



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

P.O. BOX 1879
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF KAULANA H. R. PARK, CHAIRMAN
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

ON **HB 2923 HD 1 RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS**

February 23, 2010

Chair Oshiro, Vice-Chair Lee and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaiian Homes Commission and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands support HB 2923 HD1. In the previous legislative session we testified in strong support of similar measures which would authorize DHHL to, at its discretion, extend the maximum lease term for our commercial leases from 65 to 99 years for the purpose of maximizing our ability to generate revenue for our trust.

Our ability to carry out our mission to provide homeownership opportunities to native Hawaiians is directly tied to the Hawaiian Homes Commission's ability to obtain necessary resources through federal and state funds, private and public grants, and income-generating opportunities. Over the past five years, we have supported our homesteading program with income generated through the commercial leases of our non-homestead lands. The current 65-year term has limited DHHL's ability to attract substantial investments in the proposed commercial lease properties. Legislation for a lease

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extension increases the value of DHHL's property and provides and improved tool which DHHL can use to ultimately better serve its beneficiaries.

We support HB 2923 HD 1 and respectfully urge that this committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.