

Written Direct Testimony of Keahi Tajon

Aloha, my name is Keahi Tajon. Maka'ainana ma Umauma. Vice Chair (on leave) of Kahu Ku Mauna.

The intention of this document is to relate my observations of the practical frustrations of and psychological impacts to cultural practitioners during my time as a Kahu Ku Mauna council member.

I'm a descendent of Native Hawaiians who inhabited the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778 as established through my genealogical lines.

I am a Native Hawaiian cultural practitioner who continues to exercise my traditional and customary practices on Mauna a Wakea. These traditional and customary Native Hawaiian practices, including pilgrimages to the top of Mauna a Wakea, pre-date 1892 as evidenced through cultural sites, oral traditions, and several reports, according to what information is accepted by the University of Hawaii.

The proposed TMT project within a conservation district is inconsistent with the areas of criteria outlined in HAR § 13-5-30(c), as noted below.

(c) In evaluating the merits of a proposed land use, the department or board shall apply the following criteria:

- (1) The proposed land use is consistent with the purpose of the conservation district;*
- (2) The proposed land use is consistent with the objectives of the subzone of the land on which the use will occur;*
- (3) The proposed land use complies with provisions and guidelines contained in chapter 205A, HRS, entitled "Coastal Zone Management," where applicable;*
- (4) The proposed land use will not cause substantial adverse impact to existing natural resources within the surrounding area, community or region;*
- (5) The proposed land use, including buildings, structures and facilities, shall be compatible with the locality and surrounding areas, appropriate to the physical conditions and capabilities of the specific parcel or parcels;*
- (6) The existing physical and environmental aspects of the land, such as natural beauty and open space characteristics, will be preserved or improved upon, whichever is applicable;*
- (7) Subdivision of land will not be utilized to increase the intensity of land uses in the conservation district; and*
- (8) The proposed land use will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare.*

The applicant shall have the burden of demonstrating that a proposed land use is consistent with the above criteria.

The aforementioned process is unjust to those protecting cultural practices and family protocols. I have firsthand knowledge of being arrested AS a member of Kahu Ku Mauna while exercising my rights as a cultural practitioner. That is the level of disrespect the Office of Maunakea Management officers have for the people they are asking advice from.

I was voted in as a member of Kahu Ku Mauna during the winter of 2014 following the disruption of the TMT groundbreaking ceremony atop Maunakea. Since that time, I have observed violations of the rights of cultural practitioners that are currently not being protected or spoken about, seemingly because of a lack of information. The information being referred to is information that was refused to be on record.

As a member of Kahu Ku Mauna, information brought to the group about priorities to community have been grossly ignored. The expectation on an ADVISORY board to perform actions without the economic or communal resources available, is absurd.

The level to which the information brought up by Kahu Ku Mauna has been ignored by the staff and administration of the Office of Maunakea Management. This ignorance, is offensive to every level of cultural practitioners and has been reflected in the actions of the community that practices traditional Hawaiian culture.

The rights and practices of the host culture to the occupying population is either lost in translation or being blatantly ignored and run over with little to no mitigation towards the accesses and practices of the previous land stewards.

How can a culture be told where/when/how/why/ or who can practice, by a different culture? Therefore, how has OMKM, its subsidiaries or administrators, found the rights to funnel the opinions/practices/information from a handful of practitioners into a system that creates blanket policies that overarch their jurisdiction?

The conclusion that seems obvious is blatant corporate and economic corruption, the shockwaves of which have persisted through generations to the point at which, if the de facto State of Hawaii continues to ignore the pleas and protests of the Hawaiian people, will lead to further communal separations. In turn, this will, and evidently has, caused the imbalance of people with place.

Mahalo for considering my understanding of events, policies, and their implications to Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

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