

GREAT-1(2)- 1. Appointment and Removal of Administrative Heads
Sub-Item (2) Resolution 26-39, Approving the Appointment of
Margaret T. Willis as Director of Human Concerns

Aloha, GREAT Committee Chair and committee members.

My name is Stacy Helm Crivello. I am a resident of Molokai.

I respectfully offer testimony in opposition to the consideration of appointing a director for the Department of Human Concerns from the County of Los Angeles.

County leadership has often stated the importance of keeping our young people in Hawai'i, supporting local employment, and creating opportunities so our educated residents can remain and serve their communities. When leadership positions are filled by individuals recruited from outside the state, it raises serious concerns about whether those commitments are truly being honored.

The Department of Human Concerns is responsible for addressing some of the most difficult issues facing our island, including homelessness and services for vulnerable families. Effective leadership in this role requires more than administrative experience. It requires a deep understanding of Hawai'i's culture, our Kanaka Maoli foundations, the diversity of our communities, and the generational relationships that define life in our islands.

This is especially important as Maui continues the long and painful recovery from the Lahaina wildfire disaster. Many families are still displaced, and the decisions made by this department will directly impact residents struggling to rebuild their lives. Leadership rooted in our community and familiar with our people's needs is essential during this time.

In Hawai'i, our work is guided by 'ike (knowledge) passed through generations and by our shared sense of kuleana to care for one another. Leaders who are rooted in this place understand that serving our community is not simply a job, but a responsibility to our 'ohana, our neighbors, and future generations.

Maui is not Los Angeles. The challenges we face here are different in scale, in culture, and in community expectations. Solutions developed for large mainland cities do not always translate effectively to small island communities.

We have many capable and educated local professionals who understand our people, our history, and our values. Supporting local leadership strengthens community trust and ensures that policies are guided by those who truly know this place.

I respectfully urge the committee to reconsider this appointment and consider qualified local candidates who are rooted in our community.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

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