

**Ulupuamahinamaikalani H. Peleiholani Blankenfeld-Kaheiki  
WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

**Before the  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
DATE: October 13, 2023  
TIME: 9:15 AM  
LOCATION: DLNR Boardroom, Kalanimoku Building  
1151 Punchbowl St., Room 132 & online via ZOOM**

**Agenda Item**

**D. LAND DIVISION**

1. NON-ACTION ITEM: Report Relating to Rental Reopening of the Kikala-Keokea Subdivision, Kikala and Keokea, Puna, Hawaii; Tax Map Keys: (3) 1-2-07: Various

Aloha

My name is Ulupuamahinamaikalani H. Peleiholani Blankenfeld-Kaheiki, and I am submitting written testimony on behalf of the Kikala-Keokea homesteads: "Report relating to rental reopening Kikala-Keokea Subdivision, Kikala and Keokea, Puna, Hawaii; Tax Map Keys: (3) 1-2-07: Various contest the full market value rents for the second set of rent leases varying from \$3,084 to \$3,238 annually. We are requesting that rent leases for all 67 Kikala-Keokea Residential Subdivision lots are placed at the same annual lease for the Phase I lessees at around \$600 per year.

As it States in Act 314:

In 1991, the Hawaii State Legislature passed Act 314 (as later amended) ' that established the Kikala-Keokea Residential Subdivision for Native Hawaiian families that had lived in Kalapana and had been displaced by the lava flows. The legislature found that residents of Kalapana ``maintained a unique community promoting the Hawaiian way of life, [and] that it is in the public interest to provide for relocation assistance to the Hawaiians of Kalapana to enable them to perpetuate their way of life and traditions."

We are the Kalapana 'ohana who have been displaced and have been trying to maintain our unique lifestyle here in Kikala-Keokea. It is in the best interest of the DLNR/BLNR to support the livelihood of our 'ohana and not to displace us from our homes. The rent increase is displacing our 'ohana further in having to pay insurmountable amounts of lease rents aside from not being able to receive the necessary help to build homes and access the land. We ask that you support us in our requests and to help keep our 'ohana on our 'aina.

We contest the full market value rents and want "Fair market value" of the new average of \$600/year for all lease rents [67 lots].

Mahalo nui loa,

Ulupumamahinamaikalani H. Peleiholani Blankenfeld-Kaheiki

Vice President, Nā 'Ohana o Kalapana

(808) 785-5559

ghblakah@gmail.com



**From:** [DLNR.CO.Chair](#)  
**To:** [Ferreira, Darlene S](#)  
**Subject:** FW: From the Office of Governor Josh Green, M.D. [CS97731]  
**Date:** Monday, October 9, 2023 11:03:51 AM

Hi Darlene,

Was this written testimony submitted and received at a prior BLNR meeting or is this for an upcoming meeting? I didn't think there was any meeting on 10/3?

Thanks,

AJ

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**From:** Office of the Governor <officeofthegovernor@hawaii.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 9, 2023 10:54 AM  
**To:** DLNR.CO.Chair <dlnr.chair@hawaii.gov>  
**Subject:** From the Office of Governor Josh Green, M.D. [CS97731]



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

Josh Green, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA

Constituent Name: Ms. Kuulei Kealoha Cooper Kuulei	Date of Contact: 10/9/2023
Executive Services Casework #: 97731	
Address: 1440 Kinoole Street Hilo, HI 96720 United States	
Phone #: (808) 934-7799	Alternate Phone #:
Email Address: <a href="mailto:whipmkealoha@aol.com">whipmkealoha@aol.com</a>	Fax #:
Issue: <i>kalapana lease land (see notes below)</i>	
<p><u>Constituent Message:</u> Aloha Governor Green: Our family in Kalapana is experiencing tenfold lease rent due to DLNR's recent appraisals of land value. Below please find my written testimony to the BLNR who will hear the issue on Friday (10/3). Thank you in advance for your kokua to help our Kalapana families displaced by the 1983 lava flow:</p> <p>Aloha Board Members:</p> <p>The purpose for this testimony is in support of our 'ohana in Kikala Keokea, and their request for reconsideration of the current lease rents. Our 'ohana are the original families from Kalapana that were displaced during the 1983 eruption.</p>	

The challenges they face today include the exorbitant lease rent, which may be a result of language omitted in the current lease which reflected a 20% cap on lease rent. Inflation has also been a contributing factor to our way of life as food, gas, and basic needs are sometimes unaffordable.

In the original documents, it states the intent and purpose of the subdivision:

"The legislature found that residents of Kalapana "maintained a unique community promoting the Hawaiian way of life ... [and] that it is in the public interest to provide for relocation assistance to the Hawaiians of Kalapana to enable them to perpetuate their way of life and traditions."

The current lease calculations, and the "fair market value" of the lots defies the initial purpose of the Kikala Keokea subdivision. Our 'ohana is unable to perpetuate the "Hawaiian way of life" due to the challenges we face today, including the lease rent which is tenfold the original lease rent.

In fact, the document (Exhibit 2) provided shows an average value of \$80,000 per parcel (land only), when the County Real Property Tax office shows a market value of \$18,000 (land only). The discrepancy between the DLNR appraiser's value, and the Property Tax office is over \$60,000+, and warrants explanation.

I respectfully request the DLNR revisit the current lease our 'ohana holds in Kikala Keokea, and provide resolution to their plight. The exorbitant raise in lease rent is unaffordable for our 'ohana, and will result in our families of Kalapana to be displaced. Non-action would be a travesty to our community, and allow our "way of life" in Kalapana to be forever lost. Again, it would defy the initial intent of our Kikala-Keokea homestead.

As Governor Green's priority is affordable housing, and our families are forever engrained in Kalapana, I respectfully request this matter be brought to his attention immediately, should the DLNR not be able to legally provide resolution. An Executive Order would be an immediate resolution for our 'ohana. After all, these are Crown Lands.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ku'uleiohuokalani Kealoha Cooper, Trustee  
James & Miulan Kealoha Trust

Executive Services Notes: **AJ - please call me before responding to this constituent. TY, Amy Miwa (E. HI Rep)**

Submitted to:

Email Address: [DLNR.Chair@hawaii.gov](mailto:DLNR.Chair@hawaii.gov)

Date Submitted to Department: 10/9/2023

CSR Initials:amy

**FOR STATE DEPARTMENT USE**

***The attached casework is being submitted for your department's information.***

***Thank you.***

PHONE: (808) 586-0034 • FAX: (808) 586-0006 • GOVERNOR.HAWAII.GOV

**From:** [whipmkealoha@aol.com](mailto:whipmkealoha@aol.com)  
**To:** [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [LANIHAU-rsmith](#); [Heit, Gordon C](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item D. LAND DIVISION 1. NON-ACTION ITEM: Report Relating to Rental Reopening of the Kikala-Keokea Subdivision, Kikala and Keokea, Puna, Hawaii  
**Date:** Monday, October 9, 2023 8:38:23 AM

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Aloha Board Members:

The purpose for this testimony is in support of our 'ohana in Kikala Keokea, and their request for reconsideration of the current lease rents. Our 'ohana are the original families from Kalapana that were displaced during the 1983 eruption.

The challenges they face today include the exorbitant lease rent, which may be a result of language omitted in the current lease which reflected a 20% cap on lease rent. Inflation has also been a contributing factor to our way of life as food, gas, and basic needs are sometimes unaffordable.

In the original documents, it states the intent and purpose of the subdivision:

*"The legislature found that residents of Kalapana "maintained a unique community promoting the Hawaiian way of life ... [and] that it is in the public interest to provide for relocation assistance to the Hawaiians of Kalapana to enable them to perpetuate their way of life and traditions."*

The current lease calculations, and the "fair market value" of the lots defies the initial purpose of the Kikala Keokea subdivision. Our 'ohana is unable to perpetuate the "Hawaiian way of life" due to the challenges we face today, including the lease rent which is tenfold the original lease rent.

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As Governor Green's priority is affordable housing, and our families are forever engrained in Kalapana, I respectfully request this matter be brought to his attention immediately, should the DLNR not be able to legally provide resolution. An Executive Order would be an immediate resolution for our 'ohana. After all, these are Crown Lands.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ku'uleiohuokalani Kealoha Cooper, Trustee  
James & Miulan Kealoha Trust



**Ashley L. Kierkiewicz**  
County Council District IV

*Policy Committee on Planning,  
Land Use and Development – Chair*



(808) 961-8265  
ashley.kierkiewicz@hawaiiicounty.gov

*Policy Committee on Infrastructure  
and Assets – Vice-Chair*

## **HAWAI‘I COUNTY COUNCIL**

25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai‘i 96720

October 11, 2023

**Board of Land and Natural Resources • October 13, 2023 Meeting**  
**Testimony of Council Member Ashley Kierkiewicz, Council District IV (Lower Puna)**  
**Regarding Rental Reopening of the Kikala-Keokea Subdivision, Puna, Hawai‘i Island**

Aloha kākou:

I write as a concerned Council Member and advocate for the ‘ohana of Kikala-Keokea, who have endured significant hardships due to rent increases in their homestead. These increases, raised to levels unaffordable for many, are in direct contradiction to the original purpose and intent of the Kikala-Keokea subdivision.

The ‘ohana residing in Kikala-Keokea are the original families from Kalapana displaced by the 1983 eruption. The State Legislature recognized the unique community that existed in Kalapana, one that strongly perpetuated Hawaiian values, traditions, and culture. The creation of the Kikala-Keokea subdivision was intended to provide ‘ohana with relocation assistance and to enable their way of life. They have struggled through challenging circumstances and now face the prospect of being displaced once again due to the exorbitant increase in lease rents.

Our office respectfully requests the DLNR to revisit current lease terms held by Kikala-Keokea ‘ohana and provide a fair and just resolution to their plight. Please consider the financial burden imposed by the rent increases; it is unsustainable and may lead to displacement, which would be a great tragedy for our community.

Our office urges close communication and consultation with Kikala-Keokea homestead lessees to ensure their best interests are being considered. Please work towards a solution that not only allows ‘ohana to remain in their homes, but improves quality of life immediately and for future generations.

Mahalo for your kind consideration of this matter.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley", written in a cursive style.

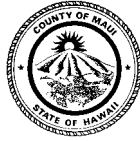
Ashley Lehualani Kierkiewicz  
COUNCIL MEMBER, DISTRICT IV  
DIRECTOR, REVITALIZE PUNA

Council Chair  
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair  
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore  
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers  
Tom Cook  
Gabe Johnson  
Tamara Paltin  
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez  
Shane M. Sinenci  
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



Director of Council Services  
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services  
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

**COUNTY COUNCIL**  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 S. HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.MauiCounty.us](http://www.MauiCounty.us)

October 11, 2023

Dawn N.S. Chang, Chairperson and Members  
Board of Land and Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 621  
Honolulu, Hawaii

**SUBJECT: NON-ACTION ITEM: Update Regarding the Disposition of Water License for Water Use from East Maui on the Island of Maui Item D1**

Dear Chair Chang and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources;

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter. In November 2022, voters overwhelmingly approved the Maui County Charter amendment enabling the establishment of local regional water authorities. Over 63.4 percent of people voted yes to the Charter amendment.

The public's support of the Charter amendment showcases their desire to place water back into the hands of community members. Water is protected as a public trust, and the State is responsible for protecting and conserving water resources for the benefit of all its people. Over the next 30 years, the County will need additional water sources to accommodate population growth and food security attained through local food production. Water has historically been controlled by private interests through plantation water systems. The passage of the Community Water Authority charter amendment is significant, as the Maui County Charter now directs Maui County under regional water authorities to secure long-term affordable water for island residents and farmers through the acquisition of water systems and state leases.

The recent fires on Maui have shown the need for public control of our water systems more than ever. Having a private intermediary when making decisions between the state and county on emergency water usage delays critical life saving actions. It also creates opportunities for private interests to use fire devastation as an excuse to further their agenda to receive more water for private development and to advance their water allotments beyond what is already allotted and needed by them. I

Chairperson Chang and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources  
October 11, 2023  
Page 2

ask that given the historic nature of the fire impacts and county recovery efforts that the Board not rush the final stages of lease process. I understand that a contract agreement between A&B and Mahi Pono puts a clock with financial penalties on acquisition of the lease, but this is a private matter and the state of Hawaii should not heed calls to expedite the process to meet private entity deadlines.

The lease process also needs to take into consideration the recently adopted instream flow standards for eight streams located in the Huelo license area. Prior to any decision making on final water allocation amounts those standards need be implemented. As you are aware the Environmental Impact Statement is based upon a scenario with no state standards for these streams and the proposed large amount of diverted water requested may not be possible under the current regulations.

It is also important to recognize the effects of the charter amendment passed almost a year ago. As a result, the Maui County Charter specifically establishes an East Maui Regional Community Water Authority and Board of Directors. For the first time, the East Maui lease area communities will have a mechanism to provide a voice on management of the East Maui water and the watersheds. It would be wise that prior to making a 30 year decision on water licenses in East Maui, that the Board understand the rights of the County of Maui as exercised through the EMRC Water Authority. The Authority is empowered to work with the state to secure the state water leases.

As an update, the members of the Board of Directors have been appointed by the Council and Mayor Bissen. The Board is in the process of getting organized and will begin meetings in the next few months. Once meetings have begun, you will be notified. This is a unique and exciting time for the citizens of Maui and the County. I look forward to embarking on a new partnership with the state to ensure that our community's water is managed as a public trust resource for the benefit of the people.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



SHANE M. SINENCI  
Councilmember

Francine Peleiholani-Blankenfeld  
P.O. Box 1106  
Pahoa, HI 96778

October 11, 2023

Board of Land & Natural Resources  
Kalanimoku Building  
1151 Punchbowl St., Room 132  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha,

My name is Francine Peleiholani-Blankenfeld and I am submitting written testimony on behalf of the Kikala-Keokea lessees of Puna, on the Big Island of Hawai'i. This is in regards to Agenda Item D. Land Division 1. NON-ACTION ITEM: Report Relating to Rental Reopening of the Kikala-Keokea Subdivision, Kikala and Keokea, Puna, Hawai'i; Tax Map Keys: (3) 1-2-07: Various.

I oppose the new full market value rents that were set for the second phase rental leases that exceeded \$3,000 per year.

In 1991, the State Legislature passed Act 314 that established the Kikala-Keokea residential subdivision for the Native Hawaiian families of Kalapana and surrounding areas that were displaced by lava flows.

The Native Hawaiian families of Kikala-Keokea come from a long line of families that hold a unique and significant connection to the lands that require us to reside in the area. In order to maintain this, we need your support by making ALL rental agreements the same as the first phase rental leases.

Mahalo nui loa,

Francine Peleiholani-Blankenfeld  
(808)315-0465  
taraivaa@aol.com

**From:** [Ikaika Rodenhurst](#)  
**To:** [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [LANIHAU-rsmith](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BLNR 10/13/23 - Testimony Agenda Item D-1  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 11:25:18 PM

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Aloha Board Members,

My name is Ikaika Rodenhurst and I am submitting testimony in support of the reconsideration for the current lease rents in Kikala-Keokea.

These families suffered displacement from an act of nature. The Hawaii State Legislature passed Act 314 and Act 73 to assist these families and perpetuate their way of life and traditions. The current valuation of the second set of lots does not assist these families and will lead to further displacement and disruption of their way of life and traditions.

I stand with the 'ohana impacted by this and implore you to reconsider the rent leases to be consistent across all lots and follow the valuation method applied to the initial set of lots.

Mahalo,  
Ikaika Rodenhurst