

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 JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
HEARING ON FEBRUARY 11, 2025 AT 2:00PM IN CR 325

HB 606, HD 1, RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOMELANDS

February 10, 2025

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, 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 the Act 279 Special Fund and appropriates funds out of the Special Fund for DHHL 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
Total E&E	\$363,461,222.45

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
36,905,557.31	Total

Projected Number of Applicants on Waitlist Assisted

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

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 8:09:54 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jim Albertini	Malu 'Aina	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Feb. 9, 2025

Aloha Hawaii Legislators,

Our organization stands in strong support of HB 606. Make affordable housing, especially for Native Hawaiians waitlisted, the number 1 priority for State funding. Our organization was named by Bernard Punikaia of Hale Mohalu/Kalaupapa who was evicted by the State along with other Hawaiians in 1983 from his home at Hale Mohalu (House of Comfort). For a time he was houseless and slept in his car. After years of struggle, new housing has been built at Hale Mohalu for people with Hansen disease, other disabilities, and low-income people. But there is much yet to be done. Housing for Hawaiians on the wait list should be a top priority of State funding. Tax the New High tech barrons -- Zuckerberg of Facebook on Kauai, Ellison of Oracle who owns 98% of Lanai, Jeff Bezos of Amazon and Peter Thiel of Pay Pal on Maui, and Sam Altman of Open AI in Kailua Kona , along with Michael Dell of Dell Computers, and Marc Beioff of Salesforce. All are BILLIONAIRES and there are many others. At holiday times like New Year's, there are so many private jets in Kona, that the state has to send dozens to Hilo and Maui to Park because they have no room TAX THE RICH for Housing Hawaiians.

Jim Albertini, president of Malu 'Aina--

Jim Albertini Malu 'Aina Center For Non-violent Education & Action P.O. Box 489 Ola'a (Kurtistown) Hawai'i 96760

Phone 808-966-7622 Email ja@malu-aina.org Visit us on the web at www.malu-aina.org

**Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement
91-1270 Kinoaiki St., Bldg. 1
Kapolei, HI 96707**

**Hawai'i State House of Representatives
Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs**

HB606 HD1 – Relating to the Department of Hawaiian Homelands

RE: Strong support of HB606 HD1

February 11, 2025

The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) writes in **strong support of HB606 HD1** in alignment with the State's trust obligations under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and the Hawai'i State Constitution. HB606 proposes an extension of the Act 279 Special Fund in furtherance of eliminating the waitlist of applicants for residential, agricultural, or pastoral leases for trust land managed by the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL). It is imperative for the State to continually work towards housing its people and HB606 is a necessary step in the right direction.

As a Native Hawaiian organization, we deeply understand the importance of land, particularly when there is an ancestral or familial connection to it. For decades, we have seen more and more Native Hawaiian families priced out of their ancestral land. The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act plays a crucial role in addressing the longstanding housing needs for native Hawaiians, persevering despite decades of underfunding and numerous bureaucratic challenges. The current waitlist of over 29,000 individuals is a reminder of the unmet promises made to native Hawaiians, and the urgency to address this issue cannot be overstated.

HB606 HD1 provides critical funding to fulfill DHHL's fiduciary duties to native Hawaiians. Additional resources will ensure necessary housing access, economic security, and cultural revitalization for its beneficiaries. Providing native Hawaiians with housing on their ancestral lands fosters stronger communities, family stability, and success for future generations.

Extending the sunset date of the Act 279 Special Fund and appropriating additional funds to be used by DHHL will address the urgency of the unmet housing needs of native Hawaiians. This measure is a critical step towards fulfilling the State's trust obligations and ensuring that native Hawaiians have the opportunity to build a future on their land in Hawai'i. For these reasons, we humbly ask that you **PASS HB606 HD1**.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Madelyn McKeague
Director of Advocacy, CNHA



February 11, 2025

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify today. My name is [Your Name], and I am here to express my **strong support** for **HB606**, which would allocate **\$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)** to address one of the most urgent crises facing our people—housing.

For decades, DHHL has been underfunded, leaving **nearly 30,000 Native Hawaiians** waiting for homesteads—many for their entire lives. Families have been forced into **overcrowded homes, unstable rentals, or even out of state** because they simply cannot afford to live in their homeland. And the list keeps growing, with about **50 more Native Hawaiians joining the waitlist every month**.

HB606 is about **more than just housing**—it's about keeping families together, strengthening communities, and ensuring that Hawaiians don't have to choose between survival and staying in their ancestral home.

Why This Bill Matters

- **It helps ease Hawai'i's housing crisis.** When DHHL beneficiaries finally receive homesteads, it frees up rental units and homes, **reducing competition and making housing more affordable for everyone.**
- **It keeps Native Hawaiians in Hawai'i.** Right now, too many of our people are being priced out and forced to leave. **We cannot afford to keep losing Native Hawaiians to the continent.**
- **It strengthens our local economy.** More housing means **more jobs, more opportunities for small businesses, and a stronger, more self-sufficient Hawai'i.**
- **It gives families stability.** Homeownership provides **a foundation for financial security, educational success, and future generations to thrive.**
- **It helps address Native Hawaiian houselessness.** Native Hawaiians are **disproportionately represented** in the houseless population.
- **It protects our culture.** When Native Hawaiians leave, we lose more than just people—we lose language, traditions, and deep connections to our 'āina. **Keeping our people home keeps our culture alive.**
- **It benefits all of Hawai'i.** When Native Hawaiians thrive, **Hawai'i thrives.** A stable Native Hawaiian community means a stronger workforce, healthier families, and a Hawai'i that honors its history and its future.

HB606 is not a handout—it is an investment in **Hawai'i's future**. It is an opportunity to finally fulfill the promise made under the **Hawaiian Homes Commission Act** and give Native Hawaiians the chance to build lives in the place they call home.

I urge this committee to **move HB606 forward** and take meaningful action to address this crisis.

Mahalo for your time and leadership.

Shane Pale

Shane Pale
Lead Advocate
Kupa'a Lāhui Alliance
Email: kupaalahuialliance@gmail.com
Phone: 808-457-2350

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/7/2025 11:10:15 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bradley Duncan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a Beneficiary and current DHHL residential lessee in Kanehili, Kapolei, Oahu I fully support HB606. DHHL desperately needs additional funding to lower their statewide waitlist and put native Hawaiians on the land. Mahalo for allowing me to testify!

Malama,

Bradley Duncan

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 7:49:10 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kiki St. Louis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The annexation and colonization of Hawaii by the United States is a dark and ongoing chapter in our nation's history. The culture of Native Hawaiians has dwindled as they have been forced out of their native lands and strong-handed into assimilation. Ownership and paying rent on an Indigenous person's ancestral lands should be a given.

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 7:56:55 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jazi Gersi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kakou

I wish to be known that 'Native Hawaiians' aka Kanaka Maoli are entitled to have the money that the bill HB606 provides for sustainable affordable housing. I trust this shall be the case.

Respectfully, Jazi Gersi

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 8:33:36 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keola Castro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The urgency behind HB606, aiming to allocate \$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL), is undeniable. The decades-long underfunding and the resulting 30,000-person waitlist paint a stark picture of the housing crisis facing Native Hawaiians. The prospect of families being forced to leave their homeland due to unaffordable housing is deeply concerning.

I believe focusing our energy on supporting HB606 is the most effective immediate step we can take. This bill offers a real chance to address the crisis directly and provide much-needed resources to DHHL.

Poor government spending priorities, the impact of foreign policy on the Hawaiian community, and the health of our leadership are valid concerns that deserve separate, focused attention. Addressing those issues effectively will require a strategic and sustained effort, and those efforts should run parallel to – not instead of – our support for HB606.

Let's channel our collective frustration into positive, tangible action to alleviate the immediate housing crisis for Native Hawaiians. We can, and should, address the broader systemic issues later, but let's not allow the immediate crisis to go unaddressed. Mahalo.

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 9:03:41 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Greg Puppione	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill because it:

- Provides stable housing for Native Hawaiians** and strengthens our lāhui.
- Helps prevent more Native Hawaiians from leaving** due to unaffordable housing.
- Fulfills a long-overdue promise** of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act.

We can and should do better to get folks off of the waitlist.

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 9:10:23 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Ma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need to address the housing crisis for native Hawaiians

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 9:18:02 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqueline Santiago	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jacqueline Santiago, and I strongly support 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.

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.

Jacqueline Santiago

P: 312-200-2027

E: santiagojacqueline824@gmail.com

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 9:25:46 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maureen Datta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB606

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Maureen Datta, and I strongly support **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.

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.

Maureen Datta

resident in Honaunau 96726

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 9:40:28 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Martha Evans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB606

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Martha Ann Napuaokalani Haia Evans. As a native Hawaiian and hopefully soon to be DHHL lessee, I strongly support **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.

29,000 Native Hawaiians remain on the DHHL waitlist, many of whom have waited decades. (I have been on the waitlist since 1988.) 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, both current and future generations, in their homeland. I respectfully urge this committee to pass this measure.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Martha Evans
anmevans@gmail.com

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 10:04:15 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Larisa Patrick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha All,

I am going to keep it short and sweet because I am fully aware there is not much time. Anyone who is aware of this bill and currently has the privilege of being able to live on this aina should be in support of it.

Without the people of the aina, there is no Hawai'i. Without any of us malihinis taking a stand with them and without proper support, in the end, ALL of us lose.

Protect the Queen's people, honor her legacy. This is the least we can do.

Mahalo Nui Loa

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 10:09:28 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brenda Hikalea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Brenda Hikalea], and I strongly support 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.

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.

Brenda Hikalea

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 10:29:38 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Hannah Manshel**, and I strongly support **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.

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.

Hannah Manshel

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 11:01:42 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

:

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB606

House Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee

Hearing Date: February 11, 2025, at 2:00 PM

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

My name is Hilina'i Kane and I am writing in strong support of HB606, which allocates \$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) to address the ongoing housing crisis affecting Native Hawaiians.

For decades, chronic underfunding has left DHHL unable to fulfill its mission, forcing nearly 30,000 Native Hawaiians to remain on a waitlist, some for generations. Too many of our people have passed away without ever receiving the homestead they were promised. This injustice is not just a bureaucratic failure it is a direct violation of the trust responsibility owed to Native Hawaiians.

The reality is that Native Hawaiians are being priced out of their homeland. Skyrocketing housing costs are pushing families to the brink, forcing them to choose between struggling to survive in Hawai'i or leaving for affordability elsewhere. If we do not act now, we will continue to witness the heartbreaking displacement of our people.

HB606 is not just a funding bill, it is a step toward fulfilling a promise that has been broken for far too long. I urge you to pass HB606 without delay and ensure that this funding reaches our families who have waited for generations.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Hilinai Kane

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 11:59:30 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rudy Kok	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass HB606. I'm not Hawaiian but it depressing to see how little support the Kanaka Maoli get. It is their land. Please allocate funds so that they can own a piece of it for their well being and security.

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 12:09:39 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB606

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kimmer Horsen, and I strongly support **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.

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.

Kimmer Horsen

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 1:10:25 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheyves Fernandez Kekahu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB606. As a Native Hawaiian who is on the list I dream of one day owning my own homestead. This bill will help others on the list and one day my children who will be able to be on the list as well.

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 1:56:46 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Kapulani Antonio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

‘O kapulani Antonio ko‘u inoa, and I strongly support **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.

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.

Kapulani Antonio
Pukalani, Maui

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 2:21:53 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl burghardt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

I SUPPORT HB 606 which extends the Act 279 Special Fund to 6/30/2028. Deposits funds into and appropriates funds out of the Act 279 Special Fund to eliminate its waitlist. Requires the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to submit a strategic plan detailing the anticipated uses of the funds appropriated. Requires an annual report. Sunsets 6/30/2028. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

This bill HB 606 provides real solutions to help with our housing issues. We know that when the people of this place thrive, we all thrive. This bill and the resulting funding will help strengthen our communities, the entirety of our islands.

C. Burghardt

Kou Oahu

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 3:33:12 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maikaaloa Clarke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am submitting my support for HB606 HD1 because so many Native Hawaiians struggle with homelessness. The cost of housing sky rockets making it impossible for Hawaiians to purchase homes or pay rent. My father left the islands before I was born and returning is not possible for me. That said I am more concerned for the homeless families that are still trying to survive in there homelands while wealthy developers take over their homeland. I can't afford to come home but I can afford to make a small donation every month to charities that provide food, clothing, school supplies and summer camp for homeless keiki. Assisting Hawaiian families in gaining homesteads and building housing that can be passed down to future generations should be the highest priority.

Mahalo for your time and attention to this critical issue.,

Maikaaloa Clarke

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 4:05:22 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimberly Oshiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please provide the funding needed to help keep our Native Hawaiians in their homeland.

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 6:54:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Hale Hikalea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm a waiting applicant of 40 plus years and am in support of HB606. Raised on DHHL lands since the age

of 7, I have witnessed the lack of financial opportunities for our Homesteaders. Be it on the list or receiving an lease award. The State of Hawai'i has failed to fulfill, as promised through the Statehood Act..And the recent Kalima Claims settlement is clearly evident of a problem that needs to be addressed.

Mahalo

Michael Hikalea

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 7:54:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donna Grabow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB606

Please support the bill that allocates \$600 million to Hawaiian Homelands. (It's their money, anyway.)

Because much of Hawaiian Homelands been leased out and zoned as fee-simple real estate, the amount of profit/income acquired for DHHL is off the charts!

However, the money from leases are supposed to go into a fund (established in 1918) by Senator Kuhio, for homes, communities and infrastructure.

Throughout the years, State has passed numerous amendments to Senator Kuhio's law, to the extent that it has been renamed the "DEPARTMENT of Hawaiian Homeland" which includes questionable new stipulations, fees, and building restrictions.

Most of the Hawaiian Homeland money is siphoned off to State and private agencies and departments.

\$600 million seems like alot, but it would be a lot more if the law of Hawaiian Hlomelands was followed.

It's been suggested that DHHL research how the people and government of New Zealand changed laws so that land can be distributed to the original people of Aotearoa.

Lastly, I'll add that I am a foreigner who lives in the island country of Hawaii, and am sympathetic to the injustices and betrayal.

Sincerely,

Donna Grabow

Hilo, Moku o Keawe

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 11:27:55 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charles Lacaden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB606

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is [Charles Lacaden], and I strongly support 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.

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.

[Charles Lacaden]

[Your Organization] (*if applicable*)

[Your Contact Information]

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 11:34:38 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
MICHAEL LINNOLT	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Michael Alapai Linnolt**, and I strongly support **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.

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 and the US Federal Government have an obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1921. Even though the Admissions Act transferred the responsibility of the HHCA program to Hawaii, nevertheless, the US Government, with its much deeper pockets, and as the originator of this Act, should lend a hand and provide the shortfall in funding to Hawaii to clear the waitlist of applicants as soon as possible. This is their obligation too, under section 101(b)(2), where it states "Placing native Hawaiians on the lands set aside under this Act in a prompt and efficient manner..."

Is 100+ years in any way shape or form "prompt and efficient"??? And considering the US government has spent around \$100 BILLION in military weapons of mass destruction to Israel and Ukraine, just \$5 Billions, a small percentage of that spent on waste for death and destruction, would be enough to clear out the waitlist once and for all!

I wish Hawaii would do more, and pressure the US government to come up with the \$5 Billion to solve the waitlist problem ASAP. Hawaii definitely has leverage with approving leases for the military at Pohakuloa, Kahuku, Makua and Poamoho. Please use that

leverage to get the military to pay up that \$5 Billion shortfall needed to clear the waitlist entirely! Courage to stand up to the military.

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.

Michael Alapai Linnolt
mlinnolt@protonmail.com

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 6:11:45 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ben Callahan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB606

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ben Callahan, and I strongly support 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.

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.

Ben Callahan

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 6:33:14 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
AJ Jitchaku	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is AJ Jitchaku, and I strongly support HB606, which allocates \$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. 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. My father passed away 15 years ago and waited decades for any progress and eventually gave up in disgust with the system of not just this waitlist, but with politics as usual in Hawaii. We constantly see reminders of how the Native Hawaiian community has been disregarded for decades, and our lands and culture stolen and used for the profit of the modern lunas. It is far time to put money into a program that actually benefits Hawaiians, instead of these endless billion dollar projects that are simply quid pro quo for politicians, their cronies, and the old boy network that frankly still rides the back of the Native Hawaiians. Rail? Now a stadium? For what? So someone can slap their name on it and pretend its benefiting anyone but out of state and non-native interests? Meanwhile Hawaiians are leaving or being left homeless on the beaches or bushes? We have been colonized long enough. Fight for the Native Hawaiians. The upcoming generations are clearly unhappy with the old boy network.

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 urge this committee to pass this measure. And maybe surprise us all by bumping it to a billion dollars.

Mahalo for your consideration in this matter.

AJ Jitchaku

Honolulu HI 96815
ajitchaku@gmail.com

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 7:44:05 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lindsay Filgas	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is **Lindsay**, and I strongly support **HB606**. The funding this bill provides is essential to addressing the long-overdue need for housing for Native Hawaiians.

Native Hawaiians are disproportionately houseless in Hawaii. 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 communities and culture. Funding DHHL will benefit all Hawai‘i residents, keeping communities strong and making housing more accessible for all.

The State of Hawai‘i has an obligation to fulfill the promise of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. 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.

Thank you.

Lindsay

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 8:51:30 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lucky Kanahele	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB606. I have waited on the list since 2016 & fortunately i was lucky enough to Inherit my uncles spot in line due to him passing away.now my application is dated 1993. My grandparents passed away on that waitlist & im afraid that i might not make it just like them. So although i support HB606 i hooe that if this money is granted i expect to see more people off the waitlist & have the affordable homes they need or the land they were promised without any stipulations according to the wishes of prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaʻole. Without Hawaiians their is no Hawaii. We make this place beautiful & what it truly is.

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 9:41:20 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

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**. As a Kanaka Maoli, a lineal descendant of the Hawaiian Kingdom, and a community advocate, I urge you to pass this critical legislation to address the ongoing housing crisis that disproportionately impacts Native Hawaiians.

Today, 29,000 Native Hawaiians remain on the waitlist for homesteads. Many have been waiting for decades—some never receiving the opportunity in their lifetime. Thousands more face overcrowding, unstable living conditions, or are forced to make the heartbreaking decision to leave their homeland. The rising cost of housing is not only displacing our people but also severing the cultural and familial ties that make Hawai‘i unique.

HB606 is a real and tangible solution. Increasing the availability of homes for Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) beneficiaries will strengthen Native Hawaiian families, reduce housing market pressure, and create a more stable future for our lāhui. When Native Hawaiians are given the opportunity to thrive, all of Hawai‘i benefits. Investing in Hawaiian homesteads boosts the local economy, improves overall housing conditions, and fosters resilient communities that honor our people and culture.

Supporting HB606 is not just about righting a historic wrong—it is about ensuring a future where all of Hawai‘i prospers. I urge you to pass this bill and stand with the Native Hawaiian community in securing a future that keeps our people in our homeland.

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

Kanaka Maoli | Lineal Descendant of the Hawaiian Kingdom

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 10:23:42 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Regina Gregory	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 3:19:01 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mai Hall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB606 to provide funds for DHHL to house our lāhui, our people. My mother has been on the list since 1985 and turns 70 years old this year. She has only dreamed of owning a home of her own with a yard to grow food and something to pass on to her keiki. So many of our people have died waiting for a home. Don't let that happen to my mother. Do your due diligence and mālama our people who deserve to live with dignity in a home on our native land. Mahalo

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 4:07:32 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Suellen Barton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Anything to get Hawaiian lands into Hawaiian hands

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 6:51:45 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please support the bill and fund DHHL. Our people have waited far too long. Thank you for your consideration.

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 8:52:45 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kawena Holu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

I support HB606! I support this bill because it is the right thing to do. The lands belong to our Native Hawaiian people who are still on the waitlist and should be made affordable. Be Pono and do what is right!

Mahalo,

Kawena Holu

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 11:50:54 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Fonarow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Amy Fonarow. I am a student of Hawaiian history and a former resident of Oahu and Maui, and I am writing in support of Bill HB606.

Native Hawaiians have waited long enough for homes promised to them generations ago. There will always be some reason to not come through and instead divert this money elsewhere. Let's break that pattern this time and help the kanaka maoli and their descendants stay in the land of their ancestors.

Without Hawaiians in Hawai'i, the archipelago becomes two-dimensional . . . shadows cast by all those who've been forced to disperse elsewhere because of folks with more money.

Please make the security, the well-being, and the future of Native Hawaiians a top priority by supporting Bill HB606.

Mahalo nui loa for your thoughtful consideration.

Mālama pono,

Amy Fonarow

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 11:54:12 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiffany Sabado	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Tiffany Sabado, and I strongly support **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.

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.

Tiffany Sabado

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 11:55:33 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Ho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a step in the right direction for Hawaiian families to finally get their homes that was promised decades ago. It's the right thing to do on behalf of a people who have waited generations.

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 4:50:53 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Juliana Rhee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In light of a long history of land dispossession, cultural genocide, racism, and socio-economic inequity against the Hawaiian people, the Hawai'i State Legislature should take all actions possible to repair and right the longstanding injustices the people of Hawai'i have suffered. They can begin to do so by supporting HB606. In an Indigenous culture where land is not a resource but an integral element of culture, identity, reciprocity, and life, the perpetuation of the Hawaiian Homelands program is especially vital and apt. I urge the Hawai'i State Legislature to do what is right and further the values it represents. I urge the Legislature to remember their commitment to "Ua Mau ke Ea o ka 'Āina i ka Pono." I hope they will do right by the people and land of Hawai'i by passing HB606.

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 10:14:54 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Samantha Preis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislators,

Housing for Native Hawaiians is shamefully long overdue. I support HB 606 to supply more funding for Hawaiian Homelands.

Mahalo,

Samantha Preis

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 10:25:50 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Hikalea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 606

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 11:02:54 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bronson White-Hikalea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Bronson White-Hikalea support HB 606

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 11:12:54 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aidan Sites	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Aidan Sites**, and I strongly support **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.

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. Some may say that this is becoming financial genocide of the Native Hawaiian peoples, forcibly removing them from their homelands because of financial burdens implemented by the colonizers. Action must be taken in order to protect Native Hawaiians and all the magic of Hawa‘i 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.

Aidan Sites

aidanasites@gmail.com

Testimony in Support of H.B. 606 HD1 with Comments and Department of the Interior Role

Measure Title:	RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOMELANDS.
Report Title:	Department of Hawaiian Home Lands; Act 279 Special Fund; Reports; Appropriation (\$)
Description:	Extends the Act 279 Special Fund to 6/30/2028. Deposits funds into and appropriates funds out of the Act 279 Special Fund to eliminate its waitlist. Requires the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to submit a strategic plan detailing the anticipated uses of the funds appropriated. Requires an annual report. Sunsets 6/30/2028. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Monday, February 10, 2025

TO: Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair, Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair and, Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affair.

FROM: Ronnie Inagaki

DATE: February 10, 2025

SUBJECT: Testimony in Support of H.B. 606 HD1 with Comments and Department of the Interior Role

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 @ 2:00 P.M.

PLACE:

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 325
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Aloha Chair Representative Tarnas, David A., Vice Chair Representative Poepoe, Mahina, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **strong support** of **H.B. 606 HD1**, which seeks to extend the sunset date of the Act 279 Special Fund, appropriate additional resources to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL), and require strategic planning and transparency to address the urgent housing needs of Native Hawaiians. As a resident of Hawai'i & Native Hawaiian beneficiary, I believe this bill represents a critical step toward fulfilling the **State of Hawaii's fiduciary duty** under the **Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920 (HHCA)**. It also aligns with the responsibilities outlined in the **Hawaii Admission Act (1959)** and the oversight role of the **U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)** in ensuring compliance with the trust obligations owed to Native Hawaiians. Below, I outline my support for this bill, as well as provide comments and recommendations to strengthen its implementation and effectiveness.

Support for H.B. 606 HD1

1. Addressing the DHHL Waitlist

The DHHL waitlist includes over **29,000 Native Hawaiian beneficiaries**, many of whom have been waiting for decades for residential, agricultural, or pastoral leases. This waitlist represents a failure to address the housing and land access needs of Native Hawaiians, despite the state's fiduciary duty under the HHCA.

- The \$600 million allocated under Act 279 (2022) was a historic step forward, but it is far from sufficient to meet the estimated **\$6 billion** needed to fully eliminate the waitlist.
- By extending the Act 279 Special Fund to **June 30, 2028**, and appropriating additional funds, H.B. 606 HD1 ensures that DHHL can continue to develop infrastructure, acquire land, and reduce the waitlist.

2. Upholding State and Federal Obligations

H.B. 606 HD1 is consistent with both state and federal responsibilities to Native Hawaiians:

- **State Responsibilities:** Under the Hawaii Admission Act (1959), the State of Hawaii assumed responsibility for administering the HHCA and managing the Hawaiian Home Lands trust. This includes ensuring that Native Hawaiians receive the benefits promised to them through land leases and other programs.
- **Federal Oversight:** The **U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)** retains oversight authority to ensure the state complies with the HHCA. The DOI's role includes reviewing amendments to the HHCA, monitoring trust management, and providing technical assistance to DHHL. H.B. 606 HD1 aligns with the DOI's mandate by emphasizing transparency, accountability, and strategic planning.

3. Building on Act 14 (1995)

H.B. 606 HD1 builds upon the precedent set by **Act 14, Special Session Laws of Hawaii 1995**, which resolved claims against the state for the mismanagement of Hawaiian Home Lands. Act 14:

- Acknowledged past breaches of trust and established the **Hawaiian Home Lands Trust Fund** to compensate for those breaches.
- Affirmed the state's fiduciary duty to Native Hawaiians.
H.B. 606 HD1 continues this work by addressing ongoing trust obligations and ensuring that the resources allocated under Act 279 (2022) are fully utilized.

4. Accountability and Transparency

The bill requires DHHL to submit a **strategic plan** by December 10, 2025, and annual reports beginning in 2026. These provisions are essential for ensuring that funds are used effectively, progress is measurable, and the public has confidence in the state's ability to fulfill its obligations.

Comments and Recommendations

While I strongly support H.B. 606 HD1, there are opportunities to strengthen the bill to ensure its success and maximize its impact.

1. Long-Term Funding Plan

- The bill provides additional funding and extends the Act 279 Special Fund to 2028, but it does not address the full funding gap of **\$6 billion** needed to eliminate the waitlist.
- I recommend the Legislature:
 - Establish a **dedicated funding stream**, such as a percentage of state revenues or federal partnerships, to provide sustained support for DHHL programs.
 - Advocate for increased federal funding through the **U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)** or other federal agencies.

2. Strategic Coordination with the DOI

- The DOI plays a critical oversight role in ensuring that the State of Hawaii complies with the HHCA. The Legislature should coordinate with the DOI to:
 - Explore opportunities for federal technical and financial support.
 - Ensure that amendments to the HHCA resulting from H.B. 606 HD1 align with federal law and DOI regulations.
- By leveraging the DOI's expertise, the state can strengthen its ability to manage the Hawaiian Home Lands trust effectively.

3. Prioritization of Beneficiaries

- The bill does not specify how beneficiaries will be prioritized for leases or funding. To ensure fairness and equity, I recommend:
 - Prioritizing beneficiaries based on **length of time on the waitlist**, urgency of needs (e.g., homelessness, elderly beneficiaries), or other transparent criteria.
 - Including input from beneficiaries and Native Hawaiian organizations in developing these criteria.

4. Addressing Systemic Implementation Challenges

- DHHL has faced challenges with delays in project implementation, underutilization of funds, and limited capacity to manage large-scale developments. To address these issues, I recommend:
 - Establishing an **independent oversight board** to monitor DHHL's progress and provide accountability.

- Allocating resources for **capacity-building** within DHHL to improve project management and ensure timely use of appropriated funds.

5. Environmental and Land Use Considerations

- Large-scale development projects could have environmental impacts, including strain on water resources and ecosystems. I urge the Legislature to ensure that DHHL incorporates **sustainable practices** and complies with environmental regulations in its development plans.

Conclusion

H.B. 606 HD1 is a vital piece of legislation that addresses the urgent housing and land access needs of Native Hawaiians while fulfilling the state's fiduciary duties under the HHCA. By extending the Act 279 Special Fund, appropriating additional resources, and emphasizing strategic planning and transparency, the bill builds on the progress made under Act 14 (1995) and Act 279 (2022). Additionally, the bill aligns with the oversight role of the **U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)** by reinforcing the state's accountability in managing the Hawaiian Home Lands trust. By coordinating with the DOI and leveraging federal resources, the state can strengthen its efforts to reduce the DHHL waitlist and improve the lives of Native Hawaiian beneficiaries. I respectfully urge the Committee to pass H.B. 606 HD1 while considering these comments and recommendations to ensure its success. Mahalo for your time and for your commitment to addressing this critical issue.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ronnie Inagaki

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 11:25:58 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Hikalea Jr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB606

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Michael Hikalea Jr** , and I strongly support **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.

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.

Michael Hikalea Jr
aelakihm@icloud.com

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 12:00:23 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Ke kāko‘o piha nei au iā HB606; (I fully support HB606).

Supporting HB606 is a much needed start by providing funding to build affordable housing to meet the demands of the Hawaiian Homes wait list.

The myriad of issues surrounding the basic need for housing for our Hawaiian families is absurd. And, by no means, are these families responsible. We are the victims of derelict politicians and officials. Why is it taking so long for the State of Hawaii to fulfill its kuleana? Must we wait another century, let alone another decade?

Mahalo no ka ‘ae ‘ana i ka‘u hō‘ike kākau.

Eileen Cain
720 Mahi'ai St., Apt. E
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96826-5635
eileencaïn808@gmail.com
February 10, 2025

Aloha, Members of the **House Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs (JHA) 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: 2/10/2025 1:43:14 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Anuheia** and I strongly support **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.

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.

Anuheia Hikalea.
anuheahikalea@gmail.com

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 1:58:29 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vera Nicol	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Gentlepersons,

I am writing to support Bill HB606. My mother was born and raised on the island of Oahu, and although not native Hawaiian, she raised us to support the Hawaiians at all costs.

Native Hawaiians have waited long enough for homes promised to them generations ago. There will always be some reason to not come through and instead divert this money elsewhere. Let's break that pattern this time and help the kanaka maoli and their descendants stay in the land of their ancestors.

Without Hawaiians in Hawai'i, the archipelago becomes two-dimensional . . . shadows cast by all those who've been forced to disperse elsewhere because of folks with more money.

Please make the security, the well-being, and the future of Native Hawaiians a top priority by supporting Bill HB606.

Mahalo nui loa for your thoughtful consideration.

Mālama pono,
Vera Nicol

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 4:18:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
fred hofer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Fred Hofer, support this Bill

Kanaka are still dying on the wait-list

Dying houseless, land less,

while on the wait list for decades.

It's a "condition of statehood" that the living conditions of Kanaka must be improved.

Maybe this infusion of funds will cause the DHHL to hop into action and pursue their stated purpose of existence: to wit: to put -

-Sadly, not all, just some, as there is that ludicrous blood quantum requirement in place -

Their purpose of existence, to put Kanaka people onto their own land

Sincerely,

Fred Hofer

Hilo

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 8:55:56 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lindsey Fritz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha- long overdue, please support this bill and funding for housing for native Hawaiians. There are so many people waiting on a promise. Let's make good on that and revive our community with hope for a future in Hawaii. This will bring positivity to many and not only help with the housing crisis but also give motivation for people. Give them something to be happy about so they can be positive in other areas of their life. I also want to note i support DHHL offering LAND, not necessarily with housing. Let them choose how they want to live and some Hawaiians like It old style living off the land in a small modest house. Some want a big house. Let them choose. Mahalo!

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 8:34:42 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Gaylord	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Carol Gaylord, and I strongly support **HB606**, which allocates **\$600 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)**. This funding is a long-overdue necessity 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.

The US is the wealthiest country in the west and is failing it's citizens in all measures for a thriving society including providing housing, food and healthcare and is blaming not only immigrants but indigenous peoples here and globally when the real culprit is wealth and its influence on government. Don't let that happen here. Protect our native population. Start with this bill.

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.

Carol Gaylord

carol.gaylord@gmail.com and 880-690-1178