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**[EXTERNAL] Docket No. SP73-159 Nani Mau Mau Gardens**

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**From** Susan Osborne <halai96720@gmail.com>

**Date** Tue 4/22/2025 3:29 PM

**To** DBEDT LUC <dbedt.luc.web@hawaii.gov>

 1 attachment (6 MB)

LUC KOKL.pdf;



Aloha,

Please find the attached document of testimony for tomorrows LUC Hearing.

Mahalo

Susie Osborne

Co-Founder/Development Director Kua O Ka Lā Charter School



# Kua O Ka Lā

A New Century Public Charter School

Susan Osborne  
Kua O Ka Lā Charter School: Co-Founder/Development Director  
345 Makalika Street, Hilo, HI. 96720  
[halai96720@gmail.com](mailto:halai96720@gmail.com) or [susie@kuaokala.org](mailto:susie@kuaokala.org)  
(808) 640-3439

April 21, 2025

Land Use Commission  
State of Hawai'i  
P.O. Box 2359  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804-2359

Subject: Letters of Support for Charter School Use at Nani Mau Gardens

Dear Commissioners,

Please find attached the support letters as presented to the Windward Planning Commission and then the County Council members in addressing the Rezone, Subdivision, Special Use Permit and Acquisition in process by the schools supporting non-profit Ho'oulu Lāhui.

Extensive community engagement and presentations have occurred over the past year to inform and seek input from the community as we move through this process. The community outreach flyer is also attached for your review.

Kua O Ka Lā Public Charter School remains committed to compliance with all permit conditions and to maintaining a safe, accessible, and community-oriented learning environment. We appreciate the continued support of the Land Use Commission and are available to provide any additional information or clarification as needed.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Susan Osborne*  
Susan Osborne Kua O Ka Lā Co-Founder/Development Director



# KUA O KA LĀ

## NEW CENTURY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

A story of gratitude, hope and resilience

On July 11, 2018, our 600-acre coastal campus was consumed by lava during the Kilauea Volcanic eruption, destroying the only school, including its administrative offices, greenhouses, fishponds and archaeological sites. What was once a wondrous learning laboratory for place-based, cultural education in a low-land rainforest was now gone.



With the help of so many community groups and individuals, we managed to renovate and relocate to the beautiful Nani Mau Gardens here in Pana'ewa. We are so **grateful** to now have the opportunity to make this our permanent home, settling the hearts and minds of our families, community and students for generations to come! **Hope!**

***WE WANTED TO SHARE THIS GREAT NEWS, AND OUR NEXT STEPS WITH YOU!***



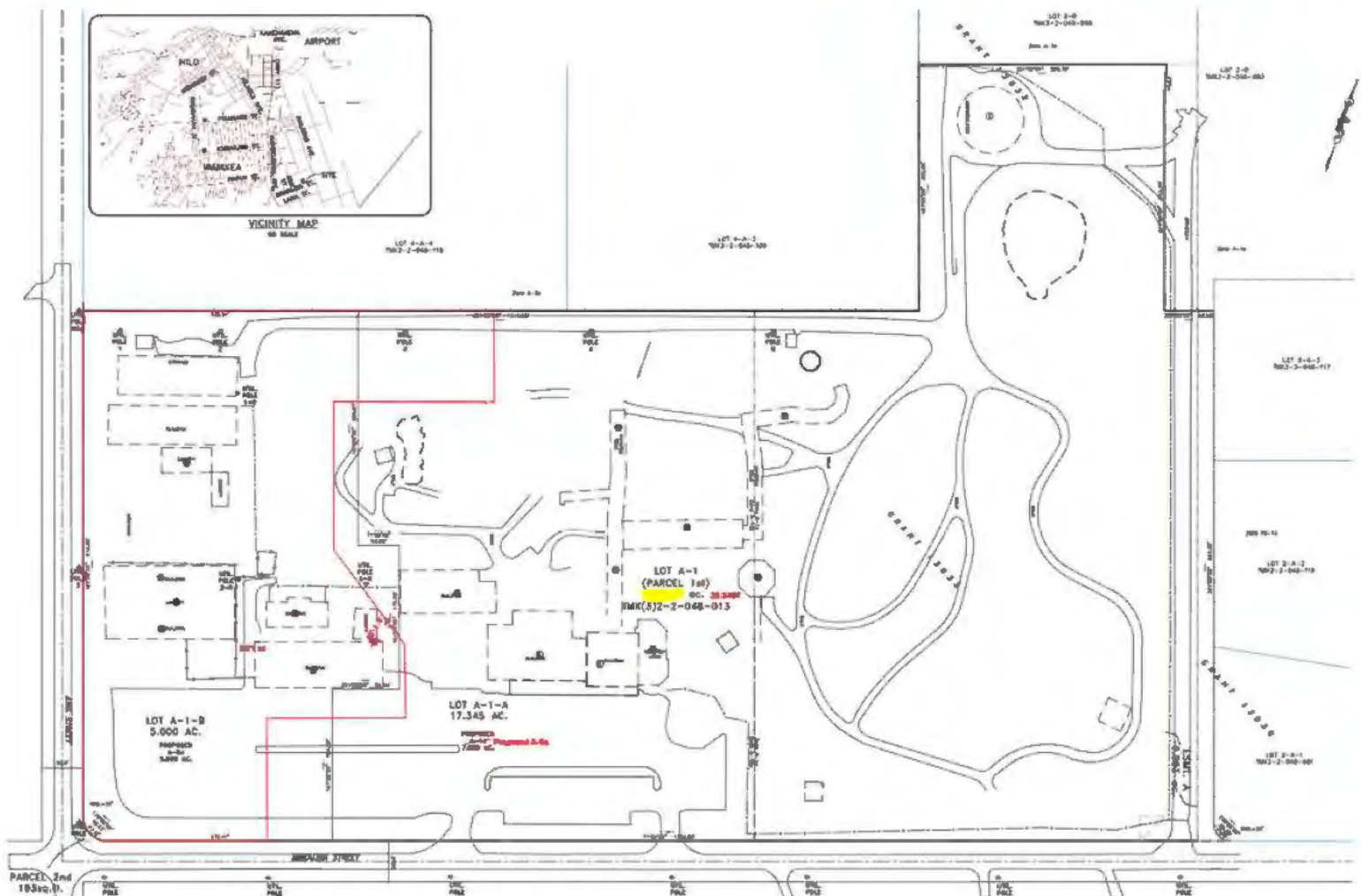
We have successfully brought the facility into 100% legal compliance with State, County, and have received a certificate of "E Occupancy" and the necessary Special Use Permits. **Resilience!**

Nani Mau has a long history as a school site, starting off with Connections Charter School in 2002 for many years & now Kua O Ka Lā Charter School has occupied the site since 2019. We do hope to add a covered food serving area for students breakfast & lunch. No other development is anticipated. Adequate parking exists for our use.



We are currently submitting an application to Rezone from Ag 10 to Ag 5 as this is what will be subdivided and sold to the schools supporting non-profit of Ho'oulu Lāhui with the purpose of providing the school with a permanent home. The next steps include subdividing out the 5 -acre parcel (see map for details) in order to have its own TMK which will then allow for the acquisition to occur. We anticipate this to take 2 years.

**If you would like more information on our project, please contact:**  
**School Co-Founder/Development Director and Project Director**  
**Susie Osborne at (808) 640-3439**



\* The red outlined area to the left indicates the area to be subdivided and acquired for the school.

**C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.**  
*Mayor*



**William V. Brilhante, Jr.**  
*Managing Director*

**Merrick Nishimoto**  
*Deputy Managing Director*

## *County of Hawai'i ~ Office of the Mayor*

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • Phone (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553  
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740  
Phone (808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

February 26, 2025

Aloha,

The Mayor's office presents this letter in full support of the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant: Ho'oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

This is the first important milestone in the process of rezone, and subdivision to ensure a permanent home for Kua O Ka Lā Charter School and its supporting non-profit, Ho'oulu-Lāhui.

In 2018 the 600-acre campus was inundated by the Kilauea eruption and the organizations relocated to this site at the Nani Mau Gardens. They have ensured that the facility has been brought up to code and have secured an 'E Occupancy and the Use Permits necessary to operate the school in Agriculture Zone.

Mahalo for your consideration and support of this important step supporting Kua O Ka Lā Charter school in their long-term recovery from our natural disaster.

Mahalo,

**C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.**  
Mayor

JILL N. TOKUDA  
2ND DISTRICT, HAWAII

WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE:  
1005 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-1102  
(202) 225-4906

DISTRICT OFFICE:  
700 BISHOP STREET, SUITE 1902  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
(808) 746-6220

<http://tokuda.house.gov>

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-1102**

March 3, 2025

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSERVATION, RESEARCH,  
AND BIOTECHNOLOGY  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NUTRITION, FOREIGN  
AGRICULTURE, AND HORTICULTURE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK, DAIRY,  
AND POULTRY  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL  
(VICE RANKING MEMBER)  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS  
SELECT SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE  
CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Mr. Louis Daniele III  
Chair, Windward Planning Commission  
County of Hawai'i  
101 Pauahi St, Ste 3  
Hilo, HI 96720

RE: *Change of Zone (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant Ho'oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.*

Dear Chair Daniele:

I have long been a strong supporter of our Hawai'i Charter Schools since their inception. In 2018, when the Kīlauea eruption inundated the Kua O Ka Lā Charter School campus, I assisted and supported Ms. Susie Osborne through those challenging times.

I was happy to learn of their successful relocation to Pana'ewa at the Nani Mau Gardens from their current location. Securing a permanent home is essential for the students, their 'ohana, and their staff, providing critical stability as they continue to rebuild. The rezone of this property from Ag 10 to Ag 5 will allow for the five acres to be subdivided and acquired by Ho'oulu Lāhui, the school's supporting non-profit organization.

Ho'oulu Lāhui is awaiting congressionally directed funding submitted through Senator Mazie Hirono's office at this time. If these funds are approved and allocated, they will provide the balance needed for the completion of this acquisition. My office has assisted Ms. Osborne with the application process, and I will continue to work towards ensuring they receive this vital federal support.

I respectfully urge your full and fair consideration of this pending application under your review. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Jill N. Tokuda  
Member of Congress



**The Senate**  
**Ka 'Aha Kenekoa**

STATE CAPITOL  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

April 10 2025

Senator Lorraine Inouye  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania St., Room 210  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

February 27, 2025

Re: Support for Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) **by the Applicant: Ho'oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.**

Aloha County Council members,

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for this important Rezone Application on Makalika Street in my District 1, Hawai'i Island. The rezone, and subsequent subdivision and acquisition by **its affiliated Ho'oulu Lāhui will ensure that Kua O Ka Lā Charter School** has a permanent home. They have suffered great trauma from the loss of their campus in Puna to the Kilauea eruption.

I have visited the school on several occasions and have been greatly impressed with the facilities, the respectful youth and I appreciate the small Hawaiian focus and values the school provides our community. This is an important community school and facility that is fully supported by the surrounding community.

Mahalo for your approval of this Rezone application.

Sincerely,

**Senator Lorraine R. Inouye**  
Senate District 1, Island of Hawai'i



# Ho'oulu Lāhui

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 7, 2025

Aloha Chair Inaba and Council members,

On behalf of the Ho'oulu Lāhui Board of Directors, we are pleased to provide this letter of support for our Rezone Application for a Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawaii.

Ho'oulu Lāhui is an educational 501c3 non-profit organization that was formed in 1995. We have provided cultural education programs for the Puna community since that time. Our successful programs led to the formation of Kua O Ka Lā Charter School and we then raised the funds to build our offices and school campus in Puna.

It was tragic to lose our 600 acre wahi pana to the Kilauea eruption but we successfully relocated the school to the Nani Mau Gardens and raised the funds to bring the facility into code compliance. We have subsequently negotiated a Development and Purchase Agreement with Nani Mau owner Cindy Cui so that the school is ensured a permanent home for generations.

This rezone is the first important step to realizing this dream. Upon the successful rezone, we will subdivide out 5 acres and then Ho'oulu Lāhui will acquire its current facility that the school occupies.

I may not be able to be present for this hearing on Monday March 10th but authorize Founder Susie Osborne to represent our organization in all matters pertaining to this hearing and application.

We implore your approval of this rezone application!

Mahalo,

*Johnson Keonelehua Kalawe*

Johnson Keonelehua Kalawe  
Board President: Ho'oulu Lāhui





# Kua O Ka Lā

A New Century Public Charter School

In 2018, the Kilauea eruption consumed the Kua O Ka Lā Charter School campus in Puna. Our school moved to the Nani Mau Gardens. We are so grateful for this opportunity of stability for our school through the rezone, subdivision and acquisition process of the property before you today that will occur through our supporting non-profit Ho'oulu Lāhui.

The 'ohana of Kua O Ka Lā are in full support of the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant Ho'oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

## NAME

## Email Address.

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Noby PARK	Allyw@me@gmail.com
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Janae Mamo-Underwood	
Justin Underwood	
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FELIPE CABALLERO	



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Ivory Kalber	rothawaiiagent@gmail.com
Camille Ortega	ca-ortega@gmail.com



**Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association**  
**P.O. Box 6844**  
**Hilo, HI 96720**

April 10, 2025

The Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association (KPFA) is a Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) Homestead Association controlled by beneficiaries (as defined by the Hawaiian Home Lands Recovery Act, 109 Stat. 537). KPFA is registered as a Homestead & Beneficiary Association (HBA) with the U.S. Department of the Interior under 43 CFR §§ 47.10 and 48.6.

We represent over 1,000 native Hawaiian Homestead Lessees and their 'ohana residing on Hawaiian Homes Trust Lands in Pana'ewa, Hawai'i Island. Our 285 agricultural lots range from 5 to 40 acres across 1,615 acres of Hawaiian Homes Trust Lands. Our programs also serve our sister residential community of over 1,200 Native Hawaiians on 311 lots on 411 acres of Hawaiian Home Trust Lands.

Our mission is to support, motivate and educate Keaukaha Pana'ewa agricultural lessees to establish a viable sustainable farm community; preserve Hawaiian culture; achieve self-sufficiency, pono management, and respect for the 'āina (land).

This past November 2024, Kua O Ka Lā Charter School and Ho'oulu Lāhui Co-Founder Susie Osborne attended and presented at our annual meeting of Panaewa lessees. Over 50 attendees were present. She shared the journey of the schools recovery from the loss of their campus to the 2018 Kilauea eruption. The move to Makalika Street also encompassed needing to secure funding and significant work to ensuring County and State compliance with the facility. We learned about the Agreement in place with Nani Mau owner to rezone, subdivide and acquire the 5 acres where the school exists now.

Our community organization whose many properties are surrounding neighbors, are in full support of Ho'oulu Lāhui and Kua O Ka Lā rezone, subdivision and use permit process. Securing this property will provide culturally based educational opportunities for our Panaewa, Hilo and Puna community youth and 'ohana. The school buses the majority of their students to the campus and we do not feel any adverse impacts from this small school in our neighborhood.

Susie Osborne has also become an Advisory member to one of our important initiatives, the Panaewa Hub Site focusing on the development of a polyforestry food forest, and community garden to grow our own food for self-sustainability and economic food security. We hope to engage the school students in these hands- on educational opportunities.

We stand in full support of the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant: Ho'oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Maile Luuwai".

Maile Luuwai  
President  
Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association



Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 10, 2025

Aloha County Council Members,

My name is Bob Matsuda and I am the immediate neighbor to the property in consideration to be rezoned, the Nani Mau Gardens. I am also President to the neighborhood Kumi`ai group which is organized to provide community information and support. We also meet for social gatherings.

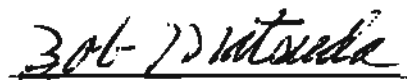
I have had the great opportunity to be invited on the Kua O Ka Lā campus several times. I first attended their Makahiki event, a celebration of the students culture and learning. It was such a heartfelt gathering of families watching their students perform and I felt so uplifted and happy to witness first hand this wonderful small school. The students were so respectful and the operations were so organized.

I was then invited to and attended the community informational open house to share about this project rezone, subdivision and acquisition process resulting in a permanent home for the school. I understand how important this is and what a wonderful opportunity for our community.

All of our surrounding community has received the colorful informational flyers and the letter from the planner with the information about this rezone. We have a phone tree and have called all of our community neighbors. There is absolutely no concern that we have come across for this initiative.

Please accept my testimony in full support of the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant Ho'oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Matsuda", written over a horizontal line.

Bob Matsuda  
President: Panaewa Kumi`ai

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.  
*Mayor*

William V. Brilhante, Jr.  
*Managing Director*

West Hawai'i Office  
74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740  
Phone (808) 323-4770  
Fax (808) 327-3563



## County of Hawai'i

### PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
*Director*

Michelle S. Ahn  
*Deputy Director*

East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720  
Phone (808) 961-8288  
Fax (808) 961-8742

April 11, 2024

Aloha e County Council Members,

I kindly submit this letter of support for Ho'oulu Lāhui regarding the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) requesting to change the zoning of TMK (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) from Agricultural-10 Acres to Agricultural-5 Acres.

Ho'oulu Lāhui and its affiliate Kua O Ka Lā Public Charter School lost their campus and symbolic home during the 2018 Kīlauea eruption. Further, many families that make up the school's community also lost everything they had during this historic eruption. Nonetheless, I have seen the resilience, creativity, and tenacity of this organization and its leaders to rebuild over the six years since the eruption.

The School serves as a vital resource to the Puna community and a close partner to the County in our recovery efforts following the 2018 Kīlauea volcanic eruption. The County's Disaster Recovery Division provided \$500,000.00 to their efforts through the Kīlauea Recovery Grant Program for *Ho'oulu Lāhui Noho Pa'a* to support the rezoning, subdivision, and eventual acquisition of the school site by the Applicant. Approval of this rezoning will achieve a critical step to securing a permanent home for the School to further cultural revitalization and education for our keiki.

We appreciate your consideration and support for this Change of Zone Application. If you have any questions regarding this letter of support, please contact me at (808) 961-8174 or [douglas.le@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:douglas.le@hawaiicounty.gov).

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Douglas Nam Le".

Douglas Nam Le, AICP  
Disaster Recovery Officer

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 10 2025

Aloha County Council Members,

My name is Loraine Terada and I am live on Makalika Street just down the road from the school property at Nani Mau Gardens in consideration to be rezoned. I am also the Treasurer for our local Kumi`ai neighborhood group, organized to support our community.

I first received an informational flyer about the Rezone, and Subdivision process being undertaken by Ho`oulu Lāhui with the intention of then acquiring the 5 acres for a permanent home for the Charter School Kua O Ka Lā. I also received a letter from Land Use Planning about this initiative.

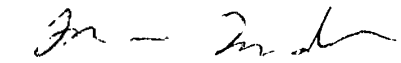
Later, I was invited to an informational open house held at the school to welcome and inform the community about the process being undertaken. We had an extensive presentation by school Founder Susie Osborne and then walked about the school campus and garden area.

Honestly, until I received this information, I was not even aware that the school had been there for over 6 years. There is absolutely no impact of traffic, noise or any concerns whatsoever.

I welcome the school securing a permanent home and the opportunities this facility will present for our community.

I am in full support of your approval to rezone this property from Ag 10 to Ag 5, the subdivision and further acquisition by Ho`oulu Lāhui.

Mahalo,



---

Loraine Terada

Treasurer: Panaewa Kumi`ai

Patti Pinto  
PO Box 711382  
Mountain View, HI 96771  
[pintonian@gmail.com](mailto:pintonian@gmail.com)

RE: HO'OULU-LĀHUI CHANGE OF ZONE APPLICATION NO. PL-REZ-2024-000070

April 10, 2025

I am writing to strongly support the request to rezone the property from Agricultural 10-acre (A-10a) to Agricultural 5-acre (A-5a).

As the coordinator for Hawai'i County's Kīlauea Recovery Grant Program, which has awarded substantial grants to this project, I have witnessed firsthand the remarkable progress made in rebuilding Kua O Ka Lā. This school, the only one displaced by the 2018 Kīlauea eruption, was left without a home. Through unwavering dedication, Susie Osborne has led the successful relocation, renovation, and reopening of the school, establishing a strong foundation for its future sustainability.

Kua O Ka Lā serves its community of students and their families with a unique curriculum that is well supported by this beautiful site. The school will continue to be excellent stewards of the property. It has been an honor to be a part of the rebirth of this school. Approving this zone change aligns with County codes and long-term goals, ensuring the continued success of Kua O Ka Lā. I urge you to support this request and help solidify the school's future in our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patti Pinto', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Patti Pinto  
(Recovery and Redevelopment Assistant, Disaster Recovery Division)





## Rotary Club of South Hilo

January 23, 2025

**Re: Letter of Support for the Rezone from Ag. 10 to Ag 5, Special Use Permit and Subdivision Application by Ho'oulu Lāhui for the Nani Mau Gardens in addressing the future acquisition of 5 acres at Nani Mau Gardens, Panaewa, Hilo.**

Aloha,

In 2018, Kua O Ka Lā New Century Public Charter School lost its 600 acre campus in Lower Puna due to the Kilauea eruption that destroyed hundreds of homes and this one public charter school.

The Rotary Clubs of East Hawai'i including the Rotary Club of South Hilo, gathered together and determined to support the school as a major collaborative project. We understood they had relocated to the Nani Mau facility which was very run down and needed a lot of repairs including walls and window replacement from termite damage, and installing air conditioning systems.

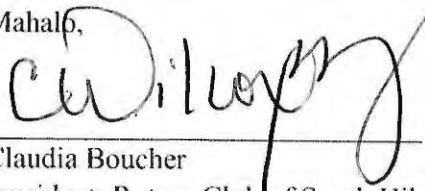
Rotary Clubs statewide and a sister club in Japan raised over \$80,000.00 and local club members gathered for several weeks with manpower and were able to get the repairs completed in order for the students to be in the classrooms on time for the school year.

We have continued to track the progress of the school and have provided continued support of their short term recovery and are happy to learn that the opportunity is in place for a permanent campus through the acquisition of 5 acres at their current location through their supporting non-profit Ho'oulu Lāhui.

As such, we understand the imperative need for both Ho'oulu Lāhui and the partnering Kua O Ka Lā Charter School to have a permanent home in addressing their long term recovery and sustainability. This letter is in full support of Ho'oulu Lāhui's application for rezone , special use permit and subdivision application.

Thank you for your consideration of support to this final step of provide disaster recovery by securing a permanent home for Ho'oulu Lāhui and Kua O Ka Lā Charter School.

Mahalo,



Claudia Boucher  
President: Rotary Club of South Hilo

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 10, 2025

Aloha Chair Inaba and County Council Members,

Re: Testimony in full support of the Rezone Application by Ho`oulu Lāhui.

My name is Catherine Rehberg and I am the Past President of the Rotary Club of South Hilo. Our club was instrumental in the fundraising, coordination and project implementation to support Kua O Ka Lā Charter School in their relocation efforts to the Nani Mau Gardens in Pana`ewa after the loss of their school campus in Puna to the Kilauea eruption. It was a powerful service project and very impactful for the school.

I then became a parent of a Kua O Ka Lā student. He loved his school experience there.

We are grateful for this opportunity to see the school have a secure home for the future. The successful rezone will then allow for Ho`oulu Lāhui to subdivide and acquire the 5 campus acres.

I did also receive regular updates on the progress of the schools recovery at our Rotary meetings. The school is in a wonderful location with no impact to the surrounding community over the past 6 years.

I fully support of the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Ho`oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana`ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

<i>Catherine F Rehberg</i>	dotloop verified 04/13/25 12:21 PM HST [SIL]EWO-RUEB-Y140
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Catherine Rehberg



11 April 2025

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Director, County of Hawai'i Planning Department  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Puahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Re: Change of Zone Application (PL- REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant: Ho'oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2 2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

Aloha mai kakou,

I am writing to express my full support for Ho'oulu Lāhui's application for change of zoning (PL-REZ-2024-000070) from Ag-10 to Ag-5 in order to support the continuity of Kua o ka Lā Public Charter School (KOKL).

As a professor of urban planning at Western Washington University and a registered Architect in Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington, I bring both professional expertise and cultural perspective to this endorsement. As a Kanaka Maoli architect and planner, I reached out to Susie Osborne and Kua O Ka Lā after learning about the loss of their Puna campus to Pele during the 2018 Kilauea eruption and lava flows to offer my kokua and mana'o in support of recovering this vital educational institution for the community.

Since 2019, I have supported the concept design and planning for the Nānāwale education center for Ho'oulu Lāhui (HL) and have assisted HL with strategic planning for the KOKL campus in my capacity as a principle of Metaamo Studio. My involvement with this project has given me intimate knowledge of both its challenges and its tremendous potential for the community.

While it is not possible to return to the 600-acre coastal campus where students could learn directly from the 'āina, the facilities at Nani Mau Gardens provide many similar aspects, including greenhouses and ponds, to support a land-based pedagogy that honors Hawaiian culture and values. This location represents a vital opportunity to ensure the school's long-term stability after the devastating loss of its original campus.



Since my initial connection with Susie Osborne and KOKL in 2019, I have become a board member of Ho'oulu Lāhui and am deeply invested in seeing this work continue. The proposed zoning change is essential to establishing a permanent home for the school that will support community needs and provide quality education for students for generations to come.

I also wish to note my familiarity with Hawaii County planning processes. I have had the opportunity to collaborate with the long-range planning team for the County of Hawaii on housing research for Micronesian communities (2019) and on Kilauea recovery efforts from 2020 through 2022, working with Bob Agres and Keiko Mercado. This experience has further informed my understanding of the importance of thoughtful land use decisions that support community resilience.

The requested zoning change aligns with both the immediate needs of the school and the long-term educational and cultural interests of the community. I strongly urge the approval of this application, which will enable Ho'oulu Lāhui to continue its vital educational mission in a stable, permanent location.

I remain committed to supporting Ho'oulu Lāhui through this process and am available to provide any additional information that might assist in your consideration of this application.

Na'u me ka 'oia'i'o,

James Miller

Associate Professor of Urban Planning, Western Washington University  
Registered Architect: Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington  
Board Member, Ho'oulu Lāhui  
Principal, Metaamo Studio  
[James.miller@wwu.edu](mailto:James.miller@wwu.edu) | 360-650-2592



Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 9, 2025

Aloha County Council members,

My name is Connie Ichinose and I am the Past President of the Rotary Club of Hilo. For over 100 years our club has served the Hilo community with the motto of "Service Above Self." We were chartered in 1920 and are the second oldest club in the State of Hawai'i. This year marks the 103<sup>rd</sup> year of service and we are honored to continue this long tradition of service to our community.

In 2018, we convened the Rotary Clubs of East Hawai'i and undertook a large collaborative project to assist Kua O Ka Lā Charter School with their relocation and recovery efforts after losing their campus to the 2018 Kilauea eruption. We raised substantial funds and provided manpower for 3 weeks to ready the school site for students. It was so rewarding to see the students in their new home on time for the next school year.

We have subsequently been engaged with the school through our peace pole initiative, installing a pole on their campus and starting off the International Day of Peace annually with their students at the peace pole. It is a wonderful collaboration. The school is successfully established now for over 6 years in this community and it is truly an asset for all.

I am pleased that the school has an opportunity through their supporting non-profit Ho'oulu Lāhui to secure a permanent home through this rezone, subdivision and then acquiring the 5 acres of the current school site. I have been kept informed of this process by Founder Susie Osborne.

I wholeheartedly support this application by Ho'oulu Lāhui for a Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your consideration and support in approving this rezone.

*Connie Ichinose*

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Connie Ichinose  
Board Member/Membership Chair/Vocational Chair: Rotary Club of Hilo  
District 5000 Membership Chair

9 April 2025

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
 Director, County of Hawai'i Planning Department  
 East Hawai'i Office  
 101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
 Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

**Re: Change of Zone Application (PL- REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant: Ho'oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.**

To Whom it May Concern,

It is without hesitation that I write this letter in full support of Ho'oulu-Lāhui's (and the Charter School is supports, Kua O Ka Lā) application for Change of Zoning (PL-REZ-2024-000070) from Ag-10 to Ag-5.

I am a registered Architect in Oregon and Washington states and have been teaching architecture, urbanism, and community resilience for nearly two decades, in programs including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Portland State University, and University of Oregon, among others. When I'm not teaching, I'm practicing out in the field with my firm, Metaamo Studio, in support of community projects in places stretching from East Asia, the Pacific Atolls, the Pacific Northwest, and here in Hawai'i County. As part of my work, I'm often traveling and working with communities around the globe, and am always in search of meaningful examples of community resilience in action that can provide inspiration and example to our work and students.

When I first learned of Kua O Ka Lā's story and work in September of 2019 when I was visiting Hawai'i County, I immediately knew that it was special, and one of the most innovative examples of ground-up community resilience I have come across. Testament to this example of resilience has been the fact that the school and community -- despite having been deeply set back after losing their 600 acre campus and facilities by the 2018 Kilauea volcanic eruption -- is still serving and inspiring students and the community as they adapt to their new home at Nani Mau.

Since Ho'oulu-Lāhui and Kua O Ka Lā's mission inspired us as well, we have been working over the last several years to provide design and technical support where we can, and will continue to do so in the future. We have been thrilled to follow the successes and believe that this change of zoning will be a key step in ensuring that the organization can continue to inspire and serve, and grow deeper, permanent roots.

Mahalo for your consideration in this matter, and in helping this incredible organization thrive.

Sincerely,



Matthew BUNZA  
 Founding Principal, AIA, NCARB, NOMA, Registered Architect (OR, WA),  
 M. ARCH (MIT), Urban Design Cert (MIT), B.A. ARCH (PSU)

Me-  
 TAA  
 MO.

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 11, 2025

Aloha County Council Members,

My name is Esther Cazimero and I am a consultant with the Nani Mau Gardens. I have been acquainted with and working alongside Kua O Ka Lā Charter School Founder Susie Osborne for the past several years and have really enjoyed the Hawaiian focused Charter School as our neighbor here at Nani Mau.

I was happy to learn that Nani Mau owner Cindy Cui established an agreement with the schools supporting non- profit Ho`oulu Lāhui for the property acquisition in support of the schools stability for generations. This requires the property to be rezoned to Ag 5, subdivided and then the acquisition will occur. Cindy is also an educator and a visionary who clearly sees the opportunities for the many collaborations that can emerge with the school in the future.

I have also been assisting Susie Osborne with the community informational outreach about the this process which she has been diligent about. I introduced her to our Kumi`ai President Bob Matsuda, and I assisted Susie with the coordination and implementation of the open house for the community at the School. This event was well received and supported by the community and I have heard of no concerns emerge whatsoever. We are pleased to have this important community school continue to be here. It has been here for over 6 years now and there is no negative impact to the community.

I fully support of the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant Ho`oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana`ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your support in approving this Rezone Application.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Esther Cazimero". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Esther" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Cazimero".

Esther Cazimero  
Consultant  
(808) 222-9684



**KŪ-A-KANAKA**

WHEN NATIVES THRIVE EVERYONE BENEFITS



808-769-4646



[www.kuakanaka.com](http://www.kuakanaka.com)



P.O.BOX 431 Hilo, HI 96721



[kuakanaka@gmail.com](mailto:kuakanaka@gmail.com)

April 10, 2025

Aloha,

Kū-A-Kanaka LLC is a Social Enterprise located on Hawai'i Island that focuses on culture-based education, sustainable native and local food production and food security. In these endeavors we work closely with our educational non-profit affiliate EA Ecovercity, which provides tuition-free, culture-based post-secondary education to young island residents.

We started out over 40 years ago, creating innovative, culture-based educational programs that meet the needs of island children. This includes founding Kanu O Ka `Āina Charter School in Waimea in 2000, and leading the Hawaiian Charter School movement Nā Lei Na`auao, supporting and encompassing 17 Hawaiian-focused Charter schools on three islands, including Kua O Ka Lā. We have enjoyed a long and successful relationship with Kua O Ka Lā and its non-profit organization Ho`oulu Lāhui, including partnering on a multi-million dollar Federal grant to develop our online professional development courses for Charter and DOE teachers.

Despite the tragic loss of their campus to the Kīlauea eruption, Ho`oulu Lāhui and Kua O Ka Lā have persevered and worked tirelessly to ensure their new campus site at the Nani Mau Gardens in Panaewa is legally compliant for public school education. Charter Schools are not provided any financial support for facilities and it is quite remarkable that Ho`oulu Lāhui is now in a position to rezone, subdivide and acquire 5 acres at Nani Mau in order to provide the school, staff and students stability for generations.

We are in full support of the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant: Ho`oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your consideration and full support of this imperative step in both organizations long term recovery. This will be a community educational facility providing Education with Aloha, so needed in these challenging times.

Kū Kahakalau, Ph.D.

Owner and Chief Executive Officer

Kū-A-Kanaka LLC



Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 8, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this strong letter of support for Ho`oulu Lāhui's application for the rezoned Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana`ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

I have been the Culinary Arts instructor at Kua O Ka Lā since its inception and have worked closely with applicant Ho`oulu lāhui in support of the school's programs. I am a resident and endured the 2018 eruption that impacted our community so very much.

We worked hard to relocate the school 6 years ago to the Nani Mau Gardens in Pana`ewa and are now very settled at this safe and welcoming site. We are so grateful to Nani Mau owner Cindy Cui, for this opportunity to rezone, subdivide and acquire the 5-acre school site parcel. This is such a great asset for this Pana`ewa community nestled amongst Hawaiian Homelands.

The success of this process will provide stability for the school and peace for the current staff, students and `ohana who have endured so very much. We can provide cultural and place-based education with confidence.

Please approve this Rezone application by Ho`oulu Lāhui.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mariposa Blanco', written over a horizontal line.

Mariposa Blanco 3 - 3. 25  
Culinary Instructor: Kua O Ka Lā Charter School

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 11, 2025

Aloha Council Members,

I am providing this letter in full support of the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant Ho'oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

This will be an important step towards providing a permanent campus for Kua O Ka Lā Charter School in Pana'ewa adjacent to Nani Mau Gardens.

As you recall, the campus on the coast of Puna was inundated by lava from the 2018 'Ai La'au/Lower East Rift Zone originating in Leilani.

Despite this devastating effect of losing the campus, this small Hawaiian focused charter school continued and continues to serve students in Puna, Hilo and South Kona.


My younger son was a student there and is now enrolled at Hawai'i Community College's metal fabrication course. I was a Hawaiian Cultural Educator at Kua O Ka Lā focusing on Hawaiian canoe sailing.

I am also a member of the Soka Gakkai-USA Hilo Buddhist Center located just down the street at 695 Makalika Street. Founder Susie Osborne has made consistent efforts to inform the neighbors about the plan including the Soka Gakkai members.

I have been driving past this school and the prior charter school for a long time and have never observed any problems that would warrant denial of this application. This is not something new and different and will ensure stability for this important educational community school.

Please let us lay the foundation for perpetuating the good works of this school into the future for generations.

Me ka ha'aha'a

  
Captain Kiko Kitazawa

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 12, 2025

Dear members of the County Council,

My name is Monika McCune and I have been the Regional Administrator of Health Information Services at East Hawai'i Health Systems since December, 2020 and I also sit on the Kua O Ka Lā Governing Board of Directors.

This past year, our hospital convened a Leadership Day at the Nani Mau Garden Restaurant facility. Over 150 leaders attending this inspiring day. I worked with Founder Susie Osborne and Principal Dilcher to coordinate students coming over to present to the group before lunch.

The students provided an `oli mahalo chant, thanking the leaders for their work in our community and then Susie Osborne presented the good news and process being undertaken to ensure the school has a permanent home at their current location on a portion of the Nani Mau facility. The group clapped with enthusiasm and happiness with this news. This is our community in recovery and many of these folks are neighbors.

As a Board member, I have been kept informed every month as to the process of the rezone, subdivision and then acquisition being undertaken by our supporting non-profit Ho`oulu Lāhui.

We fully understand and support this process as it is imperative the school, families, teachers and students have a secure and permanent home for generations.

Before you today is the first milestone and imperative step in this process of acquisition.

I am providing this letter in full support of the application by Ho`oulu Lāhui for a Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Monika McCune

Monika McCune  
Kua O Ka Lā Governing Board member

Pāhoa Lava Zone Museum  
15-2833 Pahoa Village Road,  
Pahoa, HI, 96778

April 8, 2025

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Aloha Council members,

The Pāhoa Lava Zone Museum emerged as a result of the 2018 Kilauea eruption which consumed over 600 homes, thousands of acres of agriculture lands, business and one Charter School, Kua O Ka Lā.

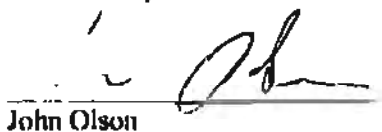
Our Exhibits were largely featured at Jeggar Museum and were donated by the Museum when their facility became inoperable and consist of videos, still photos and unique specimens from the 2018 eruption.

We are all too familiar with the trauma our community endured from the eruption and it was no easy feat for the school to successfully relocate to their current location at Nani Mau Gardens. We have watched the school from it's inception and it provides an important alternative public charter Hawaiian focused education for the community and it is fitting that they are now in Pana'ewa surrounded by Hawaiian Homelands.

We are in strong support of this first step of rezoning the applicant property which will then allow the property to be subdivided and acquired by the schools supporting non-profit Ho'oulu Lāhui. The families, students and staff need and deserve this stability.

We are providing this testimony in strong support of the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant Ho'oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your consideration.



John Olson  
President: Pāhoa Lava Zone Museum

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

March 5, 2025

Aloha Windward Planning Commissioners,

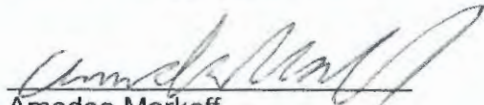
I am a long time resident and community leader in the Puna Region. I am also a parent of a former Kua O Ka Lā student. Our family has great aloha for this Hawaiian focused school and it was challenging for us to witness the lava inundate the school. We have been deeply engaged with the school since its inception in 2002. My father was an art teacher at the school site in Puna, painting murals on their buildings with students, which he also continued at their new location at Nani Mau Gardens in Pana'ewa.

I have also been very engaged in the Recovery initiatives with the County and Schools Co-Founder Susie Osborne has also been very engaged in many of the core recovery projects including "Paint the Town" and the "Hale Halawai" Economic Recovery Plans. It is astonishing to see that some of the people who lost the most, have also given the most back for our communities recovery. Susie Osborne lost her home, her animals and her school that she built from scratch. I have also collaborated on several grants with Ho'oulu Lāhui, the schools supporting non-profit and Rezone Applicant.

I am so grateful that the school was able to re-establish themselves at this new location and especially happy when we learned that owner Cindy Cui agreed to the Rezone, Subdivision and Acquisition of the 5 acres in order for the school to have stability for generations.

I fully support of the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant Ho'oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your consideration.



Amedeo Markoff  
Hale Halawai Project Director

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 8 2025

Aloha County Council members,

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for Ho'oulu Lāhui's application for the rezone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

My name is Ku'uhiapo Jeong, and I serve as the Council Legislative Assistant to Councilwoman Ashley L. Kierkiewicz of Council District 4. It continues to be a privilege to work alongside Ashley, whose open-door policy and hands-on, boots-on-the-ground approach have made a tangible difference in our communities. Our office spearheaded Activate Puna, a community revitalization and pono placemaking initiative, and we have been instrumental in securing and directing critical funds for the ongoing 2018 Kīlauea Eruption recovery efforts. Through this work, we have brought government and community together, fostering solutions that truly serve our communities.

One of the most profound partnerships I have been engaged with is Kua O Ka Lā Charter School and their supporting nonprofit, Ho'oulu Lāhui. Their relocation to Nani Mau Gardens six years ago was a major milestone, and ensuring their facility's compliance with County codes has been no small feat. This school and its community have endured unimaginable hardships—yet they continue to thrive.

Raised in 'Aha Pūnana Leo, Ke Kula O Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u, Kamehameha Schools, Hālau O Ka Ua Kani Lehua, and Hālau Ka Lehua Pua Kama'ehu, I know firsthand the power of securing spaces that uplift our Hawaiian community—especially our keiki. Kua O Ka Lā needs a kāhua—a solid foundation—to ensure its long-term recovery and sustainability.

I strongly urge the Commissioners to approve this rezone application by Ho'oulu Lāhui, enabling Kua O Ka Lā to subdivide and acquire the five existing campus acres. This is more than a land use decision—it is an investment in education, culture, and the future of our lāhui.

Mahalo,



Ku'uhiapo Jeong



Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, HI. 96720

April 10, 2025

Re: Letter of strong support for Ho'oulu Lāhui's application for the rezone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

Aloha,

My name is Mina Viritua Jr. and I was born and raised in Puna. In February 2024, the County of Hawai'i, in collaboration with the Rezone Applicant Puna 501c3 Organization Ho'oulu Lāhui, announced that they were been awarded an Economic Recovery Corps (ERC) fellow for a 30-month fellowship. After a rigorous interview process, I was selected to be the Fellow for this recovery project.

This position is a dream come true for me. I am to contribute to the economic recovery and well-being of our recovering community that has shaped me.

The ERC Fellowship program is led by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) through a \$30 million cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA). The program aims to build capacity in economically distressed areas across the U.S. while cultivating the next generation of economic development leaders. Each Host Organization is matched with a Fellow to work with communities in the implementation of community-based economic development projects.

In a statement, Nathan Ohle, President & CEO of the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), expressed the significance of ERC, stating, "ERC is more than a fellowship; it is a testament to the power of collaboration and strategic partnerships deeply needed to produce lasting social and economic impact. By investing in capacity building and leadership development, facilitating knowledge sharing and partnerships, the ERC program will set the stage for the future of economic development and a new age of collaboration in the economic development field."

Over this past year, I have worked closely with the communities recovery from the Kilauea eruption that severely impacted Kua O Ka Lā Charter School and my host; schools supporting non-profit Ho`oulu Lāhui. They have not only survived but are thriving in their location for the past 6 years at Nani Mau Gardens.

We are all sincerely focused and committed to our communities long term recovery and stability and this rezone approval is critical to ensuring that Ho`oulu Lāhui can subdivide and acquire their 5 acre campus.

I implore your approval of this Rezone application being considered.

Me ka mahalo,



Mina Viritua Jr.

ERC Fellow

3/4/2025



# Mainstreet Pāhoa Association 501(c)6

Main Street Pāhoa  
P.O. Box 1189  
Pāhoa, Hawaii 96778

April 10, 2025

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawai'i Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Aloha County Council Members,

The Mainstreet Pāhoa Association (MPA) is a community organization that advocates for Pāhoa, Hawaii's historic town. The MPA connects citizens, businesses, non-profits, and government representatives. Our primary goals include: Advocating for Pāhoa's historic town, hosting the annual Pāhoa Holiday Parade and working with the Jaggar Museum to lend exhibits to the MPA.

Main Street Pāhoa was formed to help the community after the 2018 eruption of Kīlauea that devastated the local economy. The eruption also exacerbated issues with mental health, homelessness, and crime. The COVID-19 pandemic further complicated these problems. We needed to respond to the many challenges facing the massive loss to our community businesses, infrastructure and families.

Kua O Ka Lā Charter School was inundated by the lava and they fortunately were able to relocate to Pana'ewa at the Nani Mau Gardens which previously hosted a Charter School. This was very traumatic to the many families, staff and students that were part of this important school.

We are so pleased that they will be able to find stability through the rezone, subdivision and acquisition process.

We are in full support of the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) request for Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the Applicant Ho'oulu-Lāhui on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawai'i.

Sincerely,



Kevin Kushel

President: Main Street Pāhoa

Panaewa Hawaiian Home Lands Community Association (PHHLCA)  
132 Kaieie Place Hilo Hawaii 96720 Tele: (808) 938-3330  
Email:panaewahhlca@gmail.com

April 10, 2025

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
East Hawaii Office  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

Aloha nui,

The PHHLCA was formed in 1980. We are recognized as a Hawaiian Beneficiary Association (HBA) by the 2016 43CFR 47&48 which allows us to be a part of a team consisting of the DHHL, Department of the Interior and us, as consultants. Monitoring federal laws protecting historic sites & preservations as well as protection of our iwi kupuna. We are also here to better conditions of native Hawaiian beneficiaries pursuant to the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act 1920, amended 1921.

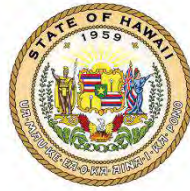
I have history with Kua O Ka La Charter school and Ho'oulu Lahui when this school was located at Puaala'a, Puna that was eventually devastated by lava flows. After many years of Ho'oulu Lahui's hard work it's great to know that KOKL Charter school is moving forward in securing a permanent home.

This small Hawaiian focused Charter school provides an important educational institution for our community beneficiaries. Right down the road location makes our homestead community know that our keiki, opio and 'Opio will have their basic educational needs met.

The Panaewa Hawaiian Home Lands Association (PHHLCA) is in strong support of Ho'oulu Lahui application of the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-00070) request for Agriculture-10 (A-10a) to Agriculture-5 Acres (5-5a) on Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (por.) at Panaewa Farm Lots South Hilo, Hawaii.

The rezoned 10 acre to the ***five-acre parcel will become HOME to the families*** that register with Kua O Ka La, how CORRECT is that!!! NANA I KA PONO!

Mahalo,  
*Kauilani Almeida*  
Kauilani Almeida, PHHLCA President



**OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

560 N. Nimitz Hwy., Suite 200  
Honolulu, HI 96817

March 10, 2025

Jeffrey W. Darrow  
Planning Director  
**East Hawai'i Office**  
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3  
**Hilo, Hawai'i 96720**

Aloha Director Darrow,

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is a semi-autonomous state agency responsible for improving the well-being of all Native Hawaiians. We strive to uplift Native Hawaiians through advocacy, research, community engagement, land management, and the funding of community programs.

**Kua O Ka Lā Charter School is a Native Hawaiian-focused school and has been a beneficiary of OHA's support.** Since 2005, OHA has provided more than \$21.5 million in per-pupil grant funding to 17 Hawaiian-focused public charter schools, including funding for facilities and program development.

We recognize the challenges our charter schools face with securing stable facilities and want to ensure their long-term sustainability. **Kua O Ka Lā has endured significant hardship, having lost its campus to the 2018 Kīlauea eruption. Despite this adversity, the school successfully relocated to Nani Mau Gardens in Pana'ewa, a rural Hawaiian community.**

**Ho'oulu Lāhui, the nonprofit organization supporting Kua O Ka Lā, now has the opportunity to acquire the five acres where the school is currently located, providing a permanent home for its students. This acquisition is contingent upon the property being rezoned from Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a), allowing them to subdivide and secure the five acres for the school.**

Accordingly, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs fully supports the Change of Zone Application (PL-REZ-2024-000070) requesting a zoning adjustment from Agricultural-10 Acres (A-10a) to Agricultural-5 Acres (A-5a) by the **applicant, Ho'oulu Lāhui, for Tax Map Key: (3) 2-2-048:013 (portion) at Pana'ewa Farm Lots, South Hilo, Hawai'i.**

Mahalo for your consideration and support of this application.

**Hau'oli Ka Mana'o**

**Kaiali'i Kahele**  
Chairperson, Board of Trustees  
Office of Hawaiian Affairs