

Ms. Dawn Chang, Chairperson
Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR)
DLNR Boardroom, Kalanimoku Bldg.
1151 Punchbowl St., 1st Floor, Rm 132
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Agenda Item D-14, Support for Kaheawa Wind Power I EIS

Aloha Chair Chang and Members of the Board,

My name is Lahela Aiwohi, a Maui native, and I am submitting testimony in support of allowing the Kaheawa Wind Farm I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to proceed.

Our island continues to face rising energy costs, uncertainty in our electrical grid, and ongoing challenges tied to our dependence on imported fossil fuels. Every Maui family and business feels the impact of fluctuating oil prices month to month. Kaheawa has been one of the few consistent sources of locally produced, stable, lower-cost renewable energy we can rely on. Allowing this EIS to move forward ensures the project can continue operating responsibly and continue delivering those benefits to our community.

We often hear our leaders speak about the importance of accelerating clean energy, reducing dependence on fossil fuels, and strengthening energy resilience. Yet when practical opportunities come forward—projects that are already proven and functioning—there can be hesitation or opposition. It is similar to the conversations we have about housing: we all agree we need solutions, but when projects finally appear, the response is often, “not here,” or “not now.” We cannot afford that same mindset with energy, especially given the realities Maui is facing.

Additionally, this project brings much more value to Maui. The proposed 20-year continuation includes a \$300,000 annual community benefits program, direct support for local nonprofits, and investments in local jobs and technical expertise. We, Maui, cannot afford to lose this benefit—not with the challenging times we have been faced with.

Right now, there are significant challenges at the federal level that complicate the implementation of renewable energy projects. If we want to maintain the progress Hawai‘i has already made—and continue building toward a reliable, cleaner energy future—this is not the moment to slow down or create unnecessary barriers for projects like Kaheawa that have demonstrated performance, compliance, and community benefit.

From my perspective as a kanaka and someone who has watched Maui navigate tremendous change, this is a responsible project supported by a team that is doing its due diligence. It is aligned with our state’s clean energy goals, reduces our reliance on imported fuel, and provides meaningful cost savings for our residents.

I respectfully urge the Board to allow the Kaheawa Wind Farm I EIS to move forward. Doing so supports Maui’s energy stability and keeps Hawai‘i on track toward a more resilient and sustainable future.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration.



Lahela Aiwohi

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RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.

Mayor

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December 10, 2025

Ms. Dawn N.S. Chang, Chairperson
Board of Land and Natural Resources
DLNR Boardroom, Kalanimoku Bldg.
1151 Punchbowl St., 1st Floor Room 132
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Aloha e Chair Chang and Member of the Board,

I am writing to express my support for the continued operation of Kaheawa Wind Power I (KWP I) and to acknowledge the thorough work presented in the project's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). I view this effort not only as an energy project but as an important commitment to Maui's long-term stability, economic well-being, and environmental stewardship.

Maui's residents continue to face volatile fossil-fuel costs that contribute to the uncertainty surrounding the island's clean energy future. With aging fossil-fuel units scheduled for retirement, maintaining existing clean energy is important for preventing reliability challenges and avoiding dependence on costly fossil fuel-based backup generation. KWP I has provided dependable energy to an estimated 17,000 Maui households for nearly two decades and has done so as one of our island's most cost-effective sources of electricity. Preserving that contribution is in the clear interest of our community.

The County also recognizes the broader value this project brings to Maui. The proposed 20-year continuation includes a \$300,000 annual community benefits program, direct support for local nonprofits, and investments in local jobs and technical expertise. These commitments come at a critical time when Maui is actively working to strengthen its economy and expand opportunities for residents.

KWP I represent a renewable energy project that supports grid reliability, cost stability, environmental protection, and long-term community benefit. I respectfully request the Board's consideration of the approvals necessary for the project to continue providing uninterrupted service to Maui.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,



RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor