



Hawaiian Civic Club of Hilo

**Written Testimony of SUPPORT Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Water and Land
April 12, 2023**

by
The Hawaiian Civic Club of Hilo

Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (GM 541)

Dear Chairperson Inouye and Members of the Committee:

Please accept this testimony in support of the following nominee for the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (SOA).

- John Komeiji, GM541

Komeiji has demonstrated the commitment, knowledge, integrity, and experience necessary to effectively serve on the Mauna Kea SOA. Our membership fully supports his confirmation.

Mahalo for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dorinna H. Cortez".

Dorinna H. Cortez
Secretary/Treasurer

2106 Kaiwiki Rd
Hilo, HI 96720
hccofhilo@gmail.com

Wednesday, April 12, 2023 at 1:00 pm
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

Senate Committee on Water and Land

To: Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair

From: Ray Vara
President & CEO

Re: **GM 541 – Testimony In Support
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Mauna Kea
Stewardship and Oversight Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, JOHN
KOMEIJI, for a term to expire 06-30-2025.**

My name is Ray Vara and I am the President and CEO of Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system comprised of its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox - and over 70 locations statewide with a mission of creating a healthier Hawai'i.

I write in **support** of GM 541 which submits for consideration and confirmation John Komeiji to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority for a term to expire on 06-30-2025.

Mr. Komeiji was most recently general counsel and vice president for Kamehameha Schools (KS). His responsibilities included overseeing KS' Legal Group, which is comprised of five divisions: Education and Administration, Real Estate, Tax, Ethics and Compliance, and the Office of the VP of the Legal Group. The Legal Group provides legal and tax advice and services to KS trustees, management and staff across the organization, and has responsibility for the KS Ethics and Compliance Program. Its cornerstone contribution to KS' educational mission is protecting and upholding the purposes and integrity of the last will and testament of Kamehameha Schools founder Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop.

Mr. Komeiji also has extensive experience in Hawai'i's legal and business community. Prior to joining KS, he served as president and general manager of Hawaiian Telcom for nearly two years, and chief administrative officer and general counsel for the utility for more than 10 years. Before Hawaiian Telcom he served as senior partner at Watanabe Ing & Komeiji LLP, where his practice focused on litigation in complex commercial, personal injury and professional liability matters.

Based on his experience in the various high level positions throughout his career, Mr. Komeiji will be able to bring leadership and trust to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. We support Mr. Komeiji's nomination and urge this committee to confirm his appointment to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Matson Navigation Company, Inc.
In Support of GM541
Before the Committee on Water and Land
April 12, 2023

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

Matson Navigation Company, Inc. (Matson) strongly supports GM541, which nominates John Komeiji to serve as Chairperson of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. Mr. Komeiji is highly qualified to serve in this position. His analytical assessment of issues, independent judgment, professionalism, strong sense of justice, and commitment to our community will bring depth of knowledge and solid leadership to the Authority. Matson has worked with Mr. Komeiji on several issues and have always found him to be upstanding, fair, and transparent. We believe he will execute his duties with fairness and competence.

Thank you for considering our testimony in support.



1411 Sand Island Parkway
Honolulu, HI 96819

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www.matson.com
Tel 808.848.1334
Fax 808.842.6048

MATTHEW J. COX
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

Testimony of Matthew J. Cox
In Support of GM541
Before the Committee on Water and Land
April 12, 2023

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

I strongly support GM541, which nominates John Komeiji to serve as Chairperson of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. Mr. Komeiji is highly qualified to serve in this position. His analytical assessment of issues, independent judgment, professionalism, strong sense of justice, and commitment to our community will bring depth of knowledge and solid leadership to the Authority. I have worked with Mr. Komeiji on several issues and have always found him to be upstanding, fair, and transparent. I know he will execute his duties with fairness and competence.

Thank you for considering my testimony in support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized, cursive letters that appear to read 'MJC' followed by a horizontal line.

Matthew J. Cox

Testimony of Ku'uhaku Park
In Support of GM541
Before the Committee on Water and Land
April 12, 2023

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

I strongly support GM541, which nominates John Komeiji to serve as Chairperson of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. Mr. Komeiji is highly qualified to serve in this position. His analytical assessment of issues, independent judgment, professionalism, strong sense of justice, and commitment to our community will bring depth of knowledge and solid leadership to the Authority. I have worked with Mr. Komeiji on several issues and have always found him to be upstanding, fair, and transparent. As a Native Hawaiian, I know he will execute his duties with fairness and competence.

Thank you for considering my testimony in support.

Sincerely,



Ku'uhaku Park

Testimony of Nelisa Asato
In Support of GM541
Before the Committee on Water and Land
April 12, 2023

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

I strongly support GM541, which nominates John Komeiji to serve as Chairperson of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. Mr. Komeiji is highly qualified to serve in this position. His analytical assessment of issues, independent judgment, professionalism, strong sense of justice, and commitment to our community will bring depth of knowledge and solid leadership to the Authority. I have worked with Mr. Komeiji on several issues and have always found him to be upstanding, fair, and transparent. As a Native Hawaiian, I know he will execute his duties with fairness and competence.

Thank you for considering my testimony in support.

Sincerely,
Nelisa Asato

Written Statement of
Su Shin
President & General Manager

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

APRIL 12, 2023 – 1:00 PM
Conference Room 229 & Video Conference, Hawai'i State Capitol

SUPPORT FOR:

G.M. NO. 541 – CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE MAUNA KEA STEWARDSHIP AND OVERSIGHT AUTHORITY, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, JOHN KOMEIJI, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 06-30-2025

To: Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Water & Land

Re: Testimony providing support for GM No. 541

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to offer support for GM No. 541, for consideration and confirmation of John Komeiji, Gubernatorial Nominee, as Chairperson of the Mauna Kea Stewardship & Oversight Authority.

Mr. Komeiji currently serves as a member of Hawaiian Telcom and altafiber's (Hawaiian Telcom's holding company) Board of Directors, providing leadership and strategic guidance as we invest a significant amount of private capital to expand access to fiber broadband across Hawai'i. In addition to being a Director at Hawaiian Telcom, Mr. Komeiji was my predecessor, having served as its President until 2020. It was during this period that I had the opportunity to work intimately with Mr. Komeiji as his Chief of Staff. Having known Mr. Komeiji for more than 10 years, I am fortunate to be able to call him a mentor and friend.

Mr. Komeiji spent the first 30 years of his professional career in private practice as a successful litigator. He then transitioned to Hawaiian Telcom and Kamehameha Schools, spending nearly 14 years not just leading legal teams, but also technology, human resources, and operations groups. The breadth and depth of his experience are clearly invaluable, however, his character, ability to bring diverse groups together to find common ground, and his passion for the Hawaiian people are the traits that make him uniquely qualified for this role. Perhaps most importantly, he

was moved to take on this challenge because of his genuine desire to serve the people of Hawai‘i. Mr. Komeiji’s motives are truly genuine and altruistic.

Mr. Komeiji is the epitome of a servant leader both professionally and personally. He serves on numerous boards, including as President of the 200 Club, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting widows and dependents of police officers and fire fighters who were killed in the line of duty. He has given of his valuable time, experience and resources to support non-profits he believes in, including the Rehabilitation Hospital of the Pacific, the Boys and Girls Club of Hawai‘i, and the Blood Bank of Hawai‘i.

His impeccable reputation as a dedicated professional with high integrity, his collaborative and visionary leadership style, and his passion for serving our community will be a tremendous asset to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority and the State of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of the Senate’s confirmation for John Komeiji’s appointment to serve as the Chairperson of the Mauna Kea Stewardship Oversight Authority, and to respectfully urge your Committee’s passage of GM No. 541.





To: **Senate Committee on Water and Land**
Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair
Senator Stanley Chang
Senator Angus McKelvey
Senator Kurt Fevella

From: Jean-Gabriel Cuby, Canada France Hawaii Telescope Executive Director

Date: April 5, 2023

GM: 541

GM Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, JOHN KOMEIJI, for a term to expire 06-30-2025.

Subject: **SUPPORT for GM541**

Aloha Chair Inouye and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **strong support** of John Komeiji's confirmation to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority, for a term to expire June 30, 2025.

As an experienced lawyer and businessman, John Komeiji is committed to bringing his experience and knowledge to the position of chairperson of the authority. It is a testament to his commitment that John has resigned from his position as vice president of Kamehameha School in order to devote himself fully to this role. In conversations we have had personally, John has acknowledged that the task ahead is both risky and daunting, and shared that after a long and successful career, he wants to give back to the community by fully engaging in a dialogue to define the future of Maunakea. John Komeiji's experience, wisdom, and knowledge of the community will be essential assets in setting up and leading the authority in this very first phase.

I support John Komeiji's confirmation, along with the full slate of nominees for the MKSOA, to continue the work they have begun as interim board members over the past several months to co-create a pono future for Maunakea governance and decision-making. Thank you very much for your consideration of my testimony.

Mahalo nui loa,

Director Jean-Gabriel Cuby, Canada-France-Hawai'i Telescope

GM-541

Submitted on: 4/6/2023 1:20:04 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/12/2023 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Ronald Buzz Wo | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chairperson Inouye and Members of the Senate Water and Land Committee,

I am writing this letter in support of John Komeiji for Chairperson of the Maunakea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. For as long as I have know John, he has shown himself to be a person of great integrity and principle with the ability to understand and navigate important issues. I believe he is supremely qualifired to lead this authority in it's important purpose for our State.

Thank you for the opportunity of offering this letter in support for John.

Very truly yours,

Ronald Buzz Wo

GM-541

Submitted on: 4/6/2023 1:43:45 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/12/2023 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Christoph Baranec | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support John Komeji for the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority.

GM-541

Submitted on: 4/6/2023 2:42:04 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/12/2023 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Christine Matsuda | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

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

I am in strong SUPPORT of John Komeiji's confirmation to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority, along with the full list of nominees under consideration by your committee for confirmation.

John has already shown tremendous leadership as the nominee for chair. His commitment to this body - and his appreciation of how much focused effort is required to make it successful - is exactly what is required, and I am personally grateful to him for his willingness to serve in this capacity.

The issues surrounding Maunakea have been incredibly divisive, important and impactful for our community to grapple with. The leadership that these individuals have shown is admirable; not just their commitment to the mauna and to our community, but importantly, their willingness to take on the complex challenges and heavy responsibility of governance. Many folks have participated as activists on all sides of the Maunakea issues, but few leaders have demonstrated the commitment, perspective and expertise necessary to build something new, working together, to move us forward on a new path as a community.

John Komeiji and his fellow nominees are remarkable leaders, and I am personally grateful to them for stepping forward to serve. This list of nominees are the right group to serve these initial terms at the critical start-up phase of the new Authority, and have already demonstrated how well they will work together as a full governing body during their initial meetings as interim appointees. Mahalo for your consideration of my testimony in support of their confirmation.

With aloha,

Christine Matsuda

Nuʻuanu, HI 96817

GM-541

Submitted on: 4/6/2023 2:43:46 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/12/2023 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Richard Matsuda | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Inouye, Vice-Chair Elefante and members of the Senate Water and Land Committee,

I support confirmation of John Komeiji as the business/finance expert and also as the designated chairperson of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority.

John has many years of professional expertise as an attorney, CEO of a large telecom company, and legal counsel for Kamehameha Schools, and can navigate and lead in many varied and complex situations. He is also passionate about the community working together to create solutions in a "Hawaii Way" based on our shared values in Hawaii. Because of this, I believe he will be a good leader and respectfully include all perspectives represented on the board of the MKSOA in arriving at solutions to complex challenges. Mahalo.

Richard Matsuda

GM-541

Submitted on: 4/8/2023 11:38:14 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/12/2023 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Gerard Silva | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

NO !!

**Meredith J. Ching
P.O. Box 3440
Honolulu, Hawaii 96801**

April 12, 2023

Committee on Water and Land
Hawaii State Senate
State Capitol, Conference Room 229
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

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

**RE: GM 541: Confirmation of John Komeiji to the Mauna Kea
Stewardship and Oversight Authority**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of the confirmation of John Komeiji to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority.

I have known John for almost four decades, in both a personal and professional capacity. John is a unique individual (and I say this in a positive way), with a unique basket of skills and experiences that would be of value to the Authority and its mission. After he established himself as one of the best litigators in the state, John took his legal skills to Hawaiian Telcom as its Senior VP and General Counsel in 2008, and then held increasingly responsible positions within the company before being named in 2018 to lead Hawaiian Telcom as its President and General Manager. In 2020, John joined Kamehameha Schools as its General Counsel and Vice President.

All of this information is available in John's resume, but I point it out as evidence of the breadth of experience that John has built up over his career, as well as to highlight that John is a risk-taker, motivated by mission. He is willing to operate outside of his comfort zone—first by moving away from a successful and established legal career to be part of the local management team charged with leading Hawaiian Telcom out of bankruptcy, notably successfully achieved. Then, he became part of the leadership team driving the fulfillment of the educational and community-building missions of the Kamehameha Schools organization that are so important to our state as a whole. And now, again, he is moving on to be involved in another matter of statewide importance and relevance—the proper management of Mauna Kea.

I believe that John is the perfect candidate for this position on the Authority—not only because of his intelligence, his background in mediation and law, but because of his extremely adept people skills and his love for his community. John treats everyone he deals with with respect, looks to understand all sides of an issue, but is never one to shy away from a tough conversation or a tough decision, or from making change.

The people of Hawaii are very fortunate to have someone of John's caliber willing to devote not only his time and energy, but his focused passion as well, to bring stability and resolution to the management of Mauna Kea. I strongly urge your confirmation of John Komeiji to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Meredith J. Ching, EVP
Alexander & Baldwin, Inc.



April 10, 2023

Senate Water and Land Committee
Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair

RE: GM541 & GM609, Consideration and Confirmation of John Komeiji as Chairperson of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority

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

I am writing to express my strong support for the appointment of John Komeiji as the Chairperson of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. Mr. Komeiji's extensive experience in business, finance, and law make him uniquely qualified to lead the Authority in fulfilling its mission to manage and protect the natural and cultural resources of Mauna Kea.

Mr. Komeiji's decades of experience in business and finance, including his leadership role as General Manager of Hawaiian Telcom, demonstrate his ability to manage complex organizations and navigate challenging situations. He has a proven track record of making sound financial decisions and ensuring the long-term sustainability of organizations under his leadership. These skills will be critical as the Authority works to balance the economic, environmental, and cultural interests of the various stakeholders on Mauna Kea.

In addition to his business and financial acumen, Mr. Komeiji's legal experience will be invaluable in guiding the Authority through the complex legal and regulatory frameworks that govern its operations. As legal counsel for Kamehameha Schools, Mr. Komeiji has gained a deep understanding of the unique legal considerations involved in managing natural and cultural resources in Hawaii. He has also been actively involved in community and cultural organizations, demonstrating his commitment to the preservation of Hawaii's cultural heritage.

Overall, Mr. Komeiji's experience and qualifications make him an exceptional candidate for the position of Chairperson of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. We respectfully request your favorable consideration. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Jason Fujimoto
President & CEO
HPM Building Supply



GM-541

Submitted on: 4/10/2023 2:00:09 PM

Testimony for WTL on 4/12/2023 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Angela Correa-Pei | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

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

I submit this testimony in strong support of the confirmation of JOHN KOMEIJI to be Chair of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. I had the privilege of working with John while I was with Kamehameha Schools as a Strategy Consultant in the Strategy & Transformation and Administration Groups. We worked on two large initiatives, along with other team members - the KS Digital Project and the variety of project surrounding COVID, to include the safe return of students and staff to school and KS offices throughout the State. Both projects entailed uncharted territory for KS, multiple layers of work, and cross-enterprise collaboration. John provided clarity of direction, efficient decision making, and positive working relationships throughout the enterprise.

As the VP of KS Legal, those who worked with John, and therefore the entire KS organization, could trust in his leadership as he always had the mission of Kamehameha Schools and the protection of the trust of Ke Ali'i Pauahi at the forefront of his thoughts and decisions. He was forthright with his opinions and supported them with transparent rationale and clear legal bases. He also values the contributions of those he worked with, at all levels, which resulted in building strong teams and collaboration to serve the mission of the organization. This is a true gift of a selfless leader.

I know that John will bring this same leadership to this role as the Chair of the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. He will work collaboratively with his fellow commissioners and the community at large to ensure the appropriate stewardship of Maunakea for generations to come and his extensive legal and business experience will enable him to lead this commission efficiently. I have had the opportunity to speak with John about this opportunity and I wholeheartedly believe he is taking on this role with the sincerity of a servant leader to help Hawai'i address and find good solutions to not only malama Maunakea, but to build a mechanism that will help Hawai'i appropriately steward all of our resources and to malama all of its aina and to malama our people.

As a native Hawaiian attorney and a board member of two environmental and cultural conservation organizations - Maunalua Fishpond Heritage Center (President) and Kupa'aina o Kuli'ou'ou (VP), I am confident that John will serve as Chair of the MKSOA to ensure that all who so desire will have their voices heard in determining the future of Maunakea, to ensure

sincere collaboration, and to ensure the appropriate stewardship of Maunakea while building a model to address and resolve many of Hawai'i's very important issues surrounding Native Hawaiian rights; cultural recognition, respect, and preservation; environmental protection; and appropriate economic growth.

Me Ka Ha'aha'a,

Angela Correa-Pei