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Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 1:20 PM

To: DLNR.Intake.SHPD <dlnr.intake.shpd@hawaii.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Urgent Support: Inclusion of Pu'u O Kapolei on National Register as Traditional Cultural Property

Regarding the Upcoming Hawaii Historic Places Review Board Meeting (July 31st)

RE: Consideration of Pu'uokapolei - to be added into Hawaii Register of Historic Places & Recommendation for the National Register of Historic Places

Agenda: <https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/shpd/files/2020/07/July-31-2020-.ReviewBoardDraftAgendaREVISED2-1.pdf>

Puuokapolei App: <https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/shpd/files/2020/07/Puuo-Kapolei.pdf>

Aloha mai kakou,

My name is Ileana Haunani Ruelas, I am a long time resident of Leeward O'ahu – and I am writing in **support** of Pu'u o Kapolei inclusion into the Hawaii Register of Historic Places, and into the National Register as a traditional cultural property as defined under federal historic-preservation regulations and guidelines.

Pu'u o Kapolei provides rich cultural, historical, and community benefits for the surrounding 'ohana/families. Activities held at the Pu'u support family engagement, place based education, applied experiential learning, the management of cultural/natural resources resources. Additional, gatherings and learning experiences hosted at the Pu'u support the growth of community cohesiveness and resiliency. Community cohesiveness and 'aina intelligence strengthened through engagement at the Pu'u - allows the character of a community to build roots in, and investments in contributing to community well-being. Current community gatherings that celebrate and build community ties include – Community Workdays, Puu O Kapolei Annual Hula Festival, Makahiki, and Observance of the Solstice.

Pu'u o Kapolei is both rooted in the community's history and it it's inclusion/recognition as a traditional cultural property is significantly important to maintaining the continued cultural identity of the community.

The Kapolei community is experiencing an unprecedented amount of development – when compared with the rest of the state - it is imperative that we maintain socio-cultural, historical, and scientifically significant spaces such as Pu‘u o Kapolei. Pu‘u o Kapolei should be included in the National Register as a traditional cultural property. Here are a few compelling reasons to do so.

- **Pu‘u o Kapolei is connected to an abundance of oral-historical information – and is actively utilized as the foundation for many educational programs spanning Early Learning, K12, Postsecondary, and Family Engagement.** Some of these education programs include:

- o Early Learning programs such as INPEACE Keiki Steps
- o K-12 programs such as DOE & Private School Teacher Professional Development training in Place Based Education (i.e. Island Pacific Academy, Kokua Hawaii Foundation, Malama Learning Center, Ulu A‘e Learning Center, Camp Palehua)
- o College/Post Secondary Level Programming (i.e. University of Hawai‘i at West Oahu, Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement – Vocational Trades Academy)
- o Family Engagement/Community Based Programs (i.e. Camp Palehua, Ulu A‘e Learning Center, Kalaeloa Heritage Foundation, Hoakalei Cultural Foundation)

- **Pu‘u o Kapolei is in the midst of unprecedented development initiatives – and it is essential that we support continued community engagement and stewardship of this cultural/historical space. In an address to Kapolei Chamber of Commerce businesses (Dec 2019) – Steve Kelly of James Campbell company noted that:**

- o For 2000-2020 – Kapolei Job Growth is 182% - compared with 51% for Oahu
- o For 2020-2040 – Kapolei Job projections is 66% - compared with 15% for Oahu
- o General population is anticipated to grow in Kapolei by 32% - compared with 6% for Oahu
- o And while various governmental and private agencies expand in this ‘Ewa region – from Rail Transit to the Commercial Harbor, to Commercial mixed lots – it is imperative that we maintain cultural, historical ties for the growing community to be able to access, support management of resources.

- **Also 2040 projections** – demonstrate that the Native Hawaiian population in the ‘Ewa Moku (inclusive of Honouliuli / Kapolei) – will increase by over 60%. This is largely due to the expanded Department of Hawaiian Homestead development in Kapolei. Currently the Hawaiian Homesteads in the Kapolei region serve 1,403 homesteads and over 4,5000 Hawaiians in Kapolei alone (i.e. Kanehili, Kaupe‘a, Maluohai, & Kauluokaha‘i).

In conclusion, I stand with multitudes of Leeward ‘O‘ahu residents in **strong support** the inclusion of Pu‘u o Kapolei

into the Hawaii Register of Historic Places, and into the National Register as a traditional cultural property as defined under federal historic-preservation regulations and guidelines.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha 'Āina,

Ileana H. Ruelas

Reference for Native Hawaiian Projections:

Kamehameha Schools Regional Databooks (2017)

'Ewa Databook pp. 5, 9-13

https://www.ksbe.edu/about_us/publications_and_resources/