

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony in Support of HCR 303/HR253

Submitted by: Maurice H. Kaya
for a hearing by the
House Committee on Economic Development and Business Concerns
Hawaii State Capitol
Tuesday, March 25, 2008
9:00 a.m. Room, 325

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Business Concerns, I am pleased to provide this testimony in strong support of HCR 303/HR253 that proposes to rename the Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority as the George R. Ariyoshi Natural Energy Lab.

I am submitting this testimony as a private citizen, but you may remember me as the former Energy Administrator and Chief Technology Officer of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism. In the twenty years I spent with DBEDT, I was associated with NELHA, an agency attached to the department for administrative purposes. During that time I have seen that agency go through numerous challenges and emerge into what we now celebrate as the unique state asset that previous leaders of the state envisioned.

Clearly among those leaders, former Governor George R. Ariyoshi was the most instrumental in establishing the laboratory, and recognizing its potential for economic develop in energy and ocean sciences that are unique to Hawaii. His leadership was visionary, and represented among the earliest efforts to link strong planning and foresight, science and technology assets, and state infrastructure to attract hundreds of millions of investment in energy and ocean businesses at NELHA.

It was through Governor Ariyoshi's efforts that the acreage for commercial endeavors at what was originally known as the Hawaii Ocean and Science Technology (HOST) Park adjacent to the original

natural energy laboratory at Keahole Point was obtained. HOST Park was eventually merged with the Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii to form what is now known as NELHA.

Under his leadership, the facility was master planned to take advantage of the unique access at that location to nutrient-rich, cold deep seawater and abundant sunshine. By obtaining master permits for research corridors in the adjacent near-shore waters, the facility developed into a world-renown location for experiments and new business development. As the resolution correctly notes, many of these innovations are the first of their kind in the world.

Today the state is reaping the benefits of former Governor Ariyoshi's visionary dream, to establish the unique asset that is today's NELHA. It is altogether fitting, proper, and deserved to name NELHA as the George R. Ariyoshi Natural Energy Lab.

I urge your support of this important resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.