

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

LATE

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

Testimony of **Nani Medeiros**
Chief Housing Officer, Office of the Governor

Before the
Senate Committee on Water and Land
Wednesday, March 8, 2023
1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 229

In consideration of
GM 528
Gubernatorial Nominee Laura Kaakua
Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante and members of the committee.

I testify in strong support of Governors Message 528, submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee Laura Kaakua.

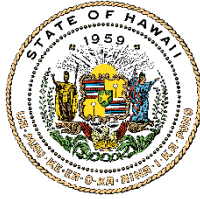
Please advise and consent to the confirmation of Laura Kaakua.

Mahalo,

Nani Medeiros

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA**

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

LAURA H.E. KAAKUA
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
DAWN N.S. CHANG
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
WATER AND LAND**

**Wednesday, March 8, 2023
1:00 PM**

State Capitol Conference Room 229 and Videoconference

**In Consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 528
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION
AS THE DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRPERSON,
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES,
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
LAURA KAAKUA,
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 7, 2026**

The Department of Land and Natural Resources strongly supports Governor's Message 528 nominating Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department), for a term to expire on December 7, 2026.

Laura H.E. Kaakua brings proven leadership, management and facilitation skills to the Department. These skills are backed by expertise in community capacity building, an understanding of complicated land transactions, and large-scale ecosystem restoration and planning with diverse partners. She combines these skills with a determination to empower local communities in the planning process and to enable them to formulate attainable stewardship goals for appropriate lands with the resources at hand. She is already using her considerable abilities to explore community partnerships for increased capacity to co-steward the Department's lands, coordinate the Department's response to a yacht grounding at Honolua Bay, and to help guide the legislative team through the 2023 Legislative Session. Deputy Nominee Kaakua and the Chair Appointee are also starting to plan for improved efficiency to impact Department operations over the long-term.

As a graduate from the Richardson School of Law, Deputy Nominee Kaakua holds an environmental law certificate and an American Jurisprudence Award in the Legal Aspects of Water Resources and Control and Historic Preservation Law. She graduated from Boston College where she double majored in Political Science and Communications, and founded the Society of Native American Peoples. She is also an alumna of Punahou School.

Before agreeing to become the nominee for Deputy at the Department, Deputy Nominee Kaakua was the President and CEO of Hawai'i Land Trust (HILT). While there, she worked in partnership with the Land Trust's Board of Directors to set strategic vision and goals to protect and steward the lands that sustain Hawai'i for current and future generations. As a part of the process of identifying significant lands in need of permanent protection, she worked with local communities, stewards, farmers, ranchers, Hawaiian cultural practitioners, landowners, and government agencies to identify funding and capacity building strategies to protect and steward significant land, and ultimately foster reciprocal relationships between people and place.

Prior to becoming the President and CEO of HILT, Deputy Nominee Kaakua managed the Aloha 'Āina Program at Trust for Public Land, where she served as project manager for several major land transactions including Ka'ehu Bay and Wetlands in Waiehu, Maui, MA'O Farms in Wai'anae, O'ahu, Kauleolī in South Kona, Hawai'i Island, Ka Iwi Coast Mauka Lands in Maunaloa, O'ahu, and Kānewai Spring in Kuli'ou'ou, O'ahu. She played an active role in developing the O'ahu Greenprint with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. This project mapped the conservation values most prioritized by O'ahu residents for use as a planning tool. She also worked to identify the strengths and weakness of partner agencies, including government agencies and then helped them to build capacity to own and manage resource properties for the betterment of Hawai'i and the perpetuation of Hawaiian culture.

Deputy Nominee Kaakua brings proven management, legal, facilitation and communication skills to the Department. In addition to her significant body of work, Deputy Nominee Kaakua is a Leadership Council Member for the National Land Trust Alliance. She is an Alaka'i (Leader) and Co-Teacher of the Keiki Class at Hālau Nā Pualei o Likolehua, and a volunteer with the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this nominee.



TESTIMONY BY:
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors
DREANALEE K. KALILI
TAMMY L. LEE
ROBIN K. SHISHIDO
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

Wednesday, March 8, 2023
1:00 P.M.
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
State Capitol

In consideration of
Governor's Message 528
Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson,
Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, Laura Kaakua

Senate Committee on Water and Land

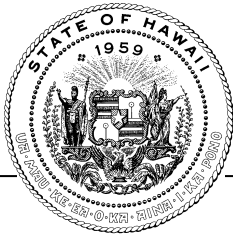
The Department of Transportation (DOT) **supports** the confirmation of Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

Ms. Kaakua received her Juris Doctor with an Environmental Law Certificate from the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and her dual B.A. degrees in political science and communications from Boston College.

Ms. Kaakua recently served as the President and Chief Executive Officer of Hawai'i Land Trust, setting strategic visions and goals that further its mission to protect and steward the lands that sustain Hawai'i for current and future generations. She also served as the Native Lands Program Manager at Trust for Public Land.

The DOT believes that Ms. Kaakua's work in land management, conservation and large-scale ecosystem restoration planning with various partners and community members makes her an ideal candidate to serve as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the DLNR.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



**STATE OF HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF PLANNING
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SCOTT J. GLENN
DIRECTOR

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

Telephone: (808) 587-2846
Fax: (808) 587-2824
Web: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/>

Statement of
SCOTT GLENN, Director

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Wednesday, March 8, 2023, 1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

in consideration of
GM 528

**Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson,
Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KAAKUA,
for a term to expire 12-07-2026.**

Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of the appointment of Laura Kaakua to serve as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). I have had the opportunity to work with Ms. Kaakua for many years in our previous respective roles in the private and public sectors.

Ms. Kaakua brings passion, knowledge, and expertise to DLNR. Through her prior positions as the President and CEO of the Hawai'i Land Trust and Native Lands Program Manager at the Trust for Public Land, she understands deeply the public trust mission of DLNR in managing public lands, water resources, ocean waters, streams, and coastal areas. Her extensive experience in strategic planning, conservation, and contract law positions the Board, Chair, and division administrators to be successful in guiding the Department in fulfilling its mandates.

For these reasons, I humbly ask for Ms. Kaakua's confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA

March 8, 2023

To: The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
The Honorable Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Committee on Water and Land

Date: Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Place: Conference Room 229 & Videoconference, State Capitol

From: Jade T. Butay, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

Re: G.M. 528; Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KAAKUA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations **strongly supports** the confirmation of Laura Kaakua as Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

Ms. Kaakua has the background and knowledge to serve as the Deputy Chairperson. As the former President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaii Land Trust, she has extensive experience with conservation and land acquisition issues. In addition, Ms. Kaakua's legal background serving as a Lecturer and Law Clerk demonstrate her ability to analyze and implement the numerous laws that the DLNR enforces.

Ms. Kaakua's remarkable background and management style of collaboration makes her the ideal legal eagle to enhance, protect, conserve and manage Hawaii's unique and limited natural, cultural and historic resources held in public trust for current and future generations of the people of Hawaii Nei, and its visitors, in partnership with others from the public and private sectors.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of Governor's Message 528.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2023
1:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 229 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

GOVERNORS MESSAGE NO. 528

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KAAKUA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

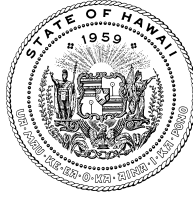
Chairperson Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Gubernatorial Nominee, Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). Laura brings relevant experience and knowledge to the position that will maximize her success in managing land and water resources. She is the current President and CEO of the Hawaii Land Trust where the mission is to protect and steward the lands for the future of Hawaii. Her Hawaiian heritage allows her a unique perspective for cultural places and how to protect them; her degree in environmental law from the UH William S. Richardson School of Law provides guidance. Laura has the experience, the qualifications and is the right person for the position.

Respectfully requesting your vote to confirm LAURA KAAKUA's nomination to serve as the Deputy to the Chairperson, DLNR.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

Testimony of
Josh Green, M.D.
Governor, State of Hawaii

Before the
Senate Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, March 8, 2023
1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 and Videoconference

In consideration of
Governor's Message No. 528

Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Committee
on Water and Land:

I respectfully request your favorable consideration of Governor's Message No. 528, appointment of Laura Kaakua to serve as Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Laura's cumulative work experiences and strong record of leadership attest to her competence to serve in a leadership role with the Department of Land and Natural Resources. As the former President and Chief Executive Officer the Hawai'i Land Trust, Laura worked in partnership with the Land Trust's Board of Directors to set the Land Trust's strategic vision and goals that furthered its mission to protect and steward the lands that sustain Hawaii now and for future generations. While serving at the helm at Hawai'i Land Trust and serving as the Native Lands Program Manager of the Trust for Public Land, Laura was entrusted to work in partnership with government leaders, public officials, and agencies at the county, state, and federal levels to achieve shared land and resource protection goals for the betterment of Hawaii.

Much of Laura's work experiences and dedication to community service have centered in the areas of land protection and land stewardship. These experiences have strengthened her breadth of experience, expertise, and service in capably carrying out the mission and responsibilities of the Department of Land and Natural Resources. It is Laura's collaborative leadership style, her proclivity to involve her team and listen to

Testimony of Office of the Governor
Governor's Message No. 528
March 8, 2023
Page 2

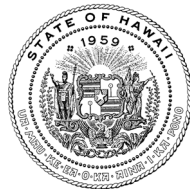
varying viewpoints to arrive at informed decisions, and her sound work ethic that round out her ability to serve as Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Laura earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science and communications from Boston College and Juris Doctor from the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

I am confident that Laura Kaakua will serve the State and community well as Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Mahalo for your consideration.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BY
SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE

TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 528

March 8, 2023
1:00 p.m.
Room 229 & Videoconference

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRPERSON, DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, LAURA KAAKUA, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-07-2026.

Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support the appointment of Ms. Laura Kaakua to the position of Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). I am working with Ms. Kaakua in my professional capacity as Deputy Director of Finance.

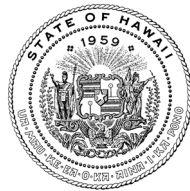
Governor Green's administration shares his priorities of homelessness and housing, the cost of living, climate change, and health care for the people of Hawai'i. We are committed to take action to make the needed changes to move Hawai'i forward.

Ms. Kaakua is an integral part of a team that is dedicated to achieving the goals of this administration in an honest, transparent, accountable, and responsive manner.

Ms. Kaakua is currently serving as the Deputy to the Chairperson of DLNR. Prior to that, she was the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hawai'i Land Trust since March 2019, working to protect and steward the lands that sustain Hawai'i for current and future generations. Her work experience in land protection and stewardship will benefit the department and the State; therefore, I support her confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BY
LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE

TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 528

March 8, 2023
1:00 p.m.
Room 229 & Videoconference

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRPERSON, DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, LAURA KAAKUA, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-07-2026.

Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support the appointment of Ms. Laura Kaakua to the position of Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). I am working with Ms. Kaakua in my professional capacity as Director of Finance.

Governor Green's administration shares his priorities of homelessness and housing, the cost of living, climate change, and health care for the people of Hawai'i. We are committed to take action to make the needed changes to move Hawai'i forward.

Ms. Kaakua is an integral part of a team that is dedicated to achieving the goals of this administration in an honest, transparent, accountable, and responsive manner.

Ms. Kaakua is currently serving as the Deputy to the Chairperson of DLNR. Prior to that, she was the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hawai'i Land Trust since March 2019, working to protect and steward the lands that sustain Hawai'i for current and future generations. Her work experience in land protection and stewardship will benefit the department and the State; therefore, I support her confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. BOX 3378
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

WRITTEN
TESTIMONY
ONLY

In reply, please refer to:
File:

Testimony in SUPPORT of GM528
Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson,
Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA
KAAKUA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

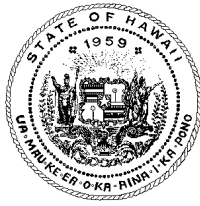
SENATOR LORRAINE R. INOUYE, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Hearing Date: 3/8/2023

Room Number: CR 229

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A.
- 2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports the nomination of Laura
- 3 Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources.
- 4
- 5 Ms. Kaakua's experience in the private sector and legal education, including partnerships with
- 6 county, state, and federal agencies, to protect through purchase or conservation easement or to
- 7 develop the next generation of conservation leaders speaks to her dedication to Hawaii's
- 8 environment. Furthermore, her background, interest, and work with Native Hawaiian issues will
- 9 assure a pono approach to public administration of land and other natural resources.
- 10
- 11 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
- 12
- 13 **Offered Amendments:** None

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
Ka 'Oihana Ho'opalekana Lehulehu
1177 Alakea Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

TOMMY JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

Melanie Martin
Deputy Director
Administration

Michael J. Hoffman
Acting Deputy Director
Corrections

William F. Oku
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR MESSAGE NO. 528
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY TO
THE CHAIRPERSON, DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES,
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE LAURA KAAKUA

By
Tommy Johnson, Director

Senate Committee on Water and Land
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 8, 2023; 1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Via Video Conference

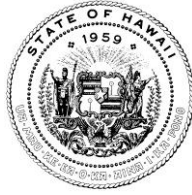
Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

I submit this testimony in support of the nomination and confirmation of Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). Ms. Kaakua's vast knowledge and experience in land management, conservation, and active community engagement make her very well suited to become the Deputy to the Chairperson of the DLNR.

Ms. Kaakua's in-depth knowledge of land management and conservation coupled with her legal background as an Attorney makes her the ideal person to serve as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the DLNR. Her skill set would be a tremendous asset to the Chairperson of the DLNR as they work together as a formidable team to lead DLNR into the future. I, therefore, recommend this committee advise and consent on this very highly qualified nominee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Governor's Message 528 and the confirmation of Ms. Kaakua.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



DOUGLAS MURDOCK
CHIEF INFORMATION
OFFICER

OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HI 96810-0119
Ph: (808) 586-6000 | Fax: (808) 586-1922
ETS.HAWAII.GOV

Testimony of
DOUGLAS MURDOCK
Chief Information Officer
Enterprise Technology Services

Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 528
NOMINATION OF LAURA KAAKUA, DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRPERSON, DEPARTMENT OF
LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Dear Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the committee:

I am writing in support of Governor Josh Green's nomination of Laura Kaakua as Deputy to the Chairperson for the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DNLR).

Ms. Kaakua most recently worked as the President and Chief Executive Officer of Hawai'i Land Trust where she set strategic visions and goals to further the trust's mission to protect and steward Hawai'i's lands.

She has also served as the Native Lands Program Manager at Trust for Public Land, a Lecturer at the Williams S. Richardson School of Law, and as a Coordinator for Envision Hawai'i.

Through these roles, Ms. Kaalua has demonstrated management, conservation, and land acquisition leadership skills, and facilitated large-scale ecosystem restoration planning efforts with diverse partners.

I am happy to support her confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau
P.O. BOX 259

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540
FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

GARY S. SUGANUMA
DIRECTOR

KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**TESTIMONY OF
GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION**

TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

In consideration of G.M. No. 528

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial nominee, Laura Kaakua

BEFORE THE:

Senate Committee on Water and Land

DATE: Wednesday, March 8, 2023

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 229

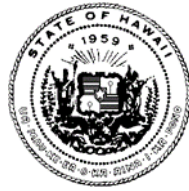
Chair Inouye, Vice-Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of the confirmation of Ms. Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

I believe Ms. Kaakua's years of leadership experience in the private sector dealing with land management will enable her to address the challenges facing DLNR. I believe Ms. Kaakua is prepared and committed to work with the communities in serving the best interests of the State and am confident that she has the experience, skillset and leadership abilities to take on the role of Deputy to the Chairperson of DLNR.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Governor's Message 528.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
Office of the Director
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 7, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
The Honorable Senator Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water and Land

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **Testimony in Support**
G.M. 528, Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the
Deputy to the Chairperson for the Department of Land and Natural Resources,
Laura Kaakua

Hearing: March 8, 2023 at 1:00 pm
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

The Department of Human Services submits this testimony in support of Laura Kaakua for the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). DHS works very closely with DLNR on issues regarding homelessness. Ms. Kaakua's vast experience in conservation, community advocacy, and protection of land of critical cultural importance are all valuable assets to bring to DLNR. I have known Ms. Kaakua for many years and she is community driven, caring, and dedicated to responsible land stewardship. She brings a wealth of knowledge and a collaborative spirit to the deputy position.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in **SUPPORT** of Governor's Message 528 and Ms. Kaakua.

JOSH GREEN
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



KENNETH S. HARA
MAJOR GENERAL
ADJUTANT GENERAL
KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

STEPHEN F. LOGAN
BRIGADIER GENERAL
DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL
KA HOPE 'AKUKANA KENELALA

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816-4495

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 528,
RELATING TO GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE LAURA KAAKUA

PRESENTATION TO
THE SENATE
COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

BY

BRIGADIER GENERAL STEPHEN F. LOGAN
DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL

MARCH 7, 2023

Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Committee on Water and Land.

I am Brigadier General Stephen F. Logan, Deputy Adjutant General, Department of Defense, State of Hawaii.

I respectfully submit testimony in **SUPPORT of GM528**, relating to the Gubernatorial Nomination of Ms. Laura Kaakua, Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

Ms. Kaakua is someone who possesses a wealth of knowledge and expertise in land related matters in Hawaii, particular in the areas of land management and conservation. She cares deeply about the protection of our unique islands. Her work as CEO and President of the Hawaii Island Land Trust helped preserve over 21,000 acres of land throughout our state, and she understands how to protect Hawaii's limited land resources, as well as restore them. She will provide thoughtful leadership to the DLNR and balanced insight.

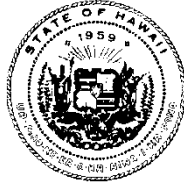
I have known Ms. Kaakua for only a brief time, but I have found her to be deeply committed to bettering our state. She has dedicated her professional life to land management and educating our residents from kieki to our kapuna through volunteer work and lecturing at the University of Hawaii. Ms. Kaakua's background in law, the relationships she has fostered in the community, and her genuine care for the future of our state will help guide mindful decisions and ensure our finite land resources are managed to prepare Hawaii for the future.

I would be honored to serve with Ms. Kaapua and am confident she will be a pillar to help lead our state into the future.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and for your consideration.

BG Stephen F. Logan; Stephen.f.logan@hawaii.gov, 808-672-1003.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



HAKIM OUANSAFI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BARBARA E. ARASHIRO
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 17907
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO:

Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi, Executive Director
Hawaii Public Housing Authority

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Wednesday, March 8, 2023
1:00 PM
Room 229, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
GM 528

**SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY TO THE
CHAIRPERSON, DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES, GUBERNATORIAL
NOMINEE, LAURA KAAKUA,
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-07-2026.**

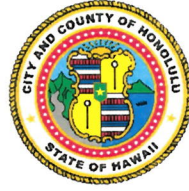
Honorable Chair Inouye and Members of the Committee on Water and Land, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of GM 528, to consider and confirm Laura Kaakua to the position of Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

It is truly my honor and privilege to be working alongside with her and there is no doubt in my mind that she will continue to bring a fresh perspective on how to deliver services, improve the experience of those we serve, and strive to maximize taxpayer dollars efficiently and effectively.

The HPHA urges the Committee to pass GM 528 and confirm Laura Kaakua to the position of Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

530 SOUTH KING STREET, ROOM 300 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 768-4141 • FAX: (808) 768-4242 • INTERNET: www.honolulu.gov



RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR

MICHAEL D. FORMBY
MANAGING DIRECTOR
KRISHNA F. JAYARAM
DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR

March 1, 2023

The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
The Honorable Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Water Land
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

SUBJECT: GM 528, Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KAAKUA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

Dear Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land:

As the Managing Director of the City and County of Honolulu, it is my privilege to express my strong support for the confirmation of Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

During my years of service, I have had the opportunity to work directly with Laura Kaakua in her role at the Hawaii Land Trust and found her to be experienced in land transactions, stewardship, and conservation. Furthermore, her dealings with me, and my office, have always been professional and solution-oriented.

I respectfully ask for this Committee's favorable consideration of Ms. Kaakua's confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Formby", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael D. Formby
Managing Director

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
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Shane M. Sinenci
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



Director of Council Services
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

March 7, 2023

TO: Honorable Chair Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair Brandon J.C. Elefante,
and members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land

FROM: Tamara Paltin
Councilmember

DATE: March 7, 2023

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF GM 528, CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY TO
THE CHAIRPERSON, DLNR, LAURA KAAKUA**

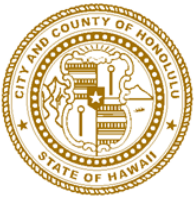
Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of the appointment of Laura H. E. Kaakua as the First Deputy of DLNR. I have known and worked with Laura for many years, first in her capacity as Native Lands Program Manager for the Trust for Public Lands and later as the CEO of Hawaiian Islands Land Trust. Independent of these professional roles, I have known Laura to be trustworthy, authentic, and committed to the stewardship of our island ecosystems as a whole. I feel extremely blessed that Governor Green has selected her for this role and overjoyed that she has chosen to accept the appointment.

Most recently, I was able to spend time with her at Honolua and work together on seeing the beached luxury yacht out of the area. She had offered to come back and meet with our community knowing the way that many in the community feel about DLNR, this before I was even able to request it. To me, that shows the courage and leadership necessary to do this job. I trust she will bring a necessary perspective that has long been missing in the way we approach stewardship and community throughout the pae 'āina. I humbly ask that you please confirm Laura Kaakua for the role of first Deputy without delay.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tamara M. Paltin".

TAMARA PALTIN
Maui County Councilmember



ESTHER KIA'ĀINA
VICE CHAIR
HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL, DISTRICT 3
Email: ekiaaina@honolulu.gov
Telephone: (808) 768-5003

March 7, 2023

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land:

I strongly support GM528, which would confirm the appointment of Laura Ka'akua as Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). Ms. Ka'akua's legal and professional background, land management experience, cultural expertise, and community grounding, make her highly qualified to serve in this capacity.

As a former First Deputy for DLNR under Governor Neil Abercrombie, I know the kuleana and challenges that Ms. Ka'akua will face at DLNR. The DLNR and its board oversees approximately 1.3 million acres of public lands, most of which are held in trust for the benefit of the Native Hawaiian people and the public, and administers important programs to carry out the state's responsibility to conserve and manage our natural and cultural resources on behalf of the people and environment of Hawai'i.

DLNR's responsibilities include the conservation and protection of natural and cultural resources; the disposition of public lands through sales, long term leases, licenses, and revocable permits; the protection of iwi kūpuna and sacred historic sites; the management of state parks, small boat harbors, ocean recreation areas, and beaches, including the maintenance of lateral access to coastal areas; the promotion of aquifer recharge through watershed protection and restoration; and the enforcement of relevant laws. This vast and significant kuleana requires leadership that not only has the subject matter and administrative capacity, but that is also committed to fulfilling DLNR's fiduciary obligations to Native Hawaiians and the general public, including future generations of these beneficiaries.

If confirmed, Ms. Ka'akua's educational, personal, and professional experiences; expertise and background in land management, land acquisition, protection of wahi kupuna and food producing lands, and natural resource management; history of empowering communities through co-management; and intimate understanding of Native Hawaiians' deep cultural connection with 'āina; will help inform the execution of DLNR's critical kuleana.

I urge the Committee to support Ms. Ka'akua's confirmation.



Ka Moku'aina 'O Hawai'i Aha Moku O Pae'Aina

State of Hawai'i Aha Moku

P. O. Box 621

Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

Testimony of the Hawaii State Aha Moku

Before the Senate Committee on

Water and Land

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

1:00 PM

Conference Room 229

IN SUPPORT of GM 528

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KAAKUA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

The Hawaii State Aha Moku (Aha Moku) supports this Gubernatorial Nominee.

Based on her extensive experience in demonstrated leadership and successful management in transactions in conservation, community capacity building, conflict resolution and ecosystem restoration, Aha Moku supports Laura Kaakua. But more than this, we acknowledge and honor her skills in empowering local communities to steward cultural landscapes.

Further, Ms. Kaakua is a native Hawaiian who was raised with the traditional values of her culture. She is respectful to Kupuna which is critically important to Hawaiians. She understands the value of generational knowledge and that each moku and ahupua'a are unique in their natural and cultural resources.

Aha Moku works with native Hawaiians on all the main Hawaiian Islands. In speaking to native Hawaiian practitioners and families on Moku O Keawe (Hawaii), Moku O Piilani (Maui), Nana'i Kaula (Lana'i), Kakuhihewa (O'ahu), and Manokalanipo (Kaua'i), all were in support of Laura Kaakua's nomination.

Thank you for the opportunity to sharing our mana'o with you. We strongly support Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources and urge her confirmation

Respectfully,

Leimana DaMate, Luna Alaka'i/Executive Director

Hawaii State Aha Moku

808-640-1214

Leimana.k.damate@hawaii.gov

Rocky Kaluhiwa, Po'o O Kakuhihewa

Hawaii State Aha Moku

808-286-7955

rockykaluhiwa1122@gmail.com

Pae'Aina: Moku O Keawe, Moku O Piilani, Moku O Kanaloa, Nana'i Kaula, Moloka'i Pule O'o, Moku O Kakuhihewa, Manokalanipo, Ka'Aina O Kawelonakala



Ko`olau Foundation

P. O. Box 4749
Kane`ohe, HI 96744

March 7, 2023

TO: Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair
& Members
Committee on Water & Land

FROM: Aaron D. Mahi, President
Mahealani Cypher, Board Member

RE: Support for G.M. 528, Confirmation of Laura Kaakua
As Deputy Director, Department of Land & Natural Resources

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante and Committee Members:

The Ko`olau Foundation strongly supports the confirmation of Laura Kaakua to serve as deputy director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Our organization is dedicated to the preservation of historic places and perpetuation of our Hawaiian cultural traditions, practices and heritage.

In our experience working with Laura in the past, we have found her to be a very capable and knowledgeable advocate for land conservation and natural resources. Her efforts to malama lands that hold cultural, environmental and agricultural value have prepared her well for the level of kuleana she will hold in supporting the mission of the state department which is charged with managing our historic and natural resources effectively.

We hope you will agree, and urge your vote of confidence in her nomination as deputy director of DLNR.

Mahalo for your consideration of our mana`o.



HAWAII REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

LATE

Senate Committee on Water and Land
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

Statement of the Hawaii Regional Council of Carpenters SUPPORT for GM 528

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Regional Council of Carpenters (HRCC) supports GM 528, submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KAAKUA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026

As Trust for Public Land's Aloha Aina Program Manager, Laura managed many projects from the idea stage through successful purchase, protecting thousands of acres with high cultural and ecological value.

As Hawaii Land Trust's President and CEO, she partnered with diverse groups (private companies, ranchers, farmers, large landowners, Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners) to find win-win solutions that led to cultural and environmental protection, job creation, and economic diversification.

We believe that Laura is an ideal candidate for Deputy Chairperson of DLNR and is willing to meet across sectors to find creative solutions.

Mahalo.

STATE HEADQUARTERS & BUSINESS OFFICES

OAHU: 1311 Houghtailing Street, Honolulu Hawaii 96817-2712 • Ph. (808) 847-5761 Fax (808) 440-9188

HILO OFFICE: 525 Kilauea Avenue, Room 205, Hilo, Hawaii 96720-3050 • Ph. (808) 935-8575 Fax (808) 935-8576

KONA OFFICE: 75-126 Lunapule Road, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii 96740-2106 • Ph. (808) 329-7355 Fax (808) 326-9376

MAUI OFFICE: 330 Hookahi Street, Wailuku, Maui 96793-1449 • Ph. (808) 242-6891 Fax (808) 242-5961

KAUAI OFFICE: Kuhio Medical Ctr Bldg., 3-3295 Kuhio Hwy, Suite 201, Lihue, Kauai 96766-1040 • Ph. (808) 245-8511 Fax (808) 245-8911

Matson Navigation Company, Inc.
In support of GM528
Before the Committee on Water and Land
March 8, 2023

Dear Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee,

Matson Navigation Company, Inc. (Matson) supports GM528, which nominates Laura Ka'akua to the serve as the Deputy to the Chair at the Department of Land and Natural Resources. Ms. Ka'akua has successfully served as the CEO of the Hawai'i Land Trust and the Aloha 'Āina Program Manager at the Trust for Public Land where both her competence and kuleana for mālama 'āina have been proven. Matson believes Ms. Ka'akua's experience qualifies her to serve as the Deputy and believes she will positively contribute to the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Thank you for considering our testimony in support.

Hawaii Harbor Users Group
In support of GM528
Before the Committee on Water and Land
March 8, 2023

Dear Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Harbor Users Group (HHUG) is a non-profit maritime transportation industry group comprised of key commercial harbor users statewide. HHUG supports GM528, which nominates Laura Ka'akua to the serve as the Deputy to the Chair at the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Ms. Ka'akua has successfully served as the CEO of the Hawai'i Land Trust and the Aloha 'Āina Program Manager at the Trust for Public Land where both her competence and kuleana for mālama 'āina have been proven. HHUG believes Ms. Ka'akua's experience qualifies her to serve as the Deputy and believes she will positively contribute to the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Thank you for considering our testimony in support.



WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

March 8, 2023

Committee on Water and Land
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

RE: Governor’s Message No. 528 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KA’AKUA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

Hearing date: March 8, 2023, 1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Young Brothers, LLC (“YB”) offering **SUPPORT** for Governor’s Message No. 528 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KA’AKUA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

YB is a common carrier by water, transporting property by tug and barge between the islands of O’ahu, Hawai’i, Kaua’i, Maui, Moloka’i, and Lāna’i. YB is currently the only water carrier authorized to transport property under Chapter 271G, Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”) (i.e., the Hawaii Water Carrier Act), subject to the regulatory authority of the Public Utilities Commission of the State of Hawaii (“PUC”). Since 1900, customers across Hawaii have relied on YB’s frequent, regular, and universal sailings to serve as the bridge that connects all communities in this island-state.

YB notes that Ms. Ka’akua has successfully served as the CEO of the Hawai’i Land Trust and the Aloha ‘Āina Program Manager at the Trust for Public Land. YB believes Ms. Ka’akua’s experience qualifies her to serve as the Deputy and believes she will positively contribute to the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

For the reasons stated above, YB offers **SUPPORT** for this nomination.

Thank you for your service to the State of Hawaii, and for the opportunity to testify offering comments on this measure.

Sincerely,

Kris Nakagawa
Vice President, External and Legal Affairs
Young Brothers, LLC

Jay Ana
President
Young Brothers, LLC



HAWAII

1164 Bishop St., Ste. 1512
Honolulu, HI 96813
tpl.org

**TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND'S TESIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 528
NOMINATION OF LAURA KAAKUA, DEPUTY TO CHAIR,
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Senate Committee on Water & Land, Rm. 229
Wednesday, March 8, 2023, 1:00 p.m.**

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Kirstin Punu
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Tom Reeve
Conservationist

Ka'iulani Sodaro
Ward Village/Howard Hughes

Jan Sullivan
Oceanit

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice-Chair Elefante and Committee Members –

Trust for Public Land (TPL) strongly supports the nomination of Laura Kaakua as Deputy Director to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Prior to leading the statewide Hawai'i Land Trust as its President and CEO, Laura worked as TPL's Aloha 'Āina project manager for 9 years, growing a program that conserves land that perpetuate Hawaiian culture and returns land to Native Hawaiian stewardship. Laura initiated and closed many important projects while at TPL, including Hāwea Heiau/Keawāwa Wetlands, Ka Iwi Coast Mauka Lands, and Kānewai Spring, located in East Honolulu, Pu'ukua in Waimea Valley on O'ahu, and Ka'ehu Bay & Wetlands on Maui. She initiated many of our Ka'ū coastal projects in partnership with the Ala Kahakai Trail Association, including Kaunāmano and Waikapuna, and other important projects throughout the islands.

Laura was able to navigate the very difficult middle path of working private landowners to convince them to sell their land on the extended timeline needed to raise public funds, while at the same time, partnering with community members, elected officials, and agency staff, to raise funding for the purchases, overcome due diligence hurdles, and chart a path for the future of the land. After she left TPL amicably to join Hawai'i Land Trust, we continued to work closely with Laura on several projects. She has been and is a great partner. Laura's commitment to community and equity is unshakeable. She would be a tremendous asset as Deputy Director to the Chair, and TPL strongly supports her nomination.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify. I apologize that I will not be able to attend the hearing in person or virtually due to a scheduling conflict.

Lea Hong
Associate Vice-President
Hawai'i State Director
Edmund C. Olson Trust Fellow
Trust for Public Land

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 12:40:10 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denby Freeland	Testifying for Hawaii Land Trust	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of Laura Kaakua as the Deputy Director for the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources. I've worked with Laura as my supervisor and CEO at Hawaii Land Trust since 2019. It was an honor to work with someone so knowledgeable and respectful of our islands' natural resources and our community. Thanks to Laura's support I have been able to expand Hawaii Land Trust's education programs on Maui to a larger extent than we've ever had. Laura also assisted in us broadening into different types of programs to help connect more people to our lands and our Hawaiian culture.

Laura is already greatly missed by the staff and community members of Hawaii Land Trust. However, we wish her the best and hope she is able to continue making great strides with her new position.

Mahalo,

Denby Freeland

Director of 'Āina Education

Hawaii Land Trust

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 9:47:21 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Uemori	Testifying for Na Pualei o Likolehua	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please accept my testimony in support of GM528 for the consideration and confirmation of Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources. I have had the honor and pleasure of dancing and teaching hula side by side with Laura for many years with Nā Pualei o Likolehua. She is dedicated to motivating, instilling, and enabling the youth of Hawai'i with the necessities of becoming active members of our community. Mahalo!



March 6, 2023

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Michael W. Beasley, Esq.

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Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water and Land
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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Pacific American Foundation
C/O 111 Hekili Street Suite A 170
Kailua, Hawaii 96734

Phone: (808) 664-3027
www.thepaf.org

Aloha,

Re: Support for the Appointment of Laura Ka'akua as Deputy to the Chair
of the DLNR

My name is Herb Lee, Jr. and I am the CEO of the Pacific American Foundation. Established in 1993, the Pacific American Foundation (PAF) is a national 501c (3) nonprofit, tax-exempt organization with the mission to "improve the lives of Pacific Americans through service with dignity, courage, humility, and competence."

I have known Laura Ka'akua for over 12 years and have recently worked with her as the CEO of the Hawaii Island Land Trust (HILT). She will make an outstanding Deputy! She is knowledgeable about all issues related to land and is a Keiki O ka 'Āina of the land. She has the values, compassion and business acumen to bridge the Hawaiian indigenous ways with western ways and continue to protect Hawaii's lands and natural resources for the betterment of all. I trust her and her judgement to do the right thing given the many challenges that the department will face in the coming years. This is her time and I know that none of us will be disappointed.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Herb Lee, Jr.
President & CEO

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 4:51:58 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Galimba	Testifying for Kuahiwi Ranch	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Michelle Galimba

PO Box 24, Naalehu HI 96772

michelle@kuahiwiranch.com

(808) 430-4927

March 6, 2023

Aloha Honorable Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Water and Land Committee:

I would like to express my strong support for Laura Ka'akua for the position of Deputy Director as the Department of Land and Natural Resources. Laura Ka'akua has wonderful skills as a community coordinator and as champion of our natural environment. She was instrumental in helping us to begin the process of coordinating an agricultural and natural resource conservation easement for our ranch, as well as helping in the larger project of preserving thousands of acres of pristine coastline in Ka'u.

Michelle Galimba, VP

Kuahiwi Ranch



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

March 8, 2023

1:00 PM

CCR229

In **SUPPORT** of **GM528**

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, Laura Ka'akua, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

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

On behalf of our 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i offers the following testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of the nomination of Laura Ka'akua as the Department of Land and Natural Resources' Deputy to the Chairperson.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources ("DLNR") and its Board play a critical role in the management and protection of the lands and waters that are the foundation of our islands' identity, social fabric, and ways of life. These public trust resources will also be essential to the socioeconomic stability and livability of our islands in the climate destabilization era; importantly, climate experts have increasingly emphasized the need to rapidly apply proven, Kānaka 'Ōiwi science, practices, and values in the administration of our lands and waters, if we wish to achieve a truly sustainable and resilient future for ourselves and our future generations.

The Sierra Club of Hawai'i strongly believes that Ms. Ka'akua has the expertise, experience, and character to enable the DLNR to fulfill its important role, and make the necessary transition towards culturally-informed management paradigms that can give our islands the best chance at making it through the climate crisis. Her legal training and familiarity with laws under the purview of the DLNR will enable her to quickly understand the department's regulatory responsibilities, and maximize her effectiveness as its deputy. Her prior work in land conservation also demonstrates her ability to facilitate Kānaka 'Ōiwi governance and stewardship over 'āina under Western legal and property frameworks, including frameworks established under the DLNR's statutes and rules. Her personal background and support of other efforts to restore and perpetuate Kānaka 'Ōiwi stewardship over their ancestral lands and historic sites,

including iwi kūpuna, additionally reflect Ms. Ka'akua's deep understanding of and commitment to the unique connection between Kānaka 'Ōiwi and 'āina, and the importance of maintaining and perpetuating these connections as a key to our environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic integrity. Finally, her personal background and numerous, positive working relationships across a wide range of government, private, nonprofit, and grassroots organizations and individuals will give her a key advantage in understanding and thereby navigating the highly complex perspectives and issues that are involved in the DLNR's important work.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to recommend that the Senate **ADVISE AND CONSENT** to the nomination of Laura Ka'akua.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify.

Date: March 4th, 2023

From: Coastal Planners, LLC
117 Loi Pohaku Place, Wailuku, HI 96793
Tel: 808-344-1595
Email: Thorneabbott@yahoo.com
CoastalPlanners@gmail.com

To: Committee on Water and Land
Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair



RE: **GM 528**
Laura Kaakua
Deputy Director, Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Dear Honorable Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members:

I **strongly support** the Governor's nomination of Laura Kaakua as the Deputy Director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources and I encourage you to approve her nomination to the position.

I have known and worked with Laura for over a decade as a member, vice-chair, and chair of the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. Laura understands the challenges and rewards of actually doing conservation work. She is adept at working with landowners in fostering conservation values through easements and property purchases. Fortunately, she understands Hawaii's land use permitting and entitlement process, so she can gauge real threats to natural resources from development and ascertain where protection efforts are likely to succeed and where they may not.

When planning for the conservation of unique ecosystems and/or cultural sites, Laura recognizes the need to implement and monitor management actions and activities and adjust and adapt them as a result of that monitoring to improve their effectiveness and efficiency.

She is well-respected in the environmental community as exemplified by her leadership of the Hawaii Land Trust and its staff and dozens of volunteers. She has an ability to motivate and inspire people and to care for, and be stewards of, the lands that sustain us for current and future generations. Laura is a good listener and will bring new and fresh ideas to the Department, grounded in actual experience of what has worked in Hawaii to protect and conserve our natural resources. I fully endorse her for the position.

Should you have any questions, please call me at 808 344-1595 or email Coastalplanners@gmail.com

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Thorne Abbott".

Thorne Abbott



2023
Board of
Directors

March 7, 2023

Elizabeth Reilly
President

Hawai'i State Senate
Committee on Water and Land

Allen Tateishi
Vice President

Meeting on March 8, 2023 at 11 a.m.

Dianne Gleis
Secretary

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

Marian Grey†
Treasurer

RE: **Strong support for GM528, Nominating Laura Kaakua to DLNR**

Dean Takebayashi
Director

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and WTL Committee Members,

Gary Weller
Director

Livable Hawaii Kai Hui is proud and excited to testify in support of GM528, nominating Laura Kaakua as Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

Mardi LaPrade
Director

Kendrick Chang
Community Outreach

For as long as we've known her, Laura has demonstrated both immense love and immense talent for stewarding Hawaiian lands and resources. Especially during her time with The Trust for Public Land and now with the Hawai'i Land Trust, she has proven her worthiness for this position in ways few, if any, have done.

Dylan Ramos
Communications &
Operations

The role of Deputy to the Chairperson of DLNR requires integrity, fortitude, technical expertise, political acumen, respect for the land, and commitment to public service, all of which are exemplified by Ms. Kaakua and evident in her extensive resume. Livable Hawaii Kai Hui can think of no better choice for this appointment. DLNR, and by extension the people of Hawai'i, would be lucky to have her confirmed in this position.

Website

www.hawaii.kaihui.org
www.kaiwicoast.org

Like us on Facebook

Livable Hawaii Kai Hui
Aloha Aina O Kamilo Nui
Ka Iwi Coast

Livable Hawaii Kai Hui is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, community organization serving East Honolulu since 2004. We strive to promote sensible growth, respect for cultural & natural resources, and upholding the integrity of the East Honolulu Sustainable Communities Plan.

Mahalo,

Elizabeth Reilly
Founder/President



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ADDRESS:

5975
Kalaniana'ole Hwy.
Honolulu, HI
96821

Chris Cramer

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PHONE:

(808) 382-0847

March 7, 2023

Re: GM528 -Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KAAKUA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

Aloha e Senators Lorraine Inouye, Brandon Elefante
Stanley Chang, Angus McKelvey, and Kurt Favella,

Maunalua Fishpond Heritage Center (MFHC) is honored to submit testimony in strong support of Laura Kaakua's confirmation as the Deputy Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources. Laura has been committed to the care of Hawai'i's 'āina, wai, and kai her entire career and she will ensure the proper stewardship of all of Hawai'i's resources within the kuleana of DLNR for generations to come.

MFHC was founded in 2007 with the vision that Maunalua's fishponds are thriving, traditions are honored, and history is preserved, through a caring community - achieving this vision through our mission *E Ho'ōla Pono Kākou i Na Loko I'a A Maunalua ~ Let's Properly Preserve the Fishponds of Maunalua.*

Laura, while with the Trust for Public Lands, played an integral part of helping MFHC achieve our mission of preserving Kanewai Spring in Kuli'ou'ou, a critical fresh water source for Maunalua Bay. Laura's legal expertise and her remarkable ability to work with community members, non-profit partners, and government agencies and leaders enabled the success of our project and the success of many other projects to conserve our lands and perpetuate Hawai'i's culture and ecosystems.

It is without doubt that Laura will continue to serve our entire community with the deep sense of kuleana, aloha, and integrity to mālama 'āina, mālama wai, mālama kai, a me mālama na po'e with which she as always served.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Chris Cramer
Executive Director

EMAIL: maunaluafishponds@gmail.com

WEBSITE: www.maunaluafishpond.org



GM528

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, **LAURA KAAKUA**, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.
Senate Committee on Water and Land

March 8, 2023

1:00 PM

Room 229 & Videoconference

The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA), a member-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a mission to enhance the cultural, economic, political, and community development of Native Hawaiians, **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** GM528, which would confirm Laura Hōkūnani Edmunds Ka'akua as the Deputy Director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

Laura has dedicated her life – both in terms of her professional career as well as her personal service to the community – to protecting Hawai'i's 'āina so our ancestral lands can continue to support our culture and people. These experiences along with her legal background, which includes certificates and awards in environmental, water resource management and historic preservation law, will be in valuable assets to the leadership of DLNR.

In closing, CNHA is honored to support the nomination of Laura Ka'akua, a Native Hawaiian land management expert and hula dancer. We humbly ask the Committee to recommend supporting her confirmation. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

J. Kūhiō Lewis, CEO
Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 3:21:47 PM

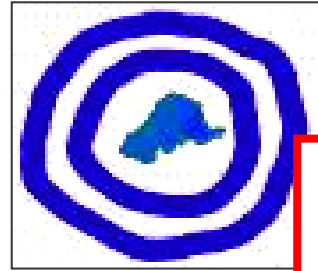
Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Pope	Testifying for Hui Maunawili-Kawainui	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hui Maunawili-Kawainui, a coalition of descendants, residents and 11 respected Hawaiian cultural and environmental organizations in Maunawili and Kailua, strongly supports the appointment of Laura Ka'akua as Deputy Director of DLNR. We have worked closely with Laura for more than 7 years in her capacity as Aloha 'Aina Program Director for the Trust for Public Land and more recently as CEO of Hawai'i Land Trust. Our work together has been to acquire for community-based stewardship more than 1,000 acres of important agricultural land, watershed and forest with many important cultural and archaeological sites. We know Laura to embody aloha 'aina, to be an excellent partner with community groups, to work well with State and County governments as well as with private and community interests, and to be the most trusted and reliable of partners. It gives us great pleasure to stand in full support of Laura's nomination and we look forward to continuing to work with her. Mahalo!

PROTECT KAHO‘OLAWE ‘OHANA
P.O. Box 39
Kaunakakai, Hawai'i 96748



LATE

March 7, 2023

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 528 CONFIRMATION OF LAURA KAAKUA AS DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON, DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES (DLNR)

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate committee on Water and Land. My name is Davianna Pōmaika‘i McGregor and I am testifying on behalf of the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana in support of GM 528, to confirm Laura Kaakua as the Deputy Chairperson of the DLNR.

Laura Kaakua is an active and important member of the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana who has demonstrated a strong commitment to the protection and cultural stewardship of Hawaiian lands. In her capacity as the Aloha ‘Āina Project Manager at the Trust for Public Land she was instrumental in saving important natural and cultural resources on legacy lands, in perpetuation. As CEO of the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust she worked with rural communities throughout the islands to manage lands with important natural, historical and cultural resources from development.

As an attorney, Laura brings legal expertise and extensive jurisdictional knowledge with regard to land and property law, Native Hawaiian law and the public trust.

Laura brings expertise in land management and law, experience in collaborating with community stewards of lands and a dedication to mālama ‘āina, protection and cultural stewardship of lands to the DLNR. Our Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana humbly urges the confirmation of Laura Kaakua by your committee.

I can be reached at davianna.mcgregor@gmail.com for more information. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Mahalo and aloha ‘āina.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/5/2023 2:56:21 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise E Antolini	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Dear WTL Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee,

I am honored to write in **strong support** of the nomination of **LAURA HOKUNANI EDMUNDS KA‘AKUA** as the First Deputy of DLNR.

I have known Laura (then-Edmunds) since she entered the William S. Richardson School of Law, where I have taught on the faculty since 1996. I was fortunate to have her as a student in several law classes and proud that she graduated in 2007 with her JD and a specialized Certificate in Environmental Law. I remember her well as an actively engaged, reliable, serious, and thoughtful student. Only positives!

Because Laura was one of our superstar Environmental Law Program certificate graduates, I kept in touch with her and closely followed her career as she clerked for a judge after Law School, became the Native Lands Project Manager for the Trust for Public Land - Hawaiian Islands Program, and then moved to President/CEO of Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, among her many other notable accomplishments.

Laura has become a wonderfully trained and accomplished lawyer who is deeply dedicated to the public interest and the conservation of Hawai‘i’s land and cultural resources. She is multi-dimensional with on-the-ground expertise in land use, financial/tax issues, cultural preservation, natural resources law, community engagement processes, land governance/policy, and traditional and customary practices.

Her calm and warm demeanor, sharp intellect, collaborative nature, and attention to detail are a perfect fit for DLNR leadership. She already has deep knowledge of many of the DLNR divisions and good working relationships with a state-wide range of governmental, business, non-profit, community, and land use group sectors, as well as key federal and county partners. All invaluable skills and connectinos for her role at DLNR.

I have also watched her testify recently in various Legislative hearings, including WTL, and I am impressed by her sincerity, respect for the Legislature’s role, and ability to understand, respond to, and follow up on the questions and issues raised by Legislators.

Laura is already, and will continue to be, a terrific asset to DLNR and Hawai‘i nei.

Mahalo for supporting her nomination as First Deputy of DLNR!

Sincerely,

Denise Antolini, Professor, William S. Richardson School of Law, Pūpūkea resident

GM-528

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 6:33:14 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support. Ms. Keakua's education and experiences, most especially in land management, water, and conservation, indicate her ability to handle the complex, and often challenging, work of the Dept of Land and Natural Resources. I am confident also that as a hula practitioner, she understands and is sensitive to the Native Hawaiian culture and values..

GM-528

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 10:27:34 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anela Evans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Madam Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and the Senate Committee of Water and Land,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of the appointment of **Mrs. Laura Ka'akua** to the position of **Deputy Director** of the State of Hawai'i **Department of Land and Natural Resources**. Laura's extensive background in law and years of experience in land and natural resource management will allow her to provide valuable contributions to the DLNR. I am sure that Laura's sense of kuleana and commitment to the stewardship of Hawai'i's precious land and natural resources will guide her work. Thank you for your time and consideration.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 1:12:38 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margaret Pulver	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in full SUPPORT of Laura Kaakua's appointment as Deputy to the Chairperson of DLNR.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 12:43:46 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pookela hanson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of Laura Kaakua for Deputy DLNR. A true, genuine advocate of 'aina, 'ohana, and Hawai'i. A respected mother, friend, and member of our community. Laura exemplifies determination, pride, and integrity, all leadership qualities needed in Hawai'i and in DLNR. Aside from her decorated resume, work experience, and education, she is a good person that I believe will put aina and the future of Hawai'i her top priority. I support her noination fully and ask you to confirm her for this position. Mahalo.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/2/2023 8:16:04 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Faith Kahale Saito	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

I just wanted convey my complete support for confirmation of Laura Ka'akua as the Deputy to the Chairperson of DLNR. Laura has professionally and personally demonstrated her commitment Aloha 'Āina and Mālama 'Āina in her roles such as President and CEO of Hawaiian Land Trust, working numerous years for Trust for Public Lands and numerous organizations she has volunteered and supported such as the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana. She is more than capable and will play a critical role in fulfilling the mission and vision of Hawai'i's DLNR.

Mahalo nui for your support,

Faith Saito

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/2/2023 12:42:04 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Keoni Crowe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the nomination of Laura Kaakua to the position of Deputy to the Chairperson for the Hawaii State DLNR. I am a resident of the island of Maui, the place of my birth. I have worked directly under Laura Kaakua's leadership for the past three-plus years protecting and stewarding land conservation projects across the islands of Hawaii. Her dedication to her efforts, her diverse knowledge and passion across subjects from land law to hawaiian cultural practices, and her ability to mediate in conflict helped to grow and guide the organization to the stongest its ever been. I feel firmly that she will serve Hawaii well should she be confirmed to this duty.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/3/2023 6:43:38 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jordan Lowe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support the confirmation of Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). Ms. Kaaua's vast knowledge and experience in land management, and active community engagement makes her well suited for the position.



Re: Testimony in Strong Support of Laura Kaakua as Department of Land and Natural Resources Deputy Director

Aloha Esteemed Committee Members,

March 2, 2023

I am writing to express my **enthusiastic endorsement of Laura Kaakua** for DLNR Deputy Director. In my capacity as Board Chair for the Hawai'i Land Trust (HILT), I have witnessed firsthand Laura's leadership and commitment; and to 'āina in particular.

During Laura's tenure as our CEO, she helped HILT achieve the following:

- **More 'āina across Hawai'i protected** with a record number of deals in the works.
- **More students of all ages on the land**, developing lifelong values around stewardship and getting the hands-on learning they need and crave.
- **Deeper connections and relationships with our community partners** building true and lasting pilina across Hawai'i pae 'āina.
- **Helping to foster an incredibly strong organizational culture and gifted staff**, while creating a leadership pipeline for local talent to learn, thrive, and shine.

Simply put, HILT is a highly functioning and financially stable organization, and we are grateful for everything Laura has done to get us to this point. And she is leaving HILT in very capable hands.

Laura led HILT by asking one question before making decisions: "What is in the best interest of the 'āina?" We, and the communities we serve, are better for it. Given the Department of Land and Natural Resources' important kuleana in Hawai'i, this is imperative.

Laura is a team leader, a morale builder, a creative problem solver, a peacemaker, not to mention a great attorney. She is also strong and quietly tenacious.

Thank you for giving Laura the serious consideration she deserves. I strongly support her appointment and hope you act to appoint her to this position. We need Hawaiian leaders like Laura in key decision-making roles now more than ever.

Mahalo nui loa,

Elisabeth (Lisa) Grove
Lanai, Hawaii
Board Chair, Hawaii Land Trust

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/3/2023 2:39:17 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Oku	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Sen.Inouye, Vice Chair Sen. Elefante, and members of the Committee on Water and Land,

I support the consideration and confirmation of Laura Kaakua to serve as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/4/2023 7:12:13 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elaine Wender	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Laura Kaakua's leadership at the Hawai'i Land Trust and her other experience make her eminently qualified to be second (or even first) in command at DLNR. We are fortunate that she is willing to serve in this role.

Elaine Wender
Wailuku

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/4/2023 10:10:22 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Laura Kaakua is an excellent candidate for this position and I fully support her nomination. As President and CEO of Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, Laura has expertly assisted our hui (Hui Maunawili-Kawainui Coalition) in its effort to acquire, preserve, restore, and steward the precious agricultural lands of Maunawili, as well as restore, protect, and educate about the archaeological and cultural historical sites there. Her knowledge and expertise regarding land preservation issues, her cultural knowledge, especially as it pertains to land use and our natural resources, and her recognition of the vital importance of protecting and preserving our open lands and natural resources makes her an ideal candidate. She would bring much experience and success to this position and is someone we can entrust implicitly to work to protect Hawaii's precious lands and cultural and natural resources.

TESTIMONY OF
MEOH-LENG SILLIMAN
TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 528
Wednesday, March 8, 2023
1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 229

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRPERSON,
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, LAURA KAAKUA, FOR A
TERM TO EXPIRE AT NOON ON 12-07-2026.

Honorable Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support for the confirmation of
Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources.

With demonstrated management, conservation, and land acquisition experience, Laura will be
an invaluable asset to a department whose mission is to enhance, protect, conserve and manage
Hawaii's unique and limited natural, cultural and historic resources. Laura's professional credentials are
impressive and make her well-qualified for this appointment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support and I respectfully ask your
committee to advise and consent to this nomination.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 8:59:38 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Fisher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai Kākou,

My name is Dr. Scott Fisher, and I am the Director of `Āina Stewardship for the Hawai`i Land Trust, although I am submitting this testimony as a private citizen. I am writing in regards to the confirmation of Ms. Laura Ka`akua for the position of Deputy Director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

As you may know, until the end of January this year, Ms. Ka`akua was the President and CEO of the the Hawai`i Land Trust. Ms. Ka`akua came to the land trust in March of 2019, and during the nearly four years I worked with her, the land trust thrived. Ms. Ka`akua is the type of leader all thoughtful, caring leaders should strive to emulate. Her leadership is exemplary and her thoughtfulness, compassion, wisdom and leadership vision are extraordinary. I was very sad to see her leave, although the breadth of her impact will increase dramatically in her new position. Should Ms. Ka`akua be confirmed, the DLNR will have a leader who personifies unselfishness, sound judgement, integrity and a deep passion for Hawai`i's land and her people. Ms. Ka`akua is the type of leader who encourages and brings out the best in her employees and is a top-caliber leader. I cannot recommend her strongly enough for this position.

Me ka ha`aha`a

Scott Fisher

Director of `Āina Stewardship, Hawai`i Land Trust

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 9:22:56 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leahi Hall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha nui Esteemed Committee Members,

I am writing to express great support for Laura Ka‘akua as DLNR Deputy Director. As a member of Hawaii Land Trust’s (HILT) Board of Directors, I have witnessed Laura’s dedication to the wellbeing of ‘āina and kanaka. Laura’s trustworthy and courageous leadership created more connections at micro and macro levels across HILT, including:

- Excellent care and management of HILT staff and organizational culture
- Unwavering commitment to community and kindness, often navigating tough natural resource issues with dignity for all involved while keeping the health of the resource a top priority
- Protecting and stewarding more lands across Hawaii, balancing financial needs for the ‘āina and staff in perpetuity, while keeping Hawaii culture and Lifeways values at the core and as the heartbeat of the organization

Laura is uniquely skilled in education, previous experience, and character, to hold and tend to the health and well-being of our natural resources at the highest level of leadership. We are so lucky that she is willing to step into this role for Hawai‘i. I strongly support Laura’s appointment and hope you will also recognize her incredible expression of skilled Hawai‘i natural resource leadership.

Sincerely,

Leahi Hall

Melody Kapilialoha MacKenzie, Esq.
Kailua, Hawai'i 96734

Senate Committee on Water and Land
Chair, Sen. Lorraine R. Inouye
Vice-Chair, Sen. Brandon J.C. Elefante
Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

**Testimony in Support of GM 528 - Confirmation of Laura Ka'akua as Deputy to
the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources**

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice-Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

I write to express my **strong support** for the confirmation of Laura Ka'akua to serve as Deputy Director to the Chairperson for the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). I am a Professor Emerita at the William S. Richardson School of Law and was the Founding Director of Ka Huli Ao Center for Excellence in Native Hawaiian Law at the Law School.

I have known Laura Ka'akua for over fifteen years, first as a student at Richardson, then in her role at the Trust for Public Lands (TPL), and more recently as the CEO of the Hawai'i Land Trust (HILT). Laura and HILT, along with TPL, have played a major role in helping the Hui Maunawili-Kawainui, of which I am a member, in seeking to protect and preserve over a thousand acres of 'āina in Maunawili and to steward those lands for future generations. We all appreciate the work and vision that Laura has demonstrated, not only in regard to the Maunawili 'āina, but more broadly to the 'āina throughout our islands. She will be a great addition to the DLNR and brings with her a wealth of experience and knowledge, and a demonstrated commitment to our natural and cultural resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in strong support of the appointment of Laura Ka'akua as Deputy to the Chairperson of the DLNR.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 10:29:38 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maya Saffery	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

My name is Maya Saffery and I am writing in strong support for the confirmation of Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the DLNR. Her wealth of professional experience as President and CEO of Hawai‘i Land Trust (HILT), Aloha ‘Āina Project Manager at The Trust for Public Land’s Hawai‘i Program, lecturer at the William S. Richardson School of Law and Law Clerk for the Honorable Greg Nakamura in the Third Circuit Court as well as her strong foundation as a cultural practitioner and community advocate make her a uniquely qualified person who will be able to ensure both the ‘āina and kānaka of Hawai‘i are protected and thriving.

I have had the pleasure of working with Laura in her roles at both TPL and HILT for the last several years as the President for one of the Kailua community non-profit organizations stepping forward to protect the lands of Maunawili, Kailua, O‘ahu. She is professional, knowledgeable, reliable, a strong leader for ‘āina and community, and works with the utmost integrity. I fully support her confirmation and look forward to the progress she will bring to the department in fulfilling her priorities:

1. Support community stewardship and kuleana of DLNR’s lands through legal agreements that make practical sense, and allow stewards to focus their limited time and resources on actively caring for the land. Community-based stewardship will encourage Hawaiian cultural practice which builds generational kuleana for land.
2. Partner with landowners, stewards, farmers/ranchers and watershed partnerships where DLNR has land to cohesively manage ahupua’a.
3. Significantly increase DLNR’s budget through increasing the State % contribution, and through private and Federal partnerships. (DLNR currently receives less than 1% of the State Budget although it is responsible for managing over 25% of the land in Hawaii plus our nearshore waters.)
4. Work with educational and nonprofit partners to build a pipeline of local stewards & scientists who will become DLNR’s future leaders.
5. Increase transparency and build public trust through open communication, physically going into communities (especially on neighbor islands) to talk and find a common path forward, and managing and supporting DLNR’s 10 divisions with sufficient staff positions and training to efficiently and effectively do their jobs.

Mahalo for this opportunity to submit my strong support of GM528 and Laua Kaakua. Hawai'i will be in good hands with her.

ke aloha,

Maya Saffery

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 10:50:26 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shae Kamakaala	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am in strong support of confirming Laura Kaakua as DLNR's Deputy. Laura brings really important gifts, skills, and experience that grows the State DLNR's capacity to steward its vast 1.3M acres of 'āina. Her experience developing true partnerships with communities - supported by nonprofits, the private sector, and other agencies - is a solid pathway to ensuring sustainable and generational stewardship of DLNR's lands and waters.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 11:23:25 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Bradford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of Laura Kaakua's confirmation as Deputy to the Chairperson of the DLNR.

I have known Laura as President and CEO of the Hawaii Land Trust where she has proven to be a smart, innovative and people oriented leader. Laura has greatly expanded our land conservation acquisitions while honoring the sacred aspects of these lands. At the same time with her warmth and caring, she has built deep community connections. Laura will be greatly missed. At the same time, I know she will be a treasured asset wherever she goes.

I encourage you to affirm Laura Kaakua for Deputy Director of the DLNR.

Sincerely, Susan Bradford

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 1:39:39 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Marquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Malia Marquez and I am thrilled to submit testimony for such a PONO candidate for such a vital position in the DLNR. Laura Ka'akua has an abundant of wealth and knowledge of these lands. It's time to provide a the DLNR with kanaka maoli science and a worldview to help steward our lands and resources in order to have a liveable future here in Hawai'i.

Through her prior work, Deputy Ka'akua has substantial demonstrated experience and expertise in facilitating kānaka maoli land management and stewardship under existing Western legal frameworks and property arrangements, which will enable her to help the DLNR to make the critical shifts that we all need to protect our communities and our home.

Deputy Ka'akua has intimate familiarity with the laws and regulations of many of the DLNR's key divisions, including the State Historic Preservation Division and Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands, which will enable her to better "hit the ground running" in meeting the administrative and programmatic needs of the DLNR overall.

Deputy Ka'akua has an abundance of positive relationships and experiences working with many in the Kānaka Maoli and larger community, which will be invaluable to navigating the many complex but necessary issues and decisions that are inherent in the administration of our public lands and natural and cultural public trust resources.

Deputy Ka'akua has demonstrated her integrity and genuine concern for the perpetuation of our cultural and natural lands and landscapes and her lifetime of commitment to our environmental and cultural integrity make her an excellent candidate for the role of deputy director of the DLNR.

Please support Deputy Laura Ka'akua for this vital position to Chair to the DLNR.

Mahalo for your time on this crucial matter,

Malia Marquez

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 4:11:25 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris Sadayasu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante and Members of the Committee.

I support the appointment of Laura Kaakua to serve as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

With Ms. Kaakua’s demonstrated leadership experience and expertise in conservation, community capacity building, and conflict resolution, I believe that she will continue to be an asset in this role. Ms. Kaakua is also a fellow graduate of the University of Hawai‘i William S. Richardson School of Law.

I respectfully ask for Ms. Kaakua’s confirmation as the Deputy to the Department of Land and Natural Resources. I look forward to collaborating with her to fulfill our departments’ respective missions.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

BIN C. LI, ESQ.
P.O. Box 3505
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96811
(808) 358-2040, bincli@msn.com

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senate Committee on Water and Land
The Thirty-Second Legislature
State of Hawai'i

March 6, 2023

Subject: GM528 – In Support of Nomination of Laura Kaakua

Dear Honorable Senator Inouye:

I write this letter to you to express my **strong support** of the nomination of Ms. Laura Kaakua as the First Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources ("DLNR").

I am an attorney at law licensed in the States of Hawai'i and California. I have been employed with DLNR for 17 years, 15 years of that period as its Administrative Proceedings Coordinator at the Office of the Chairperson. In this capacity, I have closely worked with DLNR's Chairpersons and their Deputies and am familiar with DLNR's mission, business and daily operation. My job duties include the management of three aspects of the department's administrative actions: 1) contested case proceedings, 2) the Uniform Information Practices Act (UIPA) proceedings, and 3) the Civil Resource Violations System.

I urge you and your committee to vote in favor of Ms. Kaakua's nomination. She came to DLNR with a strong background in conservation and protection of Hawai'i cultural and natural resources. She has served as the President and CEO of the Hawai'i Land Trust in the past four years, and achieved much success with outstanding work with the communities and government agencies including DLNR. Her experience will greatly benefit DLNR in furthering its mission and the welfare of the people of Hawai'i.

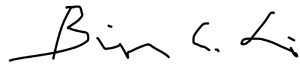
Since her nomination in December 2022, Laura immediately came to start her work at DLNR. She regularly came to work almost daily. She was without pay until her formal appointment in late January 2023. I've had the opportunity to work with her since December and can testify that she is very devoted to and passionate of this job. In addition, she demonstrated her deep knowledge of the issues faced by DLNR and proactively approached them. In particular, she picked up the duty of shepherding DLNR's legislative actions and overseeing all legislative work of the divisions and offices.

Laura also shows deep concerns about DLNR's enforcement actions, which will be her kuleana under the department's administrative rules. She's come up with some specific ideas of gearing up DLNR's enforcement and had some good discussions with me. She is well into the job now and will excel.

I believe Laura is the right person for DLNR's First Deputy job, and DLNR and the State and its people are fortunate to have such a well-qualified leader and uniquely-suited expert in natural and cultural resources management.

Again, please vote YES for Laura Kaakua's nomination as DLNR's First Deputy. Mahalo nui loa for your consideration!

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bin C. Li". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bin C. Li, Esq.

Testimony of
Suzanne D. Case
Before the Senate Committee on Water and Land
Wednesday, March 8, 2023, 1:00pm, CR229 & Videoconference

In consideration of **GM528**
**Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson,
Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KAAKUA,
for a term to expire 12-07-2026**

Strong Support

To: The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
The Honorable Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land

I write in **strong support of Laura Kaakua** as Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Ms. Kaakua is an excellent choice for DLNR Deputy. Her strong background and extensive experience in land and natural resources in Hawai‘i, her organizational management skills, her cultural and community engagement, her collaborative style, and her legal education and professional work are all a superb fit for this position.

I’ve tracked Ms. Kaakua’s work in land conservation in Hawai‘i for over a decade, through my work as Chair of the Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources and my prior work as Hawai‘i State Director for The Nature Conservancy. She has extensive experience in complex land transactions and partnership processes that have resulted in the protection and long-term stewardship, with government and communities, of many important native species and landscapes and cultural sites.

I am very confident that DLNR and all of Hawai‘i will benefit from Ms. Kaakua’s leadership as deputy of the department.

I urge your vote in support of Laura Kaakua’s nomination as Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 6:35:12 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Martha Evans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of the appointment of Mrs. Laura Ka'akua to the position of Deputy Director of the State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources. Laura's extensive background in law, years of experience in land and natural resource management, and outstanding volunteerism are but a few of the valuable assets that she brings to the DLNR. Her sense of kuleana and commitment to the stewardship of Hawai'i's precious land and natural resources will guide her work. In the words of the late Dr. Noa Emmett Aluli, "the life of the land is the life of the people is the life of the lāhui." Laura's passion and commitment to our Hawai'i will take us one step closer to ensuring that Dr. Aluli's lifelong mission is realized.

Mahalo for your kind consideration.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 7:55:03 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeannine Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kakou,

I am in strong support of the confirmation of Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson, DLNR, for a term to expire 12-07-2026. Laura's education is outstanding and her experience in land management in the nonprofit and private sectors is exceptional. As Project Manager at The Trust for Public Land's Hawai'i Program, I worked with Laura on several complicated conservation projects to preserve land and cultural resources important to my community of East Honolulu. Laura is ha'aha'a yet 'eleu. She is a brilliant mana wahine dedicated to protecting Hawai'i's natural, cultural and historical resources. She has my enthusiastic and heartfelt support and I ask for yours as well. Mahalo, Jeannine Johnson

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 8:32:46 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lacey Shimabukuro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In full support of Laura Kaakua's confirmation as Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

March 6, 2023

To: Senator Lorraine R. Inouye
Chair, Senate Committee on Water and Land

Senator, Brandon J.C. Elefante
Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Water and Land

RE: GM528, Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KAAKUA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026

Hearing: Wednesday March 8, 2023 at 1:00 p.m., Room 229

Dear Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land:

I write to wholeheartedly support the confirmation of Laura Kaakua as Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources. Having known Laura for over 35 years, I can confidently say that there is no one more qualified, dedicated, passionate, and capable of serving in this important position.

Laura's lifelong commitment to conservation and community stewardship has been evident since she was young. In high school, she co-founded a student group called STOP (Students Taking Over Pollution), inspiring and leading myself and others in beach cleanup efforts. Since then, she has continued and expanded on this work, dedicating her life and career to stewarding the 'aina and bettering the community. She went to law school to gain skills to enable her to do this most effectively and has been deploying those skills with grace and impact, having conserved hundreds of thousands of acres of land with durable legal agreements.

In addition to her impressive record, Laura possesses an unwavering commitment to collaboration, enabling her to expand the impact of her work through the many invaluable community partnerships she has forged. Further making her uniquely qualified for this role, Laura's leadership is informed by her perspective as a Native Hawaiian, with her life and work imbued with Native Hawaiian values and cultural practices that guide her reverence of the 'aina and its importance for our community. Laura understands the interconnectedness of all things in nature and is deeply committed to protecting and preserving our natural resources for future generations and building generational kuleana for the 'aina.

Laura's vision, passion, and leadership are exactly what we need to safeguard our natural resources and ensure a sustainable future for all. I have utmost confidence that she will serve the state with distinction in this critical role and wholeheartedly endorse her confirmation as Deputy to the Chairperson of DLNR.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this confirmation.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,



Nicole Y. Altman

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 9:44:30 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Olu Campbell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the committee,

I submit this testimony in strong support of Laura Ka'akua's nomination to the position of Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources. Laura's many years of leadership and dedication to 'āina stewardship and protection, in partnership with Hawai'i's communities, will be a great asset to the Department and I urge you to advance her confirmation.

Mahalo,

'Olu Campbell

President and CEO, Hawai'i Land Trust

TESTIMONY OF
KEITH A. REGAN

TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2023, 1:00 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 229

GM528

Honorable Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Committee on Water and Land, I am providing testimony in support of GM528, the confirmation of Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

Ms. Kaakua has the education and experience necessary to serve the DLNR in this role as Deputy. Her legal background, training and work experiences combined with her longterm commitment to the organizations she has served in over the years has prepared her well to take on the many complex and challenging issues faced by the DLNR. I believe that her experiences at the Trust for Public Land and the Hawaii Land Trust, dealing with issues such as protecting culturally significant and historic places have helped to shape her awareness and passion to serve.

I have also had the opportunity to witness Laura's steadfast approach to sensitive and impactful issues related to the environment and land management. As the Deputy, her strong understanding of the department's mission and functions has been extremely evident during discussions on critical topics that the DLNR is navigating.

It is for these reasons that I humbly ask you to please support the confirmation of Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Sincerely,

Keith A. Regan
Honolulu, Hawaii

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 8:22:39 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kahea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Laura is awesome, please support this mana wahine!

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 8:26:22 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jana Lam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Laura Kaakua is the most qualified person to be Deputy to the Chairperson of DLNR. Her knowledge and passion for our land and community is unmatched and she possesses the unique skills and understanding needed to work with landowners, stewards and nonprofits to move DLNR's many prerogatives forward. I fully support her confirmation 100%!!!

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 10:52:37 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carmela Noneza	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Laura Kaakua's confirmation as Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). Laura's knowledge and experience of law, community stewardship, cultural practices, protection of coastlines and Hawaiian cultural landscapes makes her an ideal candidate for this position.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 10:37:51 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Leong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kākou,

I am writing in strong support of Laura Ka‘akua to be appointed as Deputy to the Chairperson at DLNR. She has been a wonderful leader in our community throughout her career. She is a person who has that fine balance between strong leadership and a character founded in the principles of the aloha spirit.

I am very proud that Laura has grown since she was a participant and leader in our programs. During that time I saw firsthand her leadership skills at a young age. She stewarded the youth that she was in charge of and helped them to achieve their potential in the program. She was also a good co-leader. Seeing her being admired by her peers reinforced that she is the type of leader that builds bridges and finds ways to get things done. While she was in our programs, there are several challenging logistics, personalities, and situations that call our young leaders to rise up. Laura did just that.

I have since seen Laura take the helm at Hawaiian Island Land Trust at a very young age. She successfully helped that organization to grow over the years and make major impact for the community and ‘āina. I am so proud that she was able to bring various communities, government officials, funders, and other stakeholders together to agree on the protection and long-term management of so many key lands throughout the state.

I believe Laura would do an awesome job in this role at DLNR. She understands firsthand the work that many of the team at DLNR does through her experiences, including when she was a leader at Kupu that interned at DLNR sites. Having someone who understands issues on the ground is foundational to success. As a lawyer, she also has the training to work through challenging policy issues. As stated earlier, she is a wonderful leader that will allow her to be a great representative of DLNR to the community and to legislature.

I strongly endorse Laura Ka‘akua and hope that you will give her your strongest positive consideration!

Aloha,

John Leong

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 11:24:27 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lucienne de Naie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wish to strongly support the nomination of Laura Kaakua to the position of Deputy Director of DLNR.

I have worked with Ms Kaakua on many projects and she has the integrity, energy, people skills and deep background in land and resource management that this position needs.

We are fortunate to have a person of her qualifications ready and willing to take this position.

Mahalo for your consideration

Lucienne de Naie. Huelo, Maui

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 12:56:04 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Pope	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land,

I am in full support of the appointment of Laura Kaakua to serve as the Deputy to the Chairperson of Department of Land and Natural.

Hui Maunawili Kawainui has been working closely with Laura since early 2017, both in her capacity as the Aloha ‘Aina Project Manager for The Trust for Public Land and as President and CEO of Hawai‘i Land Trust. Laura has been a significant source of knowledge, wisdom, and guidance for our community-based effort to protect more than 1,000 acres of Maunawili lands, which have high cultural, historical, and agricultural significance and are at risk of subdivision, sale, and development. She has embraced and promoted our larger vision to restore the health of this watershed so that the valley and its surrounding uplands can resume their traditional, vital role in our ahupua‘a as a place of rich cultural resources and abundant agriculture. Laura has provided our community with years of unwavering support for our vision of community stewardship, rooted in Hawaiian cultural knowledge and practices, that embraces the multifaceted history of our ahupua‘a. I wholeheartedly know from experience that Laura will bring to her role at DLNR the open communication and sense of mutual respect and trust that she has both practiced and inspired in our Hui. Laura has attended countless meetings with our community—not only in the boardrooms, but in our backyards, on the trails, in the hau thickets, along the streams, and in the lo‘i, to both work with us to forge our vision and to truly become a voice for our land and community. She has gained the trust of both the Hui and other neighbors who are less actively engaged in our efforts as we carry out the work of securing these lands. In our years of working with Laura, we have greatly valued her professional experience, ability to collaborate, and commitment to lands and communities. These are qualities that all communities throughout Hawai‘i will benefit from as she works in a more expansive leadership capacity at DLNR to manage our lands and watersheds. She is poised to engage in providing leadership, establishing common paths forward, and supporting community stewardship of our lands in partnership with DLNR.

Respectfully,

Barbara Pope

Hui Maunawili Kawainui, founding member

maunawili@me.com

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 12:55:51 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaleo Manuel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante and Committee Members,

I am Kaleo Manuel, Deputy to the Chairperson for the Commission on Water Resource Management, but I am testifying today in my individual capacity. I strongly support GM 528 nominating Laura Ka'akua as the Deputy to the Chairperson for the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

I have known Laura personally for over a decade and watched her become an amazing kanaka wahine alaka'i in our community. She's formally helped to protect thousands of acres of land for public access in her professional capacities with the Trust for Public Land and the Hawai'i Land Trust. She has the skillset and training to work through complicated and complex situations with grace and compassion. I can see no better leader to help DLNR in stewarding our public lands and resources in partnership with community for the next four years.

In addition to her professional accomplishments and career accolades, I know her through our hula community, as we come from the same lineage of hula practitioners. With shared ideologies of honoring our Kumu, our kahua, and the places and resources that are important to our practice, she has a fierce commitment to her hālau and Kumu Leina'ala Kalama Heine. Laura is dedicated to reconnecting community with place. I recall meeting and coordinating with her to work on realizing her Kumu and hālau's vision in developing a Hawaiian Cultural Learning Center as a priority project for the Waimānalo Hawaiian Homestead Community. She's never backed down from assuming kuleana, and I admire her for taking on those challenges and treating them as opportunities for growth and improvement. Her Kumu would be proud to see what she's accomplished and what she will continue to accomplish, if confirmed by this committee.

I would be honored to serve alongside Laura Ka'akua to protect and manage our natural and cultural resources and I humbly and respectfully ask for you to support and confirm her as our next Deputy of DLNR.

Ola i ka wai,

Kaleo Manuel

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 12:54:28 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
MEKI PEI	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ME AND MY CORREA AND REEVES 'OHANA FROM KULI'OU'OU O'AHU STONGLY SUPPORT THE APPOINTMENT OF LAURA KAAKUA AS DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES. MAHALO NUI FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Senate Committee on Water & Land
March 8, 2023 1 pm
Room 229
(Testimony is 1 page long)

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 528
NOMINATION OF LAURA HOKUNANI EDMUNDS KA'AKUA
AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Committee Members

I write in **strong support** of Laura Ka'akua's nomination to serve as Deputy Director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources ("DLNR"). I have known Ms. Ka'akua for over fifteen years, beginning with her reputation as a star environmental law student at the William S. Richardson School of Law. More recently I am familiar with her successful leadership at the Hawai'i Island Land Trust via a variety of events, student internships, and other initiatives she spearheaded.

Ms. Ka'akua is an effective leader with a strong nose for the **public interest**. She has a well-deserved reputation for blending **sharp analytical skills** with **collaborative communication**. She has earned this reputation working with a broad swath of state and county agency staff and leaders, community members, financiers, conservationists, and many others. Like all lawyers of her caliber, Ms. Ka'akua is "**tough on the issues but easy on the people.**"

This is exactly the type of leadership that will capably serve DLNR. In particular, Ms. Ka'akua's experience with land transactions and natural resource protection will be an invaluable asset to DLNR's work.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify in support of Ms. Ka'akua's nomination.

Richard Wallsgrove
Assistant Professor and Co-Director of Environmental Law Program
William S. Richardson School of Law¹

¹ This information is provided for identification purposes only. This testimony is submitted in my own capacity and not on behalf of the University of Hawai'i or any other entity.

March 7, 2023

RE: Testimony in support of Laura Kaakua as Department of Land and Natural Resources Deputy Director

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and committee members,

My name is Jocelyn Garovoy Herbert, and I am writing to express my strong support for Laura Kaakua for DLNR Deputy Director. I serve on the board of directors for the Hawai'i Land Trust (HILT). Over the past three years I have had the opportunity to witness Ms. Kaakua's excellent leadership, values, and judgment in her role as the Chief Executive Officer of HILT.

Laura's knowledge and skills by themselves would be enough to qualify her for the position for which she has been nominated. She is an accomplished land conservation attorney with deep knowledge and understanding of complex conservation transactions, state, federal, and private funding, and excellent relationships across many agencies and institutions.

What stands out to me even more than these noteworthy qualifications and accomplishments is her deep commitment to aloha 'āina work, the way she conducts herself and navigates a wide range of personalities, deadlines, and priorities while never losing sight of and reaching the goals she is working towards. She is an exceptionally good collaborator and works well under pressure.

Under her leadership, Laura helped HILT achieve:

- More 'āina protected with a record number of deals underway
- More students of all ages on the land, developing lifelong values around stewardship and getting the hands-on learning they need
- Deeper connections and relationships with our community partners building true and lasting pilina across Hawai'i
- A strong organizational culture and staff, while creating a leadership pipeline for local talent to learn, thrive, and shine.

Laura will be a major asset to the Department of Land and Natural Resources and the many organizations, programs, people and places it serves. I urge your committee to support Ms. Kaakua's nomination.

Respectfully,

Jocelyn Garovoy Herbert
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 12:01:34 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Laura Kaakua's confirmation. She is doing a good job to date - she is smart, compassionate, and thoughtful, and is able to keep up with the considerable workflow. She is an excellent person to have in the DLNR first deputy position on many levels at this point in history, and can help to move our programs forward.

Aloha

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 12:10:19 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
james pirtle	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this hearings consideration of Laura Kaauka. Josh Green is not a legitimatley elected official. His recommendatrion is a usurpation of position of Governorn in the sdtate of Hawaii and this consideration is an act of treason agaisnt the people of the State of Hawaii and violates the United States Constitution.

March 7, 2023

TO: Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

FROM: Krislyn Hashimoto

RE: GM 528 Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KAAKUA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

Dear Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante and Members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land:

I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT** of the confirmation of Laura Ka'akua as Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources.

I have known Laura for more than 35 years. Throughout that time she has had an unwavering commitment to protecting Hawai'i's land and natural resources. From at least intermediate school, every time we went to the beach, surfing or on a hike, Laura would have us pick up at least 10 pieces of rubbish and would spearhead beach cleanups regularly with our surf crew and friends, a practice she continues to this day with her own keiki. This passion developed into a lifelong commitment and a career in stewarding the 'aina and helping Hawai'i's community.

Laura's priorities in her role at DLNR are to:

- 1) Support community stewardship and kuleana of DLNR's lands through legal agreements that make practical sense, and allow stewards to focus their limited time and resources on actively caring for the land. Community-based stewardship will encourage Hawaiian cultural practice which builds generational kuleana for land;
- 2) Partner with landowners, stewards, farmers/ranchers and watershed partnerships where DLNR has land to cohesively manage ahupua'a;
- 3) Significantly increase DLNR's budget through increasing the State % contribution, and through private and Federal partnerships. (DLNR currently receives less than 1% of the State Budget although it is responsible for managing over 25% of the land in Hawaii plus our nearshore waters.);
- 4) Work with educational and nonprofit partners to build a pipeline of local stewards & scientists who will become DLNR's future leaders; and
- 5) Increase transparency and build public trust through open communication, physically going into communities (especially on neighbor islands) to talk and find a common path forward, and managing and supporting DLNR's 10 divisions with sufficient staff positions and training to efficiently and effectively do their jobs.

Is exactly what our state needs. I can confidently say—there is no other person more qualified for this position.

Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony on this important confirmation for the State of Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Krislyn Hashimoto". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Krislyn Hashimoto

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 12:27:50 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jocelyn Leialoha M Doane	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

Mahalo for this opportunity to support GM528 to confirm Laura Ka‘akua as Deputy to the Chairperson of the DLNR.

I first learned of Ms. Ka‘akua’s commitment and passion for the conservation and protection of Hawai‘i’s ‘āina, its natural and cultural resources, and its people on our very first day as students at the William S. Richardson School of Law together. Over the last 15 years, she has continued to inspire me with her commitment to increase community stewardship of and re-connection with our wahi kūpuna, which she did through her nine years at the Trust for Public Land and three years at the Hawai‘i Island Land Trust.

Her legal background, community and cultural grounding, and professional experiences, make her more than qualified to serve in this role. I am excited about her desire to use her strengths to continue to expand DLNR’s existing community stewardship agreements, partnerships with other large landowners to improve ahupua‘a management, and partnerships to build pipelines of local stewards/scientists/ki‘ai, and I urge you to support her confirmation.

Mahalo,

Jocelyn Doane

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 12:30:48 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela M Britten	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wholeheartedly and enthusiastically support Laura Kaakua's confirmation as Deputy Director of the DLNR. With over 15 years of professional land conservation work and community-building one is hard pressed to identify a more qualified individual. As CEO for Hawaii Land Trust she demonstrated incredible leadership skills, navigating the organization through COVID and ensuring we were a stronger, more effective organization on the other side. Laura's experience with community allows her to bring a variety of perspectives together and align them for what is best for Hawaii.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

TESTIMONY OF KANANI KEALALIO

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 528

GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE

LAURA KAAKUA, DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRPERSON

DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023
State Capitol, Room 229

The Honorable Senator Inouye, Chair and Members of the Committee:

I **strongly support** the nomination of Laura Kaakua as Deputy to the Chairperson at the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

I have known Laura for the past ten (10) years during her previous work with the Trust for Public Lands and have recently begun working with her daily, since she has become the Governor's nominee as the Deputy to the Chairperson at DLNR.

Laura's past experience as the President and CEO of Hawai'i Land Trust places her in a situation where she understands the needs of landowners, cultural practitioners, farmers, and others, along with the significance of being a good land steward. Her experience with Native Hawaiian issues and community affairs also gives her a greater understanding and appreciation for many of the issues that are relevant to DLNR.

During her short time with DLNR, she has made an immediate impact from helping to guide the Department through this current legislative session to coordinating the removal of the grounded yacht at Honolulu Bay.

I respectfully ask that Laura Kaakua's nomination receive the consent of your committee and be forwarded to the full Senate for confirmation. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of Laura Kaakua.

Respectfully submitted,



Kanani Kealalio
kananikea@gmail.com

LATE

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 1:37:16 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donne Dawson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, Members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land, I offer this testimony in wholehearted support of Laura Kaakua to be confirmed as Deputy Director to the Chairperson for the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

I've known Laura for 20 years as we both have been active longtime members of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana. I have also worked with Laura in her capacity of Aloha 'Āina Project Manager at the Trust for Public Land and as president and CEO of Hawaiian Islands Land Trust and in my position as Hawai'i State Film Commissioner managing the Hawai'i Film Office within DBEDT for the past two decades. Laura's knowledge, expertise and passion for mālama 'āina are exemplary. She has dedicated her life to this practice. Given the acute climate change crisis, and knowing how vulnerable Hawai'i is in the face of this growing global crisis, the state could not find a more perfect and capable individual than Laura Kaakua to serve in this critical position.

As an attorney and proud graduate of the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawai'i, Laura's legal expertise and extensive jurisdictional knowledge will be a huge asset to the state and DLNR as well.

The Hawai'i Film Office through its department DBEDT has a longstanding Memorandum of Agreement with DLNR that calls for cooperation between the state departments in support of a healthy film industry but also with a strict focus on protection of environment, historic and culturally sensitive locations, and access for the public. This MOA has formed the foundation of our statutorily mandated film permitting system and our close working relationship with DLNR is vitally important to the continued health and well-being of the film industry in Hawai'i.

Laura Kaakua's knowledge and understanding of DLNR and its agencies, programs and their respective areas of responsibility means she will be able to carry out the department's mission to "Enhance, protect, conserve, and manage Hawai'i's unique and limited natural, cultural and historic resources held in public trust for current and future generations of the people of Hawai'i nei and its visitors, in partnership with others from the public and private sectors."

I humbly ask this committee to confirm Laura Kaakua to serve as Deputy Director to the Chairperson of DLNR. I thank you for the opportunity to offer up this written testimony.

Mahalo Nui,
Donne Dawson

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 3:47:01 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alan T Murakami	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I testify in full and unqualified support for the appointment of Laura Ka'akua to the position of Deputy Director of the DLNR. I testify based on recent experience dealing with Laura as the head of the Hawai'i Islands Land Trust, and previously as a staff person at the Trust for Public Land. In that capacity, she assisted Hui Maunawili Kawainui in a multi-year effort to assist our hui, which is seeking to impose a conservation and agricultural easement over certain properties at Palawai and Makali'i in Maunawili, so that these 1000 acres can serve as a perpetual watershed and sustainable agricultural area for future generations. I am speaking as an individual.

Laura has been an instrumental agent of change in the capacities she's filled at TPL and HILT. This background is well suited for the position of Deputy Director of the DLNR because it builds on the vision, communication skills, and expertise in land management which were so essential to have her as a partner in our now 6-year effort to obtain these Weinberg Foundation lands so they may be restored to the historic uses they once served centuries ago. Her demonstrated skill set will serve her and the State well in this appointed position and matches up with the immense challenges she and the director will face managing the state land inventory under wise use principles. Her background will also help the DLNR interface with communities on which she intends to rely for partnerships that will serve the State and department well in the future.

I commend Laura, especially for her communication skills which should be invaluable in the role she will fill. She is patient, clear-headed, and commands respect amongst those with whom she has dealt in dealings she has helped coordinate in past land dealings. She is also very patient when dealing with multiple personalities, commanding respect for her ideas and opinions. She is also a good listener.

In short, Laura's combination of educational background, skills, work experience and personality is an ideal match for this position. I foresee that her tenure at the department will demand such talents when dealing with inevitable crises which will erupt and demand the kind of maturity, understanding and skill I am confident Laura will bring to the job.

In addition to her impeccable qualifications I've mentioned, it goes without saying that as a part-Hawaiian woman she also possesses cultural sensitivities that have been missing in past administrations. Such a complementary understanding of Hawaiian traditions and culture only enhances her already formidable skill set as a land manager.

I am particularly impressed that Laura plans to bring her vision of community stewardship and partnerships to this job. Our Hui's experience with Laura was just this kind of model for the Weinberg Foundation lands we have been seeking to steward to promote conservation and enhance local food security. I fully support her intended approach to the job and urge you to support her efforts as well through funding and programs.

Please confirm Laura without qualification. She is the right person for this job and richly deserves your stamp of approval.

Aloha,

Alan T Murakami

916D Auloa Road

Kailua, HI 96734

LATE

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 3:59:56 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Blake J LaBenz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Committee members. I offer this testimony in wholehearted support of Laura Kaakua to be confirmed as Deputy Director to the Chairperson for the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

I have known Laura for over 25 years in various capacities, though most prominently as an advocate for Hawaiian lands and natural resources through her work with Trust for Public Land, Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, and with the Protect Kahoolawe Ohana and as a hula dancer who understands the intrinsic connection of Hawaiian Hula to Hawaiian environment. She is a daughter, a sister, a mother, a wife, a friend, and a compassionate protector of Hawaii. Combining that with her background in law and understanding of land policies makes her an excellent choice for as Deputy Director to the Chairperson of DLNR.

I humbly urge this Committee to confirm Laura for this position.

Mahalo nui,

Blake "Brutus" LaBenz

LATE

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 4:32:51 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Stokes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please confirm Laura as deputy director.

LATE

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 4:56:48 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Manarpaac	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this confirmation. Aloha.

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, Members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer this testimony in support of Laura Kaakua to be confirmed as Deputy Director to the Chairperson for the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

I first met Laura as a member of the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana many years ago along with her husband. More recently I have worked on project with the Trust for Public Lands and volunteered at a couple of Hawaiian Islands Land Trust sites here on Kaua‘i.

Laura’s outstanding character, fluency with the legal system, and many gifts she brings in communicating with a wide array of people are some of the reasons she is extremely able and suited for this position. She is a very wise choice given her deep understanding of the value of our natural resources and lands that the DNLR is entrusted to preserve in this fast paced world. As a mother of a teenager and adolescent she is reminded daily of the importance that decision making and policy creating that this position calls for in light of what kind of Hawaii we are leaving for future generations.

From a stable base of deep understanding and respect for indigenious wisdom and cultural sensitivity she can serve to guide contemporay policies that truly support and nurture our island community. This is key in the ligfht of the fragility of Hawaii’s ecosystems, endangered native plants and wildlife.

I urge you to see her gifts clearly and confirm her position that she may deepen into this sacred path of service.

Mahalo for your consideration and understanding.

Kelvin Ho
Lawai, Kaua‘i

LATE

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 5:05:56 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Vierra	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please confirm Laura as deputy director.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 6:31:19 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Morioka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Laura Ka'akua as DLNR Deputy Director.

LATE

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 6:44:00 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Miwa Tamanaha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for this opportunity to submit testimony in strongest support of Laura Kaakua for the position of Deputy to the Chair, DLNR. Laura is an adept, skilled and confident leader, skilled in law, conservation and community process.

Over the years, in my previous role as Co-Director of Kuaaina Ulu Auamo and as a community member, I have worked with Laura on a number of different projects, including 2018 Hoolau Kanaka Aina Summit. I've watched Laura support community groups through her work at both TPL and HILT. DLNR will benefit for Laura's intellect, listening, and leadership. DLNR has incredibly important trust duties, its function is vital to our communities, without adequate resources. Under such circumstances, good leadership is even more critical. It is with gratitude to Laura for her willingness to serve, that I write in strongest support of her confirmation.

me ka ha'aha'a,

Miwa Tamanaha
94-1144 Moolelo St.
Waipahu, HI 96797

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 7:16:41 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Aoki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Ms. Laura Kaakua as deputy to the chairperson, DLNR.

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 8:08:30 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole cody	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in full support of Laura Kaakua. Mahalo!

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND
ATTN: CHAIR LORRAINE R. INOUE & VICE CHAIR GILBERT S.C. KEITH-AGARAN**

Testimony in Strong Support of GM528

Submitting for confirmation as Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAURA KA'AKUA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026

March 8, 2023, 1:00 p.m.

LATE

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of this Committee,

My name is Dr. Rosie 'Anolani Alegado. I am a resident of Kahalu'u O'ahu and I stand in strong SUPPORT of the Governor's nomination (GM 528) of Laura Ka'akua to serve as Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) for a term to expire December 7, 2026.

I have known Ms. Ka'akua for over 10 years as a member of the McGregor 'ohana of Hau'ula who sold the Maunawila heiau complex to the Hawai'i Island Land Trust and in a professional capacity in which I coordinate and provide training to academic researchers and community entities who wish to develop equitable partnerships.

The Hawai'i Island Land Trust acquired the Maunawila Heiau complex in Hau'ula from my 'ohana in 2014 and under Ms. Ka'akua's leadership as CEO and President, has engaged in amazing habitat restoration, archaeological and cultural preservation while re-igniting this wahi pana as a space for cultural practice and education. I have especially appreciated the sensitivity with which Ms. Ka'akua and HILT have continued to include our family in the process of reconnecting this place with the Hau'ula community. This project as well as the many other projects that HILT has engaged in under the auspices of Ms. Ka'akua's leadership demonstrate to me that she will approach the need to steward and protect natural resources, which are also cultural resources, in a pono way and will bring this same ethos to the DLNR staff and 'āina that the Department manages.

However, Ms. Ka'akua is more than just a CEO with leadership experience, importantly, she is someone who cares about process and has taken the time to understand the real needs of the communities she has worked in. She has been attentive to creating and facilitating authentic relationship-building partnerships between academic researchers and communities that steward HILT lands. In this way, she has shown she has the ability to balance analytical and community considerations to make fair decisions and she will bring this experience to the DLNR.

Ms. Ka'akua is extremely well-qualified and I urge you to support GM 528 and confirm Laura Ka'akua as first deputy to the DLNR chair.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Respectfully,



Rosanna 'Anolani Alegado

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 9:13:20 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Cody	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this nomination.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

LATE

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 9:15:45 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melanie Dudley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our ohana is in full support as we are confident given her background and experience that Laura Kaakua would be the best fit for this position.

LATE

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/8/2023 9:35:50 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amber Namaka Whitehead	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land.

I offer this testimony in **strong support of GM528**, consideration and confirmation of Laura Ka'akua as the Deputy to the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources.

I have known Laura personally and professionally for over 20 years in my work as a conservation professional, a steward of 'āina, and a member of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana. I am very familiar with the work of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and am confident that Laura is an excellent choice for this critical leadership position. She has extensive experience in all aspects of land management from executing complicated real estate transactions to implementing successful on the ground community-based stewardship programs. She also has strong experience with leadership and facilitation of multidisciplinary teams, is highly intelligent, a hard worker with unquestionable morals, and most importantly is deeply committed to balanced and pono stewardship of Hawai'i's lands and resources.

I humbly ask this committee to support the nomination of Laura Ka'akua as the Deputy to the Chairperson, DLNR.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Amber Nāmaka Whitehead, PhD

Pāpā, South Kona

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/8/2023 9:39:04 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melinda Healani Sonoda-Pale	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha I would like to support the appointment of Laura Kaakua as the Deputy to the Chairperson for the Department of Land and Natural Resources. She has played an important role in the community in the protection of our natural resources, iwi kupuna and water. Ms. Kaakua has the knowledge base, strong work ethic and heart to do the important work at the DLNR and make a positive difference in a Department that has been riddled with controversy - yet plays an important role in protecting our lands and natural resources.

Me ke aloha,

Healani Sonoda-Pale

LATE

GM-528

Submitted on: 3/8/2023 9:43:29 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/8/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
elizabeth reilly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I have known Laura for close to 10 years and felt compelled to share a few words of thanks to whomever nominated her and to encourage approval of her appointment. I can not think of a finer, well educated, professionally perfect choice for this position. DLNR will benefit from Laura's effective leadership while the people of Hawaii benefit from what Laura brings to the table when it comes to love of the land (cultural and natural resources) and its care. Laura is the type of individual that empowers those in her company. She is patient and has the gift of teaching and encouraging core values that will radiate from all levels of DLNR if she is embraced and given the opportunity to step up and serve Hawaii - Mahalo from the heart, Elizabeth Reilly