

Senate Committee on Water and Land
Attn: Chair Mike Gabbard, Vice-Chair Clarence K. Nishihara

Testimony of Darren T Lerner

LATE

In SUPPORT of GM 854

Confirmation of Gubernatorial Nominee **Neil J. Kaho'okele Hannahs** to the
Commission on Water Resource Management

Monday, April 18, 2016, 2:45PM
Conference Room 224

Aloha Chairperson Mike Gabbard, Vice-chairperson Clarence Nishihara, and members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land.

My name is Darren T Lerner. In my professional capacity, I serve as the Director of the University of Hawaii Sea Grant College Program and Interim Director for the UH Water Resources Research Center. I am submitting testimony in support of **GM 854** to confirm the appointment by Governor Ige of **Neil J. Kaho'okele Hannahs** to the Commission on Water Resource Management. Mr. Hannahs's experience, particularly with respect to his position as former director for the Land Assets Division with Kamehameha Schools makes him ideally suited and in possession of the knowledge and expertise for this Commission. His passion for Hawaii and its people are unsurpassed. I can think of no one better suited for this commission and I respectfully request your approval of his appointment.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 854 AND NEIL HANNAHS TO THE WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION. APRIL 17, 2016

To: Senate Committee on Water, Land & Agriculture
Hearing on Monday, April 18, at 2:45 p.m.

From: Lilikalā Kame'eiehiwa, PhD
46-252 Ahi Nani Place
Kāne'ohe, Hawai'i 96744



LATE

**RE: Testimony in Support of GM 854
Nomination of Neil Hannahs to the Commission on Water Resource Management**

Aloha kākou, I write to express my **strong support** for the nomination of Neil Hannahs for the State Commission on Water Resource Management. I am the director and senior professor at the Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies, at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, but I submit these comments as a private person.

I have known Neil for the past 50 years. We were high school classmates together at Kamehameha and we both went off to university. We both have worked for educational institutions for most of our careers. However, whereas my career has been at university teaching Hawaiian Ancestral Knowledge, Neil's career has been devoted to culturally-based land and water resource management for the largest land owner in Hawai'i, the Kamehameha Schools Bishop Estate.

In essence, he has taken the knowledge of our ancestors and applied that to the modern challenges facing Kamehameha in ensuring that their lands are managed in support of its important educational mission. As the former manager of Kamehameha Schools' agricultural and conservation lands [358,000 acres], Neil possesses 40 years of experience in balancing Western and traditional water resource management. He excels in looking at the needs of all and will be a great asset to the Water Commission's consideration of the many private and public water needs.

Before serving as the Director of Strategic Integration in Land Assets, where he was responsible for managing the Schools' agricultural and conservation lands, he had previously worked as the Kamehameha Region II Director, where he managed 50,000 acres of land on Kaua'i, Maui, Moloka'i and in Windward O'ahu. Water management on all of those lands are critical to both Kamehameha Schools as well as to all the people of Hawai'i.

Throughout his entire career at Kamehameha, Neil was the principal spokesman for integrating Ancestral Knowledge practices into the Schools' land management models and policies. He led in the development of Natural and Cultural Resource Management Plans, and most importantly culturally-appropriate watershed management partnerships. His team made possible the very popular stewardship programs that allowed the community to use Kamehameha land assets for cultural, economic, environmental and educational benefits. These assets include hundreds of acres of Hawaiian fishponds that have become so important to the Hawaiian community.

Of course his stellar career in managing the land and water for the largest land owner in Hawai'i has given Neil invaluable experiences directly relevant to the Water Commission's mission of overseeing the management of our public trust water resources.

Moreover, Neil volunteers on many non-profit boards in support of the Hawaiian community, with a Native Hawaiian and 'āina focus. Besides chairing the Polynesian Voyaging Society board, he also has served on the boards of the Kohala Center, the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, Bishop Museum, and the 'Āina Ulu program, which he also founded.

Neil's extensive experience fulfills the State Water Code's requirement of "substantial experience and expertise in traditional Hawaiian water resource management techniques and in traditional Hawaiian riparian usage." I have no doubt that he will bring great solutions to the many discussions and decision-making with colleagues on the Water Commission and I recommend him to you without reservation.

Mahalo for the opportunity to present this testimony in **strong support** of the nomination of Neil Hannahs to the Water Commission.

Katrina-Ann Oliveira
98-715 Iho Place #904
'Aiea, HI 96701

Aloha mai kākou,

I am writing in full support of Neil Hannahs' nomination to the State Water Resources Management Commission. I have known Mr. Hannahs for more than two decades in various capacities.

Most recently, Mr. Hannahs has served as a mentor of mine as a part of the First Nations Futures Program with Kamehameha Schools. The First Nations Futures Program, a brainchild of Mr. Hannahs, was created to develop Native Hawaiian leaders in land management. This is but one example of Mr. Hannahs' firm commitment to the sustainability of Hawai'i and the proper management of our precious natural resources. His commitment to mālama 'āina coupled with his skills as a former senior executive make Mr. Hannahs a great fit for this position.

Please accept my highest support for Mr. Hannahs' nomination!

Mahalo,
Katrina-Ann Kapā Oliveira

April 18, 2016

Hearing: Monday, April 18, 2016 at 2:45 p.m., in Conference Room 224

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture

LATE

RE: **SUPPORT GM854 - Nomination of Neil Hannahs as a member to the Commission on Water Resource Management.**

Dear Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair, Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair, and Members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture:

My name is Lisa Shozuya, and I am grateful to offer testimony in strong **SUPPORT** of the nomination of Neil Hannahs to serve on the Commission on Water Resource Management.

I have known Neil Hannahs ("Uncle Neil") personally for over 20 years. His youngest daughter, Moani, and my sister, Kari Ann, were best friends growing up. In the time that I've known him, I've watched, learned, experienced, and been inspired by a number of ways in which he has made a difference in our community.

For as long as I can remember, I have always been drawn to and had a keen interest in community organizing around a greater good. Because of that, I take notice of great leaders who emulate certain core values, character traits, and uniqueness. Uncle Neil has a deep understanding, integrity, and strong commitment to serving our community and the State of Hawaii at large. He has a way of seeing the big picture and figuring out ways to bring all sides together to reach a workable consensus.

He understands process and the law exceptionally well and I believe will always stand up for what is right and good for all concerned. He draws on solid experience, a successful track record, and life experiences that contribute to his vast knowledge, heart, compassion, and ability to focus and hone in on what matters most.

Because of these things, I would like to state for the record that I **SUPPORT** the Governor's nomination of Neil Hannahs to the Commission on Water Resource Management. He will be a one of kind asset to the Commission, and will provide the kind of leadership, perspective and voice that will make this group stronger and more effective.

Thank you very much for your consideration.
Mahalo,

Lisa Shozuya
Director of Training and Community Outreach
Lyon Associates Community Preparedness Training Division