

EACP Committee

From: LEO K C. <leogizmo50@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 02, 2019 10:58 AM
To: EACP Committee
Cc: LEO CAIRES
Subject: Leo Caires - Testimony for Todays Hearing
Attachments: Testimony July 2, 2019.docx

Any questions please call or email me

808 220 8538

Leo Caires MBA, D.Ed.

EMAILED TO:

Aloha Kakou my name is Leo Kaniela Caires MBA, D.Ed, I live in upcountry. I am testifying on 2 items on today's agenda. EACP 9 and EACP 6.

EACP 9 - SUSTAINABILITY AND RESTORATION OF TRADITIONAL HAWAIIAN FISHPONDS

When I think about the sustainability and restoration of traditional Hawaiian fishponds, I think about who built it and why.

The Loko I'A connects us to times, places and events that were significant in the collective past of Kanaka Maoli even before the establishment of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

The fish ponds have both physical and spiritual purposes. One purpose in building a fishpond, was to secure the survival of people and a culture.

My family owns a Loko I'a named Hoku Ula "The red star" and is over 10 acres in size. It has a Ku'apa design, and it connects two points of land that extend into the ocean with a 900 foot long and 40 foot wide wall.

This Loko is situated at the bottom of the ahupuaa of Haneoo, in Hana and is the most well-known fish pond between Koki beach and Hamoa beach in the east side of Maui. It is hundreds of years old. It as it has been noted that Kamehameha I came to help our ohana rebuild it. Our family continues to actively pursue means in order to preserve and protect the pond for the next generations.

I have been involved in restoration projects of Loko I'a and just returned from one on Molokai. It is very hard and laborious work. But the outcome creates several impacts to the people and the place. The loko I'a brings communities together and also defines the identity of the place while producing a wealth of resources by way of food, education and cultural practicing.

In the context of this agenda item, we would ask that you as a body support our community efforts and help protect these amazing structures by ensuring regulatory agencies ensure compliance from developments that could present harm to the health and sustainability of these ponds.

I would encourage all of you if you have time, to reach out to owners/managers of Loko I'a in our community or consider participating in the restoration work on a pond.

I can assure you, your eyes will see things completely different and your hearts will open even wider to the strangers who stand next with you carrying a huge pohaku.

That concludes testimony on that item.

VISITOR IMPACTS TO COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL AND INFRASTRUCTURAL RESOURCES (EACP-6)

When I think about the visitor impact to the environment and infrastructure, I think about the long-term impacts on the future of my children, my family, my friends and neighbors who all live in Maui.

When I drive down from upcountry towards town, it's very difficult to ignore the growing central Maui Mountains of trash dominating the landscape. The trash is buried with dirt and sprinkled with grass just so that it becomes out of our sight and out of our minds. According to the EPA, a person on average throws away 4.4 lbs of trash a day. So if times that to 2.9 million visitors, that's a lot of trash.

I think about the waste fluids from all that trash entering the ground and permeating out to the reefs where our children and neighbors play on the beaches in the future, if it hasn't reached already.

I think about the sand on our beaches and how I continue to read about the increasing levels of bacteria concentrations and how harmful that is becoming for our own community.

I think about visitors eating fresh catch fish, and then I think about seeing children holding their fishing poles

sitting along the reef for hours not catching anything fresh.

I think about how we as a community have ensured that 2.9 million visitors have access to water in Maui at the turn of a dial in a hotel room. While we as a community cant even provide access to water for less than 2000 people on a waiting list.

I think about how many visitors are landing on Maui each month. The amount of people visiting Maui each month if you can imagine, is nearly 2x more than the entire population of Maui coming on an off Maui every 30 days.

I think about our new rental car facility with covered parking at the Kahului airport, what a fancy structure with miniature sugar trains, while our people in our community get to park in the rain outside, and wishing we could park in covered parking too.

I think about the visitors enjoying warm pizza ovens fired with the amazing smell of burning kiawe wood cooking in night and how fun that must be, and then I think about the rancher who sees a depletion of Kiawe trees he once could afford to use as post to fence in his cattle.

Some of these thoughts are not to point the finger at any one person. It makes me think about how we lead ourselves to this point.

I recognize the economic allure of the visitor industry.

It certainly has a means to create too many jobs, for too many people, on islands that are too small.

The pressures placed on our environment and infrastructure from this industry is social experiment, which tests patience of our community.

That concludes my testimony on this item.