

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII



LATE TESTIMONY
"KULU'IAI" NA HALE-A
CHAIRMAN
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION
ROBERT J. HALL
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRMAN

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS
P.O. BOX 1879
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF ALAPAKI NAHALE-A, CHAIRMAN
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
**HR 208/ HCR 245, URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS TO
RELEASE PASTORAL AND AGRICULTURAL LEASES TO ITS BENEFICIARIES**

April 1, 2011

Aloha Chair Tsuji, Chair Hanohano and Members of the Committees:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) supports this resolution and is currently in the process of assessing both our agricultural and pastoral homestead programs with the intent of revising, re-developing and advancing these programs. The Hawaiian Homes Commission took action last year to support this initiative to make more agricultural and pastoral homesteads available to our beneficiaries. We look forward to reporting on these efforts leading up to the opening of the 2012 legislative session.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

LATE TESTIMONY

Leimomi M. Lum
Phone (808) 292-1365

Testimony

April 1, 2011

Mr. / Madam Chairperson and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to express my concerns over the Hawaiian Homes Program.

My name is Leimomi Mo'okini Lum and I am three quarters Hawaiian. Many of you know me because of my work with the Mo'okini heiau and our annual Children's Day which has been celebrated for 32 years, and for years you have seen me in these hallways at one time or another looking for your support.

Today I am asking for your support in another area, I am talking about the process by which the Department of Hawaiian Homes handles the placement of the beneficiaries on the Hawaiian Homes List and the awarding of the pastoral and agricultural lands.

I initially applied to DHHL for a pasture lot in 1945, at the behest of my mother, who never had the opportunity to apply for "Hawaiian lands" in her lifetime.

After 21 year of waiting patiently for my turn on the DHHL list of applicants for pastoral lots, imagine my dismay when I was told my file did not exist it was lost along with others.

With great trepidation I filed another application and reapplied in 1966, which is 45 years ago, and through the years I would check on my ranking on the award list without much success, the usual answer is "you are still on the list but the ranking would fluctuate." I was told the information was internal to DHHL some kind of "highly classified, top secret" information not for public or applicants to access.

In 2005 the offering of lands in Honokaia was made available and I submitted a ranch plan, it was scored low by 2 of the 5 evaluators on contract to DHHL from the UH School of Agriculture and one evaluator who scored my plan low said he was concerned about my age and to clarify his statement went on to say he meant he thought I lacked the energy and motivation to complete the ranch plan. While I may not be as physically fit as I was as a Police Officer for 33 years, I do still possess the ability to teach and pass on the knowledge I have to my family.

This has led me to first file, an appeal to the decision with DHHL. Further I have taken this to the circuit court system to help to resolve what I perceived as an unfair evaluation by the panel, and the Judge agreed and I prevailed in the court system.

February 2005, we read about the second largest shopping center in the State being built on DHHL land the "good news for the more than 20,000 Native Hawaiians waiting for homestead awards.

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands will earn more than \$140 million in rent over the next 65 years." What about the good news for us who have been waiting for decades to get our lands. I am 85 years old and although medical science has made amazing strides in prolonging the quality of life, I do not believe I will be able to wait for an additional 65 years to realize my dream of a Hawaiian Homes award.

Today we hear persons arbitrarily use words like *Pono*, *Kukakuka*, and *Ho'oponopono* to sound Hawaiian but without understanding the history of the terms and their proper uses and the lifestyle they emanate from, they merely patronize the Hawaiian people.

A Plantation Mentality is pervasive in the Hawaiian Homes Commission in that the "Company" allows you to charge your groceries and supplies at the store but never pays you enough to pay off your bills, so you must always keep working. In much the same way, ranch lands are awarded to raise cattle but only in quantities where the number of cattle raised cannot even make a small profit, forcing the rancher and his family to work other full-time jobs to pay the ranch's and family's expenses. I overheard someone telling someone else "You don't do it for the money-it is a lifestyle." How is this *Pono*? The purpose of the Hawaiian Homes Act is to help Hawaiians get ahead not to keep them indentured to the DHHL. It cost money for fencing supplies and to supply water to the cattle and where does this come from? It will most likely come from family and friends and if you are lucky perhaps a bank or some other lending institution. Therefore you work to pay off the loan and hope that the land you were awarded can become profitable.

In closing, I understand that there are 305 acres for sale in Pu'ukapu and the asking price for the lease is \$610,000.00. One need only to go to [WWW.Charmaine QuiltPoki.com](http://WWW.CharmaineQuiltPoki.com) for details and photos, as listed in the classified ads of Ka Wai Ola. This homesteader wants to make money instead of using the land for its original intended purpose that is this parcel could be used to provide other awardees a chance to achieve their dream of Homesteading. I strongly urge the Hawaiian Homes Commission to look within and to get back to the job of working for the people, their beneficiaries, the tax payers the ones who pay the bills and start the awarding of lands that will enable the recipients to attain their lifelong hopes of sharing in the lands of their forebearers.

Mahalo A Nui Loa,..... A Hui HouMalama Pono Kakou

LATE TESTIMONY

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2011

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NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Friday, April 01, 2011

TIME: 9:00am

PLACE: Conference Room 312

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

**Testimony in Support
HR208/HCR245**

Aloha Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Lynn De Coite and I am a homestead farmer on the island of Molokai and I am in support of HR/208 and HCR 245 urging the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to release pastoral and agricultural leases to its beneficiaries. I in particular have maximized all allocated ag land and pastoral lands in my possession to grow sweet potatoes and raise cattle. Many of us would like to expand operations but cannot due so unless release of these lands are done. I urge you to support this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to give testimony.

Mahalo,
Lynn DeCoite