

22. April 2019

Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources
Meeting on Friday, 26. April 2019 at Honolulu, Oahu, Hawaii

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT

Agenda Item E-2: [Requesting Approval for the Issuance of a Revocable Permit that will be Negotiated and Executed by the Chairperson for the Collection of Parking Fees at Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks, Kaua'i, Tax Map Key: \(4\) 1-4-001:013, 004, 003, and 002 \(Portion\).](#)

Madame Chair, Honorable Members,

I have been a leaseholder within the Koke'e State Park since late 1975. During the last almost forty-five years, I have seen Parks staffing and maintenance funded at a level which barely allows mowing the grass and cleaning the restrooms. In the last five or ten years, we've seen the positive effect of increased funding for additional staff and equipment. They're doing a good job with available resources – but those resources are limited.

It is clear that additional funding is needed. Over the last year, as the road beyond Waikoko on the North Shore has closed, the Museum has seen visitor traffic increase more than thirty per cent [source: Hui o Laka/ Kokee Natural History Museum Reports to the Board of Directors] without a commensurate increase in resources to maintain the Parks.

I've seen, for the first time in my memory, the parking lots full and spilling over from the lookouts along the nearby roads, together with a substantial increase in traffic along the dirt roads within the Kokee and Waimea Canyon State Parks. Again, there has been no increase in resources to maintain the Parks.

I strongly support the issuance of a revocable permit for the collection of parking fees within the two State Parks, provided Hawaii residents are exempt from any fees, and appreciate the opportunity to testify before the Board on this important item for Kokee.

Me ke aloha,

Original signed

Cc: Billi Smith, Board Chair, Hui o Laka
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