

June 10, 2026

Board of Land and Natural Resources
State of Hawai'i
1151 Punchbowl Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: Support for Preliminary Approval — State Acquisition of Maunawili Forest & Keko'owai Tax Map Key Nos. (1) 4-2-006:010, (1) 4-2-008:044, (1) 4-2-009:002, and (1) 4-2-008:043

Aloha Chair Kanaka'ole and Members of the Board,

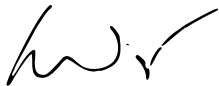
I write as a resident of Hawai'i and someone who has spent years working alongside 'āina-based nonprofit organizations dedicated to the care and restoration of ag lands, forest lands, wetlands, and streams. I offer my full and enthusiastic support for the State's preliminary approval of the acquisition of Maunawili Forest and Keko'owai.

The Ko'olaupoko ahupua'a that encompasses these parcels represents some of the most ecologically and culturally significant upland terrain on O'ahu. These lands sit at the headwaters of the Maunawili watershed, providing the forested buffer that filters, slows, and stores the rainfall that communities downstream depend on every day. In my experience working with education, conservation and restoration organizations across Hawai'i, I have seen firsthand what happens when upland forests are protected and actively restored — water quality improves, more local food is grown, youth and families are engaged and the surrounding community becomes more resilient to the floods and droughts that climate change is intensifying.

Acquisition by the State, with a commitment to active stewardship and native ecosystem restoration, is one of the most durable and meaningful investments we can make in the long-term health of this watershed.

I enthusiastically urge the Board to grant preliminary approval for this acquisition without delay. These lands deserve permanent protection, and the communities of Maunawili and Kailua deserve the watershed security that healthy, forested uplands provide.

Mahalo,



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Meeting of the Board of Land and Natural Resources
Friday, June 12, 2026

Testimony in Support of
Agenda Item C(1)

- Request preliminary approval of the acquisition of private lands at Maunawili, identified as Tax Map Key Nos (1) 4-2-006:010, (1) 4-2-008:044, (1) 4-2-009:002, and (1) 4-2-008:043; and
- Declare that the land acquisition is exempt from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment under Chapter r 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and Chapter 11-200.1, Hawaii Administrative Rules.

Acting Chair Kanaka‘ole and Board Members:

I am Māpuana deSilva, the Kumu Hula of Hālau Mōhala ‘Ilima, which is celebrating its 50 anniversary this year. As the Kumu of Mōhala ‘Ilima and a life-long resident of Kailua with ancestral ties to Maunawili, I submit testimony in **strong support** of Agenda Item C(1).

Hālau Mōhala ‘Ilima is dedicated to the perpetuation of Hawaiian culture, ‘āina, and identity through the discipline of hula. We have been deeply involved in the almost decade-long effort of the Hui Maunawili-Kawainui to ensure that the ‘āina of Maunawili is preserved, restored, and cared for by the State and by community organizations. The ultimate goal is to preserve our wetlands, fresh water resources, and the many historic and ancient sites and trails in Maunawili. Maunawili has some of the richest agricultural lands on O‘ahu, land that was nurtured and farmed by Hawaiians for centuries. Approving Agenda Item C(1) will help in fulfilling our community’s long-standing goal of protecting Maunawili’s mountains, forests, streams, agricultural lands and sacred places which are so central to the community’s health and well-being and cultural identity.

All of us understand that this is a preliminary approval and that there are still many steps – including environmental remediation and a final valuation figure – which must be taken to conclude this transaction. Although the effort to ensure that the ‘āina of Maunawili and its significant cultural and natural resources are protected is far from over, approving Agenda Item C(1) is an important step for the State of Hawai‘i in its commitment to the ‘āina and people of Kailua, Ko‘olaupoko, and all of O‘ahu.

Mahalo piha for the opportunity to present this testimony in strong support of Agenda Item C(1).
Respectfully Submitted,
Māpuana de Silva, Kumu Hula



President: Melody Kapilialoha MacKenzie
Vice President: Lani Lapilio
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Treasurer: Tierney Hōkū Morikawa Rostron
Director: Jessi K. Botti
Director: Le'a Ka'aha'aina
Executive Director: Māpuana de Silva

Meeting of the Board of Land and Natural Resources
Friday, June 12, 2026
9:00 a.m.

**Testimony in Support of
Agenda Item C(1)**

- Request preliminary approval of the acquisition of private lands at Maunawili, identified as Tax Map Key Nos (1) 4-2-006:010, (1) 4-2-008:044, (1) 4-2-009:002, and (1) 4-2-008:043; and
- Declare that the land acquisition is exempt from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment under Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and Chapter 11-200.1, Hawaii Administrative Rules.

Aloha e Acting Chair Kanaka'ole and members of the Board:

Mahalo for the opportunity to present testimony in support of Agenda Item C(1). I am Melody Kapilialoha MacKenzie, born and raised in Kailua, and my 'ohana has lived in Kailua for many generations, with deep ancestral ties to Maunawili. I also am the President of the Board of Directors of Hika'alani, a nonprofit organization based in Kailua that advances cultural education, stewardship, and community wellbeing through place-based knowledge, practitioner leadership, and meaningful pathways that honor the knowledge of our ancestors.

Today, I submit testimony in **strong support** of Agenda Item C(1), not only on behalf of myself, but also on behalf of Hika'alani. Hika'alani has been a member of the Hui Maunawili-Kawainui in the almost decade-long effort to ensure that the 'āina of Maunawili is not parceled out and sold to private parties, but is stewarded and protected for generations to come. As you know, traditionally Maunawili played a vital role in the ahupua'a of Kailua as a source of free-flowing fresh water and place of abundant agriculture and rich natural and cultural resources. A healthy Maunawili is central to Kailua's sense of identity and its future, and we want to guarantee preservation and indeed, continued growth, of this important cultural and natural landscape in perpetuity for the benefit of everyone in our ahupua'a.

Consistent with Hika'alani's mission and purpose, Maunawili provides the resources as well as the 'āina for us to continue to teach and perpetuate our oli, hula, and mele. It offers us a place to recall the mo'olelo and stories of our people, it reminds us of the innovation of our ancestors in how they cultivated the 'āina and helped to grow the mea 'ai to support all of Kailua's people, and it calls us back to the 'āina to restore and rejuvenate our souls.

We support Agenda Item C(1), although we know that the effort to secure the 'āina of Maunawili is far from complete and understand that this but one step. We believe, however, that this is a crucial step for the State of Hawai'i and DLNR in carrying out its responsibility to the 'āina, the wai, and the culture and people of Kailua.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to present this testimony in strong support of Agenda Item C(1).

HUI MAUNAWILI-KAWAINUI
Maunawili, Kailua, O‘ahu

June 11, 2026

Chairperson and Land Board Members
Board of Land & Natural Resources
Department of Land & Natural Resources
State of Hawai‘i

IN SUPPORT OF DOFAW’S REQUEST FOR PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF THE ACQUISITION OF PRIVATE LANDS AT MAUNAWILI, KO‘OLAUPOKO DISTRICT, ISLAND OF O‘AHU, IDENTIFIED AS TAX MAP KEY NOS. (1) 4-2-006:010, (1) 4-2-008:044, (1) 4-2-009:002, AND (1) 4-2-008:043; and

IN SUPPORT OF DECLARATION THAT THE USE OF STATE FUNDS FOR THE LAND ACQUISITION APPROVED UNDER ITEM 1 IS EXEMPT FROM THE REQUIREMENT TO PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT UNDER CHAPTER 343, HAWAI‘I REVISED STATUTES, AND CHAPTER 11-200.1, HAWAI‘I ADMINISTRATIVE RULES.

Hui Maunawili-Kawainui stands in full support of DLNR DOFAW’S request for preliminary approval of the acquisition of the above-mentioned four parcels of private lands in Maunawili and the statement that the use of State funds is exempt from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment. The Hui and its many individual and organizational members have been working with the Trust for Public Lands, with DOFAW and many other community organizations for years to protect these lands as part of more than 1,000 acres of privately held Maunawili lands which have high natural, cultural, historical and agricultural significance and are at risk of subdivision, sale and development.

Who We Are. Hui Maunawili-Kawainui (Hui MK) is a coalition of descendants and residents of Maunawili and Kailua and 11 respected Hawaiian cultural and environmental organizations based in Maunawili and Kailua. Hui MK’s mission is to restore the health of Maunawili so that the valley can resume its vital and traditional role in the Kailua ahupua‘a (traditional land division) as a place of healthy forests, free-flowing fresh water, abundant agriculture and rich natural, cultural and historic resources. We support the purchase, preservation and restoration of conservation and agricultural lands in Maunawili and the protection and preservation of forests, fresh water resources, wetlands, traditional lo‘i lands, important ancient and historic sites, and historic trails and roads. Our purpose is to protect and revitalize Maunawili’s forests, prime agricultural and culturally significant lands. Since its founding in 2006, Hui MK has consistently worked with State and County government, TPL, Hawai‘i Land Trust, other organizations and the community at large to ensure that these highly significant Maunawili lands are protected.

Community Benefits. Through the purchase and preservation of the Maunawili Forest lands the community will reap numerous benefits including:

- protection of these lands from subdivision, development and further damage to their precious natural and cultural resources;

- protection of a major area of the Kawainui watershed, restoration of streams and springs and improvement of water quality and integrity;
- restoration of Maunawili's traditional lo'i kalo and other traditional farming practices that once made the valley a true "breadbasket" for the island; and initiating a sustainable agriculture program to enhance local food security and provide habitat for endangered species.
- stabilization and protection of Hawaiian cultural and historic sites, many of which have not been surveyed or investigated. These include Kukapoki Heiau, a major *heiau ho'olu'ai* or agricultural temple, house sites, and extensive stone-faced lo'i kalo terraces extending along the streambeds. Excavations and radiocarbon dating of some of these features have shown that ancient Hawaiian use of the valley began as early as the 13th century, probably part of the efforts of the famous O'ahu king Ma'ili'kukahi to develop the island's productive agricultural base. These sites have great potential for further research, for education, and for cultural restoration.
- development of aloha 'aina educational programs on these lands that improve community understanding of the significance of Maunawili and its many resources.

Protecting these lands is a major step toward fulfilling our community's long standing goal of protecting Maunawili's mountains, forests, streams, agricultural lands and sacred places which are so central to the community's health and well-being, sense of place and cultural identity. We look forward to collaborating in the stewardship of these lands in close partnership with TPL, DLNR and other community partners.

Mahalo,
Hui Maunawili-Kawainui

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 Melody Pili MacKenzie, melodykmackenzie@gmail.com, (808) 780-8236

Hui Maunawili-Kawainui Members

Beth Anderson / Hui Kawainui-Kailua Ka Wai Ola
 Laurie Carlson / Maunawili resident
 Lei-Ann Moana Stender Durant / Maunawili resident
 Lehuakona Isaacs / 'Ahahui Mālama i ka Lōkahi
 Mei Ling Isaacs / 'Ahahui Mālama i ka Lōkahi
 Herb Lee / Pacific American Foundation, Hui Kawainui-Kailua Ka Wai Ola
 Melody Kapilialoha MacKenzie / Hika'alani
 Alan Murakami / Maunawili resident
 Barbara Pope / Maunawili resident
 Deborah Pope / Kailua resident with multi-generational ties to Maunawili
 Kīhei de Silva / Hālau Mōhala 'Ilima, Hika'alani, Kailua Hawaiian Civic Club
 Māpuana de Silva / Hālau Mōhala 'Ilima, Hika'alani, Kailua Hawaiian Civic Club
 Mark Paikuli Stride / Luluku Farmers Association, Aloha 'Āina Health and Learning Center
 Dean Wilhelm / Ho'okua'aina at Kapalai Farms
 Kaleomanuiwa Wong / Kauluakalana

