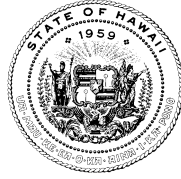


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII

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 10, 2022 AT 1:00PM VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**SCR 15/SR 9 REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME
LANDS IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT VERY LOW INCOME NATIVE
HAWAIIAN BENEFICIARIES**

March 10, 2022

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

The Department of Hawaiian Home lands (DHHL) submits comments on these resolutions requesting that DHHL implement programs to support very low income native Hawaiian beneficiaries. DHHL appreciates the motivation behind these resolutions, but notes that any proposed “non-traditional” programs designed to provide beneficiary applicants with awards quickly recognizing the financial constraints should consider first the Non-Traditional Awards Evaluation that was completed and shared with the Hawaiian Homes Commission at its meeting in November 2019 that can be accessed here: [file:///P:/Shared/HHC%20Packets/2019/11%20November%20\(Kula%20Community%20Ctr\)/November%2018%20&%2019,%202019%20HHC%20Meeting%20Agenda,%20Kula,%20Maui%20PACKET.pdf](file:///P:/Shared/HHC%20Packets/2019/11%20November%20(Kula%20Community%20Ctr)/November%2018%20&%2019,%202019%20HHC%20Meeting%20Agenda,%20Kula,%20Maui%20PACKET.pdf). The evaluation notes that while the number of lessees receiving awards increased significantly, the most significant weaknesses of the programs are that it took much longer than expected for lots to be improved and lessees to be able to move into their awards.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

Kūpuna for the Mo'opuna
committed to the well-being of Hawai'i for the next generations to come
kupuna4moopuna@gmail.com



SCR15 / SR9 - REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT VERY LOW INCOME NATIVE HAWAIIAN BENEFICIARIES. Committee on Hawaiian Affairs 3-10-22 1:00p

COMMENTS

We, Kūpuna for the Mo'opuna, a hui of homestead kūpuna farmers from Pana'ewa, Hawai'i, remind the Hawaiian Homes Commission and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands of their fiduciary duty to faithfully administer the provisions of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) on behalf of the native Hawaiian beneficiaries of the Act.

The Hawaiian Homes Commission (HHC) / Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) have authority over HHCA lands. They must exercise their decision-making powers now to protect these trust lands for all beneficiaries – those on the waitlist and those on the land – of every economic level.

The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act gives authority to the HHC and the DHHL to place native Hawaiians on the land in a prompt and efficient manner and to prevent alienation of HHCA lands so that these lands will always be held in trust for continued use by native Hawaiians in perpetuity. These principal purposes are in the Act; place beneficiaries on the land now and stop legal thievery!

While the 28,000 waitlisters continue to wait, the state legislature continues to give away HHCA / DHHL lands in 99-year long-term leases to **non-beneficiaries** (just a very few examples: 2018 - SB3058, Act 149 ... 2020 - HB2191... 2021- HB499, Act 239) which include leases for commercial, industrial, and hotel or resort purposes eligible for “**disposition by negotiation**”... “**backdoor deals**” (2022- SB 3133) **giving away our beneficiary lands to non-beneficiaries when the DHHL waitlist is over 28,000. Auē!**

The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act is clear. Put native Hawaiian beneficiaries on the land now and stop legal thievery.

~ Kūpuna for the Mo'opuna, Pana'ewa, Hawai'i



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

To: The Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Chair
The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair
Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Re: **SCR 15 / SR 9 – REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS IMPEMENT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT VERY LOW INCOME NATIVE HAWAIIAN BENEFICIARIES**

Hearing: Thursday, March 10, 2022, 1:00 p.m., Conference Room 016 and Via Videoconference

Position: Strong Support

Aloha, Chair Shimabukuro and Vice Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Committee on Hawaiian Affairs:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i strongly supports SCR 15 / SR 9 and requests that these measures be PASSED by your Committee. This bill requests the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to implement programs to support very low income native Hawaiian beneficiaries.

The Environmental Caucus supports these measures as support is seriously needed by very low income native Hawaiian beneficiaries, many of which have been on the residential or agricultural waitlists for many years. Hawaii has one of the worst homeless rates in the country, historically being the No. 1 state per capita having the highest rate of homelessness, when measured by the number of homeless per 10,000 people. Further, Hawaii's homeless population contains a disproportionately high number of native Hawaiians.

The request for flexibility in allowing tents or other temporary structures on 99-year leases; Puuhonua O Waianae or other village-style living; temporary structures on vacant lots; and payment of land taxes for those who had to seek other residence outside of DHHL lands while on its waitlist are all viable options for very low-income native Hawaiian beneficiaries during the interim while seeking resources to build permanent residential homes.

Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity to testify. Please pass these resolutions.

Respectfully submitted,

Melodie Adyja and Alan Burdick

Co-Chairs, Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i