

MAR 10 2010

S.R. NO. 117

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE RENEGOTIATION OF LONG-TERM LEASES ON MOKAUEA ISLAND WITH PERSONS WHO RESIDE ON THE ISLAND AND AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN AN EDUCATIONAL CENTER ON THE TRADITIONAL METHODS USED IN SELF-SUSTAINING HAWAIIAN FISHING VILLAGES.

1 WHEREAS, in Keehi Lagoon, between Honolulu Harbor and the
2 Honolulu International Airport and less than half a mile from
3 the bustling metropolis of downtown Honolulu, lies the small,
4 ten-acre Mokauea Island; and

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6 WHEREAS, maps dating as far back as 1817 show the fishing
7 village at Mokauea Island, the site of Oahu's last Hawaiian
8 fishing village and one of hundreds that thrived in pre-European
9 times, these villages were a repository of an impressive and
10 significant body of maritime skills including knowledge of the
11 sea, currents, tides, seasonalities, and the building and
12 handling of finely crafted canoes and fishing equipment; and

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14 WHEREAS, Mokauea Island's fishing community was once
15 entirely self-sufficient due to a functional fishpond,
16 cultivation of vegetable and medicinal plants, as well as limu,
17 and a healthy supply of reef fish in the surrounding area; and

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19 WHEREAS, in 1972, the State attempted to evict the
20 remaining seventeen families from Mokauea in order to build an
21 airport runway extension, and several fishers were arrested for
22 trespassing on land their families had lived on for generations;
23 and

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25 WHEREAS, in June of 1975, in a final eviction attempt, the
26 State burned down five fisher's homes, and these actions were
27 recorded by local media and caused a public outcry; and

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29 WHEREAS, the State negotiated a sixty-five year lease with
30 the islanders in 1978, agreeing to let them stay if they would
31 rebuild their houses according to the building code and
32 establish an educational program for local students to learn
33 about traditional fishing and the reef environment; and
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1 WHEREAS, the United States Navy provided labor and
2 machinery to construct a fishpond on the eastern side of the
3 Island and consultants from the University of Hawaii helped
4 Island residents stock it; and

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6 WHEREAS, the fishers and their families rebuilt their
7 homes, and the Mokauea Fishermen's Association began their work
8 restoring and reviving the fishing village with the cooperation
9 of the United States Army and groups of students, teachers,
10 scholars, and scientists; and

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12 WHEREAS, over the next thirty years, the fishpond faced
13 challenges ranging from invasive species to pollution and was
14 ultimately abandoned; and

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16 WHEREAS, similarly, the Mokauea Community's plans to
17 rejuvenate the Island have faced many obstacles since that time,
18 the costs of rebuilding together with the high cost of living in
19 Honolulu generally have forced many families off the Island, and
20 by 2005, only a handful of families remained on the Island and
21 none possessed the financial or time resources needed to set up
22 an educational program or the needed facilities without
23 assistance; and

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25 WHEREAS, since 2005, Kai Makana, a not-for-profit, tax
26 exempt corporation, has been leading the effort to
27 environmentally and culturally restore Mokauea Island by
28 adopting the original vision of the Mokauea Fishermen's
29 Association, and its goal is to recreate a living example of a
30 traditional Hawaiian subsistence fishing village as a learning
31 center that will allow for scientific studies and the
32 perpetuation and practice of Hawaiian fishing and seafaring
33 culture; and

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35 WHEREAS, projects planned or underway include the clearing
36 of invasive species, identification and reintroduction of
37 appropriate native plants, restoration of the fishpond, and
38 regular removal of marine debris; and

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40 WHEREAS, infrastructure is also being planned, including
41 renewable energy systems, water production, wastewater and solid
42 waste management, a community organic garden,
43 telecommunications, and security, and these efforts are being
44 supported by a diverse collection of community members, schools,



1 private businesses, and government agencies, who share an
2 interest in preserving Mokauea as a unique Hawaiian fishing
3 village; now, therefore,

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5 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
6 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010,
7 that the Governor is urged to designate the appropriate state
8 agency to renegotiate long-term leases on Mokauea Island with
9 persons who reside on the Island and agree to participate with
10 an educational center on the traditional methods used in self-
11 sustaining Hawaiian fishing villages; and

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13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the designated state agency is
14 urged to renegotiate and enter into long-term leases for lands
15 comprising the entirety of what is commonly known as Mokauea
16 Island, Keehi Lagoon, Oahu, not to exceed sixty-five years in
17 duration, with persons who reside and have continuously resided
18 on Mokauea Island, or the lineal descendants of those who reside
19 and have continuously resided on Mokauea Island, since July 25,
20 1978, pursuant to a lease between the State and the Mokauea
21 Fishermen's Association, now known as the Mokauea Fishing
22 Village Association; and

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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the lessees are urged to, in
25 consideration of the leases granted by the State in cooperation
26 with the state agency, agree to participate in, and become an
27 essential part of, an educational center where students,
28 teachers, and other members of the public can learn the
29 traditional methods used in a self-sustaining Hawaiian fishing
30 village; and

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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state agency is requested
33 to establish a monitoring system and enforcement mechanism to
34 ensure compliance with these agreements; and

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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the designated state agency and
37 the lessees are requested to establish the Mokauea Island
38 Advisory Committee to:

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40 (1) Advise the state agency on matters related to the
41 management of the leases, including eligibility
42 requirements for applicants for leases and the
43 monitoring of lessee compliance with participation in
44 the interpretive programs; and



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- (2) Provide guidance to the lessees in fulfilling their obligation to participate in the interpretive and caretaking programs on Mokauea Island; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the designated state agency is requested to include on the Mokauea Island Advisory Committee:

- (1) One member representing the state agency, as designated by the director or chairperson of that state agency;
- (2) Two members of the Mokauea Fishing Village Association, as designated by the Association;
- (3) One member representing Kai Makana, as designated by the Governor;
- (4) One member of the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation, as designated by the Corporation; and
- (5) One member of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, as designated by the Board; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the President of the Mokauea Fishing Village Association, the President of Kai Makana, and the Executive Director of the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation.

OFFERED BY: _____

J.
 Michelle N. Iudani
 Norman Sakaifu

