

Exhibit B.09a

Mauna Kea Contested Court Case Witness Testimony for Davin Vicente

I obtained my k-12 education through the public school system and continued on to the University of Hawaii at Hilo to obtain a bachelors and masters in biology. I'm very passionate about science, STEM education, and community outreach. As a kanaka maoli raised in Hilo, I know through personal experience the lack of support and opportunities available for others with similar interest. This is why I'm involved greatly with volunteering to help others with similar aspirations. Early in my journey in STEM I became involved with efforts to help students like me bridge our understanding of science and culture, which has become a huge part of who I am.

Having taken a few physics courses during my undergrad at UHH from the Physics and Astronomy department I experienced a few uncomfortable statements related to kanaka maoli protest and Mauna Kea. Although I was never okay with the development of Mauna Kea for astronomy, I felt voicing my concern would negatively impact me as a kanaka maoli in STEM. It was during the scheduled TMT ground breaking when the comments from some within the community started to become intolerable. With memorable statements from people like Neil Abercrombie who stated he supports TMT because he supports people who actually work, remaining silent no longer felt like an option. However, as a lecturer at UHH it's hard to voice your opposition to an employer when your employment is determined on a semester to semester basis.

My oppositions to the TMT project is based on the irreparable damage the proposed TMT project will have on a unique environment and my culture. Although conservation is an important concept to both kanaka maoli culture and science, I am constantly defending myself as both a kanaka maoli and scientist. As a scientist I have been met with statements that question my intelligence. As a kanaka maoli I have been met with statements that question my ethnicity. Having to face both daily harassment and the anti-science stigma created by the supporters of the proposed TMT project has caused me great hardship in both my personal and professional life.

It's obvious to me that a balance doesn't exist between astronomy and other important aspects of Mauna Kea. Astronomy is not the only science that can be done on Mauna Kea, but it's obvious that much of the other science is done only to justify further impacting Mauna Kea for the benefit of the astronomy community. Mauna Kea is a very special place to people with Kanaka maoli ancestry, which is reflected in how we have chosen to interact with this special place through minimizing our impacts. However, the only options forward that has been offered always results in construction of the proposed TMT project rather than finding ways to minimize the damage that have already permanently scarred Mauna Kea in the name of astronomy.

Many have tried to justify the proposed project by stating Mauna Kea is one of the best places in the world for studying astronomy. However, there is only one Mauna Kea in this universe we

Kanaka maoli will ever have, and the impacts have already outweighed the benefits. The proposed project has offered money as a way to justify furthering the damage to Mauna Kea, but forcing people to choose between money and their culture is not ethical. Further pushing the issue to extremes by saying that denying the project will deny the youth STEM education, is another ignorant statement that has been counterproductive to someone like me who is involved in STEM education. Not only does this project force people to value money over culture but also it delivers a message to the youth to value STEM over all other forms of knowledge that is necessary to any functional society.

The proposed project not only causes irreparable damages to a very important and unique place, but impacts many of us in the community in irreparable ways. Rather than attempting to bridge culture and science, the proposed TMT project has only created difficulties for those like me who have already shared a long passion for doing such. In addition, the proposed TMT project claims to support STEM education in Hawaii's youth, but only offers money compensation for the irreparable damage to our natural landscape and culture that the youth will inherit. The damage done by the proposed TMT project is in no way an improvement over the thirteen astronomy projects that have already caused irreparable harm to Mauna Kea and Kanaka maoli culture, but rather a continuation of this cumulative destruction.