



**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 on  
Hawaiian Affairs

Tuesday, March 15, 2022  
1:01 P.M.  
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

**In SUPPORT of  
SCR 47 / SR 42**

SCR47/SR 42 requests the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL), in conjunction with the County of Hawaii Department of Water Supply (DWS), to **provide a progress report regarding the development of the Ka'u Water System.**

**The Hawaii State Aha Moku (Aha Moku) strongly supports this measure but requests amendments due to concerns listed below.**

The Hawaii State Aha Moku System encompasses the Moku of Kau with the 26 ahupua'a within. These are Keawaiki, Pohue, Kahuku, Kapininui, Pakiniiki Kalilikii, Kalae, Kawela, Kiolakaa, Waiohinu, Kamilo, Honuapo, Kaalaiki, Hiilea, Ninole, Wailau, Punalu'u, Makaha, Kopumoaulu, Paauau, Kauhuula, Kaalaala, Kapapala, Kaaha, Na'alehu and Keauhou. We list these ahupua'a because each one depends on fresh water from the Ka'u Watershed. Of the twenty-six ahupua'a, only three – Na'alehu, Waiohinu and Kalae have Hawaiian Homestead lots on them.

SCR 47-SR 42 focusses on Hawaiian Home Lands yet this Senate Concurrent Resolution is asking for a progress report for the entire Ka'u Moku because it clearly states, "development of the Ka'u Water System". Ka'u is a truly large land district that can hold the entire Island of O'ahu within it. So the question is "Does the Legislature intend for this progress report to only focus on Hawaiian Home Lands? Or does it intend the DHHL and Hawaii County DWS to focus on the entire Ka'u Moku? If so, then we believe that it is unjust and impossible for DHHL to carry this responsibility until it can get all native Hawaiians in Ka'u on a homestead lease, whether it be residential such as Discovery Harbor, agricultural or pastoral as on Kalae.

Originally, all the ahupua'a in Ka'u were serviced by the Ka'u Watershed including a strong cave system unique to Ka'u. When Ka'u fell under the jurisdiction of the plantations, these cave systems were sealed and an irrigation system installed instead that adversely impacted the Ka'u communities, especially the native Hawaiian families of each ahupua'a. Many of those families are now generational families who have never left Ka'u and struggle to sustain their traditional practices.

Ka'u is a Moku that has little development compared to urban development on the five other Moku on Hawaii Island. Native Hawaiian culture and its traditional practices are strong on all the ahupua'a. A Water System for the entire district of Ka'u is desperately needed, yet because the lands are so rural, it has not been a priority for the state. We believe a stronger destination for this issue should be a priority for the 2023 Legislative Session.

Today the host culture of Hawaii, the native Hawaiians, many of whom are Hawaiian Homes beneficiaries are in complete and critical survival mode. Many beneficiaries who are lessees have multi-generations living in one house. These are the beneficiaries who are fortunate enough to have leases. Many of those who continue to be on the waiting list are cultural practitioners who depend on the natural and cultural resources to survive. Many in Ka'u are participants in the Hawaii Aha Moku.

We believe this SCR/SR is focused only on Hawaiian Home Lands and entreat this committee to adjust the "title" and the first "Therefore Be It Resolved to read as:

"Requesting the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, in Conjunction with the County of Hawaii Department of Water Supply, to provide a Progress Report regarding the development of the Ka'u Water System **on Hawaiian Home Lands.**

"BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session 2022, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, in conjunction with the County of Hawaii Department of Water Supply is requested to provide a progress report regarding the development of the Ka'u Water System on **Hawaiian Home Lands.**

We are sincerely grateful to the Legislators who worked on this Senate Concurrent Resolution. We support the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and the Hawaii County Department of Water Supply and their work on bringing water to the beneficiaries. Yet, we look to these same policy makers to work on a water system for the rest of the Moku of Ka'u.

Respectfully yours,

Kawaikapuokalani Hewett, Ka Mea Ho'okumu, [kahalelehua@outlook.com](mailto:kahalelehua@outlook.com)  
Rocky Kaluhiwa, Kahu Nui O Pae'Aina, [rockykaluhiwa1122@gmail.com](mailto:rockykaluhiwa1122@gmail.com)  
Leimana DaMate, Luna Alaka'i/Executive Director, [leimana.k.damate@hawaii.gov](mailto:leimana.k.damate@hawaii.gov)

Hawaii State Aha Moku  
808-640-1214