to the new development district. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates and supports this measure.**

The Department recognizes that the Waiakea peninsula area, which includes Banyan Drive, is underutilized, but has an exceptional potential for revitalization. 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.



TESTIMONY WITH COMMENTS ON SENATE BILL 2001 SD1
RELATING TO THE BANYAN DRIVE 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)

Malaki 17, 2026

9:00am

Lumi 411

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

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) provides **COMMENTS** on SB2001 SD1, which would create a new Waiākea 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 would also establish a Community Advisory Council for the District including a “lineal or cultural descendant with ties to Waiākea ahupua‘a.”

OHA respectfully recommends amendments to ensure a more accurate reflection of the District’s history, and representation of Native Hawaiian interests given that the bulk of this district is comprised of former crown and government lands of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Specifically, OHA requests that the Committee amend the bill to: (1) name OHA as a member of the HCDA with jurisdiction over the District; (2) rename the district to include “Makaokū,” specific to the bounds outlined in the bill; and (3) include a Makaokū lineal or cultural descendant as a voting member of the HCDA with jurisdiction over the District. The proposed amendment more closely align with the language in HB2616 HD2, also related to the proposed District.

OHA Must Be Consulted On Disposition of Crown and Government Lands

To carry out the requirements of the Hawai‘i Admission Act, Article XII Section 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. OHA was created and charged with managing proceeds derived from the public land trust, pursuant to under Art. XII Secs. 5 and 6, for the benefit of native Hawaiian beneficiaries. Accordingly, OHA has a constitutional mandate to ensure 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. Thus, insofar as the new District is made up of public land trust lands, OHA should be included as a member of the HCDA with jurisdiction over the District, to protect the right of its beneficiaries.

Moreover, the vast majority of 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[.]”¹ Given that Native Hawaiians have never relinquished their claims to this 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 these lands, and that it maintains these lands to ensure the corpus’ viability and availability for the future lāhui.²

Accordingly, because much of the new District consists of crown and government 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, economic, and other values of these and adjoining lands receive appropriate consideration.

The District Name Should Reflect The Lands Most Affect: Makaokū

As reflected in the ‘ōlelo noeau, “Ua hilo ‘ia ke aho a ke aloha”³ (“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, including through the choice of a culturally appropriate name. Currently, however, the place name Waiākea, encompasses a much larger area than the proposed district, as illustrated below. OHA recommends the Committee acknowledge the area’s significant cultural and historical importance by reverting to the original language of HB2616, and in alignment with the bill title, to name this the “Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District.”

Recognition of Makaokū as distinctive lands is 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

¹ *Joint Resolution to Acknowledge the 100th Anniversary of the January 17, 1893 Overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i*, P.L. 103-150 (1993).

² *See Off. of Hawaiian Affs. v. Hous. & Cmty. Dev. Corp.*, 117 Haw. 174; (2008).

³ Historic Hawai‘i Foundation Story Map (Dec. 10, 2021), <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b378b80d74054f51816d820581905ba4>.

Makaokū Descendents Should Have Voting Membership.

HCDA has pledged their commitment to ensuring a community driven planning process, and their stated mission of “advancing community-focused redevelopment”⁵ HCDA’s recommendation adopted with the current version of this bill removed lineal descendant from voting members to place these important representatives in a community advisory council. This dilutes their role, and runs counter to HCDA’s commitment to a community driven plan.

Moreover, the broadened geographical lands associated with “Waiākea” further dilutes the role to best inform redevelopment of Makaokū. Instead of including further representation from the specific lands at issue, the broader inclusion of “Waiākea” could include individuals with no ties or expertise to the very lands being redeveloped. This further undermines the intent of the lineal descendant member.

A truly community-driven process will involve appropriate representation by Native Hawaiian communities who know this area best, are most impacted by this redevelopment, and reside in the neighboring communities. Building off the unique nature of these lands being crown and government lands, and the rich history of this place, OHA reiterates its support for the inclusion of OHA and a Makaokū lineal descendant as voting members of the HCDA with jurisdiction over the District.

Accordingly, should the Committee choose to advance this measure, OHA recommends including the following amendments:

- (1) Amending the language beginning at page 1 line 4 to read as follows:

“PART . Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District”
“‘District’ means the Banyan Drive-Makaokū community development district.”

- (2) Amending language starting at page 10, line 1 to read:

“sections 1 through 5 of the third tax map key division; [and] the chairperson of the office of Hawaiian affairs, or the chairperson’s designee, and a lineal or cultural descendant of the Makaokū area.”

- (3) Amending the language beginning at page 10 line 11 to read as follows:

⁵ Hawai‘i Community Development Authority, 2025 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE HAWAI‘I STATE LEGISLATURE, REGULAR SESSION 2026, 4 (2025).

"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 Drive Hawai'i redevelopment agency of the county of Hawai'i or the chairperson's designee, chairperson of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, or the chairperson's designee, and the Makaokū lineal or cultural descendant member, shall be appointed by the governor pursuant to section 26-34.

- (4) Adding in language at page 11 line 21, to read as follows:

"For the cultural specialist and the Makaokū lineal or cultural descendant member, the governor shall appoint this member following consultation with the office of Hawaiian affairs, and shall consider any recommendations submitted by the office of Hawaiian affairs."

- (5) Inserting new language starting at page 17 line 17 to read:

"(J) The chairperson of the office of Hawaiian affairs, or the chairperson's designee; and
(K) A lineal or cultural descendant of the Makaokū area."

While OHA prefers the amendments above, should the Committee choose to leave the lineal or cultural descendant as part of the community advisory council rather than placing this seat on the voting membership of HCDA, the bill should be amended to ensure their input is incorporated into the work of the District. To accomplish this, OHA recommends inserting language at page 5 line 4 to read:

"(d) The guidance provided by the community advisory council shall be incorporated accurately and meaningfully to inform the district's planning and development on balance with the unique historical and cultural significance of the lands in the district."

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify. OHA respectfully urges this committee to incorporate our recommended amendments if it chooses to move forward with SB2001 SD1.



**HAWAII COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

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

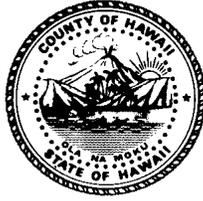
In consideration of
S.B. 2001, S.D. 1
RELATING TO THE BANYAN DRIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT.

Chairperson Hashem, Vice Chairperson Morikawa, and members of the
Committee:

The Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) **supports S.B. 2001, S.D. 1.** 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 planning for the redevelopment of state lands in the Waiākea Peninsula, as authorized by an appropriation in Act 230, Session Laws of Hawai'i, 2024. HCDA is committed to this planning effort, particularly in anticipation of legislation this session that would formally establish the district within the HCDA's jurisdiction. HCDA has no other comments on the bill at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor



Benson Medina
Director

William V. Brillhante, Jr.
Managing Director

Dennis Lin
Deputy Director

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

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March 17, 2026

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Tuesday, March 17, 2026
9:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 411

TESTIMONY ON
SB2001 SD1 Relating to the Waiakea 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 SB 2001 SD1**, which would establish the **Waiakea 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.

SB 2001 SD1 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 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 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, SB2001 SD1 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 SB 2001 SD1.

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

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor

William V. Brillhante, Jr.
Managing Director



James McCully, Chair
Anna Liu, Vice Chair
Kealohanui Browning
Nathan Gaddis
Alan Okinaka

County of Hawai'i

BANYAN DRIVE HAWAII REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
Aupuni Center • 101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
Phone (808) 961-8288 • Fax (808) 961-8742

Hawai'i County is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

March 13, 2026

RE: SB 2001

Chair Mark Hashem
Vice Chair Dee Morikawa

The Banyan Drive Hawaii Redevelopment Agency (BDHRA) offers the following Comments on SB 2001 SD1.

The Waiākea Peninsula and Banyan Drive area represent one of the most historically important and economically strategic locations on Hawai'i Island. Despite its proximity to Hilo Bay, the cruise ship terminal, and cultural landmarks such as Moku Ola, the area has struggled for decades with underinvestment, aging infrastructure, and fragmented land management.

SB2001 SD1 provides an important framework to address these challenges by establishing the Waiākea Community Development District and enabling coordinated redevelopment through the Hawaii Community Development Authority. The bill also creates a special fund and financing mechanisms that can help implement long-needed infrastructure improvements and catalyze private investment.

The Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) provides the statutory framework that ensures that the transfer from the Dept. of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR) to HCDA will maintain the public trust responsibilities. This is key to the revitalization of the Waiakea peninsula. SB2001 seeks to provide for efficient implementation with defined lines of authority. HCDA has been successful with complex projects in the past, based on its capacity to couple efficiency with transparency. This agency would like to express appreciation to the Chair of the Department of Land & Natural Resources for recognizing that another state department and its governing statutory authority, in this matter HCDA and Ch. 206e, provides the best path forward for the management of these public lands.

While the redevelopment tools contained in the bill are valuable, the long-term success of this effort will depend on strong local legitimacy and community trust. For that reason, we respectfully recommend that the Legislature consider incorporating additional place-based governance elements, sometimes referred to as home rule.

In particular, the Legislature may wish to ensure that:

- representation from the Waiākea ahupua‘a and Hilo community plays a meaningful role in redevelopment decisions;
- cultural practitioners and lineal descendants are integrated into the planning process; and
- local stakeholders participate in shaping redevelopment priorities for Banyan Drive and the surrounding peninsula.

Combining the redevelopment capacity of SB2001 with strong community participation will help ensure that revitalization efforts reflect the cultural heritage, economic needs, and long-term stewardship of this unique area.

With these considerations, we provide these comments on SB2001 SD1 and look forward to working with the Legislature to ensure the Waiākea Peninsula redevelopment effort is both effective and community-grounded.

The Waiakea Peninsula has a complex cultural, economic, and environmental history. Governance structures that prioritize local inclusion will always improve redevelopment outcomes. Clarity in statutory drafting will be important to ensure efficient implementation and avoid ambiguity regarding qualifications and authority.

The Agency respectfully submits these comments for your consideration.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide input.

James McCully, Chairman

BANYAN DRIVE HAWAI‘I REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 11:40:00 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nakoʻolani Warrington	Kupuna for the Moopuna	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG OPPOSITION TO SB 2001 SD 1

We, Kūpuna for the Mo‘opuna, a hui of Hawaiian Homes Commission Act kūpuna beneficiary farmers from Pana‘ewa, Hawai‘i, **testify in STRONG OPPOSITION to SB 2001 SD 1.**

SB 2001 SD 1 lands are Public Land Trust lands with requirements of the Hawai‘i Admission Act, Art. XII Sec. 4 of the Hawai‘i State Constitution that the Public Land Trust – ceded lands - must be administered for the betterment of the conditions of native Hawaiians and for the general public. This bill is part of a long range, long lease plan to alienate our public lands, with designs of longer terms, such as 99-year leases, for public lands, which would include Public Land Trust lands as well as “ceded” lands, taken through the unlawful overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, and to which Native Hawaiians maintain unrelinquished claims.

We are concerned over the lack of transparency and accountability in SB 2001 required by law. We native Hawaiians and the general public need more safe open spaces for the betterment of our ‘ohana. We do not need or want space launching facilities and military expansion that will negatively impact our homes and people.

Makaokū needs more direction from the directly impacted communities of Keaukaha and Pana‘ewa, which we have fought years for by way of a South Hilo Community Development Plan; denied for years, denied still yet.

NO to SB 2001 SD 1.

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 8:01:53 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jim Albertini	Malu 'Aina Center for Non-violent Education & Action	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Legislators,

Our organization, Malu 'Aina stands in strong opposition to SB2001 simply because it does NOT include Lineal Descendants. Please correct this important critical matter. Mahalo.

Jim Albertini, president of Malu 'Aina

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 11:17:19 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case	Na Wai Hoola nui laau lapaau, Waiakea Crown Land Heirs, Keaukaha Action Network, T4P	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject:OPPOSITION TO SB2001 SD1– Request to cure constitutional and trust law defects by restoring lineal descendant voting authority on the Hawai‘i Community Development Authority.

Aloha Chair Representative Mark Hashem, Vice Chair Representative Dee Morikawa and Members of the Water and Land House Committee, State of Hawai‘i GOVERNOR Josh Green, House of Representatives and Senators of the 33rd Hawai‘i State Legislature,

My name is Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case, Co-founder of (Emerging) Na Wai Ho‘ola Nui La‘au Lapa‘au Foundation in collaboration with Waiākea Ahupua‘a Crown Land Heirs, Keaukaha Action Network and Truth For the People grassroots initiative standing in protection of Aloha ‘Āina in honor of the voices and Legacy of our Kūpuna.

I write to respectfully urge this Committee and the 33rd Hawai‘i State Legislature to address a serious legal defect created by the removal of lineal descendants as voting members of the Hawai‘i Community Development Authority (HCDA) for matters affecting the Makaokū–Waiākea Community Development District.

As currently drafted, SB2001 SD1 relegates lineal descendants to a purely advisory role while vesting governing authority in state and county officials without guaranteed beneficiary representation. This restructuring raises substantial constitutional, statutory, and trust law concerns. Article XII, Section 7 of the Hawai‘i Constitution requires the State to protect the customary and traditional rights of Native Hawaiians, which includes ensuring meaningful participation in decisions affecting ancestral lands. Advisory status alone does not satisfy this obligation.

We are standing to assure a vote on the Hawaii Community Authority Development thus yes altering the “standard” sought to be maintained by HCDA Administrators. A standard that is no longer relevant to uphold in our Home, Hawai‘i. A standard that is discriminating in nature against our own people of our ‘āina. We seek a renewed standard of inclusion and honor by including Lineal Descendants as voting members on the HCDA for the Restoration and healing of our Water, Land, People and Communities in these designated HCDA project areas Statewide starting with Makaokū.

In addition, the State holds Crown and ceded lands in trust for the benefit of Native Hawaiians and the public under the public trust doctrine, the Hawai'i Admission Act, and state trust law. Excluding lineal descendants from voting authority while transferring control to a development authority risks violating the State's fiduciary duties by marginalizing trust beneficiaries and prioritizing redevelopment without beneficiary consent. This current governance structure with outdated standards creates foreseeable exposure to litigation based on constitutional violations, breach of trust, and inadequate cultural impact review.

These Legal defects have been resolved within HB 2616 HD2 which we are in full support of at this time. I respectfully request that the Committee reinstate lineal descendant voting authority on the HCDA by incorporating the following amendment language into SB2001 SD1 to reflect HB2616 HD2 in its entirety.

Adopting Language of HB2616 HD2 and amending SB2001 SD1 will:

- bring the bill into closer alignment with Article XII, Section 7 of the Hawai'i Constitution; by honoring Lineal Descendants as voting members who are given opportunity to proactively participate in decision making for Makaokū.
- reduce the State's exposure to constitutional and trust law challenges;
- fulfill public trust obligations to beneficiaries of Crown and ceded lands; and
- ensure that redevelopment proceeds with lawful and meaningful participation by those with direct ancestral ties to the district.

Without these corrections, SB2001 SD1 remains legally vulnerable and structurally deficient by excluding trust beneficiaries from decision-making authority over ancestral lands while offering only advisory participation.

I will be respectfully emailing Governor Josh Green and the 33rd Hawai'i State Legislature to encourage the House WaL and Finance Committees to adopt corrective language in the SB2001 SD1 draft in honor of our Kupuna by restoring lineal descendant voting authority within the HCDA and removing Advisory status depreciating the value of who we are and our contributions to our community as well as healing of our people. Doing so will strengthen the bill's legal integrity, cultural legitimacy, and long-term viability.

In closing, a cultural specialist or cultural practitioner, while valuable for technical or academic expertise, is not a substitute for lineal descendant representation. Lineal descendants possess inherent genealogical, legal, and trust beneficiary interests in ancestral lands that cannot be delegated to or replaced by non-descendant cultural advisors. Substituting a cultural specialist in place of a lineal descendant does not satisfy the State's constitutional or public trust obligations and does not cure the defects created by removing descendant voting authority.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

With respect,

Kanoeuluwehianuhea Case

Lineal Descendant of Moku O Keawe

Co-Founder of Na Wai Ho'ola Nui La'au Lapa'au Foundation

Co-collaborator with Waiākea Crown Land Heirs, Keaukaha Action Network and Truth for the People

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 7:51:51 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Napeahi	Waiakea Ahupua'a Crown Land Heirs	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

To: Honorable Chair House of Representative Mark Hashem and Water and Land Committee members of the State of Hawai'i House of Representatives

I Terri Napeahi OPPOSE SB2001

I am a Lineal Descendant of the Waiākea Ahupua'a Crown Lands, and have for many years participated in many Governmental processes that require the input and knowledge of a Lineal Descendant of the area, and invitation to these processes were Environmental Assessments, Environmental Impact Statements, Cultural Impact Assessments and National Historic Preservation Act Consultations 106. My family the Napeahi's have been invited to the table for their ancestral knowledge, in hopes that developers and Government Agencies would be aware of the significance of the area that could be potentially compromised or destroyed. Although within the 133 years much degradation and destruction of Waiākea has taken place, the heirs of land have always been their to steward what is their responsibility to protect and preserve for generations. The Napeahi's were care takers of a Heiau that was dismantled and used as filler for the roads and harbor landing by sugar plantation. However, my Great Great Great Grandfather's and Ohana saved the most significant parts of their temple, the ceremonial stones. One in particular with a name called "Maka'okuikalani." They were protectors of this pohakū and it is now in my possession. We Waiākea Ahupua'a Crown Land Heirs have been diligently working with Government officials, agencies and Community for years regarding Banyan and Makaokū. We have given presentations on how the reconstruction and restoration of this Heiau, could be a phenomenal component to the revitalization and redevelopment of Banyan Drive/Makaokū. I even personally took Craig Nakamoto of HCDA to view the sacred stones along with Ann Bosloug of PBR Hawaii LLC, who in her report mentions, to prioritize the reconstruction of the Heiau. This would serve as the "Piko" or center point of the area within Makaokū.

It would be no harm to anyone participating in the decision making table for Banyan Drive/Makaokū. It would enhance the decision making body, by having the by-in of hundreds of people who support the placement of a Lineal Descendant as a VOTING member to HCDA. The question that you should ask HCDA and Senator Lorraine Inouye is..."Why shouldn't a Lineal Descendant be a voting member?"

We have been active participants for two decades sharing ancient Mo'olelo and Genealogy to decision makers. We are the experts and can help with the development of the area.

Please consider the language of HB2616 in its original state. I am co-author of this bill and have the support of the FINANCE Committee. Please see House Bill HB2616 HD2 that passed and

has crossed over to the Senate.

We oppose SB2001 and wish to have the language of bill conform to House Bill HB2616 HD2.

Please see my testimony written in HB2616 HD2 that passed.

Mahalo

Terri Napeahi

WACH

tnapeahi@yahoo.com

1787 Auwae Rd

Hilo, Hawaii 96720



*Testimony of
Mufi Hannemann
President & CEO
Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association*

*Committee on Water and Land
Tuesday, March 17, 2026*

SB 2001 SD1– RELATING TO THE BANYAN DRIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

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

The Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association (HLTA), representing hotels and lodging operators statewide, submits this testimony in strong support of efforts to revitalize Banyan Drive and the surrounding Waiākea Peninsula area.

As the state's largest private sector tourism organization, representing nearly 50,000 hotel rooms, and 40,000 lodging employees, HLTA is committed to maintaining a strong and flourishing tourism industry to keep our economy strong and our state moving forward.

Banyan Drive has long been recognized as one of Hilo's most iconic visitor corridors and a gateway to East Hawai'i. Its location adjacent to Hilo Bay, the cruise ship terminal, and major cultural and community events such as the Merrie Monarch Festival makes it uniquely positioned to serve as both a welcoming entry point for visitors and a vibrant gathering place for residents. However, years of underinvestment and deteriorating infrastructure have left the area underutilized and unable to meet its full potential.

From a tourism industry perspective, revitalizing Banyan Drive is essential to strengthening Hilo's visitor economy and ensuring the Big Island remains competitive with other destinations. A safe, attractive, and well-maintained waterfront district encourages longer stays, greater visitor spending, and repeat visitation. Improvements to landscaping, lighting, walkability, and public amenities will directly enhance the visitor experience while also improving quality of life for the surrounding community.

Importantly, thoughtful redevelopment of Banyan Drive can achieve multiple public goals at once. With appropriate planning and oversight, revitalization can support small businesses, create local jobs, promote cultural and recreational uses, and foster sustainable economic growth. The area's proximity to

historic and cultural sites presents an opportunity to highlight Native Hawaiian culture, local arts, and community programming in ways that are authentic and respectful.

HLTA also emphasizes that revitalization should be guided by long-term planning and coordination among state and county agencies, community stakeholders, and private sector partners. Establishing a clear framework for redevelopment will help ensure that improvements are resilient, culturally sensitive, and responsive to climate and environmental challenges facing coastal areas.

For the visitor industry, Banyan Drive represents more than just a roadway or hotel district, it is a symbol of Hilo's identity and a critical link between tourism and the local community. Reinvesting in this area will help restore pride in place, improve safety and accessibility, and reinforce tourism as a driver of opportunity for East Hawai'i residents.

For these reasons, HLTA strongly supports initiatives that advance the revitalization of Banyan Drive and urges the Legislature to continue prioritizing this area as part of the State's broader economic recovery and destination management strategy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support.

Mufi Hannemann
President & CEO
Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association



Rep. Mark Hashem, Chair
Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair
Committee on Water & Land

Tuesday, March 17, 2026
9:00AM Conference Room 411

SB2001 SD2 - Banyan Drive Redevelopment - Oppose

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

The Chamber of Sustainable Commerce represents more than 580 small businesses, sole proprietors and entrepreneurs across Hawai'i committed to a triple bottom line: people, planet and prosperity. On behalf of the Chamber of Sustainable Commerce (CSC), we write to oppose SB2001 SD1.

While we recognize the need to revitalize the Banyan Drive and Waiākea (Makaokū) area, this bill takes a top-down, state-controlled approach that risks repeating development patterns that have left many communities excluded from decisions shaping their future.

SB2001 establishes a new community development district under the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA), granting broad powers to plan, finance, and implement redevelopment, including the ability to issue bonds, collect revenues, and attract private investment.

However, decision-making authority is centralized within a state agency based on O'ahu, with limited guaranteed representation from Waiākea (Makaokū) and the Hilo community. While the bill includes a community advisory council, it is appointed through a state-controlled process and serves in an advisory capacity only. Although the inclusion of at least one lineal descendant is appreciated, this role remains advisory. True stewardship of a place as significant as Waiākea (Makaokū) requires not just representation, but shared decision-making power rooted in those with generational ties to the land.

**Hawaii Legislative
Council Members**

Joell Edwards
Wainiha Country Market
Hanalei

Russell Ruderman
Island Naturals
Hilo/Kona

Dr. Andrew Johnson
Niko Niko Family Dentistry
Honolulu

Robert H. Pahia
Hawaii Taro Farm
Wailuku

Maile Meyer
Honolulu

Tina Wildberger
Kihei Ice
Kihei

L. Malu Shizue Miki
Abundant Life Natural Foods
Hilo

Chamber of
Sustainable Commerce
808.445.7606
P.O. Box 22394
Honolulu, HI 96823

Under this framework, HCDA serves as the primary governing authority for redevelopment. DLNR retains land ownership and lease revenue functions but does not lead redevelopment planning. County participation may be included in governance discussions but does not control the process. An HCDA-appointed advisory council provides non-binding community input.

This is not a shared-governance model. It is a centralized model with layered participation.

The core concern is not whether Banyan Drive should be revitalized—it should—but who decides, who benefits, and what kind of economy we are building. This measure emphasizes commercial redevelopment without clear safeguards to ensure meaningful community ownership, participation, and alignment with Hawai'i Island's long-term, place-based needs.

Hawai'i's future cannot be built through centralized models that treat land primarily as an economic asset. Our economy must function as a living system—one that strengthens community, supports local enterprise, and honors cultural and environmental stewardship.

Respectfully submitted. Mahalo for consideration of our testimony.

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 11:58:53 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Submitted by: Mar Ortaleza

Position: OPPOSITION TO SB2001

Relating to the Hawai‘i Community Development Authority and the Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan

Aloha Chair Representative Mark Hashem, Vice Chair Representative Dee Morikawa and Members of the Water and Land House Committee,

I, Mar Ortaleza, am submitting this testimony in strong opposition of SB2001 to ensure that the Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan meaningfully recognizes and protects the rights, participation, and authority of Lineal Descendants connected to Makaokū by including Lineal Descendants as voting members on the Hawaii Community Development Authority and including the proper ancestral place name within the title as Banyan Drive- Makaokū Community Development District.

I offer this testimony in solidarity with Lineal Descendants of Maka’oKū, cultural practitioners & community advocates, with deep ties to this wahipana who have worked closely with grassroots organizations, service providers, and the legislative processes to uplift the voices of those most impacted by state-led proposed development.

The Lineal Descendants are the original Stewards of Makaokū. This is not to go unappreciated nor unrecognized by excluding them from voting rights on the Hawai'i Community Development Authority which dishonors their true value and withholding proactive participation which could benefit HCDA in the future. The vision of healing of our people and community should not be in vain by dishonoring Lineal Descendant rights as Kānaka of our Home.

The appropriate place name, Makaokū, also known by the state-led proposed development called Waiākea Peninsula, is not merely a name to be dismissed nor just a redevelopment area to those who cherish this place and our people. Maka'oKū is honored as kūpuna, an 'āina rich with cultural history, genealogy, and ongoing stewardship amongst the Lineal Descendants of Maka'oKū 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.

While SB2001 seeks to advance planning and redevelopment goals, this proposed bill fails to honor the Lineal Descendants of Maka'oKū as the original stewards of the designated Crown Lands in which the HCDA has proposed.

Lineal Descendants are not Cultural Specialists. Lineal Descendants hold mana in a different way and shall not be defined as such due in part that we:

- Maintain genealogical ties to the 'āina.
- Carry kuleana to protect cultural resources specific to the 'āina they are tied to.
- Hold 'ike of that 'āina that cannot be replicated through cultural specialists, consultants or advisory groups.

Any state-led redevelopment plan that does not formally include Lineal Descendants of Maka'oKū in decision-making risks repeating historic patterns, generational trauma of exclusion and harm. I strongly oppose SB2001.

Laulima i ka hāpai Pōhaku. Many hands carry the stones.

Mar Ortaleza

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 8:56:31 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dephlia Rackley	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Submitted by: Dephlia Rosa Rackley and Rocky K Ishibashi

Position: OPPOSITION TO SB2001

Relating to the Hawai‘i Community Development Authority and the Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan

Aloha Chair Representative Mark Hashem, Vice Chair Representative Dee Morikawa and Members of the Water and Land House Committee,

We Dephlia Rackley and Rocky K Ishibashi , is submitting this testimony in strong opposition of SB2001 to ensure that the Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan meaningfully recognizes and protects the rights, participation, and authority of Lineal Descendants connected to Makaokū by including Lineal Descendants as voting members on the Hawaii Community Development Authority and including the proper ancestral place name within the title as Banyan Drive- Makaokū Community Development District.

I offer this testimony in solidarity with Lineal Descendants of Maka’oKū, cultural practitioners & community advocates, with deep ties to this wahipana who have worked closely with grassroots organizations, service providers, and the legislative processes to uplift the voices of those most impacted by state-led proposed development.

The Lineal Descendants are the original Stewards of Makaokū. This is not to go unappreciated nor unrecognized by excluding them from voting rights on the Hawai'i Community Development Authority which dishonors their true value and withholding proactive participation which could benefit HCDA in the future. The vision of healing of our people and community should not be in vain by dishonoring Lineal Descendant rights as Kānaka of our Home.

The appropriate place name, Makaokū, also known by the state-led proposed development called Waiākea Peninsula, is not merely a name to be dismissed nor just a redevelopment area to those who cherish this place and our people. Maka'oKū is honored as kūpuna, an 'āina rich with cultural history, genealogy, and ongoing stewardship amongst the Lineal Descendants of Maka'oKū 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.

While SB2001 seeks to advance planning and redevelopment goals, this proposed bill fails to honor the Lineal Descendants of Maka'oKū as the original stewards of the designated Crown Lands in which the HCDA has proposed.

Lineal Descendants are not Cultural Specialists. Lineal Descendants hold mana in a different way and shall not be defined as such due in part that we:

- Maintain genealogical ties to the 'āina.
- Carry kuleana to protect cultural resources specific to the 'āina they are tied to.
- Hold 'ike of that 'āina that cannot be replicated through cultural specialists, consultants or advisory groups.

Any state-led redevelopment plan that does not formally include Lineal Descendants of Maka'oKū in decision-making risks repeating historic patterns, generational trauma of exclusion and harm. I strongly oppose SB2001.

Laulima i ka hāpai Pōhaku. Many hands carry the stones.

Dephlia Rackley

Rocky K Ishibashi

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 7:03:29 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deron Akiona	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB 2001 in its present form. I support an amendment to the current draft that would include a lineal descendant be placed on HCDA Board to address any further issues including the possible development of the Waiakea Peninsula. Knowledge and history needs to be incorporated into the HCDA. Nani o Hilo e.,

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 10:28:46 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Regina Gregory	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

does not include lineal descendants

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 12:53:15 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Petricci	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Robert Petricci

Position opposed SB2001

Relating to Hawai'i Community Development Authority and the Waiakea Peninsula Community Development Authority

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

My name is Robert Petricci, I submit my testimony in strong opposition to SD2001 because it fails to include the Linial Decendants connected to the Makaoku as "voting members" for the Hawai'i Community Development Authority and the Wiakea Peninsula Community Development Authority. SB2001 by excluding the linial Decendants as "voting members" does not recognize or protect the Linial Decendants rights, participation or authority. Further SB2001 failes to include the proper ancesertial place name within the tital as Banyon Drive-Makaoku Community Development District. Please kill this bill.

Mahalo Robert Petricci

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 3:32:22 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Seb Choe	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Position: OPPOSITION TO SB2001

Relating to the Hawai'i Community Development Authority and the Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan

Aloha Chair Representative Mark Hashem, Vice Chair Representative Dee Morikawa and Members of the Water and Land House Committee,

I, Seb Choe, am submitting this testimony in strong opposition of SB2001 to ensure that the Waiākea Peninsula Community Development Plan meaningfully recognizes and protects the rights, participation, and authority of Lineal Descendants connected to Makaokū by including Lineal Descendants as voting members on the Hawaii Community Development Authority and including the proper ancestral place name within the title as Banyan Drive-Makaokū Community Development District.

I offer this testimony in solidarity with Lineal Descendants of Maka'okū, cultural practitioners & community advocates, with deep ties to this wahipana who have worked closely with grassroots organizations, service providers, and the legislative processes to uplift the voices of those most impacted by state-led proposed development.

The Lineal Descendants are the original Stewards of Makaokū. This is not to go unappreciated nor unrecognized by excluding them from voting rights on the Hawai'i Community Development Authority which dishonors their true value and withholding proactive participation which could benefit HCDA in the future. The vision of healing of our people and community should not be in vain by dishonoring Lineal Descendant rights as Kānaka of our Home.

The appropriate place name, Makaokū, also known by the state-led proposed development called Waiākea Peninsula, is not merely a name to be dismissed nor just a redevelopment area to those who cherish this place and our people. Maka’oKū is honored as kūpuna, an ‘āina rich with cultural history, genealogy, and ongoing stewardship amongst the Lineal Descendants of Maka’oKū 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.

While SB2001 seeks to advance planning and redevelopment goals, this proposed bill fails to honor the Lineal Descendants of Maka’oKū as the original stewards of the designated Crown Lands in which the HCDA has proposed.

Lineal Descendants are not Cultural Specialists. Lineal Descendants hold mana in a different way and shall not be defined as such due in part that we:

- Maintain genealogical ties to the ‘āina.**
- Carry kuleana to protect cultural resources specific to the ‘āina they are tied to.**
- Hold ‘ike of that ‘āina that cannot be replicated through cultural specialists, consultants or advisory groups.**

Any state-led redevelopment plan that does not formally include Lineal Descendants of Maka’oKū in decision-making risks repeating historic patterns, generational trauma of exclusion and harm. I strongly oppose SB2001.

Laulima i ka hāpai Pōhaku. Many hands carry the stones.

Seb Choe

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 6:09:57 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG, STRONG SUPPORT!!!

This really needs to get done! We are losing out on economic growth, tax revenue and job opportunities.

Mahalo!

Glen Kagamida, Hilo

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 12:38:12 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2001 SD1

DANA KEAWE

KEAUKAHA ACTION NETWORK

**WAIĀKEA AHUPUA'A CROWNLAND
HEIRS**

SB-2001-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 8:46:35 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rebecca Jimenez-Ward	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Bec Jimenez-Ward. I am testifying in **strong opposition** of **SD2001 SD1**, which **fails to include lineal descendants as vote-holding decision-makers** for the Banyan Drive–Makaokū Community Development District.

I have had the privilege of working alongside (Waiākea Ahupua‘a Crownland Heirs) WACH, Truth for the People, and Keaukaha Action Network for the past two years. I also serve as a Senior Coordinator for Environmental Justice programs with the National Wildlife Federation. I am an active member of the arts community on this island, and I am an apprenticing midwife.

I moved to Hilo in 2019 as a graduate student, and over the past seven years, this place has become home. In particular, Keaukaha and Makaokū — often referred to as Banyan Drive or the Waiākea Peninsula — hold deep significance for me and for many in our community.

Makaokū is storied land. It carries generations of ancestral stewardship, cultural practice, and ‘ike kūpuna. Decisions made about this land will shape not only infrastructure and economics, but the cultural integrity and historical memory of this place.

Including lineal descendants as **vote-holding decision-makers** reflects longstanding recognition in Hawai‘i that those with genealogical ties to land carry unique rights and responsibilities to steward it.

The 27 Waiakea Ahupua‘a Crownland Heirs and their families are genealogically and historically tied to this place. Their relationship to Makaokū is not transactional. It is ancestral, cultural, and ongoing. Excluding them as vote-holding decision-makers diminishes the very people whose families have stewarded and maintained relationship with this land for generations.

As an environmental justice practitioner, I know that equitable development requires meaningful power-sharing. **Solely including lineal descendants on an advisory committee, while not allowing them to participate as vote-holding decision-makers, is inherently extractive.** If this redevelopment is truly meant to serve the community, then it **must** include those with ancestral ties and kuleana to this land.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.