



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Labor and Public Employment
Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 9:20 a.m., Room 309

by

Marcia Sakai

Interim Chancellor

and

Stephanie Nagata

Director

Office of Mauna Kea Management

University of Hawai'i at Hilo

HB 1537 – RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF MAUNA KEA MANAGEMENT

Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Eli, and members of the committee:

On behalf of the Office Mauna Kea Management (OMKM), thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 1537. OMKM strongly supports this bill. The establishment of positions and corresponding funding are critical to the ongoing and long term management of UH's managed lands on Maunakea.

For the past 18 and half years, OMKM has implemented and executed numerous studies and programs to protect Maunakea's cultural, natural and scientific resources as well as to protect the health and safety of those visiting UH's managed lands on Maunakea. At the time the Office was established in 2000, very little was known about the resources the Office was tasked to protect, prompting the need to first identify and establish baseline references for long-term monitoring of the status of the resources, and conduct studies to better understand the dynamics of the resources.

OMKM, guided by the 2009 Board of Land and Natural Resources approved Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), has been developing programs called for in the CMP and implementing steps beyond identification and studies of the resources. For example, long-term monitoring of the condition of the resources, including historic properties (archaeological sites), biological and physical resources, invasive species and visitor impacts, require resource staffing and data managers to map and catalogue for retrieval information for use in resource management program development. The CMP also has a number of compliance elements, in particular compliance with DLNR permits for all the facilities, and other projects approved by DLNR, and monitoring and reporting requirements.

Over the past 10 years, the number of visitors to the upper elevations of the Maunakea has increased significantly. These are mainly tourists who are unaware of the cultural and environmental significance of Maunakea. Many are not aware of the health

hazards associated with traveling to nearly 14,000 feet above sea level and the potential to come down with altitude sickness, a life threatening condition. Nor are they aware of the hazards of driving on a steep, unimproved road and the potential harm they can inflict on themselves or others. Finally, they are unaware that emergency response is 30 to 40 minutes or longer, if they are on the summit, and that emergency vehicles are unable to travel quickly as they do on paved roads. Once on the paved road it is about another 45 minutes to reach a medical facility.

Clearly, education and outreach programs are necessary to raise awareness to help protect the resources, and inform the uninitiated about Maunakea. Social media has created communication challenges and requires immediate responses to curtail and correct misinformation that is broadcast to the world as well as to disseminate vital information to the public. Expansion of communication, education and outreach programs with the local community and visitors are an important aspect of OMKM's stewardship responsibilities.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.



Kona-Kohala

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

February 10, 2019

RE: HB1537 RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF MAUNA KEA MANAGEMENT

Dear Chair Aaron Ling Johanson and the Committee on Labor and Public Employment,

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce is in strong support of HB1537 RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF MAUNA KEA MANAGEMENT that appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i for eight full-time equivalent positions within the Office of Mauna Kea Management (OMKM).

Maunakea is a significant site scientifically, culturally and economically for our island. The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce supports the current Maunakea management structure with the OMKM and believe this office needs more resources to effectively carry out their responsibilities. This includes positions for a natural resources specialist, geographic information systems database manager, resources technician, permitting and compliance officer, community outreach program manager, communication program manager, communication specialist and fiscal specialist as stated in HB1537. These positions will aid OMKM in providing safe and educational experiences for those visiting the mountain along with preserving the cultural and natural resources of the area. In addition, managing communications, especially social media, is key in better preparing Maunkea visitors along with educating the public about the mountain.

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce is a 501(c)(6) non-profit organization with nearly 500 member businesses that represent a wide range of industries in the private, non-profit and public sectors in the Kona and Kohala districts on the West side of the island of Hawai'i. Our members range in size from small businesses with less than 10 employees to large corporations with over 1000 employees. Since 1968, our organization has provided leadership and advocacy for a successful business environment in West Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Wendy J. Laros

Executive Director, Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce

HB-1537

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 2:15:56 PM

Testimony for LAB on 2/12/2019 9:20:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Rhea R. Lee-Moku | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Aloha!

I support the passage of HB1537, which will provide funding for 8 positions for OMKM. These positions are needed to ensure that OMKM can continue its stewardship of Maunakea. The OMKM has done a fine job carrying out its responsibilities up to this point, however, with increasing numbers of visitors to the Mauna, these positions are needed to ensure that people are properly educated about the significance of Maunakea and how to visit safely.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my input.

Rhea Lee-Moku

HB-1537

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 3:34:01 PM

Testimony for LAB on 2/12/2019 9:20:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ross Wilson Jr. | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

These 8 full time positions for the Office of Maunakea will enable OMKM to continue its successful mission to malama Maunakea.

Please kokua and support!



O'ahu
(808) 733-5562
Hawai'i Island
(808) 935-0737

February 10, 2019

Committee on Labor & Public Employment
415 So Beretania St.
Honolulu HI 96813

RE: HB1537

Dear Chair Aaron Ling Johanson & Committee Members:

I am Mary Begier, a concerned citizen of Hawaii Island. I Strongly Support HB1537 I care very much about Mauna Kea and the various activities that occur or may occur on her mountain top. Personally I have spent many, many hours removing invasive weeds from the slopes and replanting native plants.

The Office of Mauna Kea Mgmt (OMKM) does a great job with the limited resources and authority they have. However, the advent of social media and the ever increasing curiosity of younger generations than mine has created a tremendous influx of visitors who are not always well informed.

For this reason I respectfully ask you to please fund the much needed positions. OMKM programs generate a lot of data about the resources and managing the data is critical to keeping track of the status of the resources into the future. OMKM takes this responsibility very seriously but needs appropriate staffing to be effective as we go forward.

Please pass HB1537 forward with a favorable recommendation. Thank you for this opportunity to be a steward to Mauna Kea!

With Aloha,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Begier".

Mary Begier, Realtor®

Referral & Relocation Certified / 1998 Aloha Aina Realtors Choice Award
Certified Residential Specialist / Certified Residential Broker
2001 Realtor® of the Year Hawaii Assoc. of Realtors®
2001 Realtor® of the Year Hawaii Island Board of Realtors®
2002 Realtor® of the Year Honolulu Board of Realtors®
2003 President Honolulu Board of Realtors®
2006-2013 Hawaii Island Commissioner Hawaii State Foundation on Culture & the Arts
2007 President Hawaii Island Board of Realtors®
2008-09 President Rotary Club of Hilo Bay
2009-2010 President Hawaii Island Chamber of Commerce
2010-2011 Chair Hawaii State Foundation on Culture & the Art
2013 Community Hero Award from Hawaii Invasive Species Council
2015 Hawaii Island Chamber Athena Award Recipient
2016-17 OEQC Advisory Member Hawaii Island

HB-1537

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 4:42:37 PM

Testimony for LAB on 2/12/2019 9:20:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Michael Miyahira | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

The 8 new positions will assist OMKM to carry out its stewardship responsibilities. With tourists continuing to visit Maunakea, there is a continued need to educate them about the significance of the mountain and how to visit it safely and with respect for the culture and history.

HB-1537

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 11:31:38 PM

Testimony for LAB on 2/12/2019 9:20:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Douglass Adams | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

HB-1537

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 7:52:59 AM

Testimony for LAB on 2/12/2019 9:20:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Arthur Taniguchi | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

OMKM since its establishment has done a remarkable job in taking responsibility for managing Mauna Kea. As more and more people visit the mountain, additional resources are required to maintain order and ensure tourists are properly informed on the "do's and don'ts" on the mountain. The Island of Hawaii Visitors Bureau has created the Pono Pledge in which it educates the public on respect and history of our natural resources and the other islands' respective boards will also be following suit. Messages sent via social media will also reach a much larger audience and we all need to assist in getting the message out.

i am writng in support of this HB1537.

HB-1537

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 9:03:51 AM

Testimony for LAB on 2/12/2019 9:20:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Richard Ha | Individual | Support | Yes |

Comments:

I strongly support HB 1537. I have been actively involved in Maunakea matters for more than 10 years. OMKM has done a good job considering the challenges.

LATE

HB-1537

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 9:20:26 AM

Testimony for LAB on 2/12/2019 9:20:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Audrey Takamine | Takamine Construction, Inc. | Support | No |

Comments:

Good morning Chair Aaron Ling Johanson and committee members,

My name is Audrey Takamine and I am a small business owner in Hilo and concerned Hawaii Island citizen. I strongly support HB 1537. The Office of Mauna Kea Management (OMKM) does a great job with the limited resources they have. They have made significant strides in protecting the resources on UH's managed lands on Mauna Kea. Over time and especially after the media attention of TMT, there are many more visitors on the mountain. Their management needs have expanded and staffing is much needed. Please help them by funding additional positions. Thank you for your time.

Audrey N. Takamine, Vice President

Takamine Construction, Inc.

LATE

HB-1537

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 9:27:02 AM
Testimony for LAB on 2/12/2019 9:20:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Gordon Takaki | Hawaii Island Chamber of Commerce | Support | No |

Comments:

The Hawaii Island Chamber of Commerce strongly SUPPORT HB1537.

The Office of Maunakea Management (OMKM) does a great job with limited resources and authority of managing the mountain. The advent of social media and the ever increasing curiosity of younger generations has created a tremendous increase of visitors who are not always well informed. This creates a critical need to educate them about the significance of Maunakea. Traditional communication through social media is not sufficient in educating people. Countering social media requires full time dedicated staff to respond to and correct mis-information.

We respectfully ask you to please fund the much needed positions. OMKM programs generate a lot of data about the resources and managing the data is critical to keeping track of the status of the resources into the future. OMKM takes this responsibility very seriously but needs appropriate staffing to be effective as we move forward.

Please pass HB1537 forward with a favorable recommendation.

HB-1537

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 3:44:16 PM

Testimony for LAB on 2/12/2019 9:20:00 AM

LATE

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jacqui Hoover | Hawaii Leeward Planning Conference | Support | No |

Comments:

While everyone is in agreement that Mauna Kea is a very important from multiple perspectives including and not limited to, cultural; environmental; scientific; educational; and commercial; the necessary financial and personnel resources have not been deployed to allow the Office of Mauna Kea Management (OMKM) to respond to the many and layered stewardship challenges. OMKM has made great strides in correcting errors of the past in managing Mauna Kea and is doing an admirable job however, additional resources (funding and people) must be made available to OMKM to meet their own and the community's stewardship expectations.

Respectfully,

Jacqui Hoover



LATE

To: Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair,
House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

From: Maunakea Observatories

RE: **HB 1537 Relating to the Office of Maunakea Management – In support**

Date: February 12, 2019; 9:20 a.m.; conference room 309

The Maunakea Observatories express their strong **support** for HB 1537 which provides funding for eight additional positions in the Office of Maunakea Management (OMKM). These positions include a new natural resource specialist, permitting and compliance officer, community outreach program manager, and more. Combined with existing staff, these additional staff will reinforce core OMKM capabilities in place now, and expand OMKM's ability to keep up with future challenges.

The important work performed 365 days a year by OMKM helps ensure everything from Comprehensive Management Plan compliance to sustaining environmental and cultural programs to providing public safety on Hawai'i's highest roads. The OMKM Ranger program, in particular, provides the public with information about Maunakea's fragile environment, helps stranded visitors, and makes sure that the hundreds of culturally sensitive sites around the summit of Maunakea are protected. We applaud OMKM's demonstrated and award winning stewardship on Maunakea, made possible by the dedication of the relatively small team in place now that is tasked with an enormous range of responsibilities. An unintended consequence of the new DK1 Highway is that the number of visitors driving to Maunakea has grown to enormous numbers in recent years, now averaging around 250,000 people annually. UH is advancing new Administrative Rules to help manage this complex situation, but with those new rules will come even more liens on OMKM's limited staff. Given these increasing demands on OMKM's staff, and the vital role OMKM plays in managing this fragile resource, the Maunakea Observatories strongly endorse expanding OMKM's staff through this legislation.

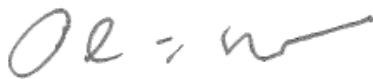
Mahalo,



Director Doug Simons, Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope



Director Pierre Martin, Hoku Kea Observatory



Director Paul Ho, James Clerk Maxwell Telescope (East Asian Observatory)



Director Walter Briske, Long Baseline Observatory



Director John Rayner, NASA Infrared Telescope Facility



Director Michitoshi Yoshida, Subaru Telescope

Klaus Hodapp

Director Klaus Hodapp, UKIRT

Hilton Lewis

Director Hilton Lewis, W.M. Keck Observatory (Keck I and Keck II)

LATE

HB-1537

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 2:13:33 PM

Testimony for LAB on 2/12/2019 9:20:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bernard A Balsis Jr Jr | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

The Office of Mauna Kea Management is doing a very good job managing the mountain. It is a difficult and complex task. Over the past years we have all witnessed the evolution of their good management practices and now the rules everyone has been asking for have been prepared and are with the governor for approval. This is great and evidences the OMKM very good management of the mountain.

Yes, please support this bill. The funding of the new 8 position will help maintain the consistent process improvement in managing our sacred Mouna Kea.

Thank you for voting yes to get this bill passed.

HB-1537

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 4:02:43 PM

Testimony for LAB on 2/12/2019 9:20:00 AM



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

Comments:

Rep. Nakashima has shown true leadership in getting this bill signed by members of the House Leadership. I support HB 1537. It would be beneficial to fund 8 full time positions for OMKM to help malama Maunakea. OMKM has done an excellent job of managing the mountain, given the overwhelming challenges surrounding the mountain, the requested positions would greatly assist OMKM carry out its stewardship responsibilities as it continues to develop long-term programs to malama the mountain.

Please support this important bill.

LATE

HB-1537

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 9:46:26 AM

Testimony for LAB on 2/12/2019 9:20:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Vaughn Cook | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

The Office of Mauna Kea Management needs to be adequately funded. It's really a no-brainer. With the TMT about to be built and increased focus on Mauna Kea, OMKM needs funding to operate and carry out its mission to protect this important resource for us all.