

March 5, 2021

TO: THE SENATE, THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE, REGULAR SESSION OF 2021
COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Senator Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Chair
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice-Chair
Members of the Committee

FROM: Pauline N. Namuo, Commissioner, Oahu
Hawaiian Homes Commission

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of these gubernatorial nominees.

Today, I submit my strong support for the consideration and nomination to the Hawaiian Homes Commission, Gubernatorial Nominees:

GM 578 Dennis Neves
GM 576 David Kaapu
GM 577 Michael Kaleikini

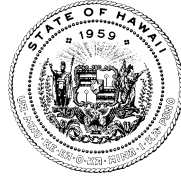
I submit this testimony in wholehearted support of these three gentlemen who have dedicated their lives to the enrichment of our Hawaiian people. As the fledgling Commissioner, I am honored to be serving with these men. I am enthralled with their banter, their intelligence, and their never ending knowledge of our culture and people in their respective locales. I am humbled in their company. We may not agree on all matters but we definitely come together for the love of our people. They are extremely worthy of their nominations and will be exemplary if you so agree.

Respectfully submitted,

Pauline N. Namuo, Commissioner, Oahu
Hawaiian Homes Commission

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII

JOSH GREEN
LT. GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII



WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.
CHAIRMAN
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION

TYLER I. GOMES
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRMAN

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**

P. O. BOX 1879
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM J. AILA, JR, CHAIRMAN
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
HEARING ON MARCH 9, 2021 AT 1:00 PM VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

IN SUPPORT OF

GM578

for consideration and confirmation to the Hawaiian Homes Commission,
Gubernatorial Nominee, **DENNIS NEVES**,
for a term to expire 06-30-2025

March 9, 2021

Aloha Chair Shimabukuro, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and members of the Committee:

It is an honor to provide this testimony in support of Governor Ige's nomination of Mr. Dennis Neves to continue his service on the Hawaiian Homes Commission (HHC). Mr. Neves has been serving on the Commission since his appointment in April, 2019.

One of fifteen children, his ohana was among the first homesteaders in Hoolehua. After military service in Vietnam and an A.A. degree, he began his airline work career. His work centered on airport management, honing skills in personnel education and development, budget development and control, project management, and federal rules and standards.

After living many years outside of Hawaii, he returned home and eventually retired as Kauai Airports District Manager and currently resides on his homestead in Anahola. He brings all his years of learned work skills, homestead insights, and his commitment to serve the people and purpose of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act.

We respectfully ask your committee to advise and consent to this nomination, and thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

Governor's Message No. 578, Nomination of Dennis Neves to the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

This letter is in response to Governor's Message No. 578, regarding your nomination to the Hawaiian Homes Commission. To assist the Senate with its constitutionally mandated responsibility to confirm gubernatorial nominees, submission of the following information is required:

- (1) A description of your experience with respect to the scope of responsibilities for the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and the Hawaiian Homes Commission, or any related field;
- (2) An assessment of your strengths and weaknesses;
- (3) An assessment of the department's strengths and weaknesses. Please include an explanation of how the department's strengths may be best utilized, as well as how the department's weaknesses may be improved;
- (4) An overall vision for the department, specifically what goals can be accomplished within the next four years and what types of annual benchmarks can be used to evaluate the department/agency's progress towards those goals;
- (5) The department's top budgetary priority for the biennium;
- (6) An assessment of the department staff's morale, including the turnover rate for personnel; and
- (7) Any foreseeable possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service in the department and how you would overcome them.

Hawaiian Affairs Committee

Senator,

Here is the information requested for Senate consideration for my nomination to the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

My past work experience in executive and operational management gives me the skills to effectively communicate, analyze, and provide positive dialog while discussing matters relating to the Hawaiian Homes Commission's mission and the needs of our beneficiaries. While at the San Francisco Airport I had responsibility of Terminal management. I coordinated maintenance, training, baggage systems, and gate management for international airlines. Effectively coordinated with all airlines. I reported to and represented the Airport Director in his absence. As Kauai Airports District Manager, I improved airport airline and TSA operations and airline relations through effective communications and partnership.

My strengths developed over the years can be characterized by being goal driven, passionate, a positive leader, a proud public servant, and an advocate for improving the lives of our beneficiaries. My weakness probably can be characterized by impatience and lack of positive movement on important issues.

The department has a dedicated staff that are goal driven. Over the past several years I have had positive discussions with staff that confirm this goal as well. I believe these strengths can benefit our beneficiaries and has over the short period I have been involved. Several items need to be developed: Policies and Procedures, Section Operating Manuals, and past Commission policies. The department is compiling this information which is critical to any organization. Another item is enforcing policies and administrative rules to effectively manage the trust.

My overall vision is to first complete the Policy and Procedures, and Section Operating Manuals and past Commission policies by the end of 2021 if not sooner for Commission review. Once these are reviewed and approved by the commission an annual report should be presented to the commission detailing the effectiveness of the department based on realistic goals and objectives.

The number one issue is funding, funding, funding. The department needs funding to advance developments and place beneficiaries on the land. Recently due to personnel leaving the department our Enforcement team has been reduced to one individual. This is a critical group needed to enforce rules, regulations, and violations. The real need is for at least one officer at each island. There is more than enough work for this person on each island and will reduce travels costs. Just the presence will deter rules and regulations violations and provide immediate response. Most sections are short personnel and this needs to be evaluated to ensure the department can effectively provide a positive service level to our beneficiaries.

From my view, I believe the staff's morale is good. Some sections may be stressed due to the workload and may be experiencing issues. Most of the section managers are acting and have been for many years. Stability in the organization is paramount to the success and morale of the employees. The staff's morale will ultimately affect the service to our beneficiaries. The Island supervisor is a key link to our beneficiaries and the office needs to be properly staffed to ensure the trust is servicing the beneficiaries properly.

Respectfully,

Dennis L. Neves

GM-578

Submitted on: 3/4/2021 10:10:12 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/9/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Wilma Akiona	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Prior to my retirement, I served as one of the secretarial assistants to the Kauai County Council. I had the opportunity to schedule an appointment for one of our councilmembers with Mr. Neves during his tenure as the Manager of the Kauai Airport. I was impressed with his timely response to my request and his willingness to accommodate the councilmember. As a commissioner, he not only continues to respond to and accommodate beneficiaries and their inquiries, but he also invites participation/input and cooperation as he strives to look for ways to get the Hawaiian people on the land so they can create communities that care for and sustain each other. He is a great advocate for the Hawaiian people and a great asset to the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

GM-578

Submitted on: 3/8/2021 10:56:24 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/9/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Priscilla Ligh	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Shimabukuro, Vice-Chair Keohokaloe, and Members of the Committee:

Thank-you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of Governor Ige's nomination of Mr. Dennis Neves to continue serving on the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

I've known Mr. Neves while he was the Lihue Airport Manager from 2013 to 2017, when I was working as a Project Manager. I was fortunate to have worked with Mr. Neves and was inspired by his dedication, extensive experience, and leadership to service the needs and safety of the passengers and the users of the Airport. By doing so, he worked well among multi-disciplinary and multi-mission groups and stakeholders in finding solutions to better facilitate changes for the airport. Mr. Neves worked relentlessly with limited staff and resources to do the best job possible, where I was always graciously supported by Mr. Neves and Lihue Airport's personnel in facilitating projects.

I believe Mr. Neves will be an asset to this Commission with his extensive management experience, problem solving skills, and dedication to further the mission of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act.

I respectfully ask your continued support of Mr. Neves' nomination.

Mahalo nui loa,

Priscilla Ligh

Honolulu, Hawaii

March 9, 2021

COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Chair
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair

RE: GM576 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawaiian Homes Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENNIS NEVES, for a term to expire 06-30-2025

Aloha e Senator Shimabukuro, Chair, Senator Keohokalole, Vice Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Homelani Schaedel, a beneficiary of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920, as amended (HHCA).

In the short time Commissioner Neves has been on the Commission, he is fully engaged, asks pertinent questions, and provides constructive comments when he has concerns. I believe he has a strong desire to advance conditions and make positive changes for the betterment of beneficiaries.

Commissioner Neves is one of five beneficiaries who currently sit on the Commission that enable contributive information and sharing of the challenges and triumphs of our beneficiaries.

I look forward to Commissioner Neves continued service to our beneficiaries and strongly support his confirmation to the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share my mana'o.

LATE

COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Senator Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Chair

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice-Chair

Members of the Committee

HEARING DATE: Tuesday, March 9, 2021

Support for Hawaiian Homes Commission, Gubernatorial Nominees:

GM 576 David Kaapu

GM 577 Michael Kaleikini

GM 578 Dennis Neves

Aloha Madame Chair and Senators of the Hawaiian Affairs Committee,

I work for the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, but today I am testifying as an individual. I am a native Hawaiian, a beneficiary of the Trust (O'ahu Residential Waitlist #7320), raised on a homestead in Hoolehua, Molokai.

Public service in any area is no small feat, but a volunteer policy-maker for the betterment of native Hawaiians is special. Commissioners are asked to accomplish an almost impossible task, affecting thousands of native Hawaiians and their familial legacies. With limited resources and a growing beneficiary class, the charge is daunting.

All three of these gentlemen have proven worthy advocates of the Trust's beneficiaries and continue to do their best to improve the policies that affect them.

I strongly support the confirmation of David Kaapu, Michael Kaleikini, and Dennis Neves Hawaiian Home Lands.

Leatrice W. Burrows-Nuuanu

wailaahia@gmail.com

LATE

GM-578

Submitted on: 3/8/2021 4:59:04 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/9/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rayne Kauhi	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I Strongly Oppose.

LATE

MARCH -8-2021

COMMMITEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TO : SENATOR MAILE SHIMABUKURO, COMMITTEE MEMBERS
FROM : RANDY AWO - SUBMITTAL OF WRITTEN TESTIMONY
REGARDING : **GM 578** CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION FOR THE HAWAIIAN HOMES
COMMISSION, **GUBANATORIAL NOMINEE DENNIS NEVES**

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Aloha Senator Shimabukuro, Committee Members.

Please accept this document as written testimony in support of **DENNIS NEVES** to be confirmed to the Hawaiian Homes Commission to serve for a term to expire June 30, 2025.

Mahalo – Randy K. Awo

LATE

GM-578

Submitted on: 3/8/2021 11:17:54 PM

Testimony for HWN on 3/9/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alex Kauhi	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Strongly Oppose

LATE

GM-578

Submitted on: 3/9/2021 11:22:15 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/9/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
MAYBELLE K. KAAA	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Maybelle (Toni) K. Kaaa, a lessee at Anahola Bayview Subdivision since December 1998, and this testimony is to support the continued service of Dennis Neves as our State of Hawai'i - Department of Hawaiian Home Lands Commissioner for Kaua'i Island.

When Dennis began his huaka'i as a Kaua'i Island Hawaiian Homes Lands Commissioner, it was (and perhaps still is) wrought with numerous and difficult paths; however, he is a good example of someone who knows the way (and if he doesn't he'll find it), goes the way (you have to keep up with him), and shows the way (in all that he does). He also emphasizes in words and actions that coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, and working together is success. In his mindfulness of his kuleana as a Commissioner, Dennis shows that beautiful character begins in the heart.

Mahalo Ke Akua a me Mahalo nui loa for your time and attention.

'O wau nĀ• me ka ha'aha'a,

Maybelle K. Kaaa