



HAWAII COMMUNITY
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STATEMENT OF

GARETT KAMEMOTO, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Wednesday, February 28, 2018
12:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

in consideration, of
**HB 2613, HD1 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR HEEIA
NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE**

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee.

The Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) supports HB 2613, HD1, which will provide the funding that will help advance the goals and objectives of the Heeia National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR). It specifically appropriates funds for staff positions needed to restore the Heeia NERR to a functioning and healthy ahupua`a.

The HCDA board is a signatory to the Heeia NERR Governance Charter. The Governance Charter is a multi-party agreement among the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, HCDA, DLNR and other stakeholders that endorse a commitment to participate in the programs of the Heeia NERR. The primary goals of the Heeia NERR include: Increasing our understanding of the effects of human activities and natural events to improve informed decision-making affecting the sustained management of Heeia; Developing a place-based education and training program for the Heeia NERR; and Engaging various communities to create opportunities for collaboration to practice and promote stewardship that sustain cultural, biological and natural resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



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

Testimony of
Rocky Kaluhiwa, Acting Chair
Aha Moku Advisory Committee

Before the House Committee on Finance

Wednesday, February 28, 2018
12:00 P.M., State Capitol, Conference Room 308

**In SUPPORT of
House Bill 2613 HD 1
Making an appropriation for He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve**

House Bill 2613 HD 1 appropriates funds for fiscal year 2018-2019 to maintain the initial staff positions that are necessary to develop and manage the He'eia national Estuarine Research Reserve and its programs.

On behalf of the Aha Moku Advisory Committee, the Moku of Ko'olaupoko and the Ahupua'a of He'eia and Kaneohe, we **SUPPORT** HB 2613 HD 1.

The Aha Moku System encompasses the eight main Hawaiian Islands and supports the traditional and generational knowledge of the people who are connected to each of the 46 Moku and 606 Ahupua'a. Our purpose is to bring forth the voices – concerns and recommendations for solutions – from the communities of an ahupua'a on natural and cultural resources to the attention of government. Towards this end, we have been successful with the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), the entity we are attached to. Aha Moku brings forth and shares generational knowledge of methods handed down practitioner to practitioner in ways to protect, preserve and sustain the land, ocean, watershed and every natural resource within a site-specific ahupua'a. This knowledge, often combined with modern scientific methods, further ensures that natural and cultural resources are protected and perpetuated. It also emphasizes that all who live in Hawaii are stakeholders and responsible for the health of our ecosystem.

We are pleased that the He'eia National Estuarine Reserve was designated as the twenty-ninth site in the national estuarine research reserve system. We believe this designation, along with the partnerships of the Hawaii Institute of marine biology, the University of Hawaii, the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), and the input of those who have indigenous Hawaiian traditional and generational knowledge of the natural and cultural resources of He'eia specifically, can perpetually sustain this unique and beautiful place in Hawaii. To do this, we need to have the appropriate funds and staffing for this important Bill.

We humbly ask that HB 2613 HD 1 be passed by the House Finance Committee.

Respectfully Submitted on behalf of the Aha Moku Advisory Committee and the Ahupua'a of He'eia and Kaneohe

Rocky Kaluhiwa, Chair ProTem
Aha Moku Advisory Committee
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UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Committee on Finance
Wednesday, February 28, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.

By
Ruth Gates, Director
Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology
And
Michael Bruno
Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Vice Chancellor for Research
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 2613 HD1 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE HE'EIA NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the Committee on Finance:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2613 HD1, making an appropriation for the He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR), provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Supplemental Budget. HIMB strongly supports this measure but would like to offer some clarifications and suggested changes to the bill as describe below.

We are highly supportive of the effort to maintain the He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve (HeNERR) and are pleased to see continuing support of the site through HB 2613 HD1 with its inclusion of the needed personnel resources for the HeNERR. However, our understanding is that 3 of the 4 requested positions (Reserve Manager, Research Coordinator & Education Coordinator) were already permanently allocated to the university by the legislature during the 2017 session, thus they need not be included again in this current bill. These three positions are required at every designated NERR site in the nation by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, thus their permanent designation last year fulfilled the required match for the annual federal funding allocation enabling the site partners to implement the HeNERR management plan. However, a fourth position for a Cultural Resource Coordinator, while initially included in last year's bill, ultimately was not funded in 2017. Although not required for the NERRS federal funding, HIMB and the HeNERR site partners believe the Cultural Resource position is critical to the long-term success of the mission.

The establishment of He'eia as one of the 29 Research reserves across the nation has enabled the Site Partners, which includes the Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, Ko'olaupoko Foundation, Paepae O He'eia, Kāko'o 'Ōiwi, and UH's Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology (HIMB), to work with the State management agencies with jurisdiction

for the lands (Division of Land and Natural Resources, Hawaii Community Development Authority) to undertake a historic effort to restore He'eia to a functioning ahupua'a, and conduct research and monitoring needed to document the utility and value of this management strategy for coastal communities elsewhere. As outlined in the detailed management plan, this effort involves the removal of alien invasives and replacement with native and naturalized species throughout the area, restoration of the lo'i kalo, the loko kuapā and He'eia stream that runs through the site and links mauka to makai. Given that the ultimate goal is to restore a functioning ahupua'a, it is critical to have a cultural coordinator intimately involved in this effort.

HeNERR is unlike any other in the system - it is a coalescence of community, culture and research to combine modern science with traditional methods and cultural practices in the hope of restoring a more productive watershed and learning from the past to better inform a more bountiful and sustainable future in the face of a changing climate and increased human population. Unlike other federal NERRs, this designation effort has been community led from the beginning and was first proposed in the Kāne'ohe Bay Master plan. The designation of HeNERR is the culmination of decades of effort by the community of He'eia, and it is essential that Native Hawaiian culture and traditional practices be given equal prominence in this effort as the federally mandated science and education. Such prominence can best be realized through state investment in a position for the Cultural Resources Coordinator, and we are fully supportive of the communities' request for this position. This unique site will expose the youth of Hawai'i and those across the U.S. to a broad array of cultural and science concepts from historical and modern land use to ecological knowledge to cutting edge marine biology, and will empower the community to restore He'eia with the backing from the State of Hawai'i and the NERRS federal funding. If successful, it will serve as an example for others who seek to restore impacted watersheds and increase the productivity of nearshore fisheries throughout the Hawaiian Islands and to the broader Pacific beyond.

The Resource Manager, Research & Education Coordinators are full-time permanent positions, housed within the Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology (HIMB) as the lead State Partner on this effort. We would recommend that mechanisms be explored to create a fourth permanent position, similar to the 3 already allocated to HIMB as State match, to ensure culture be integrated into the restoration and management of He'eia now and in perpetuity, in accordance with the management plan. However, we also recognize that HIMB may not be the best fit for a permanent cultural resource coordinator, and we are happy to work with the committee to explore options for the creation and housing of a position in other departments with the appropriate expertise that will ensure the long-term stability of this position and success of the individual recruited in achieving the vision of restoring a functioning ahupua'a for the HeNERR.

In closing, we would like to reiterate our enthusiastic support for the intent of HB 2613 HD1 and thank your committee for the opportunity to offer this testimony.



The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i
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Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting H.B. 2613 HD1 Making an Appropriation for He'eia
National Estuarine Research Reserve
House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, February 28, 2018, 12:00(M, Room 308

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which life depends. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i. We manage 43,000 acres in 14 preserves and work in 19 coastal communities to help protect the near-shore reefs and waters of the main Hawaiian Islands. We forge partnerships with government, private parties and communities to protect Hawai'i's important watershed forests and coral reefs.

The Nature Conservancy supports H.B. 2613 HD1 which would provide funding for staffing in support of the He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve. State funding is anticipated to be matched by \$700,000 in federal funds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS) partners with states and territories to ensure long-term education, stewardship, and research on estuarine habitats. Atlantic, Gulf, Pacific, Caribbean and Great Lakes reserves advance knowledge and stewardship of estuaries and serve as a scientific foundation for coastal management decisions.

The ahupua'a of He'eia on the island of O'ahu is one of twelve NOAA-designated Sentinel Sites and in January 2017 was designated as the [29th National Estuarine Research Reserve](#). The He'eia NERR encompasses upland forests and grasslands, wetlands, reefs and seagrass beds, as well as Kāne'ohē Bay—the largest sheltered body of water in the Hawaiian Islands. The designation reflects the community's desire to ensure the protection and sustainable management of valued cultural, historical and natural resources. The proposed NERR will also enhance the community's capacity to use scientific information for decision-making, and increase local and national support for research, education, and restoration efforts in the region.

He'eia contains a world-class research institution (Hawai'i Institute for Marine Biology) and multiple community organizations including Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, Ko'olau Foundation, Kāko'o 'Ōiwi, Paepae o He'eia, and the He'eia State Park working together to develop and implement effective management strategies in an entire ahupua'a. Collaboration between these organizations is recognized as necessary because of the interconnected relationship each ecosystem has to another within the He'eia ahupua'a. Any effect up in the mountains will work its way into the wetlands and lo'i (traditional wetland agriculture systems), flow downstream to the loko i'a (fishponds) and eventually into the bay and onto coral reefs.

Ecologically, Kāne'ohē Bay is unique and the opportunity to highlight this special type of estuarine system is unparalleled in Hawai'i. From a research perspective, Kāne'ohē Bay has experienced a history of significant disturbances, from wastewater effluent to invasive algae. However, its variety of corals have shown to be some of the most resilient and able to recover from recent bleaching events around the entire state. This condition may provide insight into how to save other coral reefs around the state from future unfavorable ocean conditions.

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KO'OLAUPOKO HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB

February 28, 2018

To: Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair/Rep. Ty Cullen, Vice Chair
& Members. House Finance Committee

From: Alice P. Hewett, President
Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club

Re: H.B.. 2613, H.D. 1 – Making an Appropriation
For Heeia National Estuarine Research Reserve

Aloha, Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, Honorable Committee Members:

The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club offers its strong support for House Bill 2613, House Draft 1, which would provide funding for the cultural resource position to complete the staffing team for the He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERRS). When this unit was first established as part of the public-private partnership last year, this fourth position was left out – and we ask that you complete full staffing for the Heeia NERRS.

The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club comprises most of its membership from residents of the nine ahupua'a around Kane'ohe Bay – and we have placed special emphasis on the estuary of Heeia for the purposes of the NERRS. We have worked together with NOAA, the University of Hawaii's Institute of Marine Biology, the Department of Land and Natural Resources, and other community organizations like ours who advocate for wise management of our cultural and natural resources.

President Obama designated Heeia as the 29th estuary in the Reserve as one of his last official actions. Part of the unique aspects of our NERRS is that it includes a Hawaiian cultural component, integrating Hawaiian cultural practices into the stewardship, research and management of the Heeia estuary.

That is why we ask that you complete the staff for the state's Heeia NERRS by including funding for this new position in your upcoming budget for the University of Hawaii. We are suggesting that the position might be administratively assigned to the UH-Windward Community College, which has a Hawaiian Studies division, but we have not yet consulted with the college on that possibility.

We will be meeting with them in the next couple of weeks.

We respectfully ask your kokua to complete this work team by funding this cultural resource position for the Heeia NERRS.

Mahalo for allowing us to share our mana'o.

The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club was established in 1937 and is one of the largest in the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs nationwide. Ko'olaupoko HCC is a not-for-profit community organization dedicated to preserving and perpetuating the history, heritage and culture of Native Hawaiians and providing leadership and scholarships. Its membership is open to people of Hawaiian ancestry and those who are "Hawaiian at heart."

HB-2613-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2018 11:56:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/28/2018 12:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Melodie Aduja | OCC Legislative Priorities Committee, Democratic Party of Hawai'i | Support | No |

Comments:

LATE

HB-2613-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2018 5:22:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/28/2018 12:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Brian Bowen | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

This bill will assist the wise stewardship of Kaneohe Bay, providing benefits for generations yet to come.

Mahalo