

Great Committee

From: Lauryn Rego <lauryn.rego@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 13, 2025 1:24 PM
To: Great Committee
Subject: in support of CJ Elizares

You don't often get email from lauryn.rego@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Lauryn Rego, and I'm writing to support CJ Elizares for a seat on the Maui Planning Commission.

CJ is not only a respected cultural practitioner but also someone deeply rooted in the values and responsibilities of aloha 'āina. His understanding of place-based knowledge and his long-standing commitment to protecting Maui's cultural and environmental resources make him exceptionally qualified to serve at this critical time.

The Planning Commission plays a vital role in shaping the future of our island, especially as we face interconnected crises of housing, climate, and community displacement. Yet, with multiple empty seats currently preventing the commission from meeting quorum and conducting essential business, the consequences of inaction are being felt in real time by members of the public, applicants, and our communities.

We need commissioners who bring integrity, cultural grounding, and a vision for balance and pono decision-making. CJ embodies all of these qualities.

Please move swiftly to confirm his appointment so the Planning Commission can resume its work with the benefit of CJ's knowledge and perspective.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Lauryn Rego

Great Committee

From: Kauwila Hanchett <kauwila3@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 13, 2025 12:10 PM
To: Great Committee
Subject: Support for Kauiki Lind

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Welina me ke aloha,

I was like to recommend that Kauiki Lind be accepted for the Maui Planning Commission to represent East Maui. I have known Kauiki most of my life as we grew up together in Hāna and his father, Uncle John Lind was a treasured community member and a friend of my father. We also graduated together from Hāna High School and have reconnected over the past 10 years when I returned to Hāna.

Kauiki has consistently demonstrated a passionate commitment to the protection of East Maui's precious natural and cultural resources, community values and lifestyles, and to the betterment of the lāhui. The Lind 'ohana have been long time advocates for East Maui's 'āina, wai, and people.

Currently, East Maui does not have a representative on the Maui Planning Commission and thus our collective voice remains silent as important decisions that impact our community are made. Hāna has a very small pool of qualified leaders that have the capacity to hold a seat with this level of responsibility. Often, those who are qualified are already overextended with existing obligations.

I am proud of Kauiki for stepping up to be considered for this position. I believe he is a good candidate for this important work. Please don't hesitate to contact me by email or at (808) 463-6259.

Mahalo nui,
Kauwila Hanchett

--

Kauwila Hanchett
Executive Director, Hōlani Hāna Inc.

(808) 463-6259

Great Committee

From: Dana Naone Hall <dnaonehall@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 2:03 PM
To: Great Committee
Subject: SUPPORTING THE NOMINATION OF CJ ELIZARES TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION

You don't often get email from dnaonehall@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dana Naone Hall
170 East Kuiaha Road
Haiku, HI. 96708
dnaonehall@gmail.com

Written testimony via email to: GREAT.committee@mauicounty.us

RESOLUTION 25-108, APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION (GREAT -2(2))

SUPPORTING THE NOMINATION OF CJ ELIZARES TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION

12 May 2025

Just as the Naulu rain suddenly appears at the end of a cloud bridge that straddles the uplands of Pu'u Mahoe to the southern end of Kaho'olawe, CJ Elizares would serve as a bridge to the Maui Planning Commission on matters involving Native Hawaiian traditional cultural practices and places. Appropriately, he serves as the Director of Naulu Farm in Honua'ula where he nurtures seedlings for reforestation efforts and cultivates native plants.

I will confine my testimony largely to Mr. Elizares' experience in and knowledge of Honua'ula, which qualify him for the cultural practitioner's seat. (He is also applying for the Upcountry seat.)

Mr. Elizares was four years old when he first traveled to Kaho'olawe on his Uncle's sampan. As a grown man, he has been a member of the PKO for 17 years, often in leadership positions. Among his responsibilities as a KUA is water safety for those traveling to the island. He continues to participate in and lead Ipu a Kane ceremonies. Most off all, Mr. Elizares has mana kupua, the ability to shape shift. If you ask him what this meant, he would probably say, "Go sit under the kukui tree."

Finally, Mr. Elizares would bring his knowledge of Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices and the places where these practices occur, to the Maui Planning Commission's decision-making. He would bring balance and fairness to the decision-making, good judgment and reason. It would be as though Kamapua'a was spotted in the understory of a native forest.

I wholeheartedly recommend CJ Elizares' nomination for the Maui Planning Commission.

Great Committee

From: Olan Leimomi Fisher <olan@kuahawaii.org>
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 12:42 PM
To: Great Committee
Cc: Kevin Chang; Crichton Lind
Subject: KUA Strong Support for Ka'uiki Lind Nom. for Maui Planning Comm. - Res. 25-108
Attachments: KUA Support Kauiki Lind Maui Planning Comm Res 25-108 05.13.2025.pdf

You don't often get email from olan@kuahawaii.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Aloha mai kākou,

Please find attached Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo's (KUA's) **strong support** for Crichton Ka'uiki Lind's nomination to the Maui Planning Commission, and let us know any questions or comments.

Mahalo nui loa,

Olan

Olan Leimomi Fisher (she/her/'oia), Esq.
Kua'āina Advocate
olan@kuahawaii.org
Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo (KUA)
grassroots growing through shared responsibility
www.kuahawaii.org



Testimony Before The
Council of the County of Maui
Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee
In Support of Ka'uiki Lind re Resolution 25-108
Tuesday, May 13, 2025, 1:30 p.m.

We are Olan Leimomi Fisher and Kevin Chang, Kua'āina Advocate and Executive Director, respectively, testifying on behalf of [Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo \(or KUA\)](#). "Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo" stands for "grassroots growing through shared responsibility," and our acronym "KUA" means "backbone." **Our mission is to connect and empower communities to improve their quality of life through the collective care for their biocultural (natural and cultural) heritage, serving as a "backbone organization" that supports creative and community-driven solutions to problems stemming from environmental degradation.** Hawai'i's biocultural resources continue to be negatively impacted by political, economic, and social changes, and the increasing dangers of climate change make fostering and empowering resilient communities acutely critical. **We strongly support the nomination of Crichton Ka'uiki Lind to the Maui Planning Commission for the County of Maui through Resolution 25-108, and urge you to do the same.**

Currently KUA supports three major networks of: (1) over 40 mālama 'āina (caring for our 'āina or "that which feeds") community groups collectively referred to as E Alu Pū (moving forward together); (2) over 60 loko i'a (fishpond aquaculture systems unique to Hawai'i) and wai 'ōpae (anchialine pool systems) sites in varying stages of restoration and development, with numerous caretakers, stakeholders, and volunteers known as the Hui Mālama Loko I'a ("caretakers of fishponds"); and (3) the Limu Hui made up of over 50 loea (traditional experts) and practitioners in all things "limu" or locally-grown "seaweed." **Our shared vision is to once again experience what our kūpuna (ancestors) referred to as 'ĀINA MOMONA – abundant and healthy ecological systems that sustain our community resilience and well-being.**

We have worked with Ka'uiki for several years now, as he is an active member of our Lawai'a Pono Hui, an offshoot working group of our larger E Alu Pū network with a focus on policy issues for nearshore resources and communities. KUA has a long history with Ka'uiki's larger community in Kīpahulu, Maui, with our organization itself founded in part by kūpuna of Kīpahulu 'Ohana, Inc., including some of Ka'uiki's own 'ohana. We strongly supported the recent establishment of the Kīpahulu Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area (CBSFA), as we have similar efforts to establish CBSFAs in places like Hā'ena, Mo'omomi, and Miloli'i through our networking and capacity building activities.

Ka'uiki and the rest of Kīpahulu 'Ohana were integral to the establishment of the Kīpahulu CBSFA. He currently serves as the CBSFA Makai Watch Coordinator and is also a member of the Kīpahulu and Kaupō Community Associations. **It is undisputed that Ka'uiki holds extensive traditional knowledge of his home through his own kilo (observational science) and inherited knowledge through his deep ancestral ties to Maui as both a lawai'a (fisher) and mahi'ai (farmer) for kalo and other vegetables.** We have also seen

Ka'uiki consistently display strong passion, dedication, and aloha for his beloved home on Maui and other communities across the pae'āina (Hawaiian Islands). We strongly believe in his ability to advocate for 'āina momona (abundance) in his community for future generations to love and enjoy. For all these reasons and more, Ka'uiki clearly possesses more than the required experience and background to effectively serve on the Maui Planning Commission.

The communities we work with are committed to ensuring the long-term health of our biocultural resources that they have cared for and depended on for generations since time immemorial. **We believe our environment, the foundation of our very existence and “that which feeds” us all, requires long-term investment through a shared vision of achieving 'āina momona (abundance) once again.** Getting there requires increased mālama 'āina (caring for our environment) leadership, awareness, and advocacy. This includes nominations for leaders like Ka'uiki Lind to the Maui Planning Commission. Our decisions today will continue to shape the future that our keiki's keiki's keiki will one day inherit – we hope for a future of shared and harmonious abundance, and hope you do, too.

Mahalo nui loa for considering our testimony. Please support Ka'uiki's nomination and pass Resolution 25-108.

E aloha 'āina momona kākou.

Let us all work to increase abundance in our precious and sacred 'āina.

Great Committee

From: Kēhau Springer <kapaakaiconsulting@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 12:07 PM
To: Great Committee
Cc: Kauiki Lind
Subject: Support for Ka'uiki Lind Maui Planning Commission

You don't often get email from kapaakaiconsulting@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Aloha Mai kākou,

This letter is in full support for Criton Ka'uiki Lind of Kipahulu for the Maui County planning commission. He is the perfect candidate as he's rooted in community grassroots initiatives that ensure pono stewardship practices. He is highly knowledgeable of wahi kupuna, wahi kapu and I have no doubt he will make decisions that are righteous.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Na'u
Kēhaunani Springer

Great Committee

From: Isaac Hall <isaacdavishall@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 11:06 AM
To: Great Committee
Subject: Resolution 25-108; Letter in support of Christopher Jon Elizares
Attachments: Let U'u Hodgins.pdf

You don't often get email from isaacdavishall@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Isaac Davis Hall
Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 80241
Haiku, Maui, Hawaii 96708-0241
Telephone: 1(808) 344-7041
Email: isaacdavishall@gmail.com
May 12, 2025

Hon. Nohelani U'u-Hodgins, Chair and Members
Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee
Maui County Council
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawaii, 96708

Re: Resolution 25-108; Appointment of Members to the Maui Planning Commission

Dear Chair U'u Hodgins and Members of the Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee of the Maui County Council:

I write in strong support of the selection of Christopher Jon ("CJ") Elizares to the Upcountry seat of the Maui Planning Commission, as well as in the capacity as a Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner, for a term expiring on March 31, 2030.

I have practiced in front of the Maui Planning Commission beginning in 1980 – when I participated in its first SMA contested case hearing - for a period of at least 40 years. During that time, I have had the opportunity to experience some Commissioners who I will never forget because of their dedication to protecting and preserving Maui's unique and irreplaceable resources and also Commissioners who were dedicated to protecting and preserving Native Hawaiian practices that were truly imperiled by proposed developments.

I already know that CJ Elizares would be one of those Commissioners. We need him on the Commission as Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner and in the Upcountry seat. He is well-qualified in both capacities. He will aide Commission decision-making in both capacities.

Mr. Elizares is Well-Qualified to be Appointed to the Commission as Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner

I am familiar with the subject matters that are within the decision-making jurisdiction of the Commission. I am also familiar with the duties of the Commission, imposed by the Ka Pa'akai case, to investigate the identity and scope of "valued cultural, historical, or natural resources" in a petition area, including the extent to which traditional and customary native Hawaiian rights are exercised in a petition area; the extent to which those resources—including traditional and customary native Hawaiian rights—will be affected or impaired by the proposed action; and then the duty to take any feasible action, to reasonably protect native Hawaiian rights if they are found to exist.

To assure the protection of these Native Hawaiian rights and practices, an Ordinance has been passed to assure that at least one member of the Commission has demonstrated expertise in native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices as evidenced by one or more of three credentials listed in MCC §2.28.070.A. 1-3. CJ clearly satisfies at least two of these three credentials: “2. Work history that demonstrates an appropriate level of knowledge in native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, including traditional environmental practices.” and “3. Substantial experience as a native Hawaiian traditional and customary practitioner.”

Emails have been submitted to you by well-known and well-respected Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioners, Kekuhi Kealiikanakaole and Davianna McGregor, clearly proving that CJ has demonstrated expertise in native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices and therefore undoubtedly qualifies for an appointment to the Commission as a Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner. He recognizes Native Hawaiian cultural practices, is a practitioner himself, and takes steps to protect and preserve these practices.

Mr. Elizares is Well-Qualified to be Appointed to the Commission in the Upcountry Seat

CJ is also well qualified to be appointed to the Upcountry seat of the Commission. I have known C.J Elizares for over five years. He is assuredly the sort of person who would fulfill his responsibilities to protect and preserve Maui’s unique resources as an environmental steward, ensuring the availability of these resources for current and future generations. He is fair-minded. He is intelligent. He will take into consideration testimony received by the Commission and advocate for decisions consistent with the requirements of the law. At the same time, as a Native Hawaiian, he will assure that developments do not remove Native Hawaiians and allow for the perpetuation of Native Hawaiian practices.

In conclusion, I trust that you will support the selection of Christopher Jon Elizares to the Upcountry seat of the Maui Planning Commission, as well as in the capacity as a Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner.

Sincerely,

/s/ Isaac Hall
Isaac Hall

Great Committee

From: Leahy Hall <ldnhall@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 10:40 AM
To: Great Committee
Subject: SUPPORTING THE NOMINATION OF CJ ELIZARES TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION

You don't often get email from ldnhall@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Leahi Hall
170 East Kuiaha Road
Haiku, HI. 96708
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(808) 264-5210

Written testimony via email to: GREAT.committee@mauicounty.us

RESOLUTION 25-108, APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION (GREAT - 2(2))

SUPPORTING THE NOMINATION OF CJ ELIZARES TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION

10 May 2025

To Chair U'u-Hodgins and Members of the Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee,

I am writing to offer my enthusiastic support for the nomination of Christopher Jon "CJ" Elizares to serve on the Maui Planning Commission in the Upcountry and Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner seats.

What follows is a more lengthy description of someone whose tremendous intellect and prolific stewardship are only surpassed by his integrity, and, a love and dedication to 'āina and his family.

Chapter 1: Stepping into arenas representing Maui, training the next generation

I first became aware of CJ while we were both student-athletes whose sports shared the gymnasium space at Kekaulike High School. CJ was a MIL Champion and top State finisher in wrestling. He would later coach wrestling for Kamehameha Schools and continue his competitive readiness by winning the Makahiki Games held at Hakioawa on Kaho'olawe. **I mention these examples to highlight CJ's mind-body excellence, willingness to step into cultural and more mundane arenas, and commitment to legacy and training the next generation.**

Chapter 2: A proven steward of ocean, land, and people

The next point at which I became aware of CJ was about a decade ago while on a Hawaiian Airlines flight, I came upon a video where CJ was speaking about the varietals of Hawai'i kō he was regenerating as lead farmer at Ocean Vodka. At this point in his life, CJ was heavily involved in Kaho'olawe and traditional open-ocean Hawaiian voyaging. A member of Hui o Wa'a Kaulua (HoWK), CJ earned the role of captain for HoWK. CJ and his team at Ocean Vodka planted sweet potato resulting in 400 pounds of nourishment to support a 2014 voyaging effort. CJ is quoted in a press release following that harvest, "we are stewards of ocean, and of land." What I hope to draw your attention to is CJ's proven leadership ability in open-ocean Hawaii voyaging and in cultivating Hawaiian foods - both of which speak to a deep understanding of not only our external environment - celestial movements, weather and seasonal patterns, soil regeneration, a love for Hawai'i food

plants, but also an astute understanding of people dynamics. **CJ is a proven steward of the ocean, land, and people.**

Chapter 3: Continually called out of the ocean to nourish land and people

More recently, I have had the great good fortune to engage with CJ while I've been employed by Mākena Golf & Beach Club (MGBC). At this point, CJ had already spent time employed by the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission as staff in their Cultural Department. MGBC was lucky enough to be granted the opportunity to travel to Kaho'olawe on a Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO) access in 2017. CJ conducted our orientation as a KUA for PKO and was lead zodiac captain for our travel to and from Kaho'olawe. CJ was and continues to be part of the PKO Ocean Safety crew with an adept understanding of the Honua'ula near-shore waters, 'Alalākeiki channel dynamics, and safely transporting people to and from Kanaloa moku. Our head Chef was on this access and so impressed by the food being grown by CJ and PKO at Hakioawa that we hoped CJ might become MGBC's Farm Manager. Again here, **the story continues of CJ being excellent in the ocean, but called out of the ocean to produce nourishment on land.**

Chapter 4: Hō'ike: Actualizing what is Potential, An Applied Hawaiian Scientist

CJ would eventually agree to become Farm Manager at MGBC, transforming an old golf hole and tee box into what is now Nāulu Farm. The www.makenainfo.com website notes that "Nāulu Farm was designed to reflect and echo the movement of the largest and most life-giving elements in Makena: the seasonal and daily sun angles, and the wind current and cloud (thus rain potential) both called Nāulu." Pulling language from CJ's friends at Hui Ku Maoli Ola, CJ is able to transform land back into 'āina. **Nāulu Farm is an example of CJ's ability as an applied Hawaiian scientist to engage traditional place-based ecosystem knowledge so that land and people may thrive together.**

People, myself included, like to talk about the mutuality of land/people thriving together, CJ has shown his ability to actualize that potential. MGBC is now able to have an 'Ōiwi Resources & Stewardship Department because CJ has the knowledge and skill to lead a team who are basically the DLNR for MGBC - caring for all natural and cultural resources at MGBC. None of this is possible without CJ's knowledge of the Honua'ula ecosystem, the history, archaeology, and culture of this area, and his unique ability to help revitalize not only ocean and land, but the people at the same time.

To hō'ike, to show or exhibit one's abilities in community and have experts in that particular area affirm one's growth in status (and thus responsibility) is a very Hawai'i practice. CJ has been appointed Kahu of the Nāulu ko'a, a rain shrine in 'Ulupalakua, by a preeminent Kumu on Maui. I have witnessed twice two additional Kahu anoint CJ as the next Kahu for their particular practices, one for heiau practices and another for spiritual care of the people and place of Honua'ula. **CJ has been empowered by trusted Maui experts to hold the status of one who guards and cares for, who can make decisions for natural and cultural resources.**

Chapter 5: Someone who can be trusted with power and decision-making

CJ is also incredibly smart. What I would come to notice in my own relationship with CJ is a unique fortitude as George Helm reminds us, "do your homework," to be well informed, to read and be prepared to thoughtfully contribute. This will be helpful as a member of the Planning Commission. **I think sometimes people may become intimidated by the range of CJ's skills, I hope you instead see his readiness to be a decision-maker as a member of the Planning Commission.** CJ also spent time in construction and painting, is a qualified emergency responder and participated in first response during the Kula and Lahaina fires, and has been a sought out speaker on conservation and land stewardship over the last five plus years for the Conservation Conference, CTAHR, and recently winning recognition for his participation in the Ahupua'a Accelerator for a project on legacy building. What is the nexus of all these skills? To be honest, I think his abilities are beyond my own ability to articulate, but if you will allow me to try:

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-

- **Cultural protocol is safety protocol.**
- I hope you see his depth of skill in ocean safety and first response as one expression of the range of safety protocols he understands as part of being a Hawaiian culturalist. He is also a lead for the Ipu a Kane ritual group and is trained and actively participates
- in repatriation efforts. These skills allow him to guard and protect our resources, land and people.
-
-
-
- **Prolific because he has tremendous skills, but also the courage to take**
- **responsibility for these skills.** A recent colleague of ours noted that CJ is
- prolific. CJ understands where there is potential for new life in an ecosystem and the process for how to bring that life into being. CJ also has the courage to step into leadership roles, to take responsibility for making actual what is potential. His hands
- and back show his commitment to being an applied Hawaiian scientist, and Honua'ula has a lot more native species coming back to life because of him.
-

As CJ's friend and work colleague, I find comfort and safety in his integrity and commitment to fairness and justice and that trusted Maui and Hawai'i cultural experts continue to appoint him to leadership roles. He loves Maui and Hawai'i culture, he is brilliant, he does the hard work and homework, and one of my favorite parts about him is he really loves and is dedicated to his children and his family. I am grateful to be alive at the same time he is. CJ has the character and skill that I hope you will empower to make decisions as part of the Maui Planning Commission and as the cultural seat.

Mahalo for your time and attention,

Leahi Hall

Great Committee

From: 'Āina Momona <ainamomona1893@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 10:22 AM
To: Great Committee
Cc: councilmembers@mauicounty.us
Subject: SUPPORT for Christopher Jon Elizares and Crichton Ka'uiki Lind – Resolution 25-108

You don't often get email from ainamomona1893@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Aloha Chair U'u-Hodgins, Vice-Chair Paltin, and Members of the Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee,

On behalf of Aina Momona, we write in strong support of both nominees under consideration for the Maui Planning Commission, Christopher Jon Elizares and Crichton Ka'uiki Lind.

We are deeply encouraged to see two Native Hawaiian candidates with extensive ties to their communities and deep cultural understanding being considered for this important commission. Mr. Elizares brings with him a vital voice as an Upcountry Native Hawaiian cultural practitioner, with firsthand knowledge of the land, its history, and the values that should guide its stewardship. Mr. Lind, representing East Maui, similarly embodies the generational 'ike that is essential for making land use decisions that respect and perpetuate cultural and ecological balance.

At Aina Momona, our work focuses on restoring traditional systems and elevating 'ike kupuna to address today's most pressing challenges. We believe that both of these nominees will be instrumental in helping the Maui Planning Commission fulfill its kuleana to protect 'āina, support community well-being, and uphold the intent of the Maui Island Plan and other guiding documents.

We urge the Committee and Council to move forward with confirming both nominees. Their combined expertise and values will be an asset to Maui County and ensure that the voices of our communities are reflected in our planning decisions.

Mahalo for your time and continued service.

Aina Momona

Great Committee

From: Brutus La Benz <brutusluv@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:59 AM
To: Great Committee
Subject: Supporting CJ Elizares to Maui Planning Commission
Attachments: Testimony of Support for Elizares.pdf

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Aloha!

Please find the attached letter of support for the appointment of Christopher Jon "CJ" Elizares to the Maui Planning Commission.

Mahalo NUI for your time and aloha!

--

Ke Aloha Wale,
Blake Keaka "Brutus" La Benz

RESOLUTION 25-108, APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION (GREAT -2(2))

Aloha e Chair U'u-Hodgins and Members of the Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee,

I am writing to support the nomination of Christopher Jon "CJ" Elizares to represent the Upcountry/Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner seat on the Maui Planning Commission.

My name is Blake "Brutus" LaBenz and I have known CJ for over 15 years from our volunteer work as Kua (backbone) for the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO). Kua are responsible for ensuring the safety, planning, logistics, and cultural protocols for public volunteer participants who come to Kaho'olawe. The PKO practices kilo (observations) of the environment and resources that affect the island; and in turn utilize these observations to increase our cultural understanding and sense of place. Such observations have helped to inform our deepened cultural ceremonial practices such as Makahiki and Ipu A Kāne rain ceremonies.

CJ is a leader and integral part of the Ipu A Kāne hui of practitioners who mālama rain ko'a (altars) on Maui and Kaho'olawe to increase revegetation efforts on Kaho'olawe. It has been observed that the Nāulu clouds and rains stem from Pu'u Māhoe on Maui and ceremonial chants and offerings are utilized to entice the rain waters to feed the island. As kahu of the Nāulu rain ko'a on Maui, CJ has been responsible for the physical, cultural, and spiritual integrity of the site and ceremonies since 2012.

CJ has also been a crucial component of the PKO's Ho'ōla 'Āina: Revegetation Hui who are dedicated to helping our native plants flourish. His expertise in landscape scale planning and understanding of the environment has been invaluable to the PKO. He has worked to ensure the proper working function of our water catchments, irrigation systems, and erosion control methods for the health of our native plantings. He is also spearheading the PKO's efforts to create a native ecosystem that will be used to support bringing the endangered Kapalupaluakanaloa back to Kaho'olawe.

As a farmer, he has been able to integrate customary cultivation methods with modern technologies to produce crops for both ceremonial and personal consumption. His knowledge of environmental resources and needs lends well to his incredible passion for growing native Hawaiian plant species. He is personally accountable for having planted thousands of native floras, but not just for the sake of planting them. As a hunter, he is astutely aware of the negative effects that invasive axis deer have had on the ecosystem. As such, I know that he takes great pride in cultivating species like wiliwili that have been so greatly impacted by the deer.

CJ's lifelong personal and professional experiences in the stewardship of both 'āina and kai resources stem from his 'ohana of fishermen and farmers. He prides himself on knowing his genealogy and understanding the environments that sustain him. I wholeheartedly support CJ's appointment to the Maui Planning Commission as someone who is grounded in cultural knowledge and practices, knowledgeable of Maui and its resources/environment, and who can thoughtfully consider social and community dynamics. I have no doubt that he will be able to approach issues from an aloha 'āina outlook, and always bearing in mind the decisions that would affect Maui's resources for generations to come.

Mahalo for your time and aloha,

Blake "Brutus" LaBenz

Great Committee

From: C Kipahulu <kipahulu.community@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 8:00 AM
To: Great Committee
Subject: Letter of Concern - Kauiki Lind
Attachments: Letter of Concern.pdf

You don't often get email from kipahulu.community@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Governmental Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee

Maui County Council
200 S. High Street
Wailuku, HI 96793

Subject: Concern Regarding Nominee Kauiki Lind for the East Maui Seat

Dear Members of the Governmental Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee,

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the recent nomination of the current representative seeking to occupy the East Maui Seat. This nominee has a well-documented history of problematic behavior that has deeply impacted the Kipahulu and Hana communities.

Over the past decade, numerous public meetings have borne witness to this individual's inability to maintain composure during important discussions, as well as repeated expressions of anger, hostility, and discrimination. Most alarming are the nominee's public statements that reflect a pattern of resentment and exclusion toward foreigners and newer residents who simply wish to build homes for their families on their own private lands. These divisive comments directly undermine the spirit of aloha and mutual respect that East Maui communities strive to uphold.

The future planning and development of Maui must not rest in the hands of a representative whose behavior disrespects the foundational values of inclusion, civility, and cooperation. It is troubling that this nominee, who has reportedly used racially charged language and demonstrated an inability to engage constructively with the public, is being considered for a role that demands diplomacy, fairness, and ethical leadership. The attacks of this individual at Kipahulu community association meetings have been documented, with audio and video recordings that can be shared with your committee should you request to view them in a private setting.

Internal reports and community testimonies have long highlighted this individual's conflicts within professional and private spheres, which further question their suitability for public service. The East Maui Seat deserves a representative who can display unity, uphold ethical standards, and genuinely advocate for the diverse needs of the Maui community, instead of their own agendas.

We regretfully but firmly oppose this nomination and urge the Committee to consider the long-term consequences of appointing an individual with such a divisive and unstable track record.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your continued commitment to transparent and ethical governance.

Signed,

Concerned Community members of East Maui

Governmental Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee

Maui County Council
200 S. High Street
Wailuku, HI 96793

Subject: Concern Regarding Nominee Kauiki Lind for the East Maui Seat

Dear Members of the Governmental Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee,

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the recent nomination of the current representative seeking to occupy the East Maui Seat. This nominee has a well-documented history of problematic behavior that has deeply impacted the Kipahulu and Hana communities.

Over the past decade, numerous public meetings have borne witness to this individual's inability to maintain composure during important discussions, as well as repeated expressions of anger, hostility, and discrimination. Most alarming are the nominee's public statements that reflect a pattern of resentment and exclusion toward foreigners and newer residents who simply wish to build homes for their families on their own private lands. These divisive comments directly undermine the spirit of aloha and mutual respect that East Maui communities strive to uphold.

The future planning and development of Maui must not rest in the hands of a representative whose behavior disrespects the foundational values of inclusion, civility, and cooperation. It is troubling that this nominee, who has reportedly used racially charged language and demonstrated an inability to engage constructively with the public, is being considered for a role that demands diplomacy, fairness, and ethical leadership. The attacks of this individual at Kipahulu community association meetings have been documented, with audio and video recordings that can be shared with your committee shall you request to view them in a private setting.

Internal reports and community testimonies have long highlighted this individual's conflicts within professional and private spheres, which further question their suitability for public service. The East Maui Seat deserves a representative who can display unity, uphold ethical standards, and genuinely advocate

for the diverse needs of the Maui community, instead of their own agendas.

We regretfully but firmly oppose this nomination and urge the Committee to consider the long-term consequences of appointing an individual with such a divisive and unstable track record.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your continued commitment to transparent and ethical governance.

Signed,

Concerned Community members of East Maui

Great Committee

From: Davianna McGregor <davianna.mcgregor@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 10:34 PM
To: Great Committee
Subject: Supporting CJ Elizares to Maui Planning Commission
Attachments: Support for CJ Elizares Maui Planning Commission.docx

You don't often get email from davianna.mcgregor@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Aloha

Please see attached my letter in support of the appointment of Christopher Jon "CJ" Elizares to the Maui Planning Commission.

Respectfully,
davianna pōmaika'i mcgregor

--

*Davianna Pomaika'i McGregor
Professor Emerita of Ethnic Studies and Oral History
University of Hawai'i, Mānoa*

Davianna Pōmaika'i McGregor
1942 Naio St.
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

May 11, 2025

To: Chair U'u-Hodgins and Members of the Government Relations, Ethics and Transparency Committee
GREAT.committee@mauicounty.us

Re: RESOLUTION 25-108, APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION (GREAT- 2(2))

SUPPORTING THE NOMINATION OF Christopher Jon "CJ" ELIZARES TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION

Aloha

My name is Davianna Pōmaika'i McGregor and I am writing in support of the appointment of Christopher Jon "CJ" Elizares to serve on the Maui Planning Commission for the Upcountry and Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner seat. I have worked with CJ Elizares in the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana for the past several years to restore the cultural and natural resources of the island, an ahupua'a of the Honua'ula Moku/District of Maui. The approach of the 'Ohana is to do consistent kilo, observations of the environment and its seasonal changes on the island and its natural resources, while also conducting traditional and customary ceremonies, such as the annual Makahiki to attract the seasonal rains of Lono, and working in coordination with the natural elements to install water catchments, tanks and irrigation lines to give life to native plantings.

Throughout the years of CJ's work with the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, he has demonstrated and applied both ancestral and researched Hawaiian environmental knowledge of Maui, Kaho'olawe and the surrounding ocean. He has engaged in Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices on Kaho'olawe, including environmental practices with regard to erosion control measures, installing rain catchments and water tanks, irrigation lines and sustaining native plants. Of particular note are his efforts to re-plant the endemic and endangered Kapalupaluo Kanaloa on the island, applying traditional Native Hawaiian methods to restore the native ecosystem on the island wherein the plant can flourish.

CJ has also played an important role in managing and sustaining the marine resources on the island, while allowing subsistence harvest for consumption by participants on huaka'i, cultural stewardship field trips, while on the island.

As a Native Hawaiian practitioner, CJ is also the steward for the Naulu rain ko‘a/shrine to send the Kaleinaulu rain cloud to Kanaloa Kaho‘olawe which the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohan constructed under the oversight of Kumu Hula Hokulani Holt. The rain ko‘a is located on Ulupalakua Ranch lands near Pu‘u Māhoe and its purpose is to attract the clouds that arise from the forests of Ulupalakua and send them across the channel to Kaho‘olawe to water the native plantings.

Given my experience with CJ in the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana, I believe that as a member of the Maui Planning Commission, CJ will review and deliberate upon proposals with the intelligence, heart and insights of a Native Hawaiian cultural practitioner with deep ancestral roots on Maui. He will examine the impacts of proposed actions from the perspective of the ‘āina and its capacity to sustain new uses by present generations, while also reserving its resources for seven generations to come. He understands that the ‘āina is precious and must be treated with respect, as a revered kupuna.

In closing, I respectfully support the appointment of Christopher Jon "CJ" Elizares to the Maui Planning Commission as someone whose culturally grounded ethics and outlook as a Native Hawaiian will provide an important voice for the ‘āina in the deliberations of the Commission.

I can be contacted at davianna.mcgregor@gmail.com for additional information, as needed.

Mahalo and Aloha,

Davianna Pōmaika‘i McGregor

Great Committee

From: April Greenberg <greenberg.april@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 4:40 PM
To: Great Committee
Subject: Resolution 25-108
Attachments: Resolution 25-108.pdf

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Aloha,

My testimony in support of Resolution 25-108 to appoint Mr. Elizares to the Maui County Planning Commission is attached.

Sincerely,
April Greenberg

May 10, 2025

Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee
Kalana O Maui Building
200 S. High Street
Wailuku, HI 96793

Dear Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee Members,

Aloha, my name is April Greenberg and I am writing in strong support of Resolution 25-108 regarding the appointment of Christopher Jon (CJ) Elizares to the Maui County Planning Commission. I first met CJ two years ago while conducting archaeological projects for ASM Affiliates in the Mākena area. Over the time I have known CJ, I have been consistently impressed by his dedication to the community and his proactive approach in engaging and educating the next generation of stewards on Maui.

CJ's aloha 'āina is evident in the work he does as 'Ōiwi Resources and Stewardship Manager at Mākena. CJ is a leader in the South Maui community and applies community-based approaches to environmental stewardship. His passion for the responsible management of natural resources is manifest in the work he spearheads at Nāulu Farm. CJ's commitment to sustainable land use and the preservation of cultural resources is demonstrated through his active role with the Kīpaipai archaeology training program and volunteer events. As a Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner and stewardship mentor, I believe that CJ has a profound understanding of the challenges facing Maui and will bring a community-focused perspective to make informed decisions in the planning process.

Therefore, I strongly encourage you to approve CJ Elizares's nomination to the Maui County Planning Commission. I am certain that his dedication and experience will be an asset to the Planning Commission and the Maui community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Resolution 25-108.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'April Greenberg', written in a cursive style.

April Greenberg
(808) 743-9504

Great Committee

From: Kekuhi Kealiikanakaole <ohaililani@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 1:18 PM
To: Great Committee
Subject: Re: CJ Elizares Nomination

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Kekuhi Kealiikanakaoleohaililani

Owner/Trainer Hālau 'Ōhi'a
1114 Auwae Road
Hilo, HI. 96720
ohaililani@gmail.com
(808) 865-8427

Written testimony via email to: GREAT.committee@mauicounty.us

RESOLUTION 25-108, APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION (GREAT - 2(2))

SUPPORTING THE NOMINATION OF CJ ELIZARES TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION

8 May 2025

To Chair U'u-Hodgins and Members of the Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee,

I am writing to offer my aloha & support for the nomination of Christopher Jon "CJ" Elizares to serve on the Maui Planning Commission in the Upcountry and Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner seats.

As a respected member of the Maui community, CJ has consistently demonstrated deep knowledge, lived experience, and unwavering dedication to the perpetuation and protection of Native Hawaiian values, traditions, and practices. CJ's commitment to cultural stewardship, land and resource stewardship, and community advocacy for Kaho'olawe, Makena, and Honua'ula makes him exceptionally qualified to bring a vital Hawai'i perspective to the Commission's work.

CJ has long been a practitioner of traditional Hawaiian protocols and practices. A long-time Kua of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, CJ is often called upon to offer cultural insight on matters ranging from conservation, to land use and environmental impact and restoration efforts. CJ's ability to bridge cultural understanding with modern planning processes is invaluable. Perhaps most notable is CJ's integrity, critical to ensuring that decisions made today honor the values and rights of future generations.

Beyond CJ's cultural expertise, CJ brings a sharp intellect, a dedication to being well-prepared, and fairness to all he does. He listens deeply, speaks with intention, and brings the necessary perspective of someone who works daily to restore native ecosystems.

It is with the utmost confidence and respect that I support CJ for this important role. I believe CJ's voice and leadership on the Maui Planning Commission will help support more culturally-informed outcomes.

Mahalo for your attention!

me ke aloha,

kekuhi kealiikanakaoleohaililani

Hālau ‘Ōhi’a, Kumu

Lonoa Honua, Creative/Owner

Kūlia e Uli 🙏

Great Committee

From: Gretchen Losano <gretchen@westmauigreencycle.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 1:12 PM
To: Great Committee
Subject: Supporting the Nomination of CJ Elizares to Maui Planning Commission

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RESOLUTION 25-108, APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION (GREAT - 2(2))

SUPPORTING THE NOMINATION OF CJ ELIZARES TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION

May 8, 2025

Aloha Chair U'u-Hodgins and Members of the Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee,

I am writing in support of the nomination of Christopher Jon "CJ" Elizares for the Maui Planning Commission's Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner and Upcountry seats. I was beyond excited to hear that he is seeking the nomination, and Maui County will be so fortunate to have such a great and most importantly, qualified person in these critical roles.

CJ is a long-time Kua of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, and is regularly invited to offer cultural insight on important matters ranging from conservation to environmental impact and restoration efforts. In addition to his extensive experience on Kaho'olawe, he is a lifelong practitioner of traditional Hawaiian protocols and practices. His commitment to cultural stewardship, land and resource stewardship, and community advocacy for Kaho'olawe, Makena, and Honua'ula makes him exceptionally qualified to bring a critical Hawai'i perspective to the Commission's work. CJ has consistently demonstrated deep knowledge, lived experience, and unwavering dedication to the perpetuation and protection of Native Hawaiian practices, traditions and values.

Beyond CJ's technical qualifications, he is brilliant and insightful, respectful and fair, and meticulous in the quality of his work and volunteer commitments. He is a leader that exemplifies integrity and patience, while holding himself to an incredibly high standard that by nature encourages others to do the same. He listens deeply, speaks with intention, and brings the necessary perspective of an 'āina steward committed to lifelong 'āina restoration practices.

I enthusiastically support CJ for this important role. His unique voice, perspective, and leadership on the Maui Planning Commission will help support more culturally-informed outcomes that will positively impact Maui for many generations to come.

Mahalo for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,
Gretchen

Gretchen Losano
Co-Founder
West Maui Green Cycle
(808)428-9931

“He ali’i ka ‘āina, he kauwā ke kanaka // The land is chief, man is it's servant”

-‘ōlelo no’eau #531

Great Committee

From: Christina Hartman <hartmanmaui@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 12:51 PM
To: Great Committee
Subject: Resolution 25-108_Testimony Support of CJ Elizares
Attachments: Resolution 25-108_Testimony_CJ Elizares_Supporting Nomination Letter_Resolution 25-108.pages

You don't often get email from hartmanmaui@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Christina Hartman
299 Alae Road
Kula, Hawaii 96790
hartmanmaui@gmail.com
808.283.3906

RESOLUTION 25-108, APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION (GREAT -2(2))

SUPPORTING THE NOMINATION OF CJ ELIZARES TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION

05-08-2025

To Chair U'u-Hodgins and Members of the Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee,

I am writing to offer my support for the nomination of Christopher Jon "CJ" Elizares to serve on the Maui Planning Commission in the Upcountry and Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner seats.

As a respected member of our community, CJ has consistently demonstrated deep knowledge, lived experience, and unwavering dedication to the perpetuation and protection of Native Hawaiian values, traditions, and practices. CJ's commitment to cultural stewardship, land and resource stewardship, and community advocacy for Kaho'olawe, Makena, and Honua'ula makes him exceptionally qualified to bring a vital Hawai'i perspective to the Commission's work.

CJ has long been a practitioner of traditional Hawaiian protocols and practices. A long-time Kua of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, CJ is often called upon to offer cultural insight on matters ranging from conservation, to land use and environmental impact and restoration efforts. CJ's ability to bridge cultural understanding with modern planning processes is invaluable. Perhaps most notable is CJ's integrity, critical to ensuring that decisions made today honor the values and rights of future generations.

Beyond CJ's cultural expertise, CJ brings a sharp intellect, a dedication to being well-prepared, and fairness to all he does. He listens deeply, speaks with intention, and brings the necessary perspective of someone who works daily to restore native ecosystems.

It is with the utmost confidence and respect that I support CJ for this important role. I believe CJ's voice and leadership on the Maui Planning Commission will help support more culturally-informed outcomes.

I have had the good fortune to be allowed on access trips to Kaho'olawe with the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, where CJ served as a Kua for our group. CJ is a natural and deeply grounded leader, whose

presence is marked by humility, and purpose. He exemplifies the qualities of a strong leader with a sense of responsibility to both people and place.

CJ leads through a kind, quiet steadiness that encourages trust and builds confidence in those around him. He supports others not by seeking attention, but by listening deeply, observing carefully, and acting with integrity. His decision-making is thoughtful and rooted in a deep understanding of community dynamics and the kuleana we hold to our wahi pana. I believe CJ would be the ideal person for this role, and I strongly support him in this capacity.

Mahalo for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Aloha,

Christina Hartman