



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

Testimony of
Hawaii State Aha Moku

Before the Senate Committee Water and Land

Wednesday, April 14, 2021
1:00 PM

Support for Governor Message 685, Benton Pang
Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission

Aloha Chair Inouye, and Members of the Senate Water and Land Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer strong support for Governor Message 685, Benton Pang (Kealii). This message is submitted for consideration and confirmation to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission for a term to expire 06-30-2024. **Participants in the Hawaii State Aha Moku (Aha Moku) supports this submittal.**

The vision of the Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) is to restore the *Kino*, the physical manifestation of *Kanaloa*, the native Hawaiian traditional name for Kaho'olawe. This entails the restoration of a healthy land and ocean ecosystem which is the foundation of *Nā Po 'e o Hawai'i*, the native people of Hawai'i who believe and recognize the lands and ocean of Kanaloa as a living spiritual entity – a *wahi pana*, a sacred place.

A member of KIRC must know and understand the western scientific process of physical restoration, but more importantly, must identify with the deep reverence and spiritual belief of the native Hawaiian community in its approach to this restoration. Per translations of ancient chants and generational knowledge of original descendants of Kanaloa, the island is in every way attached to the Honua-lua Moku of Moku O Pi'ilani (Island of Maui). With the traditional understanding of the three moku of Kanaloa – Ko'olau, Kona and Molokini, the spiritual as well as the physical restoration can be completed.

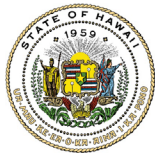
More commonly known as Keali'i, Dr. Pang is a humble yet extremely competent native Hawaiian who shares his extensive knowledge of botany, invasive species, biology and fish and wildlife. He understands Hawaiian science as well as Western philosophy. One of his many publications "Ethnobotanical Uses of Endangered Hawaiian Plant Species"¹ shows examples of his understanding of the endemic and indigenous flora which can be used to better benefit the restoration process. A fair man with integrity, Dr. Keali'i Pang is currently the President of the O'ahu District Council, Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, a life member of the Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu and has sat on many scientific and environmental boards.

Aha Moku strongly supports this nomination and urges this Committee to confirm the nomination of GM 685.

Respectfully yours,

Manuel Kuloloio, Kahu Nui O Kanaloa, Email: manuel.kuloloio@baesystems.com
Kawaikapuokalani Hewett, Ka Mea Ho'okumu, Email: kahalelehua@outlook.com
Leimana DaMate, Luna Alaka'i, Email: Leimana.k.damate@hawaii.gov

Hawaii State Aha Moku



KŪKULU KE EA A KANALOA
KAHO'OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION

811 Kolu Street, Suite 201, Wailuku, HI 96793
Telephone (808) 243-5020 Fax (808) 243-5885
Website: <http://kahoolawe.hawaii.gov>

**Testimony of
MICHAEL K. NĀHO'OPT'I
Executive Director**

Before the Senate Committee on

WATER & LAND

Wednesday, April 14, 2021

1:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 229

**In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 685 – SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND
CONFIRMATION TO THE KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION OF
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE BENTON PANG**

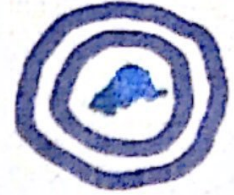
Governor's Message No. 685 submits for consideration and confirmation, Dr. Benton Keali'i Pang, Ph.D. to serve on the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) in the seat reserved for a representative of Native Hawaiian organizations. On behalf of the KIRC, I wish to express my **strong support** and **recommendation** for his confirmation.

Dr. Pang is the President (Pelekikena) of the O'ahu Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs and a member of the Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu. As the Native Hawaiian Organization Representative on the KIRC, Dr. Pang will bring to the KIRC the support of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, a national organization of 61 clubs across Hawai'i and the United States. The purpose of the Association is to "actively participate in the promotion, perpetuation and practices of long-held traditional native Hawaiian attitudes and values that dignify all human life and that are the underpinning of our culture that comprise a unique, rich and enduring legacy of the indigenous people of Hawai'i."

Dr. Pang is uniquely qualified for this position from his long-term association with Kaho'olawe. During his graduate studies, Dr. Pang participated in the development of "Ho'ola Hou I ke Kino O Kanaloa" (Kaho'olawe Environmental Restoration Plan). Later, while working for Parson-UXB Joint Ventures, he was the Natural Resource Manager for the Kaho'olawe Unexploded Ordnance Cleanup Project. Dr. Pang field of study is in Hawaiian ethnobotany and the ecological restoration of dryland forest ecosystems which will provide the KIRC with great support and advice for the continuing restoration of Kaho'olawe. Lastly, he was mentored by both Dr. Isabella Abbott and Dr. Charles Burrows, both former KIRC Commissioners representing Native Hawaiian Organizations and native Hawaiian leaders in fields of Hawaiian ecology and native Hawaiian practices.

The KIRC will be truly fortunate to have the support and advice of Dr. Pang on the commission and I strongly supports his confirmation.

Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana
P.O. Box 39
Kaunakakai, Hawai'i 96748



April 12, 2021

State Boards & Commissions
Office of the Governor
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha Kākou,

I am writing on behalf of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana ('Ohana) in **SUPPORT** of Dr. Keali'i Benton Pang's confirmation (GM685) to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC), as a representative of a native Hawaiian organization, to serve July 1, 2021-June 30, 2024.

Dr. Pang is an active member in the native Hawaiian community. He is the President of the O'ahu Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (AHCC) and Committee Lead for Natural Resources Management in the AHCC. During the removal of unexploded ordnance (1997-2004) on Kaho'olawe, Dr. Pang was a Natural Resources Manager and spent extensive time on Kaho'olawe.

Dr. Pang played an integral role supporting cultural practitioners with *cultural gathering permits* for Makahiki and other ceremonies across the State of Hawai'i. Dr. Pang was fundamental in making sure cultural gathering permit requests were represented and honored in a timely way.

Members of the 'Ohana testify that Dr. Pang is humble, firm, reliable, responsible, a good communicator, and works effectively through layers of government and a staunch advocate for native Hawaiian practices, while working with political frameworks. His kind demeanor will serve nicely when needing to address issues with potential conflicts and push towards desired results with diplomacy.

Dr. Pang is akamai (smart) and has a passion for Kanaloa-Kaho'olawe that aligns with the 'Ohana. His knowledge of plants and ecosystems and the history of the island provide a great background to serve as a commissioner.

Thank you for confirming Dr. Pang. I can be contacted at pko.huakai@gmail.com or 808-783-3281 for any questions or requests for more information.

Aloha 'Āina,

Kylee Pōmaika'i Mar

'Ohana Access Coordinator & KIRC Point-of-Contact for 'Ohana

cc: Michael Nāho'opi'i, Executive Director, KIRC

GM-685

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 12:57:55 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lu Ann Faborito	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Benton Kealii has showned and shared his vast experience in environmental issues compassionate and committed to serving our lahui in efforts regarding our aina. He is trusted and valued as credible resource through his experience.

GM-685

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 8:56:35 AM

Testimony for WTL on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Margaret Pulver	Testifying for Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana	Support	No

Comments:

Benton Pang is strong and appropriate choice for KIRC Commissioner. His experience, knowledge, and skills will allow him to represent the Native Hawaiian Organization seat in working towards the revitalization and restoration of Kanaloa-Kaho'olawe. I have the utmost faith that he will always choose what is best for Kaho'olawe and native Hawaiians.

GM-685

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 11:58:15 AM

Testimony for WTL on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support. Dr. Benton Pang is eminently qualified for this position as evidenced by his education and various experiences. He would be an asset to the Kaho'olawe Island Commission.

GM-685

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 9:24:25 AM

Testimony for WTL on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hokulani Holt-Padilla	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support for consideration and confirmation to the Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, BENTON PANG, for a term to expire 06-30-2024.

HÅ• kÅ«lani Holt-Padilla

GM-685

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 11:47:26 AM

Testimony for WTL on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anela Evans	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha e Chairwoman Inouye, vice chair Keith-Agaran, and the Senate committee on Water and Land,

It would like to urge you to support the nomination of Dr. Benton Pang to serve on the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. Although I did not yet have the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Dr. Pang, I have many highly-respected peers that hold Dr. Pang in extremely high regards. I am confident that he will be a valuable asset to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission.

GM-685

Submitted on: 4/5/2021 7:20:23 AM

Testimony for WTL on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leatrice Maluhia Kauahi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Benton Keali'i Pang's first experience with Kaho'olawe was in 1991 and he assisted with the drafting of Ho'ola Hou Ike Kino O Kanaloa (Kaho'olawe Environmental Restoration Plan). He was later employed as the Natural Resource Manager during the UXO clean-up project. from 1997-1999. My relationship and experience with Keali'i have been as a life member of the Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu and I, too, am a trustee for HCCH's Scholarship Trust Fund. We have worked towards issuing yearly scholarships to post-high school graduates and Keali'i have taken on leadership roles in reporting to the BOD of HCCH. He also is the Pelekikena (President) of the Oahu Council of which I have worked with him as well. His commitment to inclusiveness and transparency have always advocated educated recommendations and decisions.

GM-685

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 6:09:52 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nicole Cody	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I support the nomination of Benton Pang for KIRC commissioner. I believe that his proven track record of conducting himself intelligently and resourcefully throughout his career is going to be a valued asset to the commission.

Mahalo nui.

April 14, 2021

[GM 685](#)

[Status & Testimony](#)

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, BENTON PANG, for a term to expire 06-30-2024

State of Hawaii Senate - Committee on Water and Land

Aloha Honorable Senators Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair and Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair and members,

My name is Juanita Mahienaena Brown Kawamoto, Luna Ho'omalua of the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, Pelekikena of the Kalihil Palama Hawaiian Civic Club, President of Ho'omalua Ke Ola Board of Directors – substance and drug abuse Native Hawaiian rehabilitation center, Board member of Kaala Farm of Waianae and member of many other Native Hawaiian and Hawaii non-profit, community active, organizations. I Strongly Support the appointment of Dr. Benton Kealii Pang as a commissioner of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. In my humble and experienced opinion, Dr. Benton Keali'i Pang has all and every qualification necessary to serve on the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Community.

Keali'i currently serves our Native Hawaiian community as a leader, scholar, kanaka maoli and a keiki o ka aina. My friend, Keali'i sits on numerous Native Hawaiian boards as a leader for multiple Native Hawaiian Organizations as well as a friend to anyone who has ever come to meet him in every and any occasion! My friend, Keali'i, is qualified to represent Hawai'i's community as a whole, because he walks with all of Hawaii's people, in assuring that the sacred site of Kaho'olawe, that was formed approximately 1.2 million years ago, the island, a collection of seven volcanoes that collectively covered a total land area of 5,600 square miles and to put that in perspective, that's 50% larger than the modern-day Big Island, and slightly larger than the state of Connecticut. Kaho'olawe was repatriated from the U.S. Military into the care of the Native Hawaiian Community, after great protest, struggle and personal loss, therefore the "*Nā po'e o Hawai'i*" (the people of Hawai'i) care for the land in a manner, which recognizes the island and ocean of Kanaloa as a living spiritual entity. Kanaloa is a *pu'uhonua* and *wahi pana* (a place of refuge, a sacred place) where native Hawaiian cultural practices flourish. The *piko* of Kanaloa (the navel, the center) is the crossroads of past and future generations from which the native Hawaiian lifestyle is spread throughout the islands" and is the responsibility of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission.

Keali'i's ohana, who were born and raised on Maui Nui, are there, still in spirit, and have passed down this knowledge and aloha so that Dr. Pang can continue the service to protect, malama and fulfill all the requirements as a commissioner of the Kaho'olawe Island reserve commission.

The State of Hawaii, the Hawaii Legislature and Hawaii nei are fortunate to have such a person, as Dr. Benton Keali'i Pang to dedicate and volunteer his time, energy and experience in this very important role as a servant leader.

Me Ka mana'o nui,

Juanita Mahienaena Brown Kawamoto

Kanaka Maoli

GM-685

Submitted on: 4/8/2021 10:56:25 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Davianna McGregor	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye and members of the Senate Committee on Land and Water. My name is Davianna Pā• maika'i McGregor and I am a professor in Ethnic Studies at UH-Mā• noa and Director of the Center for Oral History. I am also a member of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana. I support the appointment of Benton Keali'i Pang to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) to represent Hawaiian organizations. He is a long time active and committed member of the Hawaiian Civic Clubs. His expertise as a botanist and experience in the field will be extremely valuable to the KIRC in its restoration efforts. He is an aloha 'Ā• ina and I believe that he will work for what is best for the island of Kanaloa Kaho'olawe. Mahalo for considering my supportive statement. Please affirm the appointment of Benton Keali'i Pang to KIRC. Aloha . . . Aloha 'Ā• ina.

GM-685

Submitted on: 4/13/2021 1:55:40 AM

Testimony for WTL on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aurora Kagawa-Viviani	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I would like to express my enthusiastic support for measure GM685, the nomination of Benton Kealii Pang to the Katho'olawe Island Reserve Commission.

Keali'i's demonstrated commitment to the stewardship of land, water, ecosystems, and people of Hawai'i is longstanding. I first met Keali'i when I was in 6th grade in the early 1990s- he was my NĀ• Pua No'eau summer session ethnobotany instructor and was, at the time, a student of Dr. Isabella Aiona Abbott, renowned "first lady of limu." We students were able to meet and learn from experts like Taupouri Tangaro in those 2 weeks, and I carry those experiences with me today. Later, I would interact more regularly with Keali'i through his volunteering with "Doc" Chuck Pe'ape'a Makawalu Burrows and the Kamehameha Schools high school hiking/environmental science club, Hui Lama, as he and other botanists from UH MĀ• noa regularly joined student activities and shared their knowledge.

As a native Hawaiian scientist working in the conservation field across the islands, Benton Kealii Pang has important experience working with native plant, insect, and animal species and policy. Furthermore, he has direct experiences working in/on Kaho'olawe restoration efforts. His first experience to Kaho'olawe was in 1991 and he assisted with the drafting of Ho'ola Hou I Ke Kino O Kanaloa (Kaho'olawe Environmental Restoration Plan). He was later employed as the Natural Resource Manager during the UXO clean up project from 1997-1999.

Keali'i is a life member of the Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu and is a trustee for their scholarship trust fund. This club was founded by Prince KĀ«hiĀ• in 1919 with a mission to elevate the social and intellectual status of all Hawaiians. He is also the pelekikena for Ke One O KĀ• kuhihewa- O'ahu Council for the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs. As pelekikena, he provides guidance and assists in the activities of all 23 Hawaiian Civic clubs on the Island of O'ahu and advocates for positions adopted by the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (Association). In 2009, the Association passed resolution 09-31 "Calling for the Future Use and Restoration of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve" urging the KIRC to engage in broad reaching community outreach and explicit on-island discussions. The Association also passed resolution 11-44 "Urging the Recognition of the Island of Kanaloa Kaho'olawe as a Sacred Cultural Land Trust for the Hawaiian Nation and the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana as the Kahu 'Aina for the

Island." Keali'i's nomination to the KIRC would allow for him to engage these voices and perspectives into the decisionmaking sphere of KIRC.

I believe Benton Keali'i Pang is highly experienced and qualified individual to support the stewardship of Kaho'olawe through service on the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission and urge you to support GM685.

Mahalo for your time,

Aurora Kagawa-Viviani

GM-685

Submitted on: 4/13/2021 6:57:07 AM

Testimony for WTL on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kelvin Ho	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha

I would like to submit testimony in full support of Benton Pang for this position of commissioner for the KIRC. I am a 30 yr member of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana and he has widespread support from us through out the islands.

mahalo

Kelivn Ho

GM-685

Submitted on: 4/13/2021 8:17:19 AM

Testimony for WTL on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rosanna Anolani Alegado	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Water and Land Committee,

I write to convey STRONG SUPPORT of Dr. Keali'i Pang's nomination to the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission. I am from Kahalu'u, O'ahu but have been privileged to visit Kaho'olawe a number of times since the 1980s. The KIRC needs strong and committee leadership to continue the necessary work to continue to restore the island.

Dr. Pang has critical experience working on Kahao'olawe that will inform continued progress toward achieving project goals. He learned Hawaiian conservation ethics from Dr. Charles Pe'ape'a Makawalu Burrows, a previous KIRC commissioner and my own kumu. He also received his Master's and doctoral degrees from Dr. Isabella Aiona Abbott another KIRC commissioner. Importantly, he assisted with the drafting of Ho'ola Hou I Ke Kino O Kanaloa (Kaho'olawe Environmental Restoration Plan) and was later employed as the Natural Resource Manager during the UXO clean-up project from 1997-1999.

Beyond just being involved from a job point of view, Dr. Pang has continued to advocate for support for Kaho'olawe. As a life-long member of the Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu, he supported resolution 09-31 "Calling for the Future Use and Restoration of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve" in 2009. In that resolution, we also urged the KIRC to prepare for the eventual transfer "to a Sovereign Native Hawaiian entity through broad-reaching community outreach and explicit on-island discussions." The Association also passed resolution 11-44 "Urging the Recognition of the Island of Kanaloa Kaho'olawe as a Sacred Cultural Land Trust for the Hawaiian Nation and the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana as the Kahu 'Aina for the Island". With these resolutions as a platform, he continues to provide support testimony at the Hawai'i Legislature for funding, protection of natural and cultural resources, and the transfer of Kaho'olawe to a sovereign Hawaiian entity.

Mahalo, Rosie Alegado



Committee on Water and Land
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Pō‘akolu, ‘Apelila 14, 2021
Via Leka
Ke Kapikala Moku‘āina
415 South Beretānia Street

GM 685 Related to the nomination of Dr. Benton Keali‘i Pang to the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission

Aloha Luna Ho‘omalū Lorraine Inouye, Hope Luna Ho‘omalū Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran and members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land:

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs whole-heartedly **supports** Dr. Benton Keali‘i Pang’s nomination to the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission. Dr. Pang currently serves as the O‘ahu Island Council President and as the Association’s Membership Development Committee chair. Keali‘i, as we affectionately know him, was practically raised in the Association. His parents remain respected leaders of the Association. His late father, Victor Pang – a founding president of the Association’s Mainland Council, and his mother, Jane Pang who currently serves as the Association’s Health and Human services committee chair helped influence and shape Keali‘i as the current ‘ōiwi leader he us. Keali‘i’s paternal genealogical and lineal ties also strongly link him to the Island of Maui, neighboring Kahao‘olawe’s shores. Keali‘i’s experiences as a member of our Association - specifically as a life member of the Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu has lent well to his leadership capacity growth and his contributions to the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs as well as the to larger community. Keali‘i’s expertise in hana kapa (Specifically the fiber component identification of kapa) and in resource management will lend well to the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve’s interest in the restoration, rehabilitation and permanent protection of the island’s delicate ecosystem.

The civic club movement was founded in 1918 by Congressional Delegate Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ole with the creation of the Hawaiian Civic Club; the Association was formally organized in April of 1959; and has grown to a confederation of sixty (60) Hawaiian Civic Clubs located throughout the State of Hawai‘i and the United States. The Association is the oldest Hawaiian community-based grassroots organization. The Association is governed by a 16-member Board of Directors; advocates for improved welfare of Native Hawaiians in

culture, health, economic development, education, social welfare, and nationhood; and perpetuates and preserves language, history, music, dance and other Native Hawaiian cultural traditions.

Mahalo for allowing us to share our mana‘o and for allowing the Association to formally and wholeheartedly support the nomination of Dr. Benton Keali‘i Pang to the Kaho‘olawe Island reserve Commission.

Me ka ‘oia‘i‘o,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hailama VKK Farden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Hailama VKK Farden
Pelekikena