

Support and Protections for Canoe Beach activities

My name is Melina Hight I'm here to advocate support for and implement protections for Canoe Beach activities in Maui County. I have two personal experiences with the Canoe Clubs on Maui. One was in 2009 as a single parent who sometimes had to work 2 jobs to get through the holidays. My son paddled and the coaches and other adults all were role models for his journey out of childhood. I can not express how much Kihei Canoe Club did for my young son in words. I will be eternally grateful.

Now I am enjoying my second experience as a member of Kahana Canoe Club. Paddling for exercise and putting my health first has made this club a huge part of my life. I see the attendance of Keiki growing and have witnessed how many volunteers are available and giving of their time and energy to support all keiki in the community. I am so grateful for the opportunity to "pay it forward" and encourage the kids in attendance now. To say the club participation is fulfilling is truly an understatement. Please make it your own mission to understand Canoe Clubs place and contribution to our society and insure it will always be a protected beach activity.

Our Keiki Attendance is: 112

Our Adult Members: 142

In many cases the parents have to work or cannot attend and the responsibility falls on the club members to maintain consistency and support the children in their canoe practice. This is a beautiful example of the giving nature of Maui's local community that I hope we continue to nurture by protecting the beaches we gather on.

The club is an integral part of our community and as such should be revered and treated as Special and should be Protected as a center for the community, not a place of business.

As a member of Kahana Canoe Club I pledge to always vote on the protection of these programs and to help Canoe Beaches remain vendor free.

Many thanks Tulsie Gabbard for bringing this issue to the forefront of our discussion today.

Mahalo nui loa,

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