

## EDB Committee

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**From:** Riki Hokama  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 06, 2020 8:09 AM  
**To:** EDB Committee  
**Cc:** Yvette Bouthillier  
**Subject:** EDB-72 Testimony from Ann Marguerite Tartsinis  
**Attachments:** Letter\_MauiCountySeal.pdf

Aloha EDB—

Attached is testimony our office received to forward to EDB committee regarding EDB-72.

Thank you,  
Office of Councilmember Riki Hokama  
x7768

February 5, 2020

County Council  
County of Maui  
200 South High Street  
Wialuku, Maui, Hawaii 96793

Dear Chair Lee and County of Maui Council Members,

I am writing in support of the *Resolution to Restore the Maui County Seal Tapestry by Alice Kagawa Parrott* in the Council Chamber. I am a former curator of Bard College in New York and a current PhD student at Stanford University. I have had the immense pleasure of researching Alice's life and work for the past three years. The first of my articles on her work was published in the *Journal of Modern Craft* in 2018 and explored the influence of Indigenous craft practices native to Santa Fe and Hawaii on her work. I am currently working on the second article and traveled to Oahu and Maui this past fall to conduct research. I learned just before leaving that Maui County Seal had been taken down and was disappointed to not be able see it in person. While I was able to visit her other artworks and visit the location of her residency in Pu'unene, viewing the seal in person would have completed a thorough multi-year consideration of her work from the period.

While Alice's work has been appreciated by fiber art scholars for some time, her work has recently received some much overdue critical attention which includes a spate of recent articles in international art journals as well her work's inclusion in a number of important exhibitions. These exhibitions, like "Pathmakers: Women in Art, Craft, and Design, Midcentury to Today" at the Museum of Arts and Design (2013) as well as an upcoming exhibit on the influence of Scandinavian weaving on American design at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, for example, have aimed to reveal the importance of artists like Alice to modern weaving during the 1960s and 1970s and the fiber arts movement more broadly.

Alice's work is incredibly special as it incorporates visual and material signifiers of her Japanese heritage, Hawaiian upbringing, and professional life in New Mexico. I know of no other artist who has bridged these geographies and the disparate cultures indigenous to each, and Alice did so with incredible sensitivity, creativity, and skill. From my research, I know that her 1971-2 residency on Maui was personally resonant for her and incredibly formative for her work. No doubt the *Maui Seal* reflects the importance of her time on the Island and her deep-seated connection to her Hawaiian roots.

Please consider the above as unequivocal support for this important resolution.

Sincerely,



Ann Marguerite Tartsinis