



GM677

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE ISLAND BURIAL COUNCIL, ISLAND OF MAUI, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, NOELANI PARESA, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 06-30-2029

Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

April 1, 2025

1:00 p.m.

Room Number 224

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** GM677, which would confirm Noelani Paresa for appointment to the Maui Lana'i Islands Burial Council (MLIBC). Ms. Paresa applied for the MLIBC through OHA as part of our 2024 IBC recruitment process. After internal vetting of candidates, the top respective candidates for respective IBCs were provided to the full OHA Board of Trustees (BOT) for approval on January 23, 2025. Approved candidates were then submitted to the Office of the Governor on January 28, 2025.

OHA is the constitutionally established body responsible for protecting and promoting the rights of Native Hawaiians.¹ As part of our constitutional and statutory mandate, OHA has been intimately involved with historic preservation related advocacy for decades and is granted specific kuleana under the Hawai'i Historic Preservation law, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 6E, and implementing regulations.² Per HRS 6E-43.5, the Governor must select at least two appointees on each IBC from OHA's list of nominees.

Ms. Noelani Paresa has recently been involved with the reinterment of iwi kūpuna on Maui that were held in storage at the Department of Land and Natural Resources. She is currently involved in mālama 'aina efforts in Kula, that include reforestation, water conservation, and soil rehabilitation. She served as the Board Member and Secretary for Pā'upena Community Development Corporation, a hui that provides resources and training to empower fellow Hawaiian Home Lands Trust beneficiaries to build homes and self-sufficient communities.

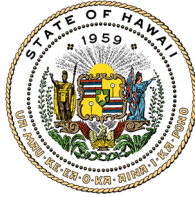
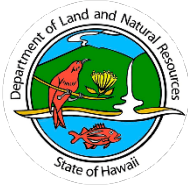
For these reasons, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** GM677, to confirm Noelani Paresa to the MLIBC. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

¹ Haw. Const. Art. XII Sec.5

² See HRS 6E-3, 43, -43.5, 43.6; and, HAR 13-284-6(c) and HAR 13-275-6(c).

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

P.O. BOX 621
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DAWN N.S. CHANG
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the Senate Committee on
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Tuesday, April 1, 2025
1:00 PM
State Capitol Conference Room 224 & Videoconference**

**In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 677
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE ISLAND BURIAL
COUNCIL, ISLAND OF MAUI AND LĀNA'I, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
NOELANI PARESA, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6/30/2029.**

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports Governor's Message 677, nominating Ms. Noelani Paresa to the Island Burial Council, Island of Maui/Lāna'i, expiring June 30, 2029.

The Island Burial Councils are established under Section 6E-43.5, Hawai'i Revised Statutes. The Councils determine whether to preserve in place or relocate previously identified native Hawaiian burials site, recognize lineal and cultural descendants, and provide counsel and advise to the Department. With the exception of the Moloka'i Island Burial Council, the island burial councils consist of no more than nine members, of which six representatives shall represent a specific geographic area, and no more than three shall be representatives of development and large landowner interests. Ms. Paresa is seeking to represent the Wailuku geographic area.

Noelani Paresa is a kama'āina of Maui, a dedicated kia'i 'āina, and a steadfast advocate for the protection of iwi kupuna. Noelani embodies the values of kuleana, aloha, and mālama 'āina. Her experience with Pa'upena CDC provided her with invaluable 'ike and fostered a connection to both the community and 'āina, qualities that are essential for this role.

Ms. Paresa is involved in the restoration of native ecosystems, community-driven traditional stewardship, land and water rights, and policy advocacy for Native Hawaiians. She holds the 'ike kūpono and pilina necessary to navigate the complexities of cultural preservation while ensuring that the voices of our kūpona and community are heard.

Ms. Paresa has also demonstrated through her commitment, actions, advocacy, and aloha that she will serve with integrity, respect, cultural sensitivity, and affection for our iwi kupuna.

Senate confirmation will ensure that Ms. Paresa's knowledge and unique lived perspective informs the deliberations of the Maui/Lana'i Island Burial Council until June 30, 2029.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this nominee.

GM-677

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 2:35:08 PM

Testimony for HWN on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
mary drayer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have known Noelani's 'ohana for over 60 years. They have lineal ties to the 'āina and iwi kūpuna of Wailuku Moku; Waihe'e Ahupua'a, going back generations. They have been steadfast in their kuleana as kia'i. Noelani is continuing that kuleana in a most admirable manner.

I strongly support her confirmation to the Wailuku Seat of the Maui Lanai Island Burial Council.

Mahalo,

Mary Drayer, 557 Imi Dr, Wailuku, HI 96793

GM-677

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 9:29:16 AM

Testimony for HWN on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Noelani Ahia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha and Thank you for your time today!

I am making testimony today in favor of Noelani Paresa's confirmation to the Wailuku seat of the Maui Lana'i Island Burial Council for the current opening term to end 2029.

I believe Noelani Paresa would be an asset to the community through this position on the burial council. She is a kanaka maoli advocate for over 10 years and has been especially active in the protection of kūpuna iwi as well as in land and water resource management. She has received some of her advocacy training through the Mana i ka Wai: Kūkulu Kahawai Ka Huli Ao/DHHL Water Law series and through cultural workshops by the Hawaiian Church of Hawai'i (E Ho'omau O Na Malama i Na Iwi Kūpuna) and ka 'Ohana O Iwi Kuamo'o (Halealoha Ayau).

Noelani began her upper level education, almost 6 years ago, with a certified Legal Clerk via UHMCs Edventure classes.

She has assisted some of the community members and local nonprofits with volunteer no-cost assistance in document processing, grant writing, research, and other ethical legal services, within the scope of public information, and has successfully advocated for water rights, TROs, child custody mediation, and a long term DHHL Agriculture land lease during her time. Noelani is a tutuwahine, makua, and a student, completing her senior year of her bachelor's program, dual major Public and Justice Administration through UHWO. She currently serves her community as a Maui County Dept. of Agriculture grant specialist and previously worked as a greenhouse tech for UHMCs Waipono Farms from 2022-2024, helping to supply local nonprofits and fire survivors with healthy organically-grown nutrient-rich produce from the UHMC SLIM Aquaponics/Hydroponics systems and sustainable māla.

I have known Noelani and seen her work as an advocate for the care and protection of kūpuna iwi and I enthusiastically support her appointment.

Mahalo

Noelani Ahia

