



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB410\_HD1

Relating to the Budget of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

House Committee on Finance

March 5, 2025

9:00 a.m.

Room 308

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

Mahalo for setting HB410\_HD1, which is part of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA's) 2025 Legislative Package, for public hearing. OHA submits this testimony in **SUPPORT of HB410\_HD1**, Relating to the Budget of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs is the constitutionally established body responsible for protecting and promoting the rights of Native Hawaiians. Haw. Const. Art. XII § 5. Among its statutory duties, OHA is required to (1) serve as principal public agency in the State of Hawai'i responsible for the performance, development and coordination of programs and activities relating to native Hawaiians and Hawaiians; (2) assess the policies and practices of other agencies impacting native Hawaiians and Hawaiians; and (3) conduct advocacy efforts for native Hawaiians and Hawaiians. Hawai'i Revised Statutes § 10-3.

**In fulfillment of these duties, OHA is requesting a \$1,858,454 increase in FY26 and \$1,996,208 increase in FY27 in general fund appropriations (reflected in the FY26 and FY27 biennium budget totals of \$4.8M and \$4.9M).**

The requested appropriation increases are necessary to adjust for the cost of inflation since 2020 when OHA began implementing its strategic plan [Mana i Maoli Ola](#) and to fund 13 new staff positions to accelerate implementation of the plan. The 13-member team will evaluate existing programs and develop new programs and tactics to advance 'oiwi well-being and reduce disparities in health, housing, education and economic development, as set forth in the strategic plan. The team will also partner with state and county agencies to leverage their resources, and ensure effective delivery of services to Native Hawaiian communities across providers through data sharing, program design, and program evaluation. To ensure transparency for elected officials and the public, staff will post dashboard progress reports on our progress in reducing disparities.

OHA is in the process of initiating bold new initiatives to make measurable progress in advancing Native Hawaiian well-being over the remaining 10 years of its strategic plan. We look forward to partnering with our beneficiaries, the legislature, other Native Hawaiian Organizations and state agencies, and private sector partners as we advance this mission. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

**Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,**

I **strongly support HB410** for the following reasons:

- **Enhancing Services:** This bill provides crucial funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to expand its staff and accelerate the implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, *Mana i Maui Ola*, aimed at improving the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. Historically, the state has not allocated OHA its full pro rata share, making these periodic appropriations both fair and necessary to fulfill OHA's mandate of bettering the conditions of Native Hawaiians.
- **Transparency & Collaboration:** OHA plans to fund staff positions to strengthen partnerships with state and county agencies while increasing transparency through an online dashboard. This strategic investment ensures greater accountability and fosters collaboration between entities serving Native Hawaiians.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I appreciate the innovative leadership driving OHA's mission forward. **Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.**

‘O wau no,

William Kahakuleilehua Haunu‘u Sonny Ching  
Kumu Hula – Hālau Nā Mamo o Pu‘uanahulu  
Pua‘ainahau Foundation



# Kahuku Medical Center

*Friends and Family Taking Care of Friends and Family*

Aloha, Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

Kahuku Medical Center fully supports HB410. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) has played a crucial role in addressing disparities in health, housing, education, and economic development in the Ko'olaupua region. As the primary healthcare provider from Haleiwa to Ka'a'awa, we witness firsthand the significant impact of OHA's efforts. OHA offers essential resources for individuals of all ages, from keiki to kupuna, ensuring they receive the healthcare services necessary for a healthy and vibrant life. We have complete confidence in the current leadership's ability to fulfill its mission of caring for the people and environmental resources of Hawaii, fostering a strong and healthy community.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for this important measure.

Matt Mamizuka,  
Chief Operating Officer  
Kahuku Medical Center

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:26:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Katie Benioni	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:28:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marilyn Moniz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's time me to provide the funding due under the law and meet our obligations to the Native Hawaiian people now. Staff positions are important to get the work done necessary to ensure the status and wellbeing of Oiwi is improved.

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:35:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matt L	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. **The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.**

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA’s work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary **and voter**, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA’s leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:38:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the reasons stated and justified in OHA’s testimony on this bill. Additionally, OHA is the lead agency for advocating and for taking actions to improve the welfare of Native Hawaiians, the indigenous people of Hawai‘i. When they are properly and sufficiently funded to enable them to do their work, there will be less reliance on state social services and other government agencies, such as in health and housing since disparities in the treatment of Native Hawaiians will have been addressed and corrected. The requested budget is reasonable and is necessary to proactively accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries and to use innovative approaches to enable its work.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. Respectively,  
Leimomi Khan

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:40:16 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John A. H. Tomoso	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

03-03-25

RE:HB410 HD1

Aloha mai nei.

I am in support of this Bill, as it will strengthen the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) and embed it, in an even more profound and transformational way, in the lives of the vast majority of its Beneficiaries, Nā ‘Ōiwi , specifically, I am supportive of the way this Bill will:

- Advance ‘Ōiwi wellbeing and reduce disparities in health, healthcare, housing, education and economic development.
- Support 13 new staff positions to accelerate implementation of OHA’s 15-year strategic plan, [Mana i Maui Ola](#). (I an many other ‘Ōiwi will be advocating and monitoring this implementation)
- Expand collaboration to ensure effective delivery of services to Native Hawaiians and ‘Ōiwi across government service-providers.
- Increase transparency and accountability through creation of an online dashboard showing progress in meeting Mana i Maui Ola benchmarks.
- Increase transparency and accountability through creation of an online dashboard showing progress in meeting Mana i Maui Ola benchmarks.

I urge passage of this Bill.

Aloha nō,

John A H Tomoso+, MSW, ACSW

51 Ku'ula St., Kahului, Maui, Hawai'i 96732-2906

808-280-1749

john.a.h.tomoso@gmail.com

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:58:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gordon B. Lindsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i suppot

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 3:05:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Monica Morris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA’s work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA’s leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Aloha, Monica T.L. Morris

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 3:11:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Clarence Kalima	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I SUPPORT HB410 for the following reasons:

Delivery of Services: This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Clarence Kalima  
Ph: 808-375-0515  
Aikue94@gmail.com

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:**

This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:**

OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

*W. Mapuana Waipa*

[awilipond@yahoo.com](mailto:awilipond@yahoo.com)

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**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 5:11:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeannine Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kakou, I SUPPORT HB410 for the following reasons: The State of Hawai'i has historically deliberately underfunded distributing the pro rata share of Public Land Trust revenues to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. If you were a beneficiary of a trust, like I am, you would call this theft. The 45 years of perpetual theft has led to many Native Hawaiians distrusting the State of Hawai'i, it's elected officials and government employees. Because we have seen what a disaster it is when mistrust in our government metastasizes into a President who believes he's a dictator and his followers do not believe in the Rule of Law, the State of Hawai'i must honor its obligations to Native Hawaiians. Otherwise, it is no better than the Trump Administration and all the duplicitousness that means. Mahalo, Jeannine

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 5:51:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
veneeta acson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**SAMPLE TESTIMONY**

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA). The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA’s leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

*Veneeta Acson*

*acson99@gmail.com*

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 5:51:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kawaiohawaiki Anakalea	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA’s work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA’s leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

mahalo & make it happen ASAP.

HAWAIIANS FIRST IN HAWAII.

THE HAWAIIAN KINGDOM IS STILL HERE.

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 6:03:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bessie China Ching	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I SUPPORT HB410 for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA’s work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA’s leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Bessie China Ching  
ae.la.china@gmail.com

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 6:17:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ella	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

I am writing to you to ask that you carefully consider HB410, as this bill has my full support. This bill appropriates funds for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA). With the necessary funds that this bill ensures, OHA can continue to serve the Hawaiian community and promote the welfare of Native Hawaiians. OHA plays a crucial role in enhancing the commuting and helping Native Hawaiians by encouraging programs in education, health, land management, and economic growth.

As a high schooler who is constantly learning more and more about the Hawaiian culture that surrounds my hometown, I've learned that they've made a huge difference with protecting land rights, helping Native Hawaiians thrive, and preserving their culture, with just a few resources. It is vital that OHA receives the needed funding to continue this important work.

I strongly urge the community to pass this bill to secure OHA's continued support and empowerment of our community.

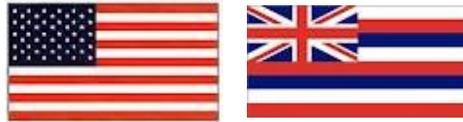
Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ella

Center for Hawaiian Sovereignty Studies  
46-255 Kahuhipa St. Suite 1205  
Kane'ohe, HI 96744  
(808) 247-7942

Kenneth R. Conklin, Ph.D. Executive Director  
e-mail [Ken\\_Conklin@yahoo.com](mailto:Ken_Conklin@yahoo.com)  
Unity, Equality, Aloha for all



To: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

For hearing Wednesday March 5, 2025

Re: HB 410 HD1 RELATING TO THE BUDGET OF THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS.

Appropriates moneys to fund the operating expenses of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs for the fiscal biennium beginning on 7/1/2025, and ending on 6/30/2027. Effective 7/1/3000 (HD1)

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

This bill appropriates moneys to fund the operating expenses of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs for the fiscal biennium beginning on 7/1/2025, and ending on 6/30/2027.

According to OHA's Annual Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, on page 15, OHA's total assets were \$971 Million. By now, two-thirds of a year later, that figure is likely more than A BILLION DOLLARS. No other branch of the State government is allowed to carry forward such a huge amount. Yet here comes OHA, demanding money for its operating expenses like a beggar holding out his tin cup.

Hawai'i Free Press on Friday June 24, 2025 reported some information from OHA's check register which it was able to obtain only after demanding access through the Freedom of Information Act. OHA's payroll was \$15.9 Million for its bloated bureaucracy, which was 40.7% of its spending. Any charity spending such a large percentage on payroll would be regarded as a scam.

Every year OHA's bills demanding money try to distinguish between general funds and trust funds. That's a distinction without a difference. Money is fungible. All these funds belong to the State of Hawai'i, whether the money is kept in the right trouser pocket or the left pocket. It is laughable to make it look like there's a fair and equitable balance between general funds and trust funds by appropriating identical amounts of each type of fund for each of the listed purposes.

It might be asserted that OHA's administrative costs for the salaries of its board of directors and its bureaucrats, and the operation of its buildings, should be paid from general funds because OHA is an agency of the state government. However, most of the money appropriated in this bill is to provide political advocacy, personal assistance, or legal representation that will be given exclusively to OHA "beneficiaries" -- i.e., exclusively to people of Hawaii's favorite racial group who have at least one drop of the magic blood (at least one ancestor who lived in Hawaii before Captain Cook's arrival in 1778). All money restricted by race should come from "trust funds"; and even if thus restricted, it is probably unconstitutional for a government agency to engage in such blatant racial discrimination.

Please vote NO on this bill. Give the money back to Hawai'i's taxpayers, or spend it to help the thousands of truly needy people of all races who are citizens of Hawai'i.

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 7:41:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ana-Melissa Kea-Scott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita and members of the House Committee on Finance,

I SUPPORT HB410. This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to implement their 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of their beneficiaries and reduce the disparities in health, housing, education, and economic stability. Thus far, the state has not allocated its full pro rata share due by law, so this increase in funding is fair and necessary for OHA to better the lives of Native Hawaiians. The bill outlines that the funding will be used to increase staffing so there is efficient delivery of services to beneficiaries, collaboration across agencies, and creation of an online dashboard for Mana i Maui Ola to track progress and foster accountability. As an OHA beneficiary, voter, and student, I welcome OHA's innovative approach to meeting their statutory and constitutional mandates, and support this important measure.

Mahalo for your consideration, and for the opportunity to testify in support of HB410.

Me ke aloha, Kawehi Kea-Scott

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 7:49:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Julia Estigoy-Kahoonei	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's important that OHA gets the funding it needs to remain functional and do what it is needed to finance its projects and infrastructure. Supporting this allows Native Hawaiians to thrive. This is especially critical now with the new administration aiming to undermine indigenous and diverse communities and culture. A strong OHA is essential for the lāhui.

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 8:32:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jason Lees	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai!

Please help OHA fulfill its kuleana to Native Hawaiians who are still disproportionately impacted by poverty, homelessness, drug addiction, incarceration, health concerns & other socio-economic factors that wear our entire system down. It's an efficient investment that uplifts us all.

MAHALO!!!

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 9:02:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ronnie N Inagaki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**\*\*TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB410 HD1\*\***

**\*\*RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 2025\*\***

**\*\*TO:\*\***

House Committee on Finance

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

**\*\*FROM:\*\*** Ronnie Inagaki

**\*\*DATE:\*\***

Tuesday, March 4, 2025 @ 9am

**\*\*POSITION:\*\***

**\*\*Oppose with Comments\*\***

**\*\*Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,\*\***

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding **\*\*HB410 HD1\*\***, which appropriates funding to the **\*\*Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA)\*\*** for the fiscal biennium beginning **\*\*July 1, 2025\*\***, and ending **\*\*June 30, 2027\*\***. While I fully support the mission of OHA and recognize the importance of funding programs that serve Native Hawaiian beneficiaries, I must express my **\*\*opposition\*\*** to this bill in its current form due to concerns about its effectiveness, transparency, and adequacy in addressing the critical needs of Native Hawaiian communities.

**### \*\*Reasons for Opposition\*\***

### 1. **Lack of Accountability and Oversight**

- The bill provides significant funding to multiple OHA programs, yet it does not include sufficient mechanisms to ensure accountability or transparency in the use of funds. While the OHA Board of Trustees is authorized to transfer funds between programs, there are no clear requirements for performance benchmarks, independent audits, or detailed public reporting.

- Without these safeguards, there is a risk that appropriations may not achieve the intended outcomes or fully benefit Native Hawaiian communities.

### 2. **Insufficient Funding for Key Initiatives**

- While the bill aims to address critical issues like affordable housing, education, and climate change adaptation, the allocated funding appears inadequate for the scale of these challenges:

- **Affordable Housing**: \$1.2 million annually (combined general and trust funds) is unlikely to make a significant impact given the severe housing crisis faced by Native Hawaiians.

- **Climate Change Adaptation**: \$1.2 million annually for land and water protections is insufficient to address long-term climate resilience, especially given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and environmental degradation.

### 3. **Ambiguity in Program Implementation**

- The bill lacks details on how programs will be implemented, evaluated, or prioritized. For example:

- How will beneficiaries be selected for affordable housing assistance or social services?

- What specific educational programs will be funded, and how will their success be measured?

- What are the measurable outcomes for climate change and environmental protection initiatives?

- The absence of clear implementation plans leaves room for inefficiencies and reduces the potential impact of these programs.

### 4. **Placeholder Effective Date**

- The bill lists an effective date of **July 1, 3000**, which is clearly a placeholder and an oversight. This must be corrected to ensure timely implementation.

### 5. **Reliance on Trust Funds**

- Many programs rely on a combination of **general funds** and **trust funds**, which could create financial vulnerabilities if trust fund availability fluctuates or general fund appropriations fall short. This dual funding model requires a detailed contingency plan to ensure program continuity.

#### 6. **Disproportionate Administrative Costs**

- The allocation of \$1.2 million annually for **OHA Administration (OHA160)** raises concerns about whether administrative expenses are being prioritized over direct services to beneficiaries. A detailed breakdown of administrative costs is needed to justify this expenditure and ensure that funds are being used efficiently.

#### ### **Comments and Recommendations**

While I oppose HB410 HD1 in its current form, I believe the following amendments and additions could address these concerns and make the bill more effective:

#### 1. **Incorporate Accountability Measures**

- Introduce **performance benchmarks, independent audits, and detailed public reporting** for all appropriations to ensure transparency and effectiveness.

- Require OHA to submit an annual report to the Legislature that includes measurable outcomes for each program, the number of beneficiaries served, and the impact of funding.

#### 2. **Increase Funding for Critical Programs**

- The appropriations for affordable housing, climate change adaptation, and education should be reassessed to ensure they align with the scale of the challenges. For example:

- Affordable housing funding should be increased to reflect the urgency of addressing housing insecurity among Native Hawaiians.

- Climate change initiatives should receive additional funding to support long-term environmental sustainability and resilience.

#### 3. **Provide Detailed Implementation Plans**

- Require OHA to submit detailed implementation plans for each program, including:

- Criteria for selecting beneficiaries.

- Specific goals and measurable outcomes.

- Plans for collaboration with community organizations, state agencies, and other stakeholders.

4. **Clarify the Effective Date**

- Update the placeholder effective date from **July 1, 3000** to **July 1, 2025** to ensure timely and actionable appropriations.

5. **Reassess Administrative Costs**

- Provide a detailed breakdown of the \$1.2 million allocated for OHA Administration to justify the expenditure and ensure that funds are being used efficiently.

6. **Strengthen the Legal Services Program**

- While the legal services program is commendable, its scope is broad and ambitious, covering areas such as quiet title actions, land rights, family law, and cultural preservation. Additional funding or prioritization of legal services may be necessary to ensure these objectives can be effectively met within the allocated budget.

**Conclusion**

While I share the Legislature's commitment to supporting Native Hawaiian communities and recognize the critical work of OHA, I cannot support HB410 HD1 in its current form due to concerns about accountability, funding adequacy, and program implementation. I urge the committee to address these issues through amendments that incorporate stronger accountability measures, increased funding for key initiatives, and clearer implementation plans.

By addressing these concerns, the Legislature can ensure that this bill fulfills its intended purpose and delivers meaningful benefits to Native Hawaiian beneficiaries.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,

Ronnie Inagaki

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 9:10:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bradford Baang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Advance 'Ōiwi wellbeing and reduce disparities in health, housing, education and economic development. To accomplish these goals we must release the full committed funds, not just the \$0.27 on the dollar that OHA received in 2022 from the promised Public Land Trust Revenues. Where's the justice for Hawaiians?

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 9:23:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Theodora Furtado	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA’s work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA’s leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

*Theodora Furtado*

*teefurtado@msn.com*

Mar 3, 2025

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

*Rachelle Nam  
323 Kamokila Rd.  
Kapaa, HI 96746  
(808) 224-4245  
mitihi@gmail.com*

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 5:41:21 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gerald Tariao Montano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

My name is Gerald Montano, and I am a resident of Maui.

**I SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA’s work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA’s leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Gerald Montano

Kahului, HI

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 5:50:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sherry Broder	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairman and Committee Members, I strongly support HB 410, HD1. It is really important that OHA be able to continue its work for Native Hawaiian people. This bill increases funding for the OHA to hire much needed new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share promised to it in the Hawaii State Constitution and statutes and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians. Mahalo. Sherry Broder

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 9:53:49 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kimmer Horsesen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I Kimmer Horsesen, SUPPORT HB410 for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Kimmer Horsesen

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 10:27:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Johne Constance Colahan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like OHA representative to serve as my testimony on HB410 HD1.

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 11:03:44 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA’s work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA’s leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros

(808)866-7409

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 3:03:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA’s work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA’s leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Mahalo piha,

Kekama Amona

swamona@gmail.com

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 3:57:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mackenzie Plunkett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA’s work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA’s leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

-Mackenzie Plunkett, concerned Native Hawaiian Woman, pursuing a Masters of Public Administration at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 4:54:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chelle C Pahinui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As a voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

'Oia'i'o,

*Chelle Pahinui*

Subject: Testimony in Support of HB410 – OHA Budget

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

I am a student of Punahou School on Oahu and strongly support HB410. Although this bill will not impact me directly, I know people for which it will make a difference. I have a Native Hawaiian friend who was forced to change schools mid-year due to high tuition costs. The \$515,000 a year provided to social services will help other families who are experiencing similar troubles. In addition to social services, the \$600,000 allocated towards affordable housing and infrastructure for Native Hawaiians will lighten the load of rising housing prices that thousands of families are facing.

HB410 provides crucial support for vulnerable communities, which will give Native Hawaiian families better opportunities and better access to resources.

Mahalo for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,  
Ryan Hayashi  
Punahou School Student

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 10:54:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Simone Kamaunu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in full support of this bill please allow this bill to go through. Mahalo

HB410 HD1- RELATING TO THE BUDGET OF THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS:

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

My name is AJ Samorin, a student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa pursuing a Master in Social Work. I would like to note that my stance is solely a reflection of my own beliefs and not of the organization or school I attend. Thank you for giving me the chance to speak in favor of House Bill 410 and its purpose to measure appropriate funds for the 2025-2027 fiscal biennium for operating expenses of the office of Hawaiian Affairs.

The purpose of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs as a semi-autonomous state agency is to prioritize improving the conditions of Native Hawaiians. By allocating funds to this cause, not only does it realize the goal of its constitutional mandate but it also sends a message to the Native Hawaiian community that efforts to serve and better their condition remains a priority of the state. As an immigrant who has grown to love and care for Hawai'i, the land that has shaped me into the person I am today, I remain grateful to the land and acknowledge its painful history and tragedy that Native Hawaiians face and so, it is crucial that efforts spent to improve their quality of life is upheld. The appropriated funds will grant the Office of Hawaiian Affairs the resources necessary to tackle the ongoing difficulties that Native Hawaiians face related to health disparities, housing crisis, access to services, and education. The funds will allow programs that serve and support Native Hawaiians to continue operating and essentially work towards the goal of improving their future and quality of life, as well as stay true to the State's resolve towards upholding accountability in relation to historical injustices.

I urge the committee to support House Bill 410 and ensure that the Office of Hawaiian Affairs is empowered to serve the Native Hawaiian community with initiatives that aim to benefit the indigenous people of the land that care for us all.

**HB-410-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 7:30:18 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I **SUPPORT HB410** for the following reasons:

**Delivery of Services:** This bill increases funding for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to hire new staff and accelerate implementation of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola, to advance the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. The state has never allocated OHA its full pro rata share due by law and therefore periodic appropriations are just, fair, and necessary to enable OHA to meet its broad mandate to better the condition of Native Hawaiians.

**Transparency and Synergy:** OHA seeks to fund staff positions focused on leveraging partnerships with other state and county agencies and increasing transparency around OHA's work through an online dashboard. This is a smart investment of taxpayer dollars to ensure collaboration between and among government entities that serve Native Hawaiians and share common goals.

As an OHA beneficiary and voter, I am happy to see the innovative approach that OHA's leadership is bringing to its statutory and constitutional mandates. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Rae Leong

rleong04@yahoo.com

45-505 Lolii St. Kaneohe, HI 96744