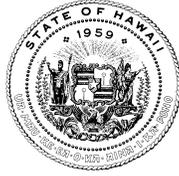


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII  
*Ke Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina 'o  
Hawai'i*

SYLVIA J. LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII  
*Ka Hope Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina  
'o Hawai'i*



KALI WATSON  
CHAIRPERSON, HHC  
*Ka Luna Ho'okele*

KATIE L. LAMBERT  
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIR  
*Ka Hope Luna Ho'okele*

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

P. O. BOX 1879  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF KALI WATSON, CHAIR  
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION  
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
HEARING ON FEBRUARY 25, 2025 AT 10:00AM IN CR 308

**HB 606, HD 1, RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**

February 24, 2025

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

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) **strongly supports** this bill which extends the Act 279 Special Fund to 6/30/2028, 2) deposits funds into and appropriates funds out of the Act 279 Special Fund to eliminate its waitlist, 3) requires DHHL to submit a strategic plan detailing the anticipated uses of the funds appropriated, 4) requires an annual report, and 5) sunsets 6/30/2028.

DHHL continues to make progress regarding the encumbrance of funds, the expenditure of funds, and the delivery of lots pursuant to Act 279, SLH 2022. Attached is the Annual Activity Report as required under Act 125/24 (Act 279, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022). HB606, HD1, provides sustained legislative action to fulfill the State's trust obligations under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, as amended, and the Hawaii State Constitution. This bill will ensure that DHHL has adequate time to encumber and expend the necessary funds and will secure additional funds that will allow DHHL to continue to address the DHHL applicant waiting list.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

Department of Hawaiian Home Lands  
Annual Activity Report

As required by:

Act 125/24

(Act 279, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022)



**HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS TRUST**

Department of Hawaiian Home Lands

In 2022, the Hawai'i State Legislature appropriated \$600 million through Act 279 to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. The purpose of this funding is to reduce the Hawaiian Homes waitlist. To this end, the Department has been actively pursuing new lot development projects as well as awarding all available lots to beneficiaries on the waitlist.

Section 5 of the Act requires the Department to submit an annual report to the legislature on the first day of each regular session that includes:

1. An accounting of the expenditures for the purposes of this Act in the previous fiscal year; and
2. The number of applicants on the waiting list assisted.

Below please find a report of expenditures and encumbrances for fiscal year 2024 (ending June 30, 2024) as well as the projected number of applicants who will benefit from these development projects.

**FY24 Encumbrances & Expenditures**

Contracts	\$318,937,382.14
Purchase Orders	\$ 7,618,283.00
Expenditures	\$ 36,905,557.31
<b>Total E&amp;E</b>	<b>\$363,461,222.45</b>

**FY24 Accounting of Expenditures**

Amount	Vendor Name
10,000.00	ACM Consultants
139,131.83	Austin, Tsutsumi & Assoc., Inc.
239,447.34	Bowers & Kubota
1,479,887.34	DDC2 LLC
12,462,753.53	DDC3 LLC
181,126.05	Hawaiian Dredging Construction
385,705.73	Hawaiian Electric
8,672,549.28	Maui Kupono Builders, LLC
344,482.00	NANA MUA LLC
5,800.00	Ponsar Valuation LLC
12,967,391.50	Title Guaranty of Hawaii
17,282.71	Townscape
<b>36,905,557.31</b>	<b>Total</b>

**Projected Number of Applicants on Waitlist Assisted**

<b>Proj # of Applicants</b>	<b>Development Name</b>
16	Panae'wa Subsistance Ag
24	La'i 'Ōpua
25	Kahikinui
52	Pu'uhona Phase 1
68	Honomū/Maku'u
<b>185</b>	<b>Total</b>

# K A L Ā H U I H A W A I ' I

WWW.KALAHUIHAWAII.NET

February 25, 2025

Testimony in Support of HB606

Submitted by Ka Lāhui Hawai'i

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

Ka Lāhui Hawai'i strongly supports HB606, which allocates \$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) to provide long-overdue housing for Native Hawaiians.

Founded in 1987 by and for Native Hawaiians, Ka Lāhui Hawai'i is a Hawaiian nation created to address Hawai'i's long history of colonization and to ensure that Native Hawaiians secure their rights of self-determination. As a Native initiative for self-determination, Ka Lāhui Hawai'i stands firmly in support of efforts like HB606, which seek to uphold the rights and well-being of the Hawaiian people.

The State of Hawai'i has a clear obligation to the Native Hawaiian community. When Hawai'i became a state, it accepted the kuleana to administer the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA), which was meant to return Native Hawaiians to their ancestral lands. Yet today, 29,000 Native Hawaiians remain on the DHHL waitlist, many having waited decades for a homestead.

This housing crisis is only worsening as the Native Hawaiian population continues to grow. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the total Native Hawaiian population has already reached 680,442, with 53% now living outside of Hawai'i. This number now exceeds earlier projections, such as those outlined in the 2009 Kamehameha Schools report, underscoring the urgent need for housing solutions. Without adequate housing, the DHHL waitlist will continue to grow, pushing more Native Hawaiians out of their homeland. (Source: Kamehameha Schools, "Native Hawaiian Educational Assessment Update," 2009; U.S. Census Bureau, 2020.)

This ongoing failure is especially unjust given that Hawaiian lands and culture fuel the state's largest industries—tourism and the military. According to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), approximately 98% of state-owned lands are ceded lands—former Hawaiian Kingdom lands held in trust. Tourism profits off Native Hawaiian identity, while the U.S. military occupies vast areas of Hawaiian lands, often under leases as low as \$1 per year. These industries thrive on Native Hawaiian resources, while too many Native Hawaiians remain houseless and displaced in our own homeland.

HB606 is not just about housing—it is about justice. Fully funding DHHL is the state's responsibility, and it is long past time to fulfill the promise made to Native Hawaiians.

We respectfully urge this committee to pass HB606 and uphold the state's obligation to the Native Hawaiian community.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

*Healani Sonoda-Pale*

Healani Sonoda

KLH Spokesperson



**Testimony in Support of HB606  
Submitted by Kūpaʻa Lāhui Alliance**

February 24, 2025

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

The Kūpaʻa Lāhui Alliance strongly supports HB606, a measure that represents both a long-overdue investment in Native Hawaiian housing and a strategic economic opportunity for Hawaiʻi.

Native Hawaiians have given more to this state than any other group. The very lands that sustain our highways, schools, airports, military bases, and public infrastructure were once Hawaiian Kingdom lands. When Hawaiʻi became a state, it agreed to uphold the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, yet thousands of Native Hawaiian families remain on indefinite waitlists, unable to access the lands that were promised to them.

Beyond the legal and moral obligations, HB606 is a smart economic investment. Hawaiʻi's economy is built on land and culture—both of which Native Hawaiians have stewarded for generations. Tourism and the military—our largest industries—generate billions annually from Hawaiian land, resources, and identity, yet Native Hawaiians continue to face economic and housing instability.

**HB606 will generate substantial economic returns for the state:**

- Job creation in construction, contracting, and local industries.
- Increased consumer spending, strengthening businesses and services.
- Reduced state costs for homelessness, healthcare, and social services.

While Act 279's \$600 million allocation was a critical step, those funds have already been distributed across 20+ developments, impacting just over 6,000 families. Meanwhile, the waitlist continues to grow by 50 beneficiaries each month. Without continued investment, Native Hawaiians will continue to be displaced from their homeland.

This displacement is especially unjust when considering that approximately 98% of state-owned lands are ceded lands, as noted by the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). These lands were once part of the Hawaiian Kingdom and are now held in trust. At the same time, the U.S. military occupies vast areas of Hawaiian lands, often under leases as low as \$1 per year, while tourism profits off Native Hawaiian identity, marketing our culture, language, and traditions. These industries thrive on Hawaiian resources, while Native Hawaiians remain houseless and displaced from the very lands that sustain the state's economy.

HB606 is not just another expenditure—it is a strategic investment to sustain progress, strengthen our communities, and grow Hawaiʻi's economy. It is a long-overdue opportunity for the state to fulfill its obligation under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and to ensure that Native Hawaiians can live, thrive, and remain in the land of their ancestors.

We humbly urge this committee to pass HB606 and ensure this measure receives full consideration.

Mahalo for your time and leadership. We appreciate your consideration and are happy to provide any further information or support as needed.

Me ke aloha,

*Shane Pale*

Shane Pale

Kūpaʻa Lāhui Alliance

Tel. 808.457.2350 | [www.kupaalahuialliance.org](http://www.kupaalahuialliance.org)



Committee: Finance  
Hearing Date/Time: February 25, 2025 at 10:00am  
Place: Conference Room 308 & via Videoconference  
Re: **Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in support of H.B. 606 H.D.1 Relating to the Department of Hawaiian Homelands**

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Committee Members:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i ("ACLU of Hawai'i") supports **H.B. 606 H.D.1** that extends the Act 279 Special Fund to June 30, 2028 and appropriates additional funds for the Department of Hawaiian Homelands to eliminate its waitlist.

The ACLU of Hawai'i is committed to protecting the civil liberties and civil rights enshrined in our federal and state Constitutions, and advancing our campaigns to Decriminalize Houselessness, and pass Smart Justice policies.

As part of our efforts to build a new vision of safety and justice, we advocate for the State to shift spending priorities away from mass criminalization and incarceration that disparately impacts Native Hawaiians, towards investments in education, housing, health care. human services and restorative justice in our communities.

Over the years, the Legislature has created multiple task forces and supported initiatives for the purpose of examining and improving the state's criminal legal system and reducing the carceral population. These include:

- Justice Reinvestment Initiative (2011)
- Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force (2012)
- H.C.R. 85 Task Force (2018)
- Criminal Pretrial Task Force (2018)
- The Hawaii Correctional Oversight Commission (2020)
- Criminal Justice Research Institute

Additionally, numerous reports and literature have highlighted the racial bias and disparities that exists within Hawai'i's criminal legal system – and disparately targets Native Hawaiians.

- *Crime and Justice Related to Hawaiians and Part-Hawaiians in the State of Hawai'i*, Dr. Gene Kassebaum, A Report Prepared for Alu Like, Inc., Study

supported by a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Development, Administration for Native Americans (April 1981)

- *Racial Tensions and Public Concern about Crime Control in Hawaii*, Dr. Gene Kassebaum, Department of Sociology, University of Hawaii at Manoa (1981)
- *The Colonial Carceral and Prison Politics in Hawai'i*, Dr. RaeDeen Keahiolalo Dissertation (2008)
- *The Disparate Treatment of Native Hawaiians in the Criminal Justice System*, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Justice Policy Institute, Georgetown Law, University of Hawaii at Manoa and Georgetown Law, 2010.
- *Understanding Women's Pathways into Crime and What Works to Improve Outcomes Among Women in the Criminal Justice System*, Criminal Justice Research Institute, Dr. Erin Harbinson and Aerielle Reynolds, MS. (2021-2022). **In 2019, Native Hawaiian women were 19% of the female general population in Hawai'i. However, they comprise 44% of the female incarcerated population in Hawai'i.**

While these Commissions and initiatives have issued a plethora of recommendations to reduce the jail and prison population, and eliminate racial disparities within our criminal legal system, these recommendations have been ignored, underfunded and rarely implemented.

**Simultaneously, the State has spent millions of dollars incarcerating Native Hawaiians instead of investing those funds into data-driven strategies, including stable housing, that would reduce the number of Native Hawaiians in the criminal legal system.**

To date, the State has already spent over \$20 million dollars and is requesting another \$30 million on consultants to construct an expanded 1,300 bed jail to replace OCCC. The projected total cost for this proposed public-private-partnership jail is \$1 billion – money that could be spent on providing Hawaiian Homelands to Native Hawaiians on the waitlist.

Due to limited data collection within our criminal legal system, it is unknown just how many Native Hawaiians under community supervision or incarcerated are on the waitlist for Hawaiian Home Lands or eligible for Hawaiian Home Lands. However, given the stark racial disparities within Hawaii's criminal legal system, the State should track this data. Determining the number of Native Hawaiians involved in the criminal legal system who are current beneficiaries on the waitlist, or are eligible for Hawaiian Home Lands, is an important data point to inform public policies, including appropriations for diversion, rehabilitation and re-entry programs.

Numerous studies confirm that housing can determine education, health and economic opportunities, and exposure to crime. Research also shows that people returning from jails and prisons face many barriers to successful re-entry. Often, the most serious challenge is securing stable housing. In turn, housing has long been recognized as a

prerequisite for stable employment, access to social services and other aspects of individual and family functioning.

Nationally, statistics show that formerly incarcerated people are almost 10 times more likely to be homeless than the general public.<sup>1</sup>

Closer to home, the 2020 O'ahu Point in Time Count noted that over half of all houseless individuals identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.<sup>2</sup> The Touchpoints Report also estimated that 25-50% of the homeless in Hawai'i have a history of incarcerated and that an estimated 30% of people released from our jails and prisons are exiting to houselessness.<sup>3</sup>

This measure is a significant step towards fulfilling the State's fiduciary duties to beneficiaries under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and Hawai'i Constitution, and providing critically needed housing for Native Hawaiians disparately impacted by Hawaii's criminal legal system.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of **H.B. 606 H.D. 1**.

Sincerely,

**Carrie Ann Shirota**

Policy Director

[cshirota@acluhawaii.org](mailto:cshirota@acluhawaii.org)

*The mission of the ACLU of Hawai'i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawai'i fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawai'i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai'i has been serving Hawai'i since 1965.*

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i  
P.O. Box 3410  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96801  
T: 808.522.5900  
F: 808.522.5909  
E: [office@acluhawaii.org](mailto:office@acluhawaii.org)  
[www.acluhawaii.org](http://www.acluhawaii.org)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2021/01/its-time-to-acknowledge-native-hawaiians-special-right-to-housing/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Touchpoints-of-Homelessness-Report-Final.pdf>



**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 12:41:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

My name is Hilina'i, and I am writing in strong support of HB606, which seeks to allocate \$600 million to address the urgent housing crisis facing Native Hawaiians. This bill is not just about funding—it is about fulfilling a long-overdue promise to the more than 29,000 beneficiaries still waiting for homes under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act.

For generations, Native Hawaiians have been systematically displaced from their ancestral lands while tourism, the military, and outside investors profit from our 'āina. Meanwhile, our people struggle with housing instability, homelessness, and the inability to afford to live in our homeland. This is an injustice that cannot be ignored any longer.

HB606 is a critical step toward justice. It ensures that Native Hawaiians are given the opportunity to thrive in their own home, Hawai'i nei. Stable housing is the foundation of a strong lāhui—without it, our families, culture, and future generations remain at risk. This funding will empower Native families, protect our communities, and uphold the integrity of the trust lands that were promised to us.

I urge this committee to pass HB606 without delay and ensure that these funds are effectively allocated to reduce the backlog, expedite home placements, and provide true relief for our people. Native Hawaiians have waited long enough—we must act now.

Mahalo for your time, your leadership, and your commitment to fulfilling the promise made to Native Hawaiians.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,

Hilina'i Kane

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 1:17:40 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support this bill and it is important for the following reasons:

- ◆ It eases Hawai‘i’s housing crisis—More homes for DHHL beneficiaries reduce competition in the overall housing market, making housing more accessible for all local residents.
- ◆ Supports economic stability—Stable housing leads to better job retention, educational success for keiki, and stronger financial security for families.
- ◆ Reduces Native Hawaiian houselessness—Native Hawaiians are disproportionately represented in Hawai‘i’s houseless population. Investing in DHHL housing directly addresses this crisis.
- ◆ Invests in future generations—Homeownership creates opportunities for Native Hawaiian families to build wealth, establish roots, and pass down stability to future generations.
- ◆ Strengthens Hawai‘i’s economy—HB606 will generate jobs, support local businesses, and boost economic activity through housing development.
- ◆ Protects cultural identity and connection to ‘āina—When Native Hawaiians are forced to leave, we risk losing the cultural practices, traditions, and knowledge that make Hawai‘i unique.
- ◆ Lowers the cost of living for Native Hawaiians—Affordable homesteads help reduce financial strain so families can afford basic necessities and stay in Hawai‘i.
- ◆ Uplifts all of Hawai‘i—When Native Hawaiians thrive, all who call Hawai‘i home benefits—from a stronger economy to a healthier, more vibrant community.

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 4:10:27 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing in support of HB606. I live in New Hampshire, but I have had the privilege to enjoy visiting Hawai'i and want to support what is best for the 'Aina and its people. It is in the best interest of Hawai'i and Native Hawaiians for it to be easier and more affordable for Native Hawaiians to live in Hawai'i. Hawai'i is not Hawai'i without Native Hawaiians. Their needs must be prioritized by the state.

Please vote in favor of HB606.

Thank you for your service, time, and consideration.

Sincerely,

Erin Sandler

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 5:17:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mariko Munro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello

My name is Mariko Munro, and I strongly support **HB606**. This funding is essential to addressing the long-overdue need for housing among Native Hawaiians.

**29,000 Native Hawaiians remain on the DHHL waitlist**, many of whom have waited decades. When factoring in ‘ohana, the true number impacted is far greater. Meanwhile, Hawai‘i’s cost of living continues to push Native Hawaiians out of their homeland. According to Hawai‘i Migration Flows data, more Native Hawaiians are **leaving the state than returning**, a crisis that threatens not just individuals but the future of our communities and culture.

Stable housing strengthens families, keeps keiki in schools, and allows our lāhui to thrive. Funding DHHL will not only provide homes but also **ease pressure on the broader housing market**, benefiting all Hawai‘i residents. If we fail to act now, the next generation of Native Hawaiians may have no choice but to leave.

The State of Hawai‘i has an obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Act 279 was a step forward, but **more is needed** to meet the overwhelming demand. HB606 is a critical opportunity to uphold that responsibility and invest in keeping Native Hawaiians in their homeland. I respectfully urge this committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo for your time and leadership.

Mariko Munro

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 9:40:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Hinrichs	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Testimony in Support of HB606**

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

My name is Emily Hinrichs, and I am writing in **strong support of HB606**, which allocates **\$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)**. This funding is essential to addressing the **long-overdue need for housing among Native Hawaiians**.

Currently, **29,000 Native Hawaiians remain on the DHHL waitlist**, many of whom have waited decades. When factoring in their ‘ohana, the true number impacted is **far greater**. Meanwhile, Hawai‘i’s soaring cost of living continues to **push Native Hawaiians out of their homeland**. According to **Hawai‘i Migration Flows data**, **more Native Hawaiians are leaving the state than returning**, a crisis that threatens not just individuals, but the future of our communities and culture.

This displacement is especially unjust when considering that **Hawaiian land and culture are central to the state’s largest industries—tourism and the military**. The **tourism industry generates billions annually**, marketing Hawaiian identity—**our language, hula, food, and aloha spirit**—while Native Hawaiians struggle to afford housing. At the same time, the **U.S. military occupies thousands of acres of Hawaiian land**, often under leases as low as **\$1 per year**, further compounding the inequity.

**HB606 is more than a housing bill—it’s an investment in Hawai‘i’s future**. Stable housing strengthens families, keeps keiki in schools, and allows our lāhui to thrive. Funding DHHL will not only provide homes but also **ease pressure on the broader housing market**, benefiting **all Hawai‘i residents**. If we fail to act now, the **next generation of Native Hawaiians may have no choice but to leave**.

The **State of Hawai‘i has a clear obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Act 279** was a step forward, but it **only addressed a fraction of the need**, funding **just over 6,000 homes**. **HB606 is a critical opportunity to uphold that responsibility**, ensuring Native Hawaiians can remain **in the land of their ancestors, where they rightfully belong**.

I respectfully urge this committee to **pass HB606 and take a stand for housing, justice, and Hawai'i's future.**

**Mahalo for your time and leadership.**

**Emily Hinrichs**

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 10:26:10 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ronnie N Inagaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Testimony in Support of HB606 HD1 with Comments and Concerns**

**To:** Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair, Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Finance.

**iFrom:** Ronnie Inagaki  
41-238 Huli Street  
Waimanalo, HI, 96795  
Email: rinagaki69@gmail.com  
February 22, 2025

**Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair, Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Finance,** I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB606 HD1, which seeks to extend the sunset date of the Act 279 Special Fund, appropriate funds to address the longstanding waitlist of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL), and require strategic planning and reporting to ensure the effective use of these funds. This bill is a vital step toward fulfilling the State of Hawaii's fiduciary obligations under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and the Hawaii State Constitution. As outlined in the bill, the housing needs of Native Hawaiians remain a significant and urgent issue, with over 29,000 individuals still on the DHHL waitlist. While Act 279 (2022) allocated \$600 million to address this need, it is clear that additional funding and sustained legislative action are necessary to make meaningful progress toward eliminating the waitlist and providing stable housing for beneficiaries.

**Comments and Concern:** While I support the intent and purpose of HB606 HD1, I would like to raise the following comments and concerns for consideration:

**1. Funding Gap**

- The bill acknowledges that the estimated cost to fully address the waitlist is approximately \$6 billion, yet it does not specify how much additional funding will be appropriated through this measure. To ensure transparency and effectiveness, I recommend that the Legislature clarify the funding amount and outline a comprehensive plan for securing the resources necessary to meet this goal.

**2. Accountability and Oversight**

- The requirement for DHHL to submit a strategic plan and annual reports is commendable. However, more robust accountability measures should be included

to ensure the funds are used effectively. Independent audits or specific consequences for non-compliance with reporting requirements could strengthen oversight and build public trust.

**3. Timeline for Implementation**

- There is a discrepancy in the bill's effective date, which is listed as July 1, 3000. This appears to be a placeholder or clerical error and should be corrected to ensure timely implementation of the bill.

**4. Sustainability**

- While the bill focuses on addressing the current waitlist, it does not outline a long-term strategy for preventing future backlogs. I encourage the Legislature to include provisions for a systemic, forward-looking plan to ensure that the progress made by this bill is sustainable.

**5. Fiscal Impact**

- The bill proposes appropriations from the State's general fund, which could impact other programs and priorities. A detailed assessment of the fiscal impact should be conducted to ensure that this measure balances the urgent needs of DHHL beneficiaries with the broader needs of the State.

**6. Strategic Plan Details**

- The bill requires DHHL to submit a strategic plan by December 10, 2025, detailing the anticipated uses of the funds. I recommend that the Legislature provide more specific guidelines for the content of this plan, including measurable goals, timelines, and performance metrics, to ensure its effectiveness.

**Conclusion:**

HB606 HD1 represents an essential step forward in addressing the housing needs of Native Hawaiians and fulfilling the State's fiduciary obligations. By addressing the comments and concerns outlined above, the Legislature can strengthen this bill and ensure that it delivers meaningful and lasting benefits for beneficiaries and the broader community. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this critical measure. I urge the Committee on Finance to pass HB606 HD1 with careful consideration of the concerns raised.

Me ka ha'aha'a,  
Ronnie Inagaki

Eileen Cain  
720 Mahi'ai St., Apt. E  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96826-5635  
eileencaïn808@gmail.com  
February 22, 2025

Aloha, Members of the **House Finance Committee**

Hawai'i State House of Representatives,

I am testifying in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 606.**

My name is Eileen Cain and I have been a resident of Honolulu for nearly 50 years. Although I am haole (caucasian), I believe that the Hawaiian people need to not just survive but thrive here in their own native homeland.

We cannot allow Hawaiian people to face having to leave their homeland because they cannot afford to live in their own homeland! Far too many native Hawaiians are still waiting and waiting for their homeland. They shouldn't have to keep waiting. They have been promised homelands, and the government needs to carry out that promise by providing funding.

**HB 606** can help to right a wrong that has been continuing for more than a century. It is not just a "historic" wrong – it is a current and ongoing wrong, and we all need to ensure justice for the Hawaiian people.

I urge the Committee to **PASS HB606**. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo for your attention to this matter.

Aloha,

Eileen Cain

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 2:44:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, regarding HB606 I strongly support this bill in order to increase funding for homes for our Hawaiian families so they may continue to live in their homeland and prosper as a native people of these islands. So many have been forced to leave due to costs far exceeding most people's incomes. We all suffer when native Hawaiians leave. It is because of the culture of Aloha that Hawaii is the paradise it is.

Regards,

Lori Punko

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 2:51:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support HB606. We need to reduce Native Hawaiian houselessness as we are disproportionately represented in Hawai'i's houseless population. Investing in DHHL addresses this crisis. **Mahalo!**

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 12:12:43 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

Please SUPPORT HB606. We desperately need housing for our own kanaka. This bill can help eliminate our long awaited waitlist on DHHL. Kanaka 'ōiwi have waited long enough for DHHL to clear the Hawaiian Homes list. Please support HB606. Mahalo

Malia Marquez

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 12:42:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimmer Horsen	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

**Testimony in Support of HB606**

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

My name is Kimmer Horsen and I am writing in **strong support of HB606**, which allocates **\$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)**. This funding is essential to addressing the **long-overdue need for housing among Native Hawaiians**.

Currently, **29,000 Native Hawaiians remain on the DHHL waitlist**, many of whom have waited decades. When factoring in their ‘ohana, the true number impacted is **far greater**. Meanwhile, Hawai‘i’s soaring cost of living continues to **push Native Hawaiians out of their homeland**. According to **Hawai‘i Migration Flows data**, **more Native Hawaiians are leaving the state than returning**, a crisis that threatens not just individuals, but the future of our communities and culture.

This displacement is especially unjust when considering that **Hawaiian land and culture are central to the state’s largest industries—tourism and the military**. The **tourism industry generates billions annually**, marketing Hawaiian identity—**our language, hula, food, and aloha spirit**—while Native Hawaiians struggle to afford housing. At the same time, the **U.S. military occupies thousands of acres of Hawaiian land**, often under leases as low as **\$1 per year**, further compounding the inequity.

**HB606 is more than a housing bill—it’s an investment in Hawai‘i’s future**. Stable housing strengthens families, keeps keiki in schools, and allows our lāhui to thrive. Funding DHHL will not only provide homes but also **ease pressure on the broader housing market**, benefiting **all Hawai‘i residents**. If we fail to act now, the **next generation of Native Hawaiians may have no choice but to leave**.

The **State of Hawai‘i has a clear obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Act 279** was a step forward, but it **only addressed a fraction of the need**, funding **just over 6,000 homes**. **HB606 is a critical opportunity to uphold that responsibility**, ensuring Native Hawaiians can remain **in the land of their ancestors, where they rightfully belong**.

I respectfully urge this committee to **pass HB606 and take a stand for housing, justice, and Hawai'i's future.**

**Mahalo for your time and leadership.**

**Kimmer Hosen**

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 8:52:21 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Housing for DHHL awaredees is long overdue. HB606 is an opportunity to keep promises made decades ok Please do the the Right Thing -

mahalo

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 11:56:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Meredith Buck	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

My name is Meredith Buck, and I am testifying in support of HB606.

**HB606** is a critical step toward justice for Native Hawaiians, providing \$600 million to address the growing waitlist of over 29,000 beneficiaries still waiting for homes promised under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. While tourism and the military profit from Hawaiian lands and cultural identity, Native Hawaiians remain displaced from their ancestral lands. HB606 ensures Native Hawaiians can live, thrive, and remain in **their home, Hawai'i nei**.

Please pass HB606.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

Meredith Buck  
96740

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 12:05:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alfred Medeiros	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou, 'o Alfred Keaka Hiona Medeiros kou inoa, no Wai'anae mai au...mahalo nui chair and our representatives for giving us the opportunity to speak in SUPPORT of HB606 and chill that'll help house many of of Kānaka Maoli and Native Hawaiians. We live in a very scary time, as many are just 1 paycheck away from being displaced and either living on the streets or having to move from their home of Hawai'i and this bill can help resolve a lot of this issues. Especially since we've got over 29,000+ Kānaka and Hawaiians on the DHHL waitlist waiting to be called and more of us continue to die while being on the waiting list...my grandparents and father being 3 of them that I know. Please help us keep Hawai'i Hawaiian by helping house us and keep us here...because we're less than 10% of the population nowadays in Hawai'i and a Hawai'i without Hawaiians isn't a Hawai'i anymore. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 3:25:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
MICHAEL ALAPAI LINNOLT	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To further my support for this Bill, I just want to point out that it has not happened that Hawaiians have been put onto their homelands in the most expeditious fashion, as guaranteed by the introduction to the original Act in 1921! The reality of the delays could not be further from the truth, 100 years, really?

Also, I want to again point out, the US gov't, especially the military, who gets all this "free" Hawaiian lands for \$1 leases, should step up and pay for the bulk of the \$5 Billion it would cost to clear the waitlist entirely.

Hawaii State needs to stand up to the Feds and demand they pay up for what they promised a century ago, or NO MORE MILITARY LEASES!

Mahalo for your courage, Michael.

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 8:53:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

As a resident of Maui, I support HB606 as it will provide funding to DHHL to provide land and housing to Native Hawaiians. DHHL has a waitlist of thousands of Hawaiian people and it is said often that people die while on that list as many have. This is not just heartbreaking, it is unacceptable. The State of Hawai'i has a legal obligation to support Hawaiians through DHHL. Without Hawaiians there is no Hawai'i. Every year more and more Hawaiians are forced out of Hawai'i because the State and County governments do not support and protect them. Hawaiian people belong on our land, in our home, on our 'āina. This bill will help to do that. To not supply adequate and promised funding for DHHL to achieve their mission is illegal. Therefore, I strongly support HB606.

Mahalo for your time.

Leila Morrison

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:45:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nanea Lo, and **I am submitting testimony in strong support of HB606.** I am a Kanaka Maoli, a lineal descendant of the Hawaiian Kingdom, and I serve as an Executive Commission Member of the Sierra Club of Hawai‘i and a Board Member of the Hawai‘i Workers Center.

HB606 is a critical step toward justice for Native Hawaiians. It allocates \$600 million to address the growing waitlist of over 29,000 beneficiaries still waiting for homes promised under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. These homes are not just shelter; they are a means for our people to remain connected to our lands, culture, and identity.

For too long, while tourism and the military have profited from Hawaiian lands and cultural identity, Native Hawaiians have been displaced from our ancestral home. Generations of families have been left waiting, facing barriers to housing security in our own homeland. HB606 is an opportunity to right these wrongs and ensure that Native Hawaiians can live, thrive, and remain in Hawai‘i nei.

I urge the committee to pass HB606 and fulfill the long-overdue promise to our people. Your support can make a tangible difference in the lives of thousands of Native Hawaiians who deserve the opportunity to call their homeland home.

Me ke aloha ‘āina,

**Nanea Lo**

Mō‘ili‘ili, HI 96826

Sierra Club of Hawai‘i, Executive Commission Member

Board Member, Hawai‘i Workers Center

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 2:56:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristen Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Kristen Young and I am in **strong support of HB606**, which allocates **\$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)**. This funding is essential to addressing the **long-overdue need for housing among Native Hawaiians**.

Currently, **29,000 Native Hawaiians remain on the DHHL waitlist**, many of whom have waited decades. When factoring in their ‘ohana, the true number impacted is **far greater**. Meanwhile, Hawai‘i’s soaring cost of living continues to **push Native Hawaiians out of their homeland**. According to **Hawai‘i Migration Flows data**, **more Native Hawaiians are leaving the state than returning**, a crisis that threatens not just individuals, but the future of our communities and culture.

This displacement is especially unjust when considering that **Hawaiian land and culture are central to the state’s largest industries—tourism and the military**. The **tourism industry generates billions annually**, marketing Hawaiian identity—**the language, hula, food, and aloha spirit**—while Native Hawaiians struggle to afford housing. At the same time, the **U.S. military occupies thousands of acres of Hawaiian land**, often under leases as low as **\$1 per year**, further compounding the inequity.

**HB606 is more than a housing bill—it’s an investment in Hawai‘i’s future**. Stable housing strengthens families, keeps keiki in schools, and allows the lāhui to thrive. Funding DHHL will not only provide homes but also **ease pressure on the broader housing market**, benefiting **all Hawai‘i residents**. If we fail to act now, the **next generation of Native Hawaiians may have no choice but to leave**.

The **State of Hawai‘i has a clear obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Act 279** was a step forward, but it **only addressed a fraction of the need**, funding **just over 6,000 homes**. **HB606 is a critical opportunity to uphold that responsibility**, ensuring Native Hawaiians can remain **in the land of their ancestors, where they rightfully belong**.

I respectfully urge this committee to **pass HB606 and take a stand for housing, justice, and Hawai‘i’s future**.

**Mahalo for your time and leadership.**

Kristen Young  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:41:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB606

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, & members of the House Committee on Finance.

My name is Rochelle K Garcia, & I am writing in strong support of HB606, which allocates \$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL). This funding is essential to addressing the Long-overdue need for housing among Native Hawaiians.

I respectfully urge this committee to **pass HB606 and take a stand for housing, justice, and Hawai'i's future.**

**Mahalo for your time and leadership.**

**Rochelle K Garcia**

**,email: Rokgge68@gmail.com**

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:53:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hannah Manshel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Hannah Manshel, and I am writing in **strong support of HB606**, which allocates **\$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)**. This funding is essential to addressing the **long-overdue need for housing among Native Hawaiians**.

Currently, **29,000 Native Hawaiians remain on the DHHL waitlist**, many of whom have waited decades. When factoring in their ‘ohana, the true number impacted is **far greater**. Meanwhile, Hawai‘i’s soaring cost of living continues to **push Native Hawaiians out of their homeland**. According to **Hawai‘i Migration Flows data**, **more Native Hawaiians are leaving the state than returning**, a crisis that threatens not just individuals, but the future of our communities and culture.

This displacement is especially unjust when considering that **Hawaiian land and culture are central to the state’s largest industries—tourism and the military**. The **tourism industry generates billions annually**, marketing Hawaiian identity—**our language, hula, food, and aloha spirit**—while Native Hawaiians struggle to afford housing. At the same time, the **U.S. military occupies thousands of acres of Hawaiian land**, often under leases as low as **\$1 per year**, further compounding the inequity.

**HB606 is more than a housing bill—it’s an investment in Hawai‘i’s future**. Stable housing strengthens families, keeps keiki in schools, and allows our lāhui to thrive. Funding DHHL will not only provide homes but also **ease pressure on the broader housing market**, benefiting **all Hawai‘i residents**. If we fail to act now, the **next generation of Native Hawaiians may have no choice but to leave**.

The **State of Hawai‘i has a clear obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Act 279** was a step forward, but it **only addressed a fraction of the need**, funding **just over 6,000 homes**. **HB606 is a critical opportunity to uphold that responsibility**, ensuring Native Hawaiians can remain **in the land of their ancestors, where they rightfully belong**.

I respectfully urge this committee to **pass HB606 and take a stand for housing, justice, and Hawai‘i’s future**.

**Mahalo for your time and leadership.**

Hannah Manshel

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:05:44 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Kaanoi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Lisa Kaanoi, and I am writing in **strong support of HB606**, which allocates **\$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)**. This funding is essential to addressing the **long-overdue need for housing among Native Hawaiians**.

Currently, **29,000 Native Hawaiians remain on the DHHL waitlist**, many of whom have waited decades. When factoring in their ‘ohana, the true number impacted is **far greater**. Meanwhile, Hawai‘i’s soaring cost of living continues to **push Native Hawaiians out of their homeland**. According to **Hawai‘i Migration Flows data**, **more Native Hawaiians are leaving the state than returning**, a crisis that threatens not just individuals, but the future of our communities and culture.

This displacement is especially unjust when considering that **Hawaiian land and culture are central to the state’s largest industries—tourism and the military**. The **tourism industry generates billions annually**, marketing Hawaiian identity—**our language, hula, food, and aloha spirit**—while Native Hawaiians struggle to afford housing. At the same time, the **U.S. military occupies thousands of acres of Hawaiian land**, often under leases as low as **\$1 per year**, further compounding the inequity.

**HB606 is more than a housing bill—it’s an investment in Hawai‘i’s future**. Stable housing strengthens families, keeps keiki in schools, and allows our lāhui to thrive. Funding DHHL will not only provide homes but also **ease pressure on the broader housing market**, benefiting **all Hawai‘i residents**. If we fail to act now, the **next generation of Native Hawaiians may have no choice but to leave**.

The **State of Hawai‘i has a clear obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Act 279** was a step forward, but it **only addressed a fraction of the need**, funding **just over 6,000 homes**. **HB606 is a critical opportunity to uphold that responsibility**, ensuring Native Hawaiians can remain **in the land of their ancestors, where they rightfully belong**.

I respectfully urge this committee to **pass HB606 and take a stand for housing, justice, and Hawai‘i’s future**.

**Mahalo for your time and leadership.**

**Lisa Kaanoi**  
lkaanoi@gmail.com

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:25:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michele	La Hui	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I support HB606 to support

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 12:51:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaleiheana-a-Pohaku Stormcrow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Kaleiheana Stormcrow, and I am writing in **strong support of HB606**, which allocates \$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL). This funding is essential to addressing the long-overdue need for housing among Native Hawaiians.

Currently, 29,000 Native Hawaiians remain on the DHHL waitlist, many of whom have waited decades. When factoring in their ‘ohana, the true number impacted is far greater. Meanwhile, Hawai‘i’s soaring cost of living continues to push Native Hawaiians out of their homeland. According to Hawai‘i Migration Flows data, more Native Hawaiians are leaving the state than returning, a crisis that threatens not just individuals, but the future of our communities and culture.

This displacement is especially unjust when considering that Hawaiian land and culture are central to the state’s largest industries—tourism and the military. The tourism industry generates billions annually, marketing Hawaiian identity—our language, hula, food, and aloha spirit—while Native Hawaiians struggle to afford housing. At the same time, the U.S. military occupies thousands of acres of Hawaiian land, often under leases as low as \$1 per year, further compounding the inequity.

HB606 is more than a housing bill—it’s an investment in Hawai‘i’s future. Stable housing strengthens families, keeps keiki in schools, and allows our lāhui to thrive. Funding DHHL will not only provide homes but also ease pressure on the broader housing market, benefiting all Hawai‘i residents. If we fail to act now, the next generation of Native Hawaiians may have no choice but to leave.

The State of Hawai‘i has a clear obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Act 279 was a step forward, but it only addressed a fraction of the need, funding just over 6,000 homes. HB606 is a critical opportunity to uphold that responsibility, ensuring Native Hawaiians can remain in the land of their ancestors, where they rightfully belong.

I respectfully urge this committee to pass HB606 and take a stand for housing, justice, and Hawai‘i’s future.

Mahalo for your time and leadership.

Kaleiheana Stormcrow

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 1:51:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rose Tahaafe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Rose Tahaafe, and I am writing in **strong support of HB606**, which allocates **\$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)**. This funding is essential to addressing the **long-overdue need for housing among Native Hawaiians**.

Currently, **29,000 Native Hawaiians remain on the DHHL waitlist**, many of whom have waited decades. When factoring in their ‘ohana, the true number impacted is **far greater**. Meanwhile, Hawai‘i’s soaring cost of living continues to **push Native Hawaiians out of their homeland**. According to **Hawai‘i Migration Flows data**, **more Native Hawaiians are leaving the state than returning**, a crisis that threatens not just individuals, but the future of our communities and culture.

This displacement is especially unjust when considering that **Hawaiian land and culture are central to the state’s largest industries—tourism and the military**. The **tourism industry generates billions annually**, marketing Hawaiian identity—**our language, hula, food, and aloha spirit**—while Native Hawaiians struggle to afford housing. At the same time, the **U.S. military occupies thousands of acres of Hawaiian land**, often under leases as low as **\$1 per year**, further compounding the inequity.

**HB606 is more than a housing bill—it’s an investment in Hawai‘i’s future**. Stable housing strengthens families, keeps keiki in schools, and allows our lāhui to thrive. Funding DHHL will not only provide homes but also **ease pressure on the broader housing market**, benefiting **all Hawai‘i residents**. If we fail to act now, the **next generation of Native Hawaiians may have no choice but to leave**.

The **State of Hawai‘i has a clear obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Act 279** was a step forward, but it **only addressed a fraction of the need**, funding **just over 6,000 homes**. **HB606 is a critical opportunity to uphold that responsibility**, ensuring Native Hawaiians can remain **in the land of their ancestors, where they rightfully belong**.

I respectfully urge this committee to **pass HB606 and take a stand for housing, justice, and Hawai‘i’s future**.

**Mahalo for your time and leadership.**

**Rose Tahaafe**

rosevtahaafe@gmail.com

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 6:51:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Claresa Asuncion	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB606

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

My name is Claresa Lynn Makalapua Asuncion, and I am writing in strong support of HB606, which allocates \$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL). This funding is essential to addressing the long-overdue need for housing among Native Hawaiians.

Currently, 29,000 Native Hawaiians remain on the DHHL waitlist, many of whom have waited decades. When factoring in their ‘ohana, the true number impacted is far greater. Meanwhile, Hawai‘i’s soaring cost of living continues to push Native Hawaiians out of their homeland. According to Hawai‘i Migration Flows data, more Native Hawaiians are leaving the state than returning, a crisis that threatens not just individuals, but the future of our communities and culture.

This displacement is especially unjust when considering that Hawaiian land and culture are central to the state’s largest industries—tourism and the military. The tourism industry generates billions annually, marketing Hawaiian identity—our language, hula, food, and aloha spirit—while Native Hawaiians struggle to afford housing. At the same time, the U.S. military occupies thousands of acres of Hawaiian land, often under leases as low as \$1 per year, further compounding the inequity.

HB606 is more than a housing bill—it’s an investment in Hawai‘i’s future. Stable housing strengthens families, keeps keiki in schools, and allows our lāhui to thrive. Funding DHHL will not only provide homes but also ease pressure on the broader housing market, benefiting all Hawai‘i residents. If we fail to act now, the next generation of Native Hawaiians may have no choice but to leave.

The State of Hawai‘i has a clear obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Act 279 was a step forward, but it only addressed a fraction of the need, funding just over 6,000 homes. HB606 is a critical opportunity to uphold that responsibility, ensuring Native Hawaiians can remain in the land of their ancestors, where they rightfully belong.

I respectfully urge this committee to pass HB606 and take a stand for housing, justice, and Hawai'i's future.

Mahalo for your time and leadership.

Claresa Lynn Makalapua Asuncion

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:28:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Cardenas (Cards) Pintor

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:11:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
E E Keliipuleole	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Puna Keliipuleole and I am writing in **strong support of HB606**, which allocates **\$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)**. This funding is essential to addressing the **long-overdue need for housing among Native Hawaiians**.

As you are well aware, many, many native Hawaiians and THEIR ohana are in limbo which has a detrimental effect on the greater society of Hawaii nei. Shameful! Our home country and land for over 1000 years. Promises made decades ago have not been fulfilled.

This displacement is especially unjust when considering that **Hawaiian land and culture are central to the state's largest industries—tourism and the military**. The **tourism industry generates billions annually**, marketing Hawaiian identity—**our language, hula, food, and aloha spirit**—while Native Hawaiians struggle to afford housing. At the same time, the **U.S. military occupies thousands of acres of Hawaiian land**, often under leases as low as **\$1 per year**, further compounding the inequity.

**HB606 is more than a housing bill—it's an investment in Hawai'i's future**. Stable homes strengthens families, keeps keiki in schools, and allows our lāhui to thrive. Funding DHHL will not only provide homes but also **ease pressure on the broader housing market**, benefiting **all Hawai'i residents**. If we fail to act now, the **next generation of Native Hawaiians may have no choice but to leave**.

The **State of Hawai'i has a clear obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Act 279** was a step forward, but it **only addressed a fraction of the need**, funding **just over 6,000 homes**. **HB606 is a critical opportunity to uphold that responsibility**, ensuring Native Hawaiians can remain **in the land of their ancestors, where they rightfully belong**.

I respectfully urge this committee to **pass HB606 and take a stand for housing, justice, and Hawai'i's future**.

**Mahalo for your time and leadership.**

**E E Keliipuleole (Puna)**

Dated: February 25, 2025 @ 6:09am

**HB-606-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:24:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Long	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is James Long, and I am writing in **strong support of HB606**, which allocates **\$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)**. This funding is essential to addressing the **long-overdue need for housing among Native Hawaiians**.

**HB606 is more than a housing bill—it’s an investment in Hawai‘i’s future.** Stable housing strengthens families, keeps keiki in schools, and allows our lāhui to thrive. Funding DHHL will not only provide homes but also **ease pressure on the broader housing market**, benefiting **all Hawai‘i residents**. If we fail to act now, the **next generation of Native Hawaiians may have no choice but to leave**.

The **State of Hawai‘i has a clear obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Act 279** was a step forward, but it **only addressed a fraction of the need, funding just over 6,000 homes**. **HB606 is a critical opportunity to uphold that responsibility**, ensuring Native Hawaiians can remain **in the land of their ancestors, where they rightfully belong**.

I respectfully urge this committee to **pass HB606 and take a stand for housing, justice, and Hawai‘i’s future**.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

James Long

Naalehu, HI