

Pre Hearing Statement of Mehana Kihoi

I am Mehana Kihoi, I am a Native Hawaiian cultural and spiritual practitioner. I am a Native Hawaiian beneficiary as defined by the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1921, and a beneficiary of the Ceded Lands Trust under Section 5(f) of the Admissions Act. I am a descendant of Native Hawaiians who inhabited the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778 as established through my genealogical lines of Pa'ao and Hewa Hewa Nui. My ancestors and subsequent generations, gathered adze only found on Mauna Kea, to build their voyaging canoes. My ancestors honored Mauna Kea as a place of spiritual worship, where they would offer their deepest prayers to our creators Papa and Wakea.

I have a spiritual, cultural, psychological, physical, close and significant relationship to Mauna Kea that is tied to my identity as a Native Hawaiian. The health and well-being of Mauna Kea are tied directly to my own health and well-being because of my close and significant relationship to the land there. Mauna Kea is my spiritual place where I connect to my ancestors and my creators Papa and Wakea. Mauna Kea is where I achieve my highest level of spirituality. Mauna Kea is a sacred place.

My ancestors were stewards of Mauna Kea and ensured that these sacred lands remained untouched because of its importance to the creation of Native Hawaiians. I empower my own child by teaching her the spiritual practices at Mauna Kea so that one day she may carry these traditions to her children, and future generations. Having a direct ancestral connection to Mauna Kea, I am an active steward of this land to ensure there is no more further desecration of this land because it is tied to my spiritual and cultural identity, health and well-being as a Native Hawaiian.

I am an indigenous native Hawaiian woman, a mother, and a victim of domestic violence. Many years ago, I experienced physical and emotional trauma that left me with 5 broken parts of my face, and deep psychological & emotional pain. Pain that could never have been healed thru pharmaceutical drugs or western therapy. The Mauna is who healed me. The Mauna is where I go to, to ask my ancestors for guidance and strength. The Mauna is who gave me the courage to trust again.

I am Mehana Kihoi, and any further desecration of this sacred site will cause irreparable harm not

only to myself but to my child who continues the same cultural practices that were passed on to me. As a victim of trauma, Mauna Kea saved my life and strengthened my identity as a Native Hawaiian because of my spiritual and cultural connection to this sacred place. Mauna Kea is my church and place of worship. Further desecration of this land will cause me an imminent injury because of my strong ancestral and cultural ties to these lands. The existing telescopes on Mauna Kea, and the State of Hawaii and the University of Hawaii's poor management of Mauna Kea have caused me to have an injury because of their failure to honor the customary and traditional practices of this area. My imminent injury is connected to the University of Hawaii's application for a Conservation District Use Permit to request approval to construct a Thirty Meter Telescope that will cause further desecration of Mauna Kea because the proposed construction will forever change the uniqueness and spiritual landscape of this sacred place.

If the permit is granted, the TMT will threaten the continuance of my traditional and customary rights in the respective area. I will suffer a severe cultural, spiritual, psychological and physical injury that will cause irreparable harm to who I am as a Native Hawaiian, my cultural identity and my spirituality as a Native Hawaiian.

‘O hānau ka Mauna a Wākea,
‘O pu‘u a‘e ka Mauna a Wākea.
‘O Wākea ke kāne, ‘o Papa, ‘o Walinu‘u ka wahine.

Hānau Ho‘ohoku, he wahine,
Hānau Hāloa, he li‘i,
Hānau ka Mauna, he keiki Mauna na Wākea.