



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

SB 1474 RELATING TO THE MAUNA KEA SCIENCE RESERVE AUTHORITY

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committees on Water, Land & Agriculture
and Higher Education

February 15, 2005

By

James Gaines
Interim Vice President for Research
University of Hawai'i System

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Chairs, Kokubun and Hee, and members of the committees:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on SB1474.

The University appreciates that the 2000 Master Plan was created over a two-year period only through the arduous efforts of many members of the community. Since its adoption, the management entity comprised of the Office of Mauna Kea Management, Mauna Kea Management Board, and Kahu Ku Mauna Council at the University of Hawai'i, Hilo, have done an admirable job in managing Mauna Kea.

The public dissatisfaction cited in this bill has largely been focused on the proposed NASA/Keck Outriggers project. These issues – from the federal EIS to the state Board of Land and Natural Resource's contested case hearing – are processes that fall outside of the University's jurisdiction and control.

The legal complexities of addressing the multi-jurisdictional factors affecting this and future project development on Mauna Kea can only be adequately addressed by a study broad enough to encompass all of the affected groups, organizations, federal and state departments and agencies. Furthermore, such a study would need to be done quickly to effectively make a difference in the future of Mauna Kea.

We do not believe that a legislative audit – as proposed in this bill – offers the most effective approach to dissecting the Master Plan and analyzing the numerous University sectors engaged with Mauna Kea (e.g. System Administration, Institute for Astronomy, Manoa Campus, Mauna Kea Support Services, Environmental Health and Safety; Legal Counsel of the University of Hawai'i, University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Office of Mauna Kea Management, Mauna Kea Management Board, and Kahu Ku Mauna Council).

Additionally, in order to gather meaningful information and make informed recommendations such an audit would necessarily have to include: the State Department of Health's Office of Environmental Quality Control, Office of Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response, Solid and Hazardous Waste and Water Quality; Department of Land and Natural Resources' Historic Preservation Office,

Natural Area Reserves, Land Division, Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands, Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement, Attorney General; the Board of Land and Natural Resources; and the CDUA process affecting all conservation lands, not to mention the various federal departments and agencies that also impact the project approval process.

We believe that those most who have been directly involved in Mauna Kea issues over the past four years are already well aware of what's working and what's not. The University believes it would make sense to bring these parties to the table to engage in a joint effort to make recommendations back to this body. The University would willingly participate in a legislatively mandated task force – including broadly based interests – to study the issues raised by this bill and to develop recommendations.

Thank you for your consideration.