



*KŪKULU KE EA A KANALOA*  
**KAHO`OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION**

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COMMISSION MEMBERS

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Michael K. Nāho`opi`i

*Executive Director*

**Testimony of**  
**MICHAEL K. NĀHO`OPTI**  
**Executive Director**

**Before the House Committee on**

**WATER, LAND & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**Wednesday, January 30, 2019**  
**9:00 AM**  
**State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of**  
**HOUSE BILL 455**  
**RELATING TO THE KAHO`OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION**

House Bill 455 appropriates funds for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission to effectively meet the unique challenges of restoring, preserving and determining the appropriate uses of the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve and to fund two full time equivalent (2.00 FTE) permanent positions, Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Specialists, for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. The Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) strongly supports this measure.

In the State's FY18/FY19 approved biennium budget, Act 49 SLH 2017, KIRC was authorized 15 temporary positions and \$1,065,147 (FY18) and \$1,097,047 (FY19) in general funds for the management and restoration of the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve. Of these funds, \$883,647 is set aside each year for Personal Services. The remaining balance is allocated for \$93,000 each year for current lease payments for the KIRC's Wailuku office and \$88,500 (FY18) and \$120,000 (FY19) for Maui-based cost such as office and commission operation expenses and travel.

The additional funding is necessary to support volunteers, contractors and KIRC staff while on Kaho`olawe. This includes housing, on-island transportation, repair and maintenance of our buildings and infrastructure and safety equipment and supplies. Additionally, the funds are necessary to support the operations, repair and maintenance of the KIRC's landing craft, which is the primary means of transporting people, supplies and equipment to Kaho`olawe.

Due to the vacancy of the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Specialist II and III positions in 2016, the KIRC was not able to include these positions with those authorized in Act 49. These positions are necessary to support necessary safety and logistic functions as well as on-island restoration efforts and sustainability field projects while on Kaho`olawe and act as boat crew while on KIRC vessels.

These positions are critically vital as the KIRC has observed a recent increase in unpredictability and severity of weather and ocean conditions in the waters surrounding Maui and Kaho`olawe most likely due to climate change and global warming, which has resulted in an increase need for additional manpower to safely and effectively operate the KIRC ocean vessel. The KIRC operates a landing craft between Maui and Kaho`olawe to transport staff, volunteers, materials and equipment between the island to support the on-island restoration efforts. The KIRC's currently designated boat crew of two consist of our Maintenance and Vessel Operator and our Logistic Specialist, other KIRC staff augment the boat crew as available. The current boat crew needs additional manpower to handling cargo, operating lines and equipment and as safety look-outs as we have been encountering rougher weather conditions and more boat traffic between Kaho`olawe and Maui.

Our current Kaho`olawe Field teams also need additional field support as we have been successful in expanding our restoration efforts to create more native dryland forest habitats, expand beach restoration and shoreline protection efforts, cultivate food sustainability and increase on-island water generation, collection, storage and distribution systems.

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Unity, Equality, Aloha for all



To: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Re: HB 455

RELATING TO THE KAHO'OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION.  
Appropriates funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for support of the Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission, including 2 full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) permanent positions.

For hearing on Wednesday, January 30, 2019

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

This bill proposes to transfer \$1,000,000 taxpayer dollars to the Department of Land and Natural Resources to provide funding for specified programs of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission for fiscal year 2019-2020, plus an additional \$72,000 for two FTE staff positions; and then the same amounts again for FY 2020-2021.

It's interesting that last year, 2018, the same legislation, SB3027 and HB2594, demanded only \$600,000 instead of \$1,000,000 to support the activities of KIRC. That's a 67% inflation rate in a single year! Yes it's an island, but does that mean we must spend like drunken sailors?

Please do not place this burden on the taxpayers of the State of Hawaii.

Let OHA pay all costs associated with the rehabilitation of Kaho'olawe -- an island which this legislature and OHA both believe will be handed over in the near future to the Hawaiian tribe which OHA has been working so hard to create for at least 19 years.

As the language of this bill points out, "Pursuant to section 6K-9, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the management and control of the Kaho'olawe island reserve will be transferred to a sovereign Native Hawaiian entity upon its recognition by the state and federal governments. This event is anticipated to occur within the timeframe of the 2026 strategic plan."

In Act 195 (2011) this legislature set in motion a process now underway to create a Hawaiian tribe. The U.S. Department of Interior recently proclaimed a regulation whereby that tribe can get federal recognition -- the final rule 43CFR50 proclaimed by the U.S. Department of Interior by publication in the Federal Register on October 14, 2016. Both Act 195 and the Department of Interior regulation insist that the Hawaiian tribe must be exclusively for Native Hawaiians, and that anyone lacking a drop of the magic blood must be ruthlessly excluded.

According to OHA trustee Lei Ahu Isa, OHA has used approximately \$33 Million of state government money over the years to lobby for federal recognition of a Hawaiian tribe either through the Akaka bill or through advertising and racial registration programs both in Hawaii and on the mainland. OHA provided the entire funding for an election of delegates and a monthlong meeting in 2006 which produced a

proposed constitution for the tribe. OHA has repeatedly pledged that when a Hawaiian tribe has achieved federal recognition, OHA will transfer all its assets to the tribe.

If the tribe is successful in creating itself and getting federal recognition, section 6K-9 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes guarantees that the island of Kaho'olawe will immediately be ripped away from the State of Hawaii and handed over to the Hawaiian tribe, to which people with no native blood are forbidden to belong.

This legislature simply must not confiscate tax dollars from 80% of Hawaii's people for a project which they will be racially excluded from.

It would be foolish and immoral for the State of Hawaii to spend taxpayer dollars collected from 100% of Hawaii's people of all races to pay for upgrades to an island which is expected to be removed from the State of Hawaii and handed over to a sovereign "nation" [tribe] restricted by law to one racial group whose people are perhaps 20% of Hawaii's people, most of whom will probably not even join the tribe. Once the tribe has been created there will be negotiations between the State of Hawaii vs. the tribe to decide how much additional land and money the State will give to the tribe. The State should not give away resources before the negotiations even begin.

OHA's most recent annual report (2017) shows that OHA has total assets of more than \$662 million. And it continues getting more payments of state government money (ceded land revenues plus legislative appropriations) every year, including a bill in this year's legislature demanding \$35 million per year from ceded land revenues.

Enough already! OHA can easily afford funding for Kaho'olawe. Let OHA pay whatever money it wishes to pay to KIRC to rehabilitate Kaho'olawe -- an island which this legislature and OHA both believe will be handed over in the near future to the Hawaiian tribe which OHA is working so hard to create.

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 10:32:03 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
pookela hanson	Honolulu Fire Department Explorer Program	Support	No

Comments:

I humbly ask for your support of this bill. The HFD Explorers were fortunate to volunteer on Kahoolawe in 2017 and 2018 as part of our annual team building activity. The HFD Explorer Program is a program aimed at promoting fire service or first responder careers in Hawai`i youth ages 14-20. On each of our trips, youth were exposed to extensive cultural practices and learned many life skills from Kahoolawe group leaders. The relationships they built with other volunteers and those within our group are ones that will last a lifetime. It is an amazing place where we are able to remove people from the 1st world luxuries and focus on the important things in life, such as relationships with people and our land. I have seen positive changes in our youth and their families have seen their child mature since visiting Kahoolawe. Not all knowledge is taught in one school. We are witnesses to that and very grateful for the opportunity to make a positive impact in our future and community. Mahalo for your time.

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 8:40:00 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

**LATE**

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 4:45:03 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michele McLean	County of Maui / KIRC	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Todd, and Committee Members,

Please accept this testimony in strong support of HB455 to provide additional funding to the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. The Legislature has been a great partner to the KIRC in recent years, and this additional bridge funding is needed to continue the KIRC's restoration efforts while the KIRC works to implement its financial sustainability plan. We could not have come this far without your prior support, and hope to earn continued support this session.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Michele McLean

Acting Planning Director, County of Maui

Chairperson, Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission





COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair

Rep. Chris Todd, Vice Chair

Rep. Sharon E. Har

Rep. Tina Wildberger

Rep. Nicole E. Lowen

Rep. Cynthia Thielen

Rep. David A. Tarnas

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Wednesday, January 30, 2019

TIME: 9:00am

PLACE: Conference Room 325

**TESTIMONY OF THE OCEAN TOURISM COALITION IN SUPPORT HB455 RELATING TO KIRC**

Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Todd and Members of WLH Committee:

My name is James E. Coon, President of the Ocean Tourism Coalition (OTC), **speaking in SUPPORT of HB 455 Relating to KIRC.**

The OTC represents over 300 small ocean tourism businesses state wide. All of them operate from State Boating Facilities managed by DLNR/DOBOR. Most of these are family businesses which are locally owned and operated.

While this proposed legislation does not directly impact our industry we believe that the restoring, preserving and the determining appropriate uses of Kaho'olawe is important to everyone who calls Hawaii home.

It is our opinion that KIRC should be supported by the General tax revenue.

We humbly request that WLH Please pass HB455.

Sincerely,

James E. Coon, President

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 12:00:04 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jennifer Roberts	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 12:00:24 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mark Hack	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

Mahalo,

Mark Hack

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 12:04:18 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
GLENISS AKAMINE	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members,

I **support** this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

Ka'iu Akamine

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 12:05:12 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mark Hyde	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please continue funding KIRC's work to cleanup Kahoolawe Island, a troubled island but one which can be recovered to reestablish historic flora, fauna and cultural resources.

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 12:16:33 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Arnold Kotler	Individual	Support	No

**Comments:**

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 12:22:35 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Eric Simpson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear respected members, I am in total support of this measure to help provide support for the Reserve! To preserve the native cultural history is, in the least, a nobile and just cause.

Please, I urge you to support this measure in its entirety.

Sincerely,

Eric Simpson

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 12:31:18 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Robert Cole	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aoha Chaairs and committee members, Please provide as much financial and staff support as needed to restore this beautiful part of Hawaii.

Thank you and mahalo,

Robert Cole

Pukalani.



**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 12:39:59 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jenny Pawai	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 2:06:57 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kalama Chock	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 3:52:18 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tammie Paul	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, We support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. The work to complete the restoration is so important both ecologically and culturally. Ongoing and additional financial support that might help accelerate the process should be approved for the people of Hawaii and all future generations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to voice our support,

Andy & Tammie Paul

Haiku, Maui

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 5:36:54 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lei K Ayat-Verdadero	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 6:48:08 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Thomas Brennon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 8:41:35 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kelvin Ho	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha House Commtee Chairs and members

I am writning in suupport of this bill. As a 25yr plus member of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana I have seen theamount of work and difference the Klrc had =s brought to the healing and restoratiuon of this most sacred place. Their work and the countless people they have provided access and opportunity to experience has been invaluable to the community. They are makaingf profound difference and fully deserve the state's support and resources to continue.

mahalo

Kelvin Ho

PO Box 769

Lawai Hi 96765

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 10:24:52 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Samantha Alvarado	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee and Committee chair, I am writing in support of HB455 to appropriate funds for the island of Kaho'olawe. The island serves not only as a place of cultural significance, but also as an educational center, and an exemplar of successful natural resource management. Thank you for your time. Mahalo, Samantha Alvarado Masters of Environmental Management student

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 11:19:36 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lily Gavagan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I, Lily Gavagan, am in full support of this bill. Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission is a state entity, thus it is imperative for the state to appropriate sufficient funding in order for this program to full function. If the KIRC is unable to function, then they will not be able to continue in their progression towards restoring the lands that our ancestors beheld as a kinolau of Kanaloa. As a kinolau, this island needs to be protected and cared for. As part of state property, it would make logical sense that the state provide the resources necessary to care for their property. However, Kaho'olawe is not only the property of the state, but it also belongs to the people who are Hawaiian by blood, by heart and soul, or by both. Kaho'olawe is an emblem of strength and unity. This entity symbolizes what unity looks like when people cooperatively work together. Thus it is imperative for the KIRC to receive the funds in order to perpetuate the legacy that our ancestors left for us in terms of caring for the land, or what is left of it.



**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 7:14:18 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lopaka White	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 1:31:58 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
kalani fukumoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill to fund KIRC and the hiring of two full time employees.

The island is making a remarkable comeback because of the many volunteers and hard work of

KIRC staff,

Please, ALWAYS fund KIRC.

Mahalo's

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 7:17:13 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kelly McHugh	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support!

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 8:02:52 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cassandra L. Smith	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The funding provided through HB455 for two more KIRC position would be very beneficial to Kahoolawe Island Reserve so we can continue our important restoration work in a safe and effecient manner. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

- Cassandra L. Hoku Smith

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 10:00:13 AM

Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nicole Cody	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**LATE**

**HB-455**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 4:02:07 PM  
Testimony for WLH on 1/30/2019 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kylee Mar	Individual	Support	No

**Comments:**

Aloha Chairs and committee members, I support this measure to provide additional financial and staff support for the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission. They have taken the lead in demonstrating that it is possible to reverse ecological damage after years of neglect and abuse, to preserve our native cultural history for future generations and to connect our residents with the healing of Kaho`olawe through meaningful and safe work on the island.