

**From:** [whipmkealoha@aol.com](mailto:whipmkealoha@aol.com)  
**To:** [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Item K - CDUA Permit / HA-3945 - In Support  
**Date:** Thursday, May 9, 2024 6:38:09 AM

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Aloha Board Members,

I write in support of the CDUA Permit application regarding the dredging, and restoration of our Pohoiki Boat Ramp. It has been six (6) years since the historic eruption of 2018, and our lawai'a (fishermen) have no ocean access along the Puna coastline.

Our ohana humbly requests your approval of the CDUA Permit application, and would appreciate your support towards the restoration of our boat ramp in Pohoiki. Our generational lawai'a have fed our community for generations. Their livelihood has been crippled, and our Puna community needs the economic driver.

We appreciate the continued efforts of Finn McCall, and DOBOR towards the restoration of our boat ramp. We trust the governmental procedures will be completed in short order, as time is our worst enemy.

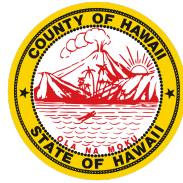
Mahalo in advance for your kind consideration, and approval of the CDUA permit for our Pohoiki boat ramp restoration.

Warmest Aloha,

Ku'u lei Kealoha Cooper, Trustee  
James & Miulan Kealoha Estate

*Ashley L. Kierkiewicz*  
*County Council District IV*

*Policy Committee on Planning,  
Land Use and Development – Chair*



(808) 961-8265  
*ashley.kierkiewicz@hawaiiicounty.gov*

*Policy Committee on Infrastructure  
and Assets – Vice-Chair*

## **HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL**

25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

May 9, 2024

**Board of Land and Natural Resources • May 10, 2024 Meeting**  
**Testimony of Council Member Ashley Kierkiewicz, Council District IV (Lower Puna)**  
**Regarding Conservation District Use Application • Pohoiki Boat Ramp Excavation**

Aloha kākou:

I write to express my full endorsement of DLNR-DOBOR's proposal to excavate and dredge volcanic debris from Pohoiki Bay in the Puna District on Hawai'i Island. This action is crucial to restore navigational access at the Pohoiki boat ramp, which is vital to the health and well-being of the Puna community that I humbly serve as Council Member.

The Pohoiki Boat Ramp has been inaccessible since the 2018 Kīlauea eruption, which left it buried under lava debris and black sand. Before the eruption, this ramp was one of the most productive fishing grounds in the State, contributing significantly to household food security and our local economy. However, with the ramp being inaccessible for six years now, our lawai'a are forced to transport their vessels to Hilo (~30 miles away) or Nā'ālehu (~70 miles away) to launch their boats, incurring substantial time, expenses, and disparities with each fishing journey. The inability to use the boat ramp hampers the County's ability to conduct effective ocean rescue operations along the southeast shores.

DLNR-DOBOR has diligently explored solutions to reopen Pohoiki bay, and a viable path forward has been identified. Please grant approval of the Conservation District Use application, allowing necessary excavation and dredging to proceed. This action will not only benefit our Puna lawai'a and County rescue teams by facilitating their return to the water within Puna but also greatly enhance our subsistence lifestyle, commercial fishing operations, economic revitalization efforts, emergency response capabilities, and ongoing recovery from the eruption.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide support. I appreciate your kind consideration of this important matter.

Cheers,

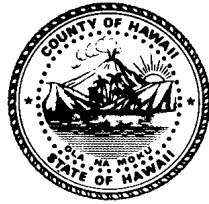
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley", written in a cursive style.

Ashley Lehuani Kierkiewicz  
COUNCIL MEMBER, DISTRICT IV  
DIRECTOR, REVITALIZE PUNA

Mitchell D. Roth  
*Mayor*

Deanna S. Sako  
*Managing Director*

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## County of Hawai'i

### PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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*Director*

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May 8, 2024

Ms. Dawn Chang, Chairperson  
and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources  
Department of Land and Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 621  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96809

Dear Chairperson Chang and Members:

**Subject: Item K – CDUA HA-3945 Pohoiki Boat Ramp Excavation, Dredging and Placement of Volcanic Debris**

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We appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony in **support** of Agenda Item K. - (CDUA) HA-3945 Pohoiki Boat Ramp Excavation, Dredging, and Placement of Volcanic Debris.

The aftermath of the 2018 Kīlauea eruption dramatically altered the landscape of lower Puna and its coastline, notably affecting Pohoiki where a new black sand beach has obstructed the district's sole boat ramp. This impediment significantly hampers access to some of the State's most abundant waters, creating substantial challenges for the local community.

Access to the Pohoiki boat ramp is indispensable for the residents of Puna, particularly for their livelihoods, subsistence, and cultural practices deeply rooted in the ocean. The current situation necessitates individuals haul their boats for considerable distances to Hilo, adding both time and financial burdens. This disruption has been detrimental to those who have relied on these waters for generations.

We strongly **support** the dredging of the Pohoiki boat ramp as it presents a crucial opportunity to restore essential infrastructure vital to the well-being of the Puna community. We respectfully urge a favorable recommendation on this matter and express our gratitude for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Zendo Kern*

ZENDO KERN  
Planning Director