

**GM 506**

Joshua K. Kaakua  
5086 Poola Place  
Honolulu, HI 96821

1

February 26, 2016

Senator Mike Gabbard  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 201  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: **GM 506** Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, JOSHUA KAAKUA, for a term to expire 06-30-2019

Aloha e Senator Gabbard,

Please accept this letter of interest and enthusiasm to serve on the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC). I am committed to faithfully discharge my duties as a State of Hawaii Commissioner to the best of my ability. To assist with the confirmation process, I am providing responses to your written questions:

*(1) Why do you wish to be a member of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission?*  
I value greatly the proper stewardship and management of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve and the broader impact that Kaho‘olawe has on the greater community. I want to contribute and kako‘o the important work of the Commission.

*(2) How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission?*

The role and responsibilities of the Commissioners are, in a broad sense, to collectively develop, manage, and implement the vision for Kaho‘olawe as outlined by HRS Chapter 6K. Further, members of the KIRC must conduct business in a way that promotes high standards of ethical conduct and open and transparent government in Hawaii.

*(3) Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, or knowledge that would aid your decision-making ability as a member of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission. &*

*(4) Name three qualities that best describe you and that would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission?*

I understand that this is a critical time for the island of Kaho‘olawe and the KIRC. The KIRC will face challenges relating to generating funds, implementing the restoration, education, and cultural use vision, and preparing for the successful transfer to the sovereign native Hawaiian entity. Although I don’t have all the answers for these challenges, I believe I can be a strong asset to the Commission and will bring the

following resources:

1. Skills and experience: I am an educator, grant writer, and program manager. I am trained as a Civil Engineer and believe in approaching problems with systematic and creative processes. As a grant-writer, I have raised over \$10,000,000 from federal and private sources to implement innovative programs at the University of Hawaii and broader community to increase Native Hawaiian representation in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). I am very comfortable managing budgets, timeline, and scope and have not lost my entrepreneurial flair while working in a very bureaucratic environment. I am an active member in the Native Hawaiian community, especially in regards to education and STEM workforce.

2. Clear communication, perspective, and support from the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana: The 'Ohana's cultural, historical, community, and Kaho'olawe expertise is a valuable resource to the Commission. As the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana representative on the 7-member Commission, I intend to bring access to the collective knowledge and contemporary skills of the 'Ohana to find solutions to the KIRC's challenges. In 2015, the 'Ohana conducted an internal selection process to replace Dr. Aluli as the member of the 'Ohana on the KIRC and I was humbled to receive their unanimous selection and support. As a Protect Kaho'olawe member, I take very seriously the kuleana passed onto us by kupuna such as George Helm, Uncle Harry Mitchell, and Auntie Frenchy DeSoto. I also understand that the duties of a Commissioner are to act in the best interests of the State and will do so.

3. Commitment & Solution-oriented temperament: I believe I can work well with other members of the Commission and it's partners. I will always provide respect for others and will not shy away from providing criticism, support, or alternate ideas if necessary. I am willing to fully participate keeping informed of KIRC business and legislation, and actively participating in commission meetings, assigned Task Forces and Working Groups. I am passionate about working with others to take Kaho'olawe to the next level. If I can support the KIRC in the capacity of a commissioner, I will fulfill the obligation to the best of my abilities.

*(5) What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service? &*

*(6) Name one previous experience that would make you stand out. How would this benefit the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission?*

Over the past 2.5 years, I had the privilege to serve on the eight-member Kanaloa 2026 Working Group working with communities on all the islands to develop the I OLA KANALOA! LIFE TO KANALOA! strategic plan. The experience gave me a clearer understanding of what our community values and where KIRC can seek an expanded network of partners to generate support for sustainable stewardship of the island. There are specific activities in the I OLA KANALOA! plan that the Executive Director and I believe can be accomplished during the next three years.

Joshua K. Kaakua  
5086 Poola Place  
Honolulu, HI 96821

3

*(7) Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?*

No. I currently work at the University of Hawaii Office of STEM Education charged with providing UH system-wide leadership and support for STEM activities at UH and in Hawaii. I do not foresee any possible conflicts of interests in my line of work or with my spouse or family. However, I intend to seek feedback from the Hawaii State Ethics Commission in the event that a potential conflict of interest may arise.

Thank you for your consideration of my confirmation to serve on the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission. Please contact me at [jkaakua@hawaii.edu](mailto:jkaakua@hawaii.edu) or (808) 291-4487 if I can provide further clarification or comment. I will also plan to attend the Water, Land, and Agriculture hearing on Monday, February 29, 2016 at 2:45 pm in Conference Room 224 to be available for any discussion or questions, if necessary.

Sincerely,



Joshua K Kaakua, Ed.D.



*KŪKULU KE EA A KANALOA*  
**KAHO‘OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION**

811 Kolu Street, Suite 201, Wailuku, HI 96793  
Telephone (808) 243-5020 Fax (808) 243-5885  
Website: <http://kahoolawe.hawaii.gov>

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*Chairperson*  
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*Vice-Chair*

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JOSHUA KAAKUA, Ed.D  
CARMEN HULU LINDSEY

Michael K. Nāho‘opi‘i  
*Executive Director*

**Testimony of**  
**MICHAEL K. NAHO‘OPTI**  
**Executive Director**

**Before the Senate Committee on**

**WATER, LAND AND AGRICULTURE**

**Monday, February 29, 2016**

**2:45 PM**

**State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of**  
**GOVERNOR’S MESSAGE 506 – SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND**  
**CONFIRMATION TO THE KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION OF**  
**GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE JOSHUA KAAKUA**

Governor's Message No. 506 nominates Joshua Kaakua to serve on the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) in the seat reserved for a representative of the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana (PKO). On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express my strong support and recommend his confirmation.

Joshua Kaakua has been a member of the PKO for over 14 years and has served in many leadership positions within the organization. He has been trained and certified as a KIRC Assess Guide and has participated and lead many volunteer trips to the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve safely. His most currently involvement with Kaho‘olawe has been as one of the PKO representatives on the joint KIRC/PKO/OHA working group that created the current long-term, community planning document for Kaho‘olawe entitled: *I OLA KANALOA!*

Joshua Kaakua is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame with a Bachelor’s of Science Degree in Civil Engineering, the University of Hawai‘i with a Master’s in Business Administration and the University of Southern California with a Doctorate’s in Education. Joshua has been employed by the University of Hawai‘i since 2002 teaching in the College of Engineering, directing the Native Hawaiian Science & Engineering Mentorship Program, and administering over \$10 million in extramural projects to improve STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education and outcomes for underrepresented groups (including Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and women). Joshua currently serves as Diversity Specialist for the University of Hawai‘i Office of STEM Education charged with providing UH system-wide leadership and support for STEM activities at UH and in Hawai‘i.

Joshua's training as an engineer and experience working with native Hawaiian youth especially in the STEM field is a critical need for this commission as the KIRC embarks on a series of Capital Improvement Projects including the installation of alternative energy systems on Kaho'olawe, the development and construction of the KIRC Operational and Educational Center at Kihei, and the expansion of a native Hawaiian, Continuing Technical Education internship program for college students.

Again, the KIRC strongly supports the confirmation of Joshua Kaakua to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. His commitment to the native Hawaiians and to Kaho'olawe makes him uniquely qualified for the position.



**Department of Land and Natural Resources  
Aha Moku Advisory Committee  
State of Hawaii  
Post Office Box 621  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809**

**Testimony of  
Leslie Kuloloio, Chair**

**Before the Senate Committee on  
Water, Land and Agriculture**

**Monday, February 29, 2016  
2:45 P.M.  
Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of  
GM 506  
RELATING TO HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE**

Government Message 506 submits for consideration and confirmation to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee Joshua Kaakua, for a term to expire on June 30, 2019. **Aha Moku supports this nominee.**

Mr. Kaakua has spent his life working toward the betterment of conditions for Native Hawaiians. That experience is needed on the Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission. Just as important, is his expertise in culture-based framework especially for Moku O Kanaloa.

Aha Moku puts their trust in Mr. Kaakua in his understanding of the Aha Moku cultural framework, particularly of the families and community of Honuaula, the one moku on Maui that is attached traditionally to Kahoolawe. These are the families who have generational knowledge of the natural and cultural resources of Kanaloa and who are lineal descendants of their kupuna iwi who rest on the island.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



**PROTECT KAHO'OLAWE 'OHANA**  
**P.O. Box 39**  
**Kaunakakai, Hawai'i 96748**

Testimony Presented Before the Senate Committee on Water, Land and Agriculture  
Monday, February 29, 2016 @ 2:45 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

By  
Kylee Mar  
on Behalf of the Organization Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana

### **IN SUPPORT OF GM 506**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and members of the House Committees on Water, Land and Agriculture. Aloha. My name is Kylee Pomaka'i Mar testifying on behalf of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana ('Ohana) **in support of GM 506** Confirmation of Gubernatorial Nominee, **DR. JOSHUA KA'AKUA**, to serve as the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana's representative on the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC). He has the unanimous and full support of the 'Ohana to represent our organization on the KIRC.

**Dr. Joshua Ka'akua** has a direct, fifteen-year working relationship with the restoration of Kaho'olawe – Kanaloa. From his early days as a simple volunteer, he quickly moved to training as a Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana *kua (leader)* and regularly leads accesses of his students from the University of Hawai'i Native Hawaiian Science, and Engineering Mentorship Program to Kaho'olawe. **Dr. Kaakua** is also trained as a KIRC Access Guide - in the ability to identify, mark and avoid unexploded ordnance. This next step as a member of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission affirms his growing commitment to the *kuleana (responsibility)* of the restoration and life of Kaho'olawe.

**Dr. Ka'akua** is an initial member of the The Kanaloa 2026 Working Group, established in 2013 with representation from the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO), Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC), and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to lead the strategic planning process up to 2026.

**Dr. Kaakua** earned a Doctorate of Education degree from the University of Southern California (USC) in 2014, a Master of Arts degree in Business Administration from the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa (UHM) in 2007 and a Bachelor of Science degree from Notre Dame University in 2002. In his position at UHM, **Dr. Kaakua** has raised over \$6 million from federal and private sources to implement innovative programs to increase Native Hawaiian representation in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics and he has managed over \$11 million in program grant monies.

**Dr. Ka'akua** has been essential in recruiting Hawaiian STEM talent and providing them with the nurturing support needed for academic resilience Native and success through undergraduate research, internships and academic support. His current role allows for extensive networking and partnership relationships internal and external to the university system and with other local and national organizations such as the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and Na Pua No'eau, US Department of Education and National Science Foundation. A skill and practice valuable to the responsibilities of a Commissioner.

Mahalo for your attention to the 'Ohana testimony in support of **DR. JOSHUA KA'AKUA** for Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commissioner.

Aloha 'Āina,  
Kylee Pomaka'i Mar



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**Date:** Saturday, February 27, 2016 11:18:17 PM

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**GM506**

Submitted on: 2/27/2016

Testimony for WLA on Feb 29, 2016 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Amy Brinker	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**Date:** Thursday, February 18, 2016 7:17:33 PM

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**GM506**

Submitted on: 2/18/2016

Testimony for WLA on Feb 29, 2016 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anela Evans	Individual	Support	No

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**Date:** Sunday, February 28, 2016 6:45:15 PM

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**GM506**

Submitted on: 2/28/2016

Testimony for WLA on Feb 29, 2016 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Don Aweau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**Date:** Friday, February 19, 2016 8:04:48 AM

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**GM506**

Submitted on: 2/19/2016

Testimony for WLA on Feb 29, 2016 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Faith Kahale Saito	Individual	Support	No

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**Date:** Friday, February 19, 2016 7:20:57 AM

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**GM506**

Submitted on: 2/19/2016

Testimony for WLA on Feb 29, 2016 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kaulu Lu?uwai	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Kelvin Ho  
PO Box 769,  
Lawai Hawaii 96765  
808. 3327263  
[kelkauai@gmail.com](mailto:kelkauai@gmail.com)

Feb 28, 2016

Aloha Committee On Water, Land and Agriculture

I am writing in support of GM 506 to confirm Gubernatorial nominee Dr. Josh Ka'akua to serve as a representative of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana representative on the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. As a long time member of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana I have witnessed firsthand the growth of this young man into a leader who listens to and embodies the spirit of the PKO. I am sure you are aware of his achievements and accreditations but I wish to speak to the core values he consistently demonstrates. His ability to communicate with a diverse group of 'ohana members speaks to a wisdom beyond his years on earth. His honesty, compassion and knowledge both grass roots and academic are coupled with a determination in problem solving. He is a stellar candidate for this position and has the unified support of the 'Ohana.

We humbly ask you to consider him clearly and confirm his position.

Mahalo,

Kelvin Ho

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**GM506**

Submitted on: 2/23/2016

Testimony for WLA on Feb 29, 2016 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kevin Chang	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha Senators Gabbard and Nishihara and members of the Committee on Water, Land and Agriculture, I submit this testimony in strong support of Mr. Joshua Ka'akua. I know Mr. Ka'akua as a loving family man whose family gives back to Hawai'i through both its advocacy and actual stewardship of our cultural and natural landscapes in places like Kaho'olawe and others that are physically closer to home. Also Mr. Ka'akua is one smaht buggah with a big heart. I thunk our state needs to start putting more smaht buggahs with big hearts on commissions that deal with aspects of our community that touch upon both. Aloha nui. Kevin Chang

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**GM506**

Submitted on: 2/22/2016

Testimony for WLA on Feb 29, 2016 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kylee Mar	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Chair Gabbard and Vice Chair Nishihara,

My name is Lisa Grandinetti. I am a student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and a registered voter. I would like to express my support of GM506.

I have known Joshua Ka'akua for several years now, and he has demonstrated his commitment and dedication to the preservation and revitalization of the island of Kaho'olawe. I believe he is the right person to confirm to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission.

I urge you to vote yes on GM506, and confirm Gubernatorial Nominee Joshua Ka'akua.

Thank you,  
Lisa

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**Date:** Wednesday, February 24, 2016 1:53:05 PM

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**GM506**

Submitted on: 2/24/2016

Testimony for WLA on Feb 29, 2016 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nicole cody	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support the nomination of Josh Kaakua

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**GM506**

Submitted on: 2/25/2016

Testimony for WLA on Feb 29, 2016 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Pilialoamaulua Cashman	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha Chairperson Mike Gabbard, Vice-chairperson Clarence K. Nishihara and the Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture. My name is Pilialoamaulua Kukunala'ela'eokala Cashman and I am submitting testimony in SUPPORT of GM 506 to confirm the appointment by Governor David Ige of Josh Ka'akua as Commissioner of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC), for a term to expire June 20, 2019. Mahalo Pilialoamaulua Cashman

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