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COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

December 5, 2025

Mr. Kali Watson, Chair
Department of Hawaiian Home Lands
State of Hawai'i
P.O. Box 18579
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96805

Via Email: kali.watson@hawaii.gov

Aloha e Chair Watson:

**SUBJECT: TRANSITIONING KALAWAO COUNTY TO MAUI
COUNTY (KA'Ā-1(2))**

At its meeting of January 29, 2026, the Council's Kōmike Aloha 'Āina intends to discuss the matter of "TRANSITIONING KALAWAO COUNTY TO MAUI COUNTY."

The purpose of this letter is to confirm, in writing, our understanding of how responsibilities and related expenditures would be allocated if the State Department of Health's proposal to dissolve Kalawao County and incorporate it into the County is enacted by the State Legislature next session.

We have worked with Mayor Richard Bissen and his Administration to review potential County costs related to infrastructure, emergency services, and any other financial obligations the County may incur.

Based on recent discussions, we understand the following:

1. The National Park Service, as the lessee of land from the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, will remain responsible for maintaining roads, water and sewer systems, and buildings in Kalawao County.
2. The County will not assume any maintenance responsibilities within Kalawao County.

3. The County will keep its current Memorandum of Agreement with the National Park Service to provide police and fire support.
4. Under the proposed legislation, the County will extend its authority to Kalawao County for activity within the Special Management Area.

May I further request you confirm, in writing, whether this understanding is accurate or identify any corrections or additions, if not.

Please transmit your response to kaa.committee@mauicounty.us by **January 9, 2026**. To ensure efficient processing, please include KA'Ā-1(2) in the subject line.

Should you have any questions, please contact me or the Committee staff (Tiare del Castillo at 808-270-7140, or Lori Tengan at 808-270-7147).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keani Rawlins-Fernandez", with a stylized, flowing script.

KEANI RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ, Chair
Kōmike Aloha 'Āina

ka'ā:ltr:001(2)ahhl01:kes

cc: Mayor Richard T. Bissen, Jr.
Josiah Nishita, Managing Director, Maui County
Mahina Martin, Director of Public Affairs, Maui County
Katie Lambert, Deputy to the Chair, DHHL
Mahina Poepoe, Representative, Hawaii State House
Lynn DeCoite, Senator, Hawaii State Senate
Nancy Holman, Kalaupapa Superintendent, National Park Service