

**TESTIMONY**  
**SCR 73/ SR 44**  
**LATE**



**UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM**  
Legislative Testimony

**LATE TESTIMONY**

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs Committee  
and  
Senate Higher Education Committee  
March 23, 2009 at 3:45pm

By  
Rose Tseng  
Chancellor, University of Hawaii at Hilo

SCR 73/SR 44

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO CONVENE MEETINGS WITH STAKEHOLDERS TO ADDRESS STEWARDSHIP ISSUES AND AFFIRM THE STATE'S COMMITMENT TO A COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE VARIED MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY INTERESTED IN MAUNA KEA AND ITS UNIQUE SPIRITUAL, CULTURAL, HISTORICAL, AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

Chairs Hee and Tokuda and Members of the Committees:

These resolutions request that the State Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and the University of Hawaii (University) convene meetings with stakeholders to address and affirm issues with the varied members of the community interested in Mauna Kea. We are respectful of the spirit of this resolution but want to note that we have already started to do what is being requested in these resolutions.

Under the University approved Mauna Kea Science Reserve Master Plan (2000) (Master Plan), the University of Hawaii at Hilo (UH Hilo), through the Office of Mauna Kea Management (OMKM), has managed the lands that the University is leasing from the DLNR on Mauna Kea. The mission of OMKM is to achieve harmony, balance, and trust in the sustainable management and stewardship of the Mauna Kea Science Reserve through community involvement programs that protect, preserve, and enhance the natural, cultural, and recreational resources of Mauna Kea, while providing a world-class center dedicated to education, research, and astronomy.

OMKM operates with close assistance of the community-based, all volunteer Mauna Kea Management Board (MKMB), whose seven members are currently drawn from groups such as the DLNR, the Native Hawaiian community, the observatories, and other community interests. To fully understand and appreciate the community-based arrangement and sensitivity of OMKM and the MKMB, it is notable that they are both advised by the Kahu Ku Mauna Council—"the guardians of the mountain". Members of Kahu Ku Mauna are selected on the basis of their awareness of traditional and

customary use of Mauna Kea and their sensitivity to the sacredness of Mauna Kea. Serving on this Board are cultural practitioners, a Polynesian navigator, representatives of the Native Hawaiian enrichment coordination program, an instructor in Native Hawaiian cultural programs, and an expert in Hawaiian Language. OMKM is also advised by an Environmental Committee on natural resources. All meetings of the MKMB are publicly noticed and open to the public. These meetings are attended by stakeholders from groups interested in the varied aspects of Mauna Kea and clearly have an opportunity to exchange ideas and have their concerns addressed. Stewardship issues are addressed at these meetings.

Recently, the UH Hilo through OMKM has agreed in concept to enter into a cooperative agreement formalizing the mutually supportive relationship between OMKM and the Natural Area Reserve Commission, which is under DLNR authority. The University through OMKM will reciprocate by assisting DLNR to protect the resources in the Natural Area Reserve.

Since the establishment of OMKM, there has been significant progress in the stewardship of Mauna Kea's cultural and natural resources.

Moreover, with the preparation and submission of a comprehensive management plan (CMP) to the DLNR and the Board of Land and Natural Resources, the University is prepared to take the next step in the management of Mauna Kea's cultural and natural resources. In preparing the CMP, the University consulted extensively with all parts of the Big Island community, including the Native Hawaiian community. As the CMP is intended to be an evolving document, to be updated and modified as new, better, and more current information becomes available, the University will continue to consult with the Big Island community in relation to the CMP and other related Mauna Kea management matters.

In summary, we are respectful of the spirit of this resolution but want to note that we are already doing what is being requested in these resolutions.

Thank you kindly for allowing us this opportunity to share our comments. Aloha.



UNIVERSITY  
of HAWAII°  
MĀNOA

## LATE TESTIMONY

RL:2253

SR 43/SCR 72

REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAN SECURITY TO COLLABORATE AND SHARE INFORMATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO PREVENT INVASIVE SPEICIES FORM ENTERING THE UNITED STATES

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs  
Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

Joint Public Hearing – March 23, 2009  
2:45 p.m., State Capitol, Conference Room 229

By

Rachel Neville, Oahu Invasive Species Committee  
Peter Rappa, Environmental Center

SR 43/SCR 72 requests cooperation among federal and state agencies preventing the establishment and spread of invasive species. We are testifying as individual faculty and our views do not represent an official position of the University of Hawaii.

We support the intent of this resolution. Some progress has been made regarding communication between the entities named in this resolution, but there is room for improvement. Customs officials regularly attend and report out at meeting of the Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) but state and federal agencies responsible for protecting Hawaii against invasive species need to communicate with each other immediately if pests are detected in international shipments.

Invasive species are the single biggest threat to Hawaii's economy and natural environment. Pests already cause millions of dollars in crop losses, the extinction of native species, the destruction of native forests, and the spread of disease. But many more harmful pests now threaten to invade Hawaii and wreak further damage. Alien species have already had a tremendous effect on Hawaii's unique flora and fauna. Because of its isolation, Hawaii originally had thousands of species found nowhere else on Earth. It has, however, suffered the highest rates of extinction of any area of the United States and one of the highest rates anywhere in the world, with hundreds or possibly thousands of unique species already extinct. The primary agent of this remarkable loss of native biodiversity has been the massive introduction by humans of alien species to the Hawaiian Islands. Only through vigilance enhanced by cooperation among agencies charged with the interception and eradication of invasive species can the islands be protected.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this resolution.

HO'OKAHI NO KA 'ĀINA A ME NA KĀNAKA

**KAHEA**

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**LATE TESTIMONY**

**SCR 73/SR 44 Mauna Kea  
Room 229, 3:45 pm  
March 23, 2009**

Aloha Chairman Hee and Chairwoman Tokuda, and members of the Senate Committees on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs, and Higher Education,

**KAHEA strongly supports the passage of Senate Concurrent Resolution 73 and Senate Resolution 44.** We believe that the laws are in place to properly protect and manage the sacred summit of Mauna Kea. The challenge has long been the Board of Land and Natural Resources inability and unwillingness to fulfill its mandate under the law to manage the conservation district on Mauna Kea. The state court's ruling in 2007 combined with these resolutions put the Land Board and the Department on notice of their failure to fulfill their responsibilities under the law. It is our sincere hope that with this directive from the Legislature the Land Board will finally embrace its kuleana and adopt a truly comprehensive management plan to address the long-standing issues of telescope development in the conservation district of Mauna Kea. With a proper management plan, the best interests of the irreplaceable natural and cultural resources, the public, and everyone involved with the summit can be properly balanced and protected.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

*Marti Townsend*

Marti Townsend  
Program Director

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**(END)**