



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB268\_SD1**  
Relating to Island Burial Councils

Senate Committee on Judiciary

February 19, 2025

9:45 a.m.

Room 016

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

Mahalo for setting SB268\_SD1, which is part of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA's) 2025 Legislative Package, for public hearing. OHA submits this testimony in **SUPPORT of SB268\_SD1** to explain OHA's background and expertise in this area, and to provide the specific analysis that supports passage of this bill.

Background

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

In fulfillment of its mandates, OHA has been deeply involved with protection of iwi kūpuna for decades. Under HRS Chapter 6E, Hawai'i's Historic Preservation law, and implementing administrative rules, OHA is tasked with specific kuleana including nominating candidates to serve on the island burial councils (IBCs).<sup>3</sup> OHA also regularly receives communications from its beneficiaries concerning illegal desecration of iwi, difficulties exerting their rights as cultural and lineal descendants, and other issues related to proper implementation of HRS Chapter 6E. OHA will intervene and advocate on behalf of beneficiaries to the IBCs, State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD), and private landowners, when appropriate, to encourage compliance with existing law, including the requirement to consult with cultural and lineal descendants.

Moreover, OHA convened a Burial Sites Working Group (BSWG) in 2021 in response to House Resolution 113 (HR 113) and Senate Resolution 171 (SR 171) to look at

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<sup>1</sup> Haw. Const. Art. XII § 5

<sup>2</sup> Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) § 10-3.

<sup>3</sup> See HRS §§ 6E-3, 43, -43.5, 43.6; Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR) §§ 13-284-6(c); 13-275-6(c).

systemic and recurring issues related to SHPD’s implementation of HRS Chapter 6E.<sup>4</sup> The BSWG published a Final Report in February 2023, with proposed statutory and regulatory amendments that would enhance protections for traditional burial sites, and ensure the IBCs are properly consulted concerning treatment, preservation, and disposition of such sites, among other matters.<sup>5</sup> Several bills introduced this session and last session reflect recommendations made by the BSWG.

Based on these decades of work and research, OHA is aware of shortcomings in the current laws and rules, and where amendments would improve the historic preservation process.

### SB268: Honoring the Purpose of the IBCs and Facilitating Effective Oversight

The amendments to HRS Chapter 6E that created the IBCs were passed in 1990, following the disinterment of over 1,100 men, women, and children in Kapalua, Maui in the location of the proposed Ritz-Carlton Hotel. As recognized by the legislature at the time, the public has a vital interest in the disposition of its interred persons, which is in the nature of a sacred trust for the benefit of all. Further, under the State of Hawai’i Constitution Article XII, section 7, the state has a specific trust duty to protect Native Hawaiian cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. The IBCs are an important means for the State to effectuate these important trust duties and to ensure protection of Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices.

**The current provision in HRS Chapter 6E allowing up to three representatives of development and large landowner interests on each council (other than Moloka’i which designates one landowner seat) does not align with the state’s trust responsibility to protect traditional and cultural practices.** While some landowner representatives have made meaningful contributions to IBC decisions, their participation as a designated landowner is not necessary. Culturally qualified individuals who happen to be large landowners can apply independently through established nomination processes, ensuring that council members are selected based on their cultural expertise and commitment to preserving burial sites. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the seats reserved for developer and large landowner interests, this measure ensures that the councils can serve as representatives of Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives in the historic review process, as originally intended.

**Moreover, removing the designated development/landowners seats would lower the number of council members required to meet quorum and conduct council business,**

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<sup>4</sup> Although a Joint Resolution between the Senate and House was never achieved, OHA decided to underwrite and establish the BSWG in reflection of OHA's historic preservation responsibilities in both rule and statute.

<sup>5</sup> See Report of the Burial Sites Working Group to the Hawai’i State Legislature (Feb. 2023), [BSWG Report to the 2023 Legislature - Google Docs](#). As a clarification, the report was submitted to Senator Maile Shimabukuro and Representative Mark Nakashima, sponsors of the Senate and House Resolutions respectively, in December 2023, but does not appear in the 2023 Reports to the Legislature list that is available online.

**increasing the effectiveness of the council system.** IBCs are comprised of unpaid volunteers who meet for long hours and quorum has historically been a roadblock to IBC decision making, leaving important community issues—including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants—unresolved. This bill would reduce the maximum number of council members from 9 to 7 for Hawai‘i, Maui/Lāna‘i, Moloka‘i, O‘ahu, and Kaua‘i/Ni‘ihau (the Moloka‘i council would remain at 5 members). Allowing IBCs to do business with a smaller number of members will help relieve the existing council backlog and ensure that descendants are able to provide their feedback and input into important decisions concerning protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Finally, HRS Chapter 10H recognizes Native Hawaiians as the only indigenous, aboriginal, maoli people of Hawai‘i and commits to facilitating self-governance for Native Hawaiians.** Across, the state, national, and international levels, control over the disposition of human remains and the right of indigenous peoples to the repatriation and control over their burials and ceremonial objects is an established legal principle. See, e.g., United Nations, General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, at Articles 12 and 19 (Sep. 13, 2007), A/RES/61/295. By ensuring that representation on IBCs is limited to individuals with cultural qualifications, both the structure and the role of the IBCs will better align with the self-governance rights of Native Hawaiians as recognized under HRS Chapter 10H and international standards and norms.

In closing, HRS Chapter 6E recognizes that **all** burial sites are significant and should be preserved in place whenever possible, reflecting universal norms concerning the respectful treatment of deceased persons. The law also recognizes that traditional Native Hawaiian burials are uniquely vulnerable to disinterment and desecration, and requires consultation with lineal descendants, cultural practitioners, and Native Hawaiian organizations to guide decisions regarding preservation or relocation of disturbed burials. To fulfill this kuleana, IBCs must be composed of individuals with a deep understanding of the cultural, historical, and spiritual significance of iwi kupuna, and mālama iwi practices.

Mahalo again for the Committee’s consideration of this bill. On behalf of OHA, I respectfully urge the committee to **PASS** SB268.

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

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKUAĀINA 'Ō HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P. O. BOX 621  
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DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
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COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
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RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

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BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
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CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES  
ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

Testimony of  
DAWN N. S. CHANG  
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on  
JUDICIARY  
Wednesday, February 19, 2025  
9:45 AM

State Capitol Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 268, SENATE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO ISLAND BURIAL COUNCILS

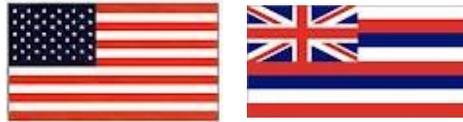
Senate Bill 268, Senate Draft 1 amends section 6E-43.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to decrease the size of the island burial councils from nine to seven members and removes the requirement for the councils to include representatives of development and large landowner interests. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

The Department recognizes the ongoing challenge with filling each of the nine seats to which the Hawai'i (HIBC), Maui/Lāna'i (MLIBC), O'ahu (OIBC), and Kaua'i/Ni'ihau (KNIBC) Island Burial Councils are entitled. The Department notes that low membership has been causing issues with quorum, which in turn hinders the councils' ability to fulfill their responsibility of protecting Native Hawaiian burial sites. HRS section 6E-43.5(f) expressly defines quorum to do business as a majority of all members to which each council is entitled, therefore, Senate Bill 268 would subsequently reduce the number of members required for quorum to conduct business.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

Center for Hawaiian Sovereignty Studies  
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Kane'ohe, HI 96744  
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Kenneth R. Conklin, Ph.D. Executive Director  
e-mail [Ken\\_Conklin@yahoo.com](mailto:Ken_Conklin@yahoo.com)  
Unity, Equality, Aloha for all



To: SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

For hearing Wednesday February 19, 2025

Re: SB 268, SD1 RELATING TO ISLAND BURIAL COUNCILS.  
Decreases the size of the Island Burial Councils from nine to seven members. Removes the requirement for the councils to include members having development and large property owner interests. (SD1)

#### TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

This bill would decrease the size of the Island Burial Councils from 9 to 7 members and remove the requirement for the councils to include members having development and large property owner interests.

It is probably a good idea to reduce the size of the Burial Councils, because some of those Councils have had difficulty assembling a sufficient number of members to constitute a quorum.

It is certainly true that lineal descendants of dead people should have a major role in deciding whether their remains must stay in the place where they were buried or whether they can be respectfully moved to a different place where property development will not intrude upon them. So-called cultural descendants should have a lesser right to participate in such decision-making, but a greater right than the general public.

However, it is grossly inappropriate to exclude landowners or business owners from such decision-making, because their property rights deserve respect.

Among the descendants of the dead people there should be greater rights for the lineal descendants and lesser but still significant rights for the cultural descendants. In the same way, among the property and business owners, there should be greater rights for owners who are directly connected to the lands where the bodies are buried, and lesser but still significant rights for the general class of owners whose lands or businesses are not directly connected to those particular lands.

Land owners and business owners, as a general class within our society, have a right to participate in setting the rules and attitudes whereby laws affecting all property rights are enacted and then respected.

People lacking Hawaiian native blood are nevertheless citizens of Hawaii with a right to participate in making the decisions which govern us all. It would be blatantly racist to exclude them from participation on the Burial Councils.

The first sentence of the first Constitution of the Kingdom of Hawaii, proclaimed in 1840 by King Kamehameha III, contains the wisdom that should be applied: "Ua hana mai ke Akua i na lahuikanaka apau i ke koko ho'okahi, e noho like lakou ma ka honua nei me ke kuikahi a me ka pomaika'i." That sentence can be translated into modern English thusly: God has made of one blood all races of people to dwell upon this Earth in unity and blessedness. E hana kakou. Aloha kakou. Let's all work together and love each other.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 4:21:28 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Luana Rivera Palacio	Testifying for Halau Napuaokamokihanaoha	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

forward to the Senate Committee on Judiciary as  
[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT TESTIMONY ON SB 268 SD1](#)  
[How to Create a Legislative Account](#) | [How to Testify](#)  
[Summary of SB 268 SD1](#)

The island burial councils were created in 1990 following the disinterment of over 1,100 Native Hawaiian burials in the location of the proposed Ritz-Carlton Kapalua.

The councils were created to give Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners and lineal descendants a role in protecting iwi kūpuna through the historic review process (HRS Chapter 6E) and to prevent future desecration.

Currently, up to 3 of 9 seats on Island Burial Councils (and 1 of 5 seats on the Moloka‘i council) are reserved for “development and large landowner interests.”

OHA’s bill would strengthen cultural perspectives and make it easier for councils to meet by eliminating the large landowner seats and reducing the number of seats. The bill also removes the Vice Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

I support SB 268 SD1 for the following reasons:

Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices: SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils: SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

Implementing the state’s trust duties: The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions,

and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Luana Rivera Palacio

808.365.7961

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 4:22:31 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelley Uyeoka	Testifying for Nohopapa Hawaii, LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*Kelley Uyeoka*

*Founding Partner, Nohopapa Hawaii, LLC*

*kelley@nohopapa.com*

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 11:02:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Megan Fox	Testifying for Malama Kaua'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The current requirements force a conflict of interest and inefficiency which is not in the best interests of the intended purpose of the councils. SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.



February 19, 2025

TESTIMONY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS  
To the Senate Committee on Judiciary

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**SB 268 SD 1 - RELATING TO ISLAND BURIAL COUNCILS**

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committee:

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Club **supports** SB 268, SD1 which amends the current requirements of the Island Burial Councils composition. We find that the proposed modifications will better facilitate the important work of the councils and will amplify the voice of Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners and lineal descendants in the historic preservation process.

Founded by Prince Kūhiō in 1918, the Hawaiian Civic Club movement is the oldest Native Hawaiian community-based advocacy movement. The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs is a not-for-profit organization that is a confederation of 60 individual and autonomous Hawaiian Civic Clubs and 3,500 members located across Hawai‘i and across the continental United States.

We appreciate your favorable consideration of this bill.

## Nā Alakaʻi o ʻAhahui o Hawaiʻi

Advocates for Native Hawaiian Justice

William S. Richardson School of Law | University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa



ʻAHAHUI  
O HAWAII  
Advocates for Native Hawaiian Justice

### Testimony of Nā Alakaʻi o ʻAhahui o Hawaiʻi

Before the Senate Committee on Judiciary

Wednesday, February 19, 2025, 9:45 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 016

415 South Beretania Street

Honolulu, HI 96813

#### Re: Support for SB 268, SD1

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and committee members,

We are the alakaʻi of ʻAhahui o Hawaiʻi (“the Hui”), an organization of student advocates at the William S. Richardson School of Law. For over 50 years, the Hui has advocated for Native Hawaiian justice in all areas of law, especially those affecting Native Hawaiian communities, traditional and customary practices, resource management, and environmental protection. Today we submit this **testimony in strong support of SB 268, SD1.**

The Hui hosts members of Native Hawaiian descent as well as allies who support Native Hawaiian rights and self-determination through the practice of law. We represent future attorneys, law-makers, and advocates who both recognize the importance of protecting iwi kūpuna and have personal connections and experience advocating for the proper treatment of discovered iwi kūpuna throughout the islands.

Two of our Hui alakaʻi are from Kauaʻi, where the recent disturbance of iwi in Wainiha highlights several issues. During the owners’ cesspool conversion project on coastal land, where iwi is commonly found, there was an ‘inadvertent discovery.’ Despite the iwi preservation laws in place, cultural and direct lineal descendents were not given a chance to be heard; culminating in descendants protesting to protect these iwi which led to their subsequent arrests. A well functioning burial council would reduce the stress on community members and county resources. This example highlights the substantial importance of cultural sensitivity in dealing with iwi discovery, and adopting provisions to improve the process for iwi kūpuna protections in the law will help. The amendments proposed will improve the island burial council’s (“IBC”) ability to function efficiently.

In the Wainiha example, the Kauaʻi IBC had not convened since 2022 due to a lack of enough volunteer personnel and inability to hold quorum because of the nine council member requirement. Part of the convening IBC’s job is to identify native Hawaiian burial sites before they are disturbed and

## Nā Alakaʻi o ʻAhahui o Hawaiʻi

Advocates for Native Hawaiian Justice

William S. Richardson School of Law | University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa



ʻAHAHUI  
O HAWAIʻI  
Advocates for Native Hawaiian Justice

allow sufficient time for descendent consultations.<sup>1</sup> This bill will reduce the IBC member requirement from nine to seven by removing the “development and large landowner interest” members from the councils. **We strongly support removing development and large landowner interests from IBC membership, which will create greater opportunities to meet quorum requirements and ultimately lead to better and properly functioning IBCs.**

The inclusion of development and large landowner interests on a council that makes decisions regarding the treatment and preservation of native Hawaiian burial sites is contradictory to the State’s interests in promoting and facilitating Native Hawaiian self-governance<sup>2</sup> and the State’s constitutional public trust obligations to protect iwi kūpuna.<sup>3</sup> It is an internationally recognized right of indigenous people to self maintain and protect cultural and religious sites, including burials and the repatriation of remains.<sup>4</sup> Designated landowner interest seats on the council only creates conflict with these inherent and protected rights. Centering cultural knowledge and expertise on the IBC will ensure the proper treatment of iwi kūpuna and mitigate potential community conflicts. This amendment will further the original intent of the historic review process and recognize the significance of native Hawaiian burials and the need for their respectful treatment that all burial sites deserve.

We respectfully urge this committee to **pass SB268 SD1**. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

Nā Alakaʻi o ʻAhahui o Hawaiʻi

Nā Alakaʻi:

B. Oriana McCallum (ʻ25)

Andrea Leialoha Mākuanani (ʻ25)

Kyle K. Moriguchi (ʻ26)

Bronson Gonzales (ʻ26)

Lenei Naipo (ʻ27)

Derek Kamakanaaloha Soong (ʻ27)

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<sup>1</sup> See Haw. Rev. Stat. § 6E-43.5(h).

<sup>2</sup> Haw. Rev. Stat. § 10H-2.

<sup>3</sup> Haw. Const. Art. XII § 7

<sup>4</sup> UN General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* : resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, Art. 12, 2 October 2007, A/RES/61/295

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 2:48:48 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kawaiohawaiki Anakalea	Testifying for OHA burial committee Oahu	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STOP DISRESPECTING OUR BURIAL GROUNDS FOR PROFIT!! No one should be on this committee that has its interests in big corporations. Oahu is a being destroyed by foreign corporations!! Stop!!! Protect Iwi Kupuna.



# SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

**LATE**

## SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

February 19, 2025 9:45 AM Conference Room 016  
In **SUPPORT** of **SB268 SD1**: Relating to Island Burial Councils

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Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committee on Judiciary,

On behalf of our 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS SB268 SD1**, which will facilitate the implementation of our historic preservation laws relating to iwi kūpuna and burial sites, by removing the large landowner and developer representative requirements for the island burial councils.

Our historic preservation law recognizes that “the historic and cultural heritage of the State is among its important assets and that the rapid social and economic developments of contemporary society threaten to destroy the remaining vestiges of this heritage.” The law accordingly relies upon interagency consultation and coordination along with other procedural and substantive protections in decisionmaking that may impact Native Hawaiian burials, cultural sites, and other historic features. These protections also include oversight and advice by our island burial councils, which are essential to preventing the irreversible loss of iwi kūpuna and burial sites that serve as a physical and spiritual foundation for traditional Kānaka ‘Ōiwi values, practices, and knowledge.

The Sierra Club emphasizes that the science and perspectives embodied in traditional ‘Ōiwi ways of life enabled hundreds of thousands of people to live sustainably on our islands for centuries - and are the key to the resilience and well-being of our current and future generations. Protecting iwi kūpuna through the proper implementation of our historic preservation law and the cultural expertise embodied in our island burial councils is therefore essential not just to defending our islands’ unique heritage, but to creating a hopeful future for our communities as a whole.

Unfortunately, there are a number of challenges that have arisen in the implementation of our historic preservation laws and the work of the island burial councils in particular. This includes the landowner and developer membership requirements that have given rise to inadvertent and potentially intentional vacancies and absences that often prevent the island burial councils from meeting and fulfilling their statutory responsibilities. By removing the requirements for landowner and developer representation on the island burial councils, the councils will have an easier time making quorum, and applying their members’ critical expertise and insight to the proper treatment of iwi kūpuna and burial sites.

For the above reasons, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** SB268 SD1. Mahalo nui for your consideration of this testimony.

**LATE**

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 10:57:12 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Melinda Healani Sonoda-Pale	Testifying for Puuhonua o Wailupe	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB268 SD1  
RELATING TO ISLAND BURIAL COUNCILS  
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
Wednesday, February 19, 2025  
9:45 AM, Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

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

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Pu‘uhonua o Wailupe in strong support of SB268 SD1, which seeks to realign the composition of Island Burial Councils to better reflect and uphold Native Hawaiian cultural values regarding the care and protection of iwi kupuna (ancestral remains).

Island Burial Councils play a crucial role in safeguarding iwi kupuna, ensuring that Native Hawaiian burial customs and traditions are honored. These councils serve as the primary decision-makers in cases involving the discovery, relocation, and protection of ancestral remains. Their responsibility is not merely administrative; it is deeply rooted in the spiritual and cultural well-being of the Native Hawaiian community.

Currently, council membership includes representatives from development and large property owner interests, which can conflict with the councils' primary mission of malama iwi kupuna (caring for ancestral remains).

The care of iwi kupuna is a sacred responsibility that should be entrusted to individuals with the cultural and historical understanding necessary to make informed and respectful decisions.

Furthermore, requiring that at least two members per council be nominated by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) ensures that knowledgeable, culturally grounded individuals guide these sensitive and significant deliberations.

SB268 SD1 is a necessary and meaningful step toward ensuring the integrity of Island Burial Councils. This bill reinforces Native Hawaiian self-determination in cultural preservation matters and ensures that iwi kupuna are treated with the utmost care and respect.

For these reasons, Pu‘uhonua o Wailupe respectfully urges the Committee to pass SB268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Healani Sonoda-Pale  
Pu‘uhonua o Wailupe

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/14/2025 10:46:30 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ruth Love	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Makes sense for developers/large land owners to also be on the councils as they are the most likely to discover remains.

Thank you

Mrs Ruth Love

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 3:56:47 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kimo Cashman, PhD

kimocashman@gmail.cpm

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 4:05:55 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Help to facilitate protection of na iwi as intended more efficiently and effectively through downsizing and ensuring the voices of current Ohana are heard.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 4:42:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Ann K Poire	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*Elizabeth Ann K. Poire*

napua\_poire2004@yahoo.com

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 4:54:09 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support SB 268 SD1 for the following reasons:

Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices: SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils: SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

Implementing the state’s trust duties: The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Lea Kamakawiwoole

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 8:02:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Trisha Kehaulani Watson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Dr. Trisha Kehaulani Watson-Sproat. I own Honua Consulting, one of only a handful of Hawaiian-owned archaeology firms in Hawaii. We have been in business for over 20 years. I am strongly opposed to this measure. It is extremely short-sighted and fails to honor both the history of this legislature and the reality of the fact that without landowner representatives, councils would have an insufficient number of members to operate. The reality is that the landowner representatives include hard-working volunteers from landowners like the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust and Kamehameha Schools. The perception of landowner representatives here is just wrong. Landowner representatives have been Hawaiians and allies of Hawaiians who have done excellent work for the councils. For example, if this bill passed, you would instantly lose both the Chair and Vice Chair of the Oahu Island Burial Council, both of who have served well, effectively and in strong support of descendants. I urge deferral of this bill.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 5:43:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheena Lopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*Sheena Lopes*

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 5:57:36 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*Theodora Furtado*

*teefurtado@msn.com*

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 6:02:30 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 6:53:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brenten Kanoa Yamane	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

I support SB 268 SD1 for the following reasons:

Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices: SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils: SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

Implementing the state’s trust duties: The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Brenten Kanoa Yamane

brentenyamane@gmail.com

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 7:27:04 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

I support SB 268 SD1.

Kanaka maoli (Hawaiians) possess unique, culturally based beliefs, customs, and practices, as well as a unique connection to iwi kupuna in Hawaii. In a majority of cases, iwi kupuna discovered in Hawaii are kanaka maoli.

I urge your committee to support SB 268 SD1 to remove the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on burial councils, and placing burial council decision making in the hands of kanaka maoli.

Kanaka maoli ancestors thank you for your support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely, Isaac Harp, aka Paka

Waimea, Hawaii 96743

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 7:31:31 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*Brandee yuen*

*Bnyuen79@gmail.com*

808-372-5516

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 7:46:41 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

As a native Hawaiian who resides on the Island of Maui, I support SB268 as it will make it easier for burial councils to meet and prevent the disruption and infringement of landowners over the decisions regarding 'iwi kupuna during the process. It is for those knowledgeable and qualified kānaka to decide and meet with one another to determine how to proceed and THEN communicate with state representatives and private landowners who are relevant. It is difficult to find enough knowledgeable people to staff these councils and landowners are not qualified to be a part of the discussion as part of the council. Again I strongly support SB268.

Mahalo,

Leila Morrison

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 8:13:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

**Aloha Judiciary Committee members,**

**I support SB268. Why should developers and large land owners who have no care for the bones of buried Hawaiians get to sit on burial councils where their only concern is their own selfish purposes and zero concern for the remains of buried native Hawaiians? For those persons to sit and vote on burial councils is a conflict of interest.**

**Respectfully,**

**Marty Martins**

**Kihei**

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 8:15:46 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 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,

We desperately need SB268 to pass to protect our iwi kupuna from developers. The whole purpose of protecting iwi are from those that want to develop and disturb their resting place. They do NOT need a seat at the table as part of our O'ahu Burial Council. Please support SB 268!!

Mahalo!

Malia Lum-Kawaihoa Marquez

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 8:30:49 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

aloha mai kakou,

"development and large landowners" do not have any actual interest for our people - HAWAIIANS, and our place HAWAI'I, they only have self interest. So to have seats, 1/3 of them to be reserved to make decisions for our ancestors, our literal, physical iwi form of ancestors is egregious, violent and unacceptable. as settlers in our territories you are indebted to our people and our place, for Hawai'i, literally allows you to breathe.

thus, being informed on how to be an aspiring ally is the minimum starting point to reciprocate and be a contributor - and not a parasite. thus, supporting this bill is a good, SMALL, step in being oriented towards aspiring allyship. whereas, shall landowners have say in the remains of your ancestors? in your ancestral birth sands? yes or no?

be informed on how to be an aspiring ally in our territories, otherwise you contribute to the violent vampirism of our place and people - which is one in the same. we are calling you to recognize you are in our house, and reciprocity to that generosity from which you benefit, upholds our place for all who are blessed to reside here, and is owed to us as descendants of this place. whereas Hawaiians make Hawai'i, Hawai'i. Thus our ancestors in all their forms, is for us as descendants to steward.

johanna kapomaikai stone

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 9:10:31 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Debra M Javar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully SUPPORT sb268. This would help strengthen cultural perspectives. Mahalo,

Debra M Javar

Kona, Hawai'i

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 9:12:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

**Time to stop deceiving us, the Kanaka maoli and acknowledge ou basic cultural rights.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 9:53:33 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
ANITA MAE K NAONE	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

I support SB 268 SD1 for the following reasons:

Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices: SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils: SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

Implementing the state’s trust duties: The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Anita Mae K. Naone

(808) 375-7301

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 9:57:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*Scott W. Kekama Amona*

*swamona@gmail.com*

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 10:31:29 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jess Ivey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their pū kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner seats, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for quorum requirements, reducing the number of landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important decisions unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members ensures that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian cultural resources, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties. Ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*[Your Name]*

*[Your Contact Information]*

[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT TESTIMONY ON SB 268 SD1](#)

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**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2025 10:51:45 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e ka Luna Ho‘omalu Rhoads, Pani Luna Ho‘omalu Gabbard, a me nā lālā no ke Kōmike Ho‘okolokolo ma ka ‘Aha Kenekoa a pau:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

János Samu  
janoss@aol.com

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 12:28:25 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

I support SB268 and I agree with the terms and language that states "Decreases the size of the Island Burial Councils from nine to seven members. Removes the requirement for the councils to include members having development and large property owner interests" because I live near a big land developer that has just recently bulldozed the mauka area to make room for their electric bicycling. I am not sure if they have a cultural consultant to monitor their development activities but I can see important trees and markers being removed. The Burial Council needs a solid foundation and they need better accountability. The bones of our ancestors are very important and need to be respected.

Mahalo nui loa,

Kauwila Sheldon

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 1:11:38 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support SB268 so that Kānaka Maoli have greater control and a stronger voice in taking care of their lands.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 2:16:26 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

I am writing in strong support of SB 268 SD1, which aims to refine the composition of the Island Burial Councils to better reflect and protect Native Hawaiian cultural practices concerning the care of iwi kūpuna (ancestral remains). Here are my reasons for supporting this bill:

**\*\*Cultural Integrity:\*\*** The bill directly addresses the need for councils to be composed of individuals who truly understand and respect Native Hawaiian culture, history, and burial customs. By removing the seats reserved for development and large landowner interests, we ensure that decisions are made with a focus on cultural preservation rather than economic considerations.

**\*\*Efficiency in Decision-Making:\*\*** By reducing the number of council members from nine to seven, this bill will make it easier for councils to achieve quorum and make timely decisions. This change will be crucial in addressing the backlog of issues related to the recognition and protection of burial sites, allowing for more effective governance over these sacred matters.

**\*\*Alignment with Trust Obligations:\*\*** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional obligation to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices. SB 268 SD1 aligns with this duty by ensuring that the councils are predominantly composed of individuals knowledgeable in Native Hawaiian practices, thereby strengthening the state's commitment to its fiduciary responsibilities.

**\*\*Community Representation:\*\*** This bill supports greater representation from the community and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, which is essential for ensuring that decisions regarding burial sites are made with deep respect for cultural nuances and the wishes of lineal and cultural descendants.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 268 SD1. I urge the committee to pass this bill to enhance the protection and reverence for our kūpuna, ensuring their iwi are cared for with the dignity and respect they deserve.

Mahalo for considering my testimony.

Tiare Smith



**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 4:39:29 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sonya H Davis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

I support SB 268 SD1 for the following reasons:

Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices: SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils: SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

Implementing the state’s trust duties: The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify

Sonya HIlaniwai Davis

7656 E Desert Honeysuckle Drive, Gold Canyon, AZ 85118

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 4:42:33 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Gerald Montano

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 6:23:37 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lu Ann Mahiki Lankford-Faborito	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Complete support to keep Hawaiian perspective on the council

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 6:25:47 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Luther	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 6:43:13 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

02-17-25

RE: SB268 SD1

Aloha mai,

I am insupport of this bill, which eliminates "development and large landowner interests" seats on Island burial Councils. This not only makes 'Ōiwi Voices, in my humble opinion, more authentic and certainly more culturally competent.

Me ka mahalo,

John A H Tomoso+, MSW, ACSW

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

8808-280-1749

john.a.h.tomoso@gmail.com

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 6:55:32 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*[Veneeta ACSON]*

*acson99@gmail.com*

8082218008

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 6:59:10 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JarraeTehani Manasas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

I am writing in support of SB 268 SD1. Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission - to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise and **removing the requirement** that developer and large landowner interest have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils, would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues, including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants, unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

The state of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices including those related to mālama iwi. Island burial councils are important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the consideration, please support SB 268 SD1.

JarraeTehani Manasas, Kailua-Kona Hawai‘i

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 7:27:20 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha

Please pass this legislation to respect the integrity of iwi kūpuna and the future of Hawai'i . There is no reason to seat foreign developers at a table speaking to, of, or for the protection of the most intrinsic of humane Hawaiian values.

This is a decision many generations overdue. We must consciously act to repair the damages done and return the power of life and historical truth to those wherein it resides.

Mahalo

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 7:47:45 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou, I would like to submit testimony in favor of SB268 SD1 relating to island burial councils. Developers and large landowners do not belong in the determination process about what to do with 'iwi kūpuna. Only lineal descendants and culture keepers should be involved in that kind of decision making and protocol. I support the decision to permanently remove Developers and large landowners from the councils.

Mahalo nui loa,

Malialani Dullanty

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state's trust duties:** The State of Hawai'i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

For too long, many have sat by the wayside and let developers change our land forever and profit from the changes. The kanaka maoli need to be empowered.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Moana Heu

[moanacarolyn@gmail.com](mailto:moanacarolyn@gmail.com); 808 391-1204 cel

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 9:17:06 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

The voices of Kānaka should be the most represented on this body.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 9:19:41 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

submitting my strong support for this bill - so much of what is important has been lost or compromised by development and basic american greed.

kū kia‘i ‘āina

kū kia‘i iwi

mahalo

mary drayer

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 9:28:22 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support SB 268 SD1 for the following reasons:

Perpetuation of malama iwi practices: SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and malama iwi kupuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils: SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues - including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants - unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

Implementing the state's trust duties: The State of Hawaii has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to malama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Tyler Bright (tkjbright@gmail.com)

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 9:40:03 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*Ashley Mainani Lee, BA, MS4*

*John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii at Mānoa*

*808-258-9689 | amlee4@hawaii.edu*

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB268 SD1.**

SB268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their mission to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

The State of Hawai'i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB268 SD1.

Mahalo,<sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub> na U'ilani Naipo, he kauwā no nā iwi kūpuna

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 10:04:04 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

support

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 10:12:49 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Angus: Please assist in passing SB268 in support of Lahui/Iwi Burial Sites. No pro development large landholders should have a voting seat/presence in continued land grab for self profit. Complete conflict of intrests.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 10:22:12 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nana-Honua Manuel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Please approve.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 10:31:48 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael A Manuela	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support. Mahalo, Michael A Manuel, lineal descendant, Kiolakaa/Pueo & Kamaoa, Ka'u, Moku o Keawe

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 11:31:35 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noah Humphrey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in support of SB 268 SD1 for the following reasons:

1. **Perpetuating Mālama Iwi Practices:**

SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission of protecting and mālama iwi kūpuna. By prioritizing cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement for developer and large landowner seats on each council, this bill ensures that Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives are authentically represented. This approach honors the holistic connection between people, land, and ancestors, fostering a deeper sense of community identity and continuity.

2. **Enhancing Burial Council Effectiveness:**

SB 268 reduces the number of members needed to achieve quorum by eliminating the landowner seats. Historically, meeting quorum requirements has been challenging, causing delays in addressing significant community issues, such as the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants. By enabling councils to operate more efficiently, this measure supports a holistic approach to decision-making, ensuring that the voices of descendants are heard and that ancestral sites are preserved with cultural sensitivity.

3. **Fulfilling the State’s Trust Responsibilities:**

The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional obligation to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils play a crucial role in upholding this duty by ensuring that council decisions reflect Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives and by empowering Native Hawaiian authority over burial sites. This measure reinforces the holistic responsibility of stewardship, balancing cultural preservation with contemporary community needs.

As someone deeply committed to mentoring, coaching, and community development, I recognize the importance of cultural identity and heritage in guiding the next generation. My experiences in leadership, mentoring youth, and working in various community roles have shown me that protecting cultural traditions and ancestral ties is foundational to building resilient and thriving communities.

Mahalo for considering this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo nui,  
Noah Humphrey

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 12:54:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tasman Kekai Mattox	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a native Hawaiian with family buried here, please continue to respect and protect our burial grounds.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 1:06:28 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anna Symonds	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,  
Anna Symonds

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 2:14:59 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimmer Horsen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha chairs and leaders,**

**I Kimmer Horsen support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*Kimmer Horsen*

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 2:31:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support sb268

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 3:23:04 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Kēpa‘a-Tam Sing	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

Mahalo for the opportunity to support testimony regarding proposed legislation SB268 SD1.

I **oppose** SB268 SD1, which seeks to reduce the number of Island Burial Council (IBC) members from nine to seven and remove the designated seats for large landowners and developers. While the intent of this bill may be to strengthen cultural oversight of burial protections and improve quorum, it fails to address the underlying issues with respect to protecting iwi kūpuna.

Under HRS §6E-43.5(b), the IBC is already structured to ensure Kānaka ‘Ōiwi representation holds the majority, with an existing ratio of no less than 2 to 1 over appointed development and landowner representatives. The removal of these seats does not increase Kānaka ‘Ōiwi decision-making power, as that authority is already secured. Instead, it eliminates an opportunity to hold landowners accountable and removes a critical space for them to directly engage with lineal and cultural descendants and be educated in the appropriate treatment of iwi kūpuna. The core issue is not the number or composition of the IBC, it is the systemic failure of the State of Hawai‘i to properly enforce burial laws and manage the IBC effectively.

The Burial Sites Working Group (BSWG) 2023 report identified the challenges facing the IBC system which includes delays in appointing new members, lack of enforcement against burial law violations, and inadequate support for IBC members as the most significant barriers to protecting iwi kūpuna. Reducing council size will not solve these issues and may worsen quorum issues if vacancies remain unfilled.

Rather than amending HRS §6E-43.5(b), a more effective approach may be for OHA to take on a direct stewardship role in the protection of iwi kūpuna, ensuring councils are properly supported and enforcing compliance with burial protection laws. SB268 SD 1 does not cure the core problems, it only reduces the number of IBC members without addressing the chronic failures that continue to leave iwi kūpuna vulnerable.

Ola nā iwi.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Lauren Kepa'a-Tam Sing

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 3:37:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

I support SB 268 SD1 for the following reasons:

Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices: SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils: SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

Implementing the state’s trust duties: The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1,

Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros

(808)866-7409

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 3:45:45 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ronnie K. Kikala	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill SB268 SD1. ‘A‘ole!

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 4:27:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Real Estate and Developer persons usually just go ahead and box up our iwi and then cause delays in the burial council until they can hide the results. They do not usually show any respect for our Hawaiian culture. I am not Hawaiian but I have seen this for myself and have heard the developers and builders onsite show their disrespect. In order to facilitate reasonable action on the burial councils, it is better not to have delays caused by commercial interests.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 4:44:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mana Kaleilani Caceres	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB268 SD1**

I strongly oppose SB268 SD1, which seeks to reduce the number of Island Burial Council (IBC) members from nine to seven and remove designated seats for large landowners and developers. While this bill may intend to strengthen cultural oversight and improve quorum, it fails to address the real challenges in protecting iwi kūpuna.

Under HRS §6E-43.5(b), Kānaka ‘Ōiwi already hold a secured majority on the IBC, with no less than a 2-to-1 ratio over development and landowner representatives. Removing these seats does not enhance Native Hawaiian decision-making power—it eliminates a key opportunity to hold developers and landowners accountable while removing a critical space for education and direct engagement on the appropriate treatment of iwi kūpuna.

The core issue is not the council’s composition but the State’s systemic failure to enforce burial protection laws and support the IBC. The 2023 Burial Sites Working Group report highlighted the real barriers: delays in appointing members, lack of enforcement against burial law violations, and inadequate support for IBC operations. Reducing the council’s size will not fix these issues and may worsen quorum problems if vacancies remain unfilled.

Rather than amending HRS §6E-43.5(b), a more effective approach would be ensuring OHA takes a direct stewardship role in protecting iwi kūpuna and enforcing compliance with burial laws. SB268 SD1 does nothing to resolve these failures—it only reduces council membership while iwi kūpuna remain at risk.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to reject SB268 SD1.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 4:59:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*Austin Hussain*

austin.hussain@gmail.com

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

I am a full time resident of Waikapū, Maui, and I have studied 'Ōlelo Hawai'i for 4 years in the University of Hawai'i system. **I support SB 268 SD1** because my studies have helped me understand the importance of iwi kūpuna to the Hawaiian culture and also that Native Hawaiian voices are the most important voices on issues of Hawaiian cultural practices. I am also concerned about the over-development of the 'āina without regard to its impact on Hawaiian culture.

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state's trust duties:** The State of Hawai'i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Patricia Gotschalk

808-707-2001

1391 Ho'olako Street

Wailuku HI 96793

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 5:40:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Committee Members,

My name is Kaleiheana Stormcrow and I am writing in **strong SUPPORT** for HB268, which would decrease the size of the Island Burial Councils and remove the requirement for the councils to include members having development and large property owner interests.

Developers have no business (pun intended) on the Island Burial Councils. Large land owner interests should not be allowed to be on boards or councils that are making decisions for our ‘āina, and especially not for our ‘iwi kūpuna, who deserve to rest in peace and perpetuity where they are resting now.

Mahalo for your time and the opportunity to comment on this bill.

Kaleiheana Stormcrow, Mountain View

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 7:51:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Summer P Noland	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. It would strengthen cultural perspectives.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 8:30:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dane K. U. Maxwell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

My name is Dane Uluwehiokalani and I oppose SB268 SD1, which seeks to reduce Island Burial Council (IBC) members and remove designated seats for landowners and developers. While intended to strengthen cultural oversight and improve quorum, this bill fails to address the real issue: the State's failure to enforce burial laws.

Under HRS §6E-43.5(b), Kānaka ʻŌiwi already hold a majority on the IBC. Removing landowner and developer seats does not increase their authority but instead eliminates a crucial space for accountability and education on iwi kūpuna protections.

Mahalo,

Dane Uluwehiokalani Maxwell

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 8:51:56 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou 'O Alfred Keaka Hiona Medeiros kou inoa no Wai'anae mai au. I'm a kia'i 'iwi and protector of our 'Iwi kūpuna and believe it's very vital that we all support SB268, as we need to do everything we can to mālama na 'iwi kūpuna and protect those that came before us. This bill will stop the conflict of interest which is the landowner or entity that "resides" on the property of which our kūpuna lay to rest at, as well as ensures the right people are involved in the protection process, as the landowner and entities normally only care about themselves and what they want and have no concern with our 'iwi kūpuna. I myself had to physically stop desecration from continuing multiple times, from 'Oahu to Kaua'i and will give my life to ensure our kūpuna whether living or not, is protected. So I ask that you please pass SB268, to ensure we protect our 'iwi, because even when they're dead, they're still being displaced. Mahalo nui and mahalo to all our kia'i 'iwi that protect throughout ko Hawai'i pae 'āina.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 9:25:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB 268 SD1

Hearing Date: 02/19/2025

To: Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

From: Kepola Kawaiala Allen

Subject: Strong Support for SB 268 SD1 – Protecting Native Hawaiian Land and Burial Rights

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in strong support of SB268, which is necessary to protect Native Hawaiian burial sites and ensure that decision-making remains in the hands of those who have the cultural knowledge and responsibility to care for our iwi kūpuna.

For too long, large landowners and developers have had undue influence over burial councils, prioritizing profit over cultural preservation. SB268 ensures that burial councils are led by Native Hawaiians who understand and respect the sacred responsibility of mālama iwi. By removing the requirement for developer and landowner representation, this bill restores the councils’ true purpose: to safeguard ancestral remains and uphold Hawaiian traditions.

Additionally, SB268 will help burial councils function more effectively by reducing quorum requirements, allowing meetings to proceed without unnecessary delays. Too often, critical decisions—such as recognizing cultural and lineal descendants—have been stalled due to the inability to convene. By streamlining this process, the bill ensures that burial sites receive the respect and protection they deserve.

This measure aligns with the State of Hawai‘i’s constitutional duty to uphold Native Hawaiian cultural practices. Protecting iwi kūpuna is not just a Native Hawaiian issue—it is a matter of justice, respect, and fulfilling the state’s legal obligations to its Indigenous people.

I urge the committee to pass SB268 and stand with Native Hawaiians in protecting our ancestors and preserving our culture.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kepola Kawaiala Allen

kepolaallen@gmail.com

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 10:06:01 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alexander K.D. McNicoll	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in STRONG SUPPORT of **SB268 SD1**.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 10:57:55 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Diane Fitzsimmons	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB268 SD1, which seeks to reduce the number of Island Burial Council (IBC) members from nine to seven and remove the designated seats for large landowners and developers. While the intent of this bill may be to strengthen cultural oversight of burial protections and improve quorum, it fails to address the underlying issues with respect to protecting Iwi Kūpuna.

The core issue is not the number or composition of the IBC, it is the systemic failure of the State of Hawai'i to properly enforce burial laws and manage the IBC effectively.

The Burial Sites Working Group (BSWG) 2023 report identified the challenges facing the IBC system which includes delays in appointing new members, lack of enforcement against burial law violations, and inadequate support for IBC members as the most significant barriers to protecting Iwi Kūpuna.

SB268 SD 1 does not cure the core problems, it only reduces the number of IBC members without addressing the chronic failures that continue to leave Nā Iwi Kūpuna vulnerable.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 11:17:42 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support this measure

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 2:43:16 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I support SB268 SD1 because it supports Hawaiian Culture and Hawaiian Practices.

Aloha.

Mahalo,

Napua Froman

nfroman@hotmail.com

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 5:56:14 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
P Hauoli'ipo Wright	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state's trust duties:** The State of Hawai'i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*P Hauoli'ipo Wright*

hauoli.ipo@gmail.com / 808.268.9974

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 7:29:22 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

I am writing in strong support of SB268.

Passing this bill would strengthen cultural perspectives and make it easier for councils to meet by eliminating the large landowner seats and reducing council size.

The interests of large land owners and developers runs in opposition to the kuleana to mālama ‘iwi kūpuna. Currently, the large landowner members are not required to be cultural practitioners or lineal descendants, so including them in the council to make decisions around the care of our sacred ancestral remains does not make any sense. This bill will allow the OHA council to better mālama ‘iwi kūpuna.

I urge you to please pass SB 268.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony,

Lorraine Waianuhea

Honolulu, HI 96816

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 7:39:36 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michelle Pescaia	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

OPPOSE. I OPPOSE SB268 SD1 because this structure is intended to provide an opportunity for Native Hawaiians and large landowners to learn from one another and collaborate in finding solutions that best meet all stakeholders' interests. It is not just about the decisions being made, but about the process, we need robust information, multiple perspectives, and rigorous conversation.

Reducing the size makes it harder to meet quorum. I know this because I have sat two terms and chaired the Molokai island Burial Council.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs is obligated to offer nominations to fill seats. Perhaps another agency could balance that by providing the nominations for the large landowner seats, or at least support promoting the opportunity to serve the state in this capacity - share flyers or cross-post on their websites when vacant seats are looking for volunteers. Let's start holding others accountable.

Perhaps it's not the landowners who should be sitting at the table, perhaps it's the developers?

The potential repercussions include animosity and a sense of "unfairness" should there be no representation of land owner or developer interest. It erodes the integrity of the decisions and limits the mana of the actions taken. In the end, complete collapse of this process is at risk.

Mahalo.

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 7:47:31 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

Aloha, my name is Keala Fung and I urge you to please SUPPORT SB268, which lowers the number of Island Burial Council members from 9 to 7, and removes the requirement for the councils to include members having development and large property owner interests. I feel that this would make it more equitable for someone to be able to be a member of the council.

Mahalo for your time,

Keala Fung, Honolulu

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 8:02:03 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lion Fiyah	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*Lion Fiyah*

*lionfiyah@gmail.com*

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 8:03:12 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Torie Hoopii	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Torie Hoopii,

I am a kupa from Lahaina, Maui, and a direct descendant of this sacred wahi pana. My husband is Richard Hoopii Jr., whose father, Richard Hoopii Sr. of Kahakuloa, Maui, fought to protect the ‘iwi kupuna in Honokahua, where our ancestors and Uncle Charles Maxwell are buried. My uncle, Kahu Glenn Kamaka, was born in Honokahua; his ancestors are also buried there.

On their behalf, I am submitting testimony to oppose this bill 268 SB RELATING TO ISLAND BURIAL COUNCILS.

These are the many kupuna who instilled these laws to protect ‘iwi kupuna, which you are now trying to change. They did this for a reason, and after praying and seeking council, it doesn’t sit well with my na‘au.

Also, some of the wording in this bill is misleading.

For this reason, I am opposing this bill.

Mahalo,  
Torie Hoopii

February 18, 2025  
Joseph A. Carvalho  
POB 776, 53378 Old Halaula Mill Rd  
Kapaa, HI 96755  
Cell: 808-987-5366  
kohala1@yahoo.com

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state's trust duties:** The State of Hawai'i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Joseph A. Carvalho  
Halaula, Kohala, Hawaii

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 8:09:37 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

Written Testimony in Support of SB 268 SD1.

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **\*\*strong support\*\*** of **\*SB 268 SD1\***. This measure is critical to ensuring the protection and perpetuation of Native Hawaiian cultural practices and the preservation of iwi kūpuna.

I support **\*SB 268 SD1\*** for the following reasons:

**\*\*Perpetuation of Mālama Iwi Practices\*\***

This bill strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and **\*\*mālama iwi kūpuna\*\***. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, **\*SB 268 SD1\*** removes the requirement that developers and large landowners hold reserved seats on each council. This ensures that the councils will better represent **\*\*Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives\*\***, empowering them to address burial protection needs in a culturally appropriate manner.

**\*\*Increasing the Effectiveness of Burial Councils\*\***

The removal of landowner seats will also improve the **\*\*functionality and efficiency\*\*** of the Island Burial Councils. Historically, quorum requirements have hindered the councils' ability to convene, leaving important decisions unresolved. This backlog has kept issues such as

recognizing lineal and cultural descendants and protecting burial sites in limbo. Allowing councils to meet with fewer members will help alleviate these challenges, ensuring that **\*\*descendants and community members have a voice\*\*** in the care and preservation of burial sites.

**\*\*Implementing the State's Trust Duties\*\***

The **\*\*State of Hawai'i has a constitutional obligation\*\*** to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to **\*\*mālama iwi\*\***. Island Burial Councils are a key mechanism through which the state fulfills these trust duties. By prioritizing Native Hawaiian representation and decision-making authority over burial sites, **\*SB 268 SD1\*** reaffirms the state's commitment to honoring its constitutional responsibilities and protecting Native Hawaiian cultural heritage.

**\*\*Mahalo nui loa\*\*** for considering this testimony in **\*\*strong support\*\*** of **\*SB 268 SD1\***. I respectfully urge the committee to pass this important measure to better protect iwi kūpuna and perpetuate Native Hawaiian cultural practices.

**\*\*Mahalo for your time and consideration.\*\***

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Ronnie Inagaki

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 8:57:58 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brandy Caceres	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB268 SD1, which seeks to reduce the Island Burial Council (IBC) from nine to seven members and remove designated seats for large landowners and developers. While the bill may intend to improve cultural oversight and quorum, it does not address the real challenges in protecting iwi kūpuna.

HRS §6E-43.5(b) already ensures Kānaka ‘Ōiwi hold a strong majority on the IBC, with at least a 2-to-1 ratio over landowner and developer representative interests. Eliminating these seats does not enhance Kānaka ‘Ōiwi decision-making power, instead, it removes a key accountability mechanism for developers and landowners, limiting opportunities for direct engagement and education on proper burial protections. The real issue is not the council’s composition but the State of Hawai‘i’s failure to enforce burial laws and effectively manage the IBC.

The 2023 Burial Sites Working Group (BSWG) report highlights systemic issues such as delays in appointing members, weak enforcement of burial laws, and inadequate support for IBC councils. Reducing council size does nothing to address these failures and may even worsen quorum challenges if vacancies remain unfilled.

Rather than restructuring the IBC, a more meaningful solution would be for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to take on a greater stewardship role in burial protection, ensuring the IBC has the necessary resources and that burial laws are properly enforced. SB268 SD1 does not resolve the real issues—it simply reduces the size of the council while iwi kūpuna remain vulnerable due to ongoing systemic neglect.

Ola Nā Iwi!

na Kalehua Kamohali‘i Caceres

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 8:59:16 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Penn Pantumsinchai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state’s trust duties:** The State of Hawai‘i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

*Penn Pantumsinchai*

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 9:18:55 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kailana Moa-eli	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this Bill as a kanaka maoli we should be responsible for our ancestors Bones

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 9:21:54 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy M. McPherson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

**I support SB 268 SD1** for the following reasons:

In my past life as a planner for the County of Maui on Molokai, I directly experienced the challenges posed by the Molokai Burial Council not being able to achieve quorum and make decisions due to the fact that for many years there was no Large Landowner representation. This requirement defeats the purpose of the Burial Councils and Chapter 6E, HRS and undermines the Councils' ability to conduct effective and timely implementation of the Administrative Rules governing proper and culturally appropriate treatment of iwi kupuna.

**Perpetuation of mālama iwi practices:** SB 268 strengthens the ability of Island Burial Councils to fulfill their primary mission: to protect and mālama iwi kūpuna. By centering cultural knowledge and expertise, and removing the requirement that developer and large landowner interests have reserved seats on each council, this bill ensures the councils will represent Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives.

**Increasing the effectiveness of burial councils:** SB 268 would also decrease the number of individuals necessary for the councils to meet by removing the landowner seats. Historically, quorum requirements have made it difficult for councils to convene, leaving important community issues – including the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants – unresolved. Allowing councils to do business with fewer members will help relieve this backlog and ensure that descendants have a voice in the protection and preservation of burial sites.

**Implementing the state's trust duties:** The State of Hawai'i has a constitutional mandate to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices, including those related to mālama iwi. Island Burial Councils are an important means for the state to effectuate its trust duties by ensuring that Native Hawaiians cultural perspectives are properly reflected in council decisions, and by empowering Native Hawaiian decision-making authority over Native Hawaiian burial sites.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 268 SD1.

**Testimony of Laulani Teale, MPH  
on SB 268, RELATING TO ISLAND BURIAL COUNCILS**

 laulani.org

**Feb 18, 2025**

Testimony in **Support** of SB268 SD1

Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Hearing Date: February 19, 2025

**LATE**

Aloha e Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Laulani Teale, and I submit this testimony in support of SB268 SD1, which strengthens the integrity of our Island Burial Councils (IBCs) by ensuring that their composition aligns with the values of the descendants of these burials.

The presence of developers and large landowners on the IBCs has long been a contradiction to this kuleana, as their primary interests are often in direct conflict with the protection of burials. Removing this requirement is a necessary and long-overdue step toward ensuring that these councils truly serve their intended purpose: to protect our ancestors with the respect and care they deserve. By prioritizing representatives who understand and uphold Native Hawaiian burial customs, SB268 SD1 reaffirms that the responsibility for 'iwi should rest with those who hold cultural knowledge, not those with economic or development-driven motivations. It is a fundamental matter of self-determination to care for our own ancestors according to our own practices, without external pressures that compromise their protection.

I urge this committee to pass SB268 SD1 and to continue supporting efforts that strengthen the protection of 'iwi and uphold Kanaka Maoli rights.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Me ke Aloha,

*Laulani*

Laulani Teale

**LATE**

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 1:30:49 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support this bill

**LATE**

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 3:43:44 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

This measure will help to address the longstanding quorum problem with our island burial councils, while also ensuring that burial councils can focus on their critical work in ensuring the appropriate treatment of iwi kūpuna. Mahalo!

**LATE**

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 4:42:10 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

I stand in strong support of SB268.SD1. Island residents who know the cultural history of the area, should be included in these councils, along with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, not land developers and people who believe they own large amount of land in our islands. Kamehameha and his descendants protected us and continue to as the Kingdom of Hawaii!

**LATE**

**SB-268-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 9:10:57 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I support SB 268 in the strongest possible terms. For too long, it is my understanding that our burial council on Kaua'i has been unable to even meet because of the large landowner requirement.

Large landowners and developers presence on the burial council is completely inappropriate in the first place. It is demonstrates the state of Hawaii's bias in favor of landowners and developers over the spiritual wellbeing of all of Hawaii's people.

It also allows landowners and developers to sway and hold up the work of the burial council, stopping them from doing their VITAL work of protecting iwi. We must support iwi protectors in their work, and making way for them to have the burial council and its decisions made only by cultural practitioners is extremely basic and also extremely necessary. Please support SB268

Mahalo,

Lana B.