



Governor of the State of Hawaii

**David Y. Ige** (<http://governor.hawaii.gov>)

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# GOVERNOR IGE'S TRANSCRIBED MAUNA KEA STORY

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## Remarks of Governor David Ige as prepared

THE MAUNA KEA STORY, MAY 26, 2015

My role as Governor is to represent all the people of Hawai'i our people, especially on critical and controversial matters.

The issues surrounding Mauna Kea are contentious and on all sides very strongly felt. And because of that, the search for answers is very challenging and difficult.

In moving forward, I believe our core values need to be:

- The importance of respecting our host culture and the special places of Hawai'i.
- The critical role that science and technology play in the economic and educational life of our community. Our young people need to reach for the stars, literally and figuratively.
- Respect for the laws and the process of seeking and receiving approvals to do work in Hawai'i.
- The need in all of our work as government, and as people, to take the time to listen, and to learn, from each other and especially from those who feel they have not been heard.
- To act always with aloha.

In reflecting on those values, we have in many ways failed the mountain. Whether you see it from a cultural perspective or from a natural resource perspective, we have not done right by a very special place and we must act immediately to change that.....

TMT went through the appropriate steps and got the appropriate approvals. I do not doubt that they did more than any previous telescope to be a good neighbor.

This is in litigation at this time and the courts will ultimately have their say on this case.

In the meantime, however, TMT has the right to proceed with construction and they may proceed as far as I am concerned. And we will support and enforce their right to do so.

We also acknowledge the right to protest this activity. We will protect the right to peaceful protest and also will act to ensure the public safety and the right to use our roads for lawful purposes.

That is however not the end of the story, it is only the beginning.

It is my own belief that the activities of Native Hawaiians, and of our scientists, to seek knowledge and to explore our relationship with our cosmos and its creation can and should co-exist on the mountain.....

What has instead happened is that science has received most of the attention and it has gotten way ahead of culture in our work on the mountain. The proper balance between the two has been lost.

From my own personal experience on the mountain, with all the noise and crowding, I could not feel the same special feeling I felt the last time I was up there. It felt and still feels entirely wrong. It is a special place and we need to treat like a special place.

So what can we do to be better stewards of the mountain?

That is one of the key issues we have been talking about these last weeks, and we received input from multiple perspectives.

We received a petition from those protesting on the mountain asking that public hearings be held on any new lease to the University, that we deny any renewal to the University, that any new development be restricted including TMT, that fair market lease rent be charged and back rent sought, and that 20% of all revenues as provided by law. We received a petition from a young Native Hawaiian who wants to see TMT installed and astronomy encouraged. We received a citizens group's request that the current EIS on the lease renewal be reopened for comment. And we have been part of several convened conversations with leaders of the Native Hawaiian community.

Based on those conversations and our own visits and meetings including many with strong supporters of the project, I am sharing with all of you my sense of how we go forward from here.

First, my responsibility begins with the State of Hawai'i and our need to change the way we exercise responsibility for the mountain.

1. We will change the management of the entire summit, all of which is state land, to bring cultural voices into the leadership structure so that all acts from here forward are sensitive to and observant of culture. We are establishing a Mauna Kea Cultural Council to work with the Board and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, and the Governor's Office, to do a better job. Among the tasks for this group will be the review of all leases and lease renewals, of all proposed rules impacting the mountain especially those relating to access, of any EIS preparation and any cultural impact assessments, of decommissioning plans and execution, working on leasing portions of the mountain to cultural groups, and the reconciliation of the various other uses of the mountain including native species protection and forestry. We are currently putting the group together and

hope to make an announcement on that shortly. In asking people to be part of this work, I am not making support for TMT a requirement of those who agree to serve...

2. We are also committed to doing a much better job of monitoring compliance with all activities under any leases or sub-leases, and to act immediately if there are issues that need resolution. Such action may include the reopening of current leases or the suspension of processing extension requests.

Second, the University of Hawai'i must do a better job in its stewardship of the mountain. If we are going to be a long term partner (and landlord) of the University, we expect the University to do its part as well:

1. The University must begin by being very forthright and public in accepting its need to do a better job in the future.
2. The University must formally and legally bind itself to the commitment that this is THE last area on the mountain where a telescope project will be contemplated or sought.
3. The University must decommission as many telescopes as possible with one to begin this year and a least 25% of all telescopes gone by the time TMT is ready for operation.
4. The University must restart the EIS process for its lease extension including a full cultural impact assessment as part of that process.
5. Access rules that significantly limit and condition non-cultural access to the mountain must be moved expeditiously through the process. There is far too much routine access to this special place and it cannot continue to carry this burden.
6. What I would hope to see is that future visitor access to the mountain be handled through the Native Hawaiian community so that visitors have a greater understanding of and respect for the cultural significance of the mountain. Anyone going on the mountain must receive training in the cultural aspects of the mountain and how to be respectful to the cultural areas.
7. I am asking that the University substantially reduce the length of its request for a lease extension. We need to ensure that the stewardship of the mountain is revisited in an appropriate period and we all need to take another look at activities on the mountain in mid-century.
8. I am also asking the University to voluntarily return to full DLNR jurisdiction all lands not specifically needed for astronomy. This would involve over 10,000 acres and would allow for culture-based management of much of the mountain. This was an alternative proposed in their pending EIS document for their lease renewal request and would be a significant act of good faith in ensuring the proper balance of activities on the summit.
9. The University will ensure the full use of its scheduled telescope time.
10. Finally, I am asking the University to make a good faith effort to revisit the issue of greater payments by the existing telescopes now as well as requiring it in the new lease.

For all these activities, the University will set forth a schedule for their completion which must be done as expeditiously as possible.

Third, I am asking the TMT leadership to significantly increase the level of support they are providing Native Hawaiian students interested in the areas of science and technology. This can include admission and scholarships at their own institutions or partner institutions. First priority would be for students on Hawai'i Island and then to students statewide.

As in many areas of Hawai'i's life, we need to take a much longer view of our resources and to plan for them in ten years, forty and even a hundred years.

