



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committees on Higher Education and
Water and Land

Thursday, March 22, 2018 at 1:15 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

Chairs Kahele and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Kim and Gabbard, and members of the committees:

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. Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology (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, to work with the State management agencies with jurisdiction for the lands (Division of Land and Natural Resources, Hawai'i 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'ohē 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 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.



HAWAII COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



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STATEMENT OF

GARETT KAMEMOTO, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
and
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Thursday, March 22, 2018
1:15 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

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

Chairs Kahele and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Kim and Gabbard, 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.

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting H.B. 2613 HD1 Making an Appropriation for He'eia
National Estuarine Research Reserve
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Senate Committee on Water and Land
Thursday, March 22, 2018, 1:15PM, Room 224

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'ohe 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'ohe Bay is unique and the opportunity to highlight this special type of estuarine system is unparalleled in Hawai'i. From a research perspective, Kāne'ohe 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

March 22, 2018

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 2613, H.D. 1 – HE'EIA NERRS CULTURAL POSITION

To: Senator Kai`alii Kahele, Chair/Senator Donna Kim, Vice Chair
& Members, Committee on Higher Education

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair/Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
& Members, Committee on Water & Land

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

Aloha Chairs Kahele and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Kim and Gabbard, and Committee Members:

The Ko`olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club strongly supports passage of House Bill 2613, which would provide funding for the fourth and final position of the Heeia NERRS, National Estuarine Research Reserve, which is the cultural resources position. This would complete the Heeia NERRS team which was envisioned when President Obama signed the declaration establishing the Heeia NERRS in 2017.

The three other positions have already been included in the UH budget since their approval last year, and are part of this year's legislative budget request. This fourth position would provide cultural guidance to the operations of the NERRS, an important federal-state-private partnership which will help with research and educational activities in and around the Heeia estuary in Kane`ohe bay.

This program was created with the help of five community organizations, two state agencies and at least one federal agency, and provides a 70% federal share of the funding for the position.

Our Heeia NERRS is the only one in the 29-site national system of estuarine research reserves nationwide that has a cultural component. Our concept is to ensure that cultural practices for sustainability and resource management would be integral to the operation of the Heeia NERRS.

We urge your approval and support for funding of this fourth position so badly needed to help make this program more successful.

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."



Ko`olau Foundation

P. O. Box 4749
Kane`ohe, HI 96744

March 22, 2018

To: Sen. Kai`alii Kahele, Chair
Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair
Members, Committee on Higher Education

Sen. Karl Rhoads, Chair
Sen. Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Members, Committee on Water & Land

From: Aaron Mahi, President
Ko`olau Foundation

Re: Support – H.B.2613, H.D. 1 – He`eia NERRS Cultural Position

Aloha Chairs Kahele and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Kim and Gabbard, and Committee Members:

The Ko`olau Foundation strongly supports House Bill 2613, House Draft 1, and urges your approval of this legislation to move forward to the Ways & Means Committee.

This bill completes the He`eia National Estuarine Research Reserve staffing, and would add the cultural resource position that would play an important part in the team that carries out the work of the He`eia NERRS.

This program involves a cost-sharing with 70% federal, to be matched with 30% state funding. Three other positions, approved last year, are already embedded in the UH budget and attached to the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology – a key partner in the He`eia NERRS. We are asking that this fourth position be attached administratively to Windward Community College, which has a Hawaiian Studies program that would interface very well with the He`eia NERRS research and educational work that will be done.

We appreciate your consideration of our request, and urge your approval of this bill.

Mahalo nui, thank you for allowing us to offer our mana`o.

HB-2613-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/21/2018 12:33:24 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/22/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for Oahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

To the Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair; the Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee on Higher Education:

To the Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair; the Honorable Mike Gabbard, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee on Water and Land:

Good afternoon, my name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") Legislative Priorities Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii. I am also DPH Precinct President for District 48, Precinct 1, which includes He'eia to Kahalu'u. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on **HB2613 HD1**, relating to the He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve; Staff Hiring; University of Hawaii; and an appropriation.

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in favor of **HB2613 HD1** and support its passage.

HB2613 HD1 is in alignment with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it 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.

The DPH Platform states that "We support the growth of Native Hawaiian farming, agricultural and healing practices. We value and wish to foster the preservation of our host culture. (Platform of the DPH, P. 4, Lines 213-214 (2016)).

We support Hawaiian-focused schools and courses that provide culturally-based education in order to maximize choices in life and work. We support educational programming and efforts that embody Hawaiian values, language, culture and history as a foundation to prepare students for success in college, career and communities. (Platform of the DPH, P. 4, Lines 218-222 (2016)).

To ensure wise use and equitable distribution of our precious water, we must stress water conservation and alternative patterns of water treatment and consumption

such as the use of recycled water for irrigation, water storage reservoirs, and the use of catchment systems by the public. (Platform of the DPH, P. 6, Lines 93-95 (2016)).

Agriculture in our state must be preserved and its future strengthened. Sufficient prime agricultural lands must be maintained for the health, economic well-being and sustenance of the people. We believe in an integrated approach to agricultural innovation and sustainability. (Platform of the DPH, P. 2, Lines 76-78 ((2016)).

This approach includes, but is not limited to, the adoption of the native Hawaiian concept of ahupua'a, an integrated approach to land management. This could also include development of economic, land and ocean use policies that foster sustainable crops both for local consumption and for export, policies to foster agriculture-related infrastructure at shipping points, and increased inspection to protect against invasive species and to encourage reduced holding times. (Platform of the DPH, P. 2, Lines 82-86 (2016)).

As an island state, securing affordable food for all is a priority. We support healthy, sustainable, and diversified local food production, and "Buy Local" strategies to assure greater food security and food safety. (Platform of the DPH, P. 2, Lines 97-99 (2016)). We support land use planning and infrastructure development to support sustainable diversified agriculture, including low cost interisland transportation of agricultural products. We likewise support publicly funded research and development for agricultural diversification and value-added products. (Platform of the DPH, P. 2, Lines 104-107 (2016)).

Given that **HB2613 HD1** 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, it is the position of the OCC Legislative Priorities Committee to support this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.
yours,
s/ Melodie
Aduja
Iodie Aduja, Chair, OCC Legislative Priorities Committee
Text/Tel.: (808) 258-8889

Sincerely

/

Me

Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com,

HB-2613-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2018 8:44:06 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/22/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2613-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2018 9:08:04 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/22/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nancy Davlantes	Individual	Support	No

Comments: