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STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS  
*Ka 'Oihana 'Āina Ho'opulapula Hawai'i*

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**LATE**

TESTIMONY OF KALI WATSON, CHAIR  
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION  
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
HEARING ON FEBRUARY 4, 2025 AT 1:15PM IN CR 224

**SB 1553, RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**

February 3, 2025

Aloha Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) **strongly supports** this bill which appropriates funds to DHHL to purchase a parcel of land identified as tax map key: (1) 9-1-013-025.

There is a large hangar located on the land that was used by the military to maintain and store large military planes. Under the Base Realignment and Closure Act, the hangar was closed and transferred to the State of Hawaii. The hangar was acquired and is now owned by the University of Hawai'i (UH). UH unsuccessfully used it for an aviation program that proved unpopular and subsequently abandoned. The hangar is temporarily being used by the Honolulu Fire Department and Honolulu Police Department to house and operate their helicopters until their permanent hangar is finished on Lagoon Drive.

With the cost of housing averaging over \$1 million per house, DHHL has sought to explore other approaches to making housing more affordable. One way is the use of modular housing as is done on the U.S. continent, and to a limited extent here in Hawai'i. With the acquisition of the hangar at Kalaeloa and conversion of the facility into a modular manufacturing facility, DHHL will be able to supply modular manufactured housing to its beneficiaries at a significantly lower cost. Just as important, DHHL will be able to quickly build housing for its beneficiaries. Time is of the essence because many applicants on the DHHL waiting list died while waiting for a homestead lease lot as is reflected and acknowledged in the State vs. Kalima case.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.