

# Resolution 24-151 Testimony

MISC. COM. 383

P&E



**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
560 N. NIMITZ HWY., SUITE 200  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817**

August 19, 2024

The Honorable Esther Kia'āina  
Chair and Members Committee on Planning and the Economy  
530 South King Street, Room 202  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Kia'āina and Councilmembers:

Re: OHA Support for Resolution 24-151, Proposed CD1

Aloha,

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) will recommend that the Board of Trustees support Resolution 24-151, proposed CD1, which seeks to authorize the transfer of an unused City-owned property in Kailua to the State Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL) to facilitate the development of affordable housing. This resolution is crucial as it marks a significant step towards addressing the housing crisis in Kailua and across O'ahu. Housing affordability has become increasingly challenging, particularly for Native Hawaiian families who seek to reside on their ancestral lands. The transfer of this property to DHHL will pave the way for the establishment of the very first DHHL homestead in Kailua, a long-overdue initiative that will help alleviate DHHL's extensive waitlist backlog, providing much-needed housing opportunities for our community

The 10.038-acre parcel on Iliaina Street, valued at approximately \$10,455,000, has been vacant since the City acquired it in 1961. Transferring this property to DHHL presents a significant opportunity to utilize this land, which is already zoned for residential and restricted preservation uses. This transfer will facilitate the development of essential single-family homes for Native Hawaiians, enhancing their access to secure and affordable housing within their ancestral lands. Additionally, this development will be designed to complement the existing community's character and scale, thereby positively contributing to the neighborhood.

This initiative is in line with OHA's mission to improve the conditions of Native Hawaiians and ensure their equitable access to housing, education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. It

reflects our commitment to advancing the well-being of our beneficiaries and the broader community.

We are also aware of the concerns raised about the land's stability and stormwater management, as discussed during the July 25, 2024, hearing. These concerns include the potential risks of landslides and the proposed cancellation of crucial drainage easements, which are essential for effective stormwater management and flood risk mitigation. To address these issues, we recommend conducting comprehensive geological and engineering assessments prior to finalizing the land transfer. This will ensure the land's suitability for development and safeguard the community's safety.

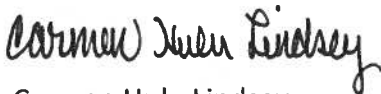
Recommendations:

1. **Conduct Detailed Assessments:** Undertake comprehensive geological and engineering evaluations to assess land stability and development feasibility prior to the property transfer.
2. **Reinforce Stormwater Management:** Develop and implement a robust stormwater management plan to address potential issues resulting from the cancellation of essential drainage easements.
3. **Prioritize Community Safety:** Thoroughly address concerns related to landslides and flooding risks to ensure the safety of both current and future residents.

OHA supports Resolution 24-151, Proposed CD1, which aims to meet the urgent need for affordable housing and advance DHHL's housing objectives. However, we urge the City Council to incorporate these recommendations to ensure the property transfer benefits both the Native Hawaiian community and the broader Kailua neighborhood.

Mahalo for your attention and commitment to enhancing the well-being of our community members.

'O wau iho nō me ka 'oia'i'o,



Carmen Hulu Lindsey  
Chairperson, Board of Trustees  
Office of Hawaiian Affairs