RES26-174
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 351

*HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS & PARKS (HHP)

***HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS & PARKS (HHP) Meeting**

Meeting Date: Aug 25, 2026 @ 02:30 PM

Support: 2

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Robbie Watland	rwatland@yahoo.com	96819
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Aug 19, 2026 @ 11:41 AM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Tupola, Vice Chair Tulba, and Members of the Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this resolution naming the tennis courts at Kalihi Valley District Park to the Vailima Watson Kalihi Valley District Park Tennis Courts and recognizing her countless hours of volunteering as a tennis coach and community leader in Kalihi.

I have known Vailima for many years, dating back to when I was a youth growing up in Kalihi Valley. At that time, she and her husband worked with my dad in starting the first shelter for abused spouses and children. When mothers with young children around my age stayed at the shelter, my brother and I would go there to spend time with the kids.

Vailima always went above and beyond to ensure those children felt welcome, safe, and comfortable. I remember she would host movie nights and games, creating a warm and nurturing environment in a time of uncertainty. Her deep compassion, selflessness, and genuine love for our community continued when she began working at Kokua Kalihi Valley and launching the tennis program at Kalihi Valley Homes.

This recognition by the Honolulu City Council is exceptionally well-deserved. Vailima has given so much to Kalihi over the decades, and I wholeheartedly urge you to pass this resolution in honor of her extraordinary contributions.

Aloha,

Robbie Watland

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Shirley Ann Templo	reptemplo@capitol.hawaii.gov	96819
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Aug 25, 2026 @ 01:30 PM

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August 25, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: **Chair Andria Tupola, Vice Chair Augie Tulba, & Voting Members**

From: **Representative Shirley Ann Templo**

Re: **Vailima Watson Kalihi Valley District Park Tennis Courts**

Aloha Chair Tupola, Vice Chair Tulba, and Members:

I am proud to submit testimony in strong support of Resolution 26-174, honoring Vailima Watson by naming the tennis courts at Kalihi Valley District Park after her.

This resolution is especially meaningful to me because Coach Watson was my tennis coach growing up.

For so many young people in Kalihi, Coach Watson was more than just a tennis coach. Through her work with Kōkua Kalihi Valley and Farrington High School, she helped create opportunities for young people to learn, grow, build confidence, and feel like they belonged. Tennis became more than a sport—it became a way to bring our community together and provide them with a positive place to develop discipline, perseverance, sportsmanship, and confidence.

I know firsthand the impact Coach Watson has had on generations of players because I was fortunate to be one of them.

Her influence can also be seen in the accomplishments of Andre Ilagan, whom she coached. Andre became a two-time HHSAA boys singles state champion while attending Farrington High School, went on to become one of the most accomplished players in University of Hawai'i men's tennis history, and is now competing professionally. This year, Andre earned a wild card into the 2026 U.S. Open qualifying draw, proudly representing Hawai'i and our Kalihi community on one of the biggest stages in tennis.

Seeing someone from our Kalihi community reach that level is something we can all be proud of. It demonstrates what can happen when talented young people are given opportunities and have mentors like Coach

Watson—and institutions like Kōkua Kalihi Valley and Farrington High School—that believe in them and invest in their potential.

But Coach Watson's legacy is bigger than championships or tennis trophies. It is about the lives she has touched and the generations of young people she has encouraged to believe in themselves.

I am grateful that I had the opportunity to be one of her players, and it means a great deal to me to see someone who helped shape my own childhood and our community receive this recognition.

Naming these tennis courts after Coach Watson is especially fitting because generations of people will continue to play there, learn there, and hopefully be inspired by the legacy she created through her service.

I am honored to support Resolution 26-174. I respectfully urge the Council to adopt Resolution 26-174 and honor Coach Watson's lasting legacy in Kalihi.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



Representative Shirley Ann Templo
Hawai'i State House of Representatives
District 30

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