



United States Department of the Interior



National Park Service
Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail
73-4786 Kanalani St., #14
Kailua Kona, Hawaii 96740
Tel: (808) 217-0307
Fax: (808) 329-2597

March 19, 2024

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

Hawai'i State Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Subject: GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 640 / Nomination of Alexandra Kelepolo to the
Legacy Land Conservation Commission

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

This is to convey the Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail's support for the Governor's nomination of Alexandra "Alex" Kepolo to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. I met Alex when she served as an administrator for the County of Hawaii's Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation Commission and Program "PONC". We were supporting the nomination of parcels located within the Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail's corridor. Acquisition of these parcels would provide protection of the trail's tread, the associated cultural and natural landscape and viewsheds thus significantly enhancing and supporting traditional Native Hawaiian ancestral connections to place, their stewardship and associated cultural/subsistence practices along with overall trail visitors' experience and education.

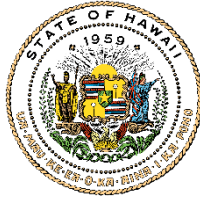
Clearly a dedicated and sincere public servant, Alex understands the PONC and LLCC programs' land acquisition processes. When with the County of Hawaii, Alex performed efficiently in a timely and professional manner and with much aloha for all. In addition, Alex can formulate funding strategies that include non-profits, private land trusts, state, public donations, etc. and bring very complex acquisitions to closure.

Given my experience with her, I am confident that Alex will make significant contributions to the LLCC in an objective and fair manner. Please consider a favorable decision on her nomination.

Superintendent

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
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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**

**Friday, March 22, 2024
1:00 PM**

State Capitol, Conference Room 229 and Via Videoconference

**In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 640
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE
LEGACY LAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
ALEXANDRA KELEPOLO, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE JUNE 30, 2028**

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports Governor's Message 640 to appoint Alexandra Kelepolo to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission (Commission). Alexandra resides in the County of Hawai'i and possesses "membership in a land conservation organization land organized in the State" (Moku O Keawe Land Trust), thus fulfilling the Commission membership requirements of subsections 173A-2.4 and 2.4(a)(3), Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS). We note, respectfully, that she does not appear to possess "membership in a statewide agricultural association" HRS §173A-2.4(a)(4).

Alexandra Kelepolo has served on the County of Hawai'i Commission Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation Commission (PONC) for the last four years, including terms as Vice-Chair and Chair. In her prior work with the County Department of Finance, she facilitated PONC operations and coordinated County grant applications to the Legacy Land Conservation Program that resulted in several successful County land acquisitions.

Alexandra's record of land conservation experience and accomplishments highlights her suitability for serving on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. The Department strongly supports Governor's Message 640 and recommends that the Senate confirm the appointment of Alexandra Kelepolo for a four-year term. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this nominee.

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor



Deanna S. Sako
Managing Director

Robert H. Command
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i
Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
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March 18, 2024

Committee on Water and Land
Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair
Hawai'i State Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Subject: GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 640 / Nomination of Alexandra Kelepolo to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission
Hearing Date / Time: Friday, March 22, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.
Location: Via Videoconference and Conference Room 229

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

I wholeheartedly endorse the nomination of Alexandra "Alex" Kelepolo to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. Alex worked for the County of Hawai'i, Finance Department administering the Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation Commission and program "PONC". She was instrumental in laying the foundation to what has evolved into one of the most successful government funding programs in the State of Hawai'i to protect and preserve our natural and cultural resources, native wildlife habitat and ensuring lands remain open space in perpetuity. Alex worked closely with the Legacy Land Conservation Program "LLCP" during her time with the County PONC program. LLCP funds contributed to PONC's success by providing matching funds for multiple fee simple and/or conservation easement acquisitions in the County of Hawai'i.

Alex's passion and dedication in the community is endless; you will find her volunteering with her ohana any chance she gets. She currently is the Chair of the PONC Commission, Vice President of Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy, Board of Director for E Mau Nā Ala Hele, Secretary and Committee member for Toys for Tots and a member of the Zonta Club. Alex's experience working with community, non-profits, government and ohana to protect, preserve and steward these lands and her knowledge of the LLCP is invaluable and will make her a great asset to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

With Aloha,

MITCHELL D. ROTH
Mayor

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor



Deanna S. Sako
Managing Director

Robert H. Command
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

March 20, 2024

Committee on Water and Land
Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair
Hawai'i State Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Subject: GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 640 / Nomination of Alexandra Kelepolo to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission
Hearing Date / Time: Friday, March 22, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.
Location: Via Videoconference and Conference Room 229

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

I strongly endorse the nomination of Alexandra "Alex" Kelepolo to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. I first met Alex over 17 years ago when she started working for the County of Hawai'i in our Finance Department. She worked in our Property Management Division and was instrumental in getting the County's Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation (PONC) program off the ground. During her years of service to the County this program continued to grow to help protect and preserve our natural and cultural resources, native wildlife habitat and ensure that lands remain open space in perpetuity. While at the County, Alex was able to work with the Legacy Land Conservation Program as they provided matching funds for many fee simple and/or conservation easement acquisitions in the County of Hawai'i.

While Alex no longer works for the County of Hawai'i, she currently serves as Chair of our PONC Commission. In addition, she is Vice President of Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy, Board of Director for E Mau Nā Ala Hele, Secretary and Committee member for Toys for Tots and a member of the Zonta Club. Her passion and dedication in the community is endless and you will frequently find her volunteering with her ohana any chance she gets.

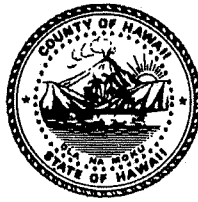
Alex's experience working with community, non-profits, government and ohana to protect, preserve and steward these lands and her knowledge of the Legacy Land Conservation Program is invaluable and will make her a great asset to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Respectfully,

DEANNA S. SAKO
Managing Director

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor



Diane Nakagawa
Director

Aaron K.H. Brown
Deputy Director

County of Hawai'i

Finance Department

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2103 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
(808) 961-8234 • Fax (808) 961-8569

March 21, 2024

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

Hawai'i State Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Subject: GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 640 / Nomination of Alexandra Kelepolo to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission
Hearing Date / Time: Friday, March 22, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.
Location: Via Videoconference and Conference Room 229

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

I wholeheartedly endorse the nomination of Alexandra "Alex" Kelepolo to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. Alex worked for the County of Hawai'i, Finance Department administering the Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation Commission and program "PONC". She was instrumental in laying the foundation to what has evolved into one of the most successful government funding programs in the State of Hawai'i to protect and preserve our natural and cultural resources, native wildlife habitat and ensuring lands remain open space in perpetuity. Alex worked closely with the Legacy Land Conservation Program "LLCP" during her time with the County PONC program. LLCP funds contributed to PONC's success by providing matching funds for multiple fee simple and/or conservation easement acquisitions in the County of Hawai'i.

Alex's passion and dedication in the community is endless; you will find her volunteering with her ohana any chance she gets. She currently is the Chair of the PONC Commission, Vice President of Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy, Board of Director for E Mau Nā Ala Hele, Secretary and Committee member for Toys for Tots and a member of the Zonta Club. Alex's experience working with community, non-profits, government and ohana to protect, preserve and steward these lands and her knowledge of the LLCP is invaluable and will make her a great asset to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hamana Ventura".

Hamana Ventura, Property Manager



March 18, 2024

RE: Strong Support for Alexandra Kelepolo for Legacy Land Conservation Commission

Dear Honorable Members of the Committee on Water and Land,

Malama Kohala Kahakai stands in strong support of appointing Alexandra Kelepolo to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. Ms. Kelepolo's is highly qualified to serve on this Commission. Her dedication to and expertise in protecting important lands and cultural and natural resources is significant and will serve the Commission well.

Ms. Kelepolo was the primary driver behind successfully establishing Hawaii County's very successful Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resource Preservation (PONC) fund and PONC Commission to administer the funds, which has successfully preserved nearly 11,000 acres of land on Hawaii Island. She has been responsible for overseeing numerous multimillion dollar conservation purchases, as well as monitoring of these lands and monitoring of conservation easements. Alex understands the nuts and bolts of conservation fee simple, and easement purchases as well as what is required for successful long-term stewardship.

Alex has nearly 20 years of experience effectively coordinating work with a diversity of stakeholders to preserve lands to protect a variety of values, including habitat, view planes, cultural sites, agricultural lands, important coastal and watershed functions, etc. Everyone who has worked with Alex, be it archeologists, landowners, scientists, cultural practitioners, community nonprofits, etc. will tell you that she has a heart of gold *and* the skill set and experience to be an effective Legacy Land Conservation Commissioner.

Alex's current work requires her to have a strong understanding of a variety of land use issues as she works with landowners and utilities to secure important easements while protecting natural and cultural resources. She has worked successfully with landowners on hundreds of easements.

Very few people in this state have the breadth of real property experience in a conservation context working with both government agencies, community nonprofits, and a variety of public and private funding sources.

We strongly recommend you appoint Alexandra Kelepolo to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. She will be an asset to the state.

Respectfully,

Gail Byrne Baber

Gail Byrne Baber

Co-coordinator

Malama Kohala Kahakai

**P.O. Box 198900 PMB 102
Hawi, HI 96719
MalamaKohalaKahakai@gmail.com**

Kohala Lihikai

P.O. Box 76
Hawi, Hawai'i 96719

March 20, 2024

RE: Strong Support for Alexandra Kelepolo's Appointment to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission

Aloha, Chair and Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land,

Ms. Alexandra Kelepolo is highly qualified to serve effectively and with integrity on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. We strongly recommend her appointment.

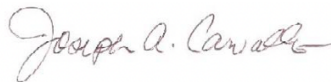
Kohala Lihikai is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving North Kohala's important open spaces and public access ways. We were founded by five community nonprofits and groups to further their decades of work, especially with respect to coastal preservation.

Without a doubt, Ms. Kelepolo's work has made a tremendous difference to the North Kohala community's efforts to preserve our cultural, agricultural, and ecological heritage. She has a very humble but effective way of helping to advance community driven initiatives and has worked with a wide range of professionals to protect and conserve important community properties around Hawaii Island.

Ms. Kelepolo was responsible for establishing the highly effective Hawaii County Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resource Conservation program, which has preserved 11,000 acres to-date. Alexandra coordinated the purchase of numerous conservation purchases and conservation easements and has been responsible for the monitoring of the care of these lands once purchased. She understands the nuts and bolts of real property conservation purchases, what it takes to steward properties, as well as experience with a variety of land uses that have deepened her on-the-ground understanding of effective and respectful management of cultural and natural resource management.

Ms. Kelepolo's expertise and experience are a perfect match for the Legacy Lands Commission. Please appoint her to the Commission as soon as possible.

Malama na Lihikai o Kohalanei,



Joseph A. Carvalho
Chairperson



Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy

P.O. Box 209

Kailua Kona, HI 96745

<https://www.moklc.org/>

March 18, 2024

Committee on Water and Land

Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair

Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

Hawaii State Legislature

415 Beretania Street

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: Governor's Message #640/ Nomination of Alexandra Kelepolo to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission

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

I have known Alex since I served on the Public Access Open Space and Natural Resources Commission in 2011-2012. At that time, she was secretary for the Hawaii County Department of Finance administering the Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation Commission.

I am currently the President of Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy and Alex is Vice President. We have worked closely and very collaboratively on projects over the years. She is organized, delivers what she promises and is a person of the highest integrity. She is prepared, does her research and is not afraid to ask questions.

As PONC chair for her second term, much has been accomplished during this time. She has become an effective leader, the commission has updated their rules and she is effective at keeping the commissioners on track to get things accomplished. The PONC Maintenance Program has grown during her leadership with the policies that have been established by the commission. With her background in land conservation and stewardship, she is a quick study on ways to conserve property and preserve habitat. She has been instrumental in obtaining matching funds for PONC through the Legacy Land Conservation Program and already knows the process.

In addition to being Vice President of Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy and Chair of PONC, she is a tireless volunteer in the community as part of the Board of Directors for E Mau Nā Ala Hele, Secretary and Committee member for Toys for Tots and a member of the Zonta Club.

She is sure to quickly become a valued member of the Legacy Lands Conservation Commission! I know I can speak for the entire board of Moku O Keawe, to say that we wholeheartedly support her nomination without any reservations. We humbly ask you to appoint Alexandra Kelepolo to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

With warm aloha,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Hecht".

Debbie Hecht, President, Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy
PO Box 209
Kailua Kona, HI 96745
808-989-3222



Hawai'i Wildlife Fund

PO Box 1801, Kealahou, HI 96750 & PO Box 790637, Paia HI 96779

Celebrating 28 years of protecting Hawai'i's native wildlife
through research, education and conservation.

Hawai'i State Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

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

18 March 2024

Re: Governor's Message No 640 -- Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, ALEXANDRA KELEPOLO, for a term to expire 06-30-2028. Hearing Date / Time: Friday, March 22, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

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

As an active non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of Hawai'i's wildlife for the past 28 years, Hawai'i Wildlife Fund (HWF) would like to wholeheartedly support the nomination of Alexandra Kelepolo for the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

HWF team members have worked alongside with Alex for over a decade, supporting the County of Hawai'i's "PONC" (Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation Commission) program and cleaning remote beaches along the Ka'u coastline. Alex has both worked and volunteered for the County of Hawai'i, Finance Department administering the Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation Commission and program "PONC" since its establishment. She was instrumental in laying the foundation to what has evolved into one of the most successful government funding programs in the State of Hawai'i to protect and preserve our natural and cultural resources, native wildlife habitat and ensuring lands remain open space in perpetuity. During this time with the County PONC program, Alex worked closely with the Legacy Land Conservation Program "LLCP". LLCP funds contributed to PONC's success by providing matching funds for multiple fee simple and/or conservation easement acquisitions in the County of Hawai'i.

Alex's passion and dedication in the community is endless; you will find her volunteering with her 'ohana any chance she gets. We can confirm that she has spent countless hours helping us to pull plastic pollution off the rocky shoreline, or to research TMK for land acquisition efforts across the island. Alex currently is the Chair of the PONC Mayor's Commission, Vice President of Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy, and also serves on the Board of Director for E Mau Nā Ala Hele, Secretary and Committee member for Toys for Tots and a member of the Zonta Club.

Alex's experience working with community, non-profits, government and 'ohana to protect, preserve and steward these lands and her ample knowledge of land acquisition effort, PONC, and the LLCP is invaluable. Alex will be a wonderful asset and team member of the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

Founded in 1996, HWF is a nonprofit organization with a mission to conserve Hawai'i's native wildlife through research and education. We engage and inspire our communities through outreach, education, conservation and habitat restoration activities, conducting environmental research, supporting community-based management efforts, and initiating advocacy campaigns. Please join us to recommend Alex Kelepolo for the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

Mahalo for your time and consideration. *Me ka mahalo pumehana,*



Megan R. Lamson, M.S.

Hawai'i Wildlife Fund – Kealakekua, Hawai'i
President & Hawai'i Program Director



William "Bill" G. Gilmartin

Hawai'i Wildlife Fund – Kealakekua, Hawai'i
Co-founder & Director of Research, Emeritus



Jodie R. Rosam, M.S.

Hawai'i Wildlife Fund - Nā'ālehu, Hawai'i
Plant Program Manager



Nohealani K. U. Ka'awa

Hawai'i Wildlife Fund - Nā'ālehu, Hawai'i
Ka'ū Resources Specialist



HAWAII

1164 Bishop St., Ste. 1512

Honolulu, HI 96813

tpl.org

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Green Climate Fund

Kirstin Punu

AES

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Conservationist

Jonathan Sprague

Pūlama Lāna'i

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Pūlama Lāna'i

Jan Sullivan

Oceanit

March 18, 2024

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

Hawai'i State Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 640 / Nomination of Alexandra Kelepolo to the
Legacy Land Conservation Commission
Hearing Date / Time: Friday, March 22, 2024, at 1:00 p.m., Rm 229

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

Trust for Public Land wholeheartedly support the nomination of Alexandra "Alex" Kelepolo
to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission (LLCC).

Alex worked for the County of Hawai'i, Finance Department administering the Public
Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation Commission and program
(PONC). She helped lay the foundation at PONC which has now evolved into one of the
most successful public conservation funding programs in Hawai'i. While at PONC, Alex
worked in close partnership with the Legacy Land Conservation Program (LLCP). LLCP
funds contributed to PONC's success by providing matching funds for multiple fee simple
and/or conservation easement acquisitions in the County of Hawai'i.

Alex is passionate about and dedicated to community causes. She volunteers regularly at
community work days with her 'ohana. She currently is the Chair of the PONC
Commission, Vice President of Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy, Board of Director for E
Mau Nā Ala Hele, Secretary and Committee member for Toys for Tots and a member of
the Zonta Club.

Alex's experience working with community, non-profits, government and 'ohana to
preserve and steward land and her knowledge of LLCP is invaluable and will make her a
great asset on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. I regret that I cannot attend the hearing in person due
to a prior commitment.

Mahalo,

Lea Hong, Associate Vice-President & Hawai'i State Director
Edmund C. Olson Trust Fellow

Regenerative Organic Probiotic Practices Hawaii
P.O. Box 198900
Hawi, HI 96719

March 18, 2024

RE: Support for Alexandra Kelepolo for Legacy Land Conservation Commission

Aloha, Chair and Members of the Committee on Water and Land,

Regenerative Organic Probiotic Practices Hawaii is an agricultural nonprofit project on Hawaii Island. We have witnessed the success of Ms. Alexandra Kelepolo's work at the helm of Hawaii County's Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resource Preservation Commission (PONC). She not only was a critical reason why the program is so successful due to her work to standing up the program, but later as a Commissioner and Chair of PONC, she has demonstrated that she has the requisite leadership abilities and knowledge, skills, and experience to be considered for and appointed to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

Ms. Kelepolo has volunteered her time to serve with numerous community organizations and on boards, including helping to found a land trust dedicated to preserving agricultural lands and important conservation properties. Her background and experience with a variety of land uses, preserving natural and cultural resources as well as important ag lands will make her an excellent Commissioner.

We endorse Alexandra Kelepolo and urge you to appoint her to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

Respectfully,

Clarence A. Baber
Clarence A. Baber

Regenerative Probiotic Practices Hawaii

P.O. Box 76
Hawi HI 96719
March 20, 2024

Committee on Water and Land
Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair
Hawaii State Legislature

Subject: Governor's Message 640 – Nomination of Alexandra Kelepolo
to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission

Aloha Lorraine and Committee members,

I can easily give Alexandra "Alex" Kelepolo my highest recommendation to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. I worked closely with Alex during her decade of service as administrator of the County of Hawai'i's Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation Commission and program "PONC". She was immeasurably helpful to the groups I represented that have in the past 14 years participated in the conservation of over 1,200 acres of coastal property in North Kohala. On several of the projects she helped us qualify for and receive funding through the Legacy Land Conservation Program.

Her passion for protecting important lands I have felt directly while she serves, twice, as Chair of the PONC commission and as Vice President of Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy, on whose board I am also a member. She conducts meetings with efficiency and always asks the best questions. She inspires those around her to put a high priority on proper stewardship of preserved lands for future generations. She walks the talk by showing up with her family members at every beach cleanup and trail work project available. I particularly like that about her.

Alex's commitment, experience and knowledge will be a great asset to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. Please approve her appointment.

Aloha, Toni Withington, Ka Makani O Kohala Ohana

March 19, 2024

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

Hawai'i State Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Subject: GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 640 / Nomination of Alexandra Kelepolo
to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission
Hearing Date / Time: Friday, March 22, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.
Location: Via Videoconference and Conference Room 229

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

I would first like to introduce myself. My name is Anginette (Angie) Onaka. I have been a civil servant with both the County and State of Hawaii for over 25 years. For approximately 15 of those years, it has been my honor and privilege to have known and worked with Alexandra "Alex" Kelepolo. From the day we met, Alex's character, heart and passion have been second to none in the workplace as well as in the area of conservation. Alex has worked endless hours (examples listed below) to pursue her passion of conservation and community service. Her knowledge and experience are supreme, and she is an asset to any and all committees and/or organizations she serves. Alex is the "real deal" when it comes to "Living Aloha". Her humility and personal values permeate all that she is involved with. Because of this, I wholeheartedly endorse the nomination of Alexandra "Alex" Kelepolo to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

Alex has worked for the County of Hawai'i, Finance Department administering the Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation Commission and program "PONC". She was instrumental in laying the foundation to what has evolved into one of the most successful government funding programs in the State of Hawai'i to protect and preserve our natural and cultural resources, native wildlife habitat and ensuring lands remain open space in perpetuity. Alex worked closely with the Legacy Land Conservation Program "LLCP" during her time with the County PONC program. LLCP funds contributed to PONC's success by providing matching funds for multiple fee simple and/or conservation easement acquisitions in the County of Hawai'i.

Alex's passion and dedication in the community is endless; you will find her volunteering with her ohana any chance she gets. She currently is the Chair of the PONC Commission, Vice President of Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy, Board of Director for E Mau Nā Ala Hele, Secretary and Committee member for Toys for Tots and a member of the Zonta Club.

Alex's experience working with community, non-profits, government and ohana to protect, preserve and steward these lands and her knowledge of the LLCP is invaluable and will make her a great asset to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

Mahalo and with Humble Regards,

Anginette "Angie" Onaka

Moku O Keawe

March 18, 2024

Committee on Water and Land
Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice-Chair
Hawaii State Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

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

I am writing to you today regarding the nomination of Alexandra “Alex” Kelepolo’s to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. Truly, you could not find a person more committed to land conservation and caring for the irreplaceable lands and waters of Hawaii than Alex.

After working for 20 years for Wyoming’s TNC program, I became the acquisition specialist for the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust in 2011. I am quite knowledgeable about the legal requirements in protecting land, but I was completely unfamiliar with the flora and fauna in my new home. Alex was invaluable to me in getting me up to speed – she knows the land and understands the challenges we face in protecting this magical place. Alex is so personable and relates easily to people across a diverse spectrum of interests. She helped administer the Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation Commission (PONC), later becoming a member and now, the Chair of PONC. Alex is familiar with all the conservation programs, non-profit organizations, and governmental agencies in Hawaii and has worked in some capacity with most of them. She also knows the people who head these organizations, as well as those individuals who are critical to the success of conservation efforts. As vice-president of Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy, Alex works “on-the-ground” with the landowners and helps them decide how to conserve their lands in perpetuity.

Alex Kelepolo not only has years of conservation experience and knowledge, but she also has the ability to work with community members, conservation organizations, government agencies and others in a non-confrontational manner, always seeking solutions that lead to successful conservation outcomes.

I unreservedly recommend Alexandra Kelepolo to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. I know Alex will be an outstanding member of this Commission.

Sincerely

Janet R. Britt
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Kailua-Kona, HI 96740
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808-937-1694

GM-640

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 10:41:34 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
C. Kauai Lucas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, Committee Members Chang, McKelvey, and Favella;

Currently I have the honor of serving on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. In that capacity I recently met Alexandra Kelepolo. It was a site visit to a property in Hawaii. She was there as a member of Moku o Keawe Land Conservancy which was assisting the applicant. I was impressed equal measures by her keen understanding of the details of conservation transactions and the many layered complexities of effectively navigating Hawaii Island social infrastructure.

She was instrumental in opening the PONC (Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Conservation Commission) fund to purchasing conservation easements, which allowed Hawaii County to purchase its first conservation easement; the Amy B. H. Greenwell Ethnobotanical Garden in November 2019. She now serves as a PONC Commissioner and is the current chair for the second time. She will bring welcome transaction skills, and real estate knowledge, among her varied talents, to the Legacy Land Commission.

me ka pono,

Kauai Lucas

GM-640

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 12:00:08 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting written testimony in support of the nomination of Alex Kelepolo to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission. I have worked with Alex for over ten years in my role as a board member for the Ala Kahakai Trail Association and Ho`omalau Ka`ū. During this time, Alex has been a staunch advocate for the preservation of cultural and natural landscapes on Hawaii Island. Alex was instrumental in helping to develop the County of Hawaii, Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation Program (PONC). Although she left the County to work for a local utility company, Alex continued to support the program by serving on the PONC Commission and volunteering her time doing malama `āina work with various community organizations. I admire her passion and professionalism. She will be a great asset for the State Legacy Land Conservation Program.

Mahalo, Keoni Fox

Josie Kiyan
825 Kaho Street
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

March 19, 2024

Committee on Water and Land
Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair
Hawai'i State Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

RE: Governor's Message No. 640/Nomination of Alexandra Kelepolo
to the Legacy Land Conservation Commission
Hearing Date/Time: Friday, March 22, 2024 @ 1:00 p.m.
Location: Via Videoconference and Conference Room 229

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

I am writing on behalf of the endorsement and nomination of Alexandra (Alex) Kelepolo to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

In all the years I've had the privilege to know and work alongside Alex, I've had the opportunity to watch and observe the passion she has while working with various organizations in the community. Her dedication is boundless, and she always gives more than 100%.

Alex worked for the County of Hawai'i Finance Department administering the Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation Commission and program, PONC. She was instrumental in laying the foundation to what has evolved into a successful government funding program in the State of Hawaii, which protects and preserve our natural and cultural resources, native wildlife habitat and ensuring lands remain open spaces in perpetuity. She also worked closely with the Legacy Land Conservation Program (LLCP) during her time with the County PONC program.

She is currently the Chair of the PONC Commission; Vice President of Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy; Board of Director for E Mau Nā Ala Hele; Secretary and Committee member for the National Marine Corps Toys for Tots Program; and a member of the Zonta Club.

I strongly support Alex as her experience working with the community, non-profit programs, government and ohana to protect, preserve and steward the lands, as well as her knowledge of the LLCP is instrumental and she will be a great asset to serve on the Legacy Land Conservation Commission.

You may contact me at (808) 756-3692, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Josie Kiyan

GM-640

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 6:35:58 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beryl Blaich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Senators,

Alexandra Kelepono would be an excellent Legacy Lands Commissioner. She brings experience in all technical aspects of land acquisition work, having been involved on Hawai'i Island with both the administrative and the citizen's advocacy of the Public Access Open Space Natural Resources Commission (PONC). She also brings extensive cultural knowledge. She is both passionate and informed about heritage land conservation for the people of Hawai'i Nei.

Respectfully,

Beryl Blaich

PO Box 1434

Kīlauea, Hi 96754