


OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
‘Ōlelo Hō‘ike ‘Aha Kau Kānāwai
Legislative Testimony

GM740

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE ISLAND BURIAL COUNCIL, ISLAND OF HAWAII‘I, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, RANDALL HIGA, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2025

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ke Kuleana Hawai‘i
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Malaki 30, 2021

1:00 p.m.

Hālāwai Keleka‘a‘ike

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** GM740, which would confirm former OHA Nominee, Randall Higa, for an additional term on the Hawai‘i Island Burial Council.

Mr. Higa is originally from Waimānalo on O‘ahu, but now lives in Pa‘auilo, in the Hāmākua moku, and has genealogical ties to Liloa of Waipi‘o, where he also has ‘ohana and ‘āina. He received his BA in Math from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, an AS in Fire Science from Honolulu Community College, and received his MA in Public Administration from U.H. Mānoa. He had a fulfilling career as a teacher at Waimānalo Elementary, Central Intermediate, and Kamehameha Schools and as a Fire Education Captain, Training Captain, OSHA Captain, and Engine and Ladder Captain with the Honolulu Fire Department.

Throughout his life, Mr. Higa hiked all over Ka Pae ‘Āina o Hawai‘i, and his visits to many pōhaku and heiau on the various islands inspired him to become more involved in the restoration of wahi kapu. After retiring, he attended classes at UH Mānoa to learn oli, and joined Palehua Nākoa in learning to restore and build hula pā. After desiring for many years to learn hāpai pōhaku practices, Mr. Higa was eventually asked to help restore Pu‘ukoholā heiau on Hawai‘i Island, after it sustained damage from a 2006 earthquake. He agreed, and initially used traditional methods of hāpai pōhaku to restore the heiau several days a month; after making several trips, Mr. Higa volunteered to work on the restoration full-time. He moved to Hawai‘i Island and eventually took on a full-time position with the National Park Service to preserve the Pu‘ukoholā site and steward the surrounding areas.

Mr. Higa continues to enjoy practicing the Hawaiian arts of hula, wood carving, olokea, and hale building, and additionally serves with the Royal Order of Kamehameha. His ‘ohana owns Lālākea fish pond in Waipi‘o, which he helps to restore and maintain. Mr. Higa also demonstrates a dedication to mālama iwi. He has been mentored by

kūpuna Fred Cachola, Ron Dela Cruz, Les Kululoio, Scott Mahoney, and Keoni Fox. He has also been serving on the HIBC since 2018.

For these reasons, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** GM740 to confirm Randall Higa, for an additional term on the Hawai'i Island Burial Council. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



SUZANNE D. CASE
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROBERT K. MASUDA
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
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LAND
STATE PARKS

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

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**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**Tuesday, March 30, 2021
1:00 PM-2:30 PM
State Capitol, Via Videoconference**

**In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 740
SUBMITTING FOR THE CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE ISLAND
BURIAL COUNCIL, ISLAND OF HAWAII, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
RANDALL HIGA FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2025**

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports Governor's Message 740, nominating Mr. Randall Higa to the Island Burial Council, Island of Hawai'i expiring June 30, 2025.

The Island Burial Councils are established under Section 6E-43.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes. The Councils determine whether to preserve or relocate previously identified native Hawaiian burial sites, recognize lineal and cultural descendants, and provide counsel and advice to the Department.

Mr. Higa is a resident of Pa'auilo on the Island of Hawai'i. He has a B.A. in Mathematics, a M.A. in Public Administration and a Ph.D. in Remedial and Special Education. He spent 32 years with the Honolulu Fire Department and retired as a Captain. Waiola (as he is known by his peers) is a member of the prestigious Royal Order of Kamehameha. He has done extensive volunteers work which includes the Fort Barrette Field cleanup, Waikele Petroglyph field cleanup as well as ground maintenance at Mauna 'Ala (Royal Mausoleum). He has served on the Board of Directors of several canoe clubs such as Ka Māmalahoa Canoe Club, Kai'ōpua Canoe Club, and Kawaihae Canoe Club. He also has experience in working on projects that involved Hawaiian dry stackwall renovation at Pu'u Koholā Heiau, Kalaupapa, and at the Kaloko-Honokōhau Fishpond. Mr. Higa has been serving on the Council for the last couple of years.

Senate confirmation will ensure that Mr. Higa's knowledge and perspective informs the deliberations of the Hawai'i Island Burial Council until June 30, 2025.

GM-740

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 9:59:24 AM

Testimony for HWN on 3/30/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Downer	Testifying for DLNR	Support	No

Comments:

I am available for questions. Please allow me Zoom access. Thank you.