

COMMITTEE ON BENEFICIARY ADVOCACY AND EMPOWERMENT (BAE)

January 28, 2026

9 a.m.

(via Interactive Conference Technology)

To view this meeting's recording, please click on the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XMfpqDI8mzs>

MINUTES

TRUSTEES PRESENT

Brickwood Galuteria, Chair
Kaleihikina Akaka, Vice Chair
Dan Ahuna
Keli'i Akina
Luana Alapa (arrives at 9:31 a.m.)
Carmen Hulu Lindsey
Keoni Souza

TRUSTEES EXCUSED

Kaiali'i Kahele
John Waihe'e, IV

BAE STAFF

Kyla Hee
Lei-Ann Stender Durant
Mark Watanabe
Nathan Takeuchi

BOT STAFF

Carina Lee
Kanani Iaea
Pōhai Ryan
Remy Keli'ihō'omalu
Morgan Kauai Robello
Sommer Soares
Von Mahelona

ADMINISTRATION

Summer Sylva, Interim CEO
Sean Kekina, COO
Bill Brennan
Deja Ostrowski
Kamakani Ferreira
Ku'ulei Awo-Chun
Kyle Saucier
McKenna Woodward

BOARD COUNSEL

Kapono Kiakona

GENERAL COUNSEL

Everett Ohta

***Note: Due to technical issues with the sound, Chair Galuteria cannot be heard on the recording when he starts to speak at 9:07:24 a.m. (Time Stamp: 5:31/1:24:05), but he can be seen speaking on the livestream at approximately 9:07:25 a.m (Time Stamp: 5:32/1:24:05) when he officially called the meeting to order.**

I. CALL TO ORDER

***Note: Sound is restored when he introduced committee technology and information specialist, Kyla Hee.**

Chair Galuteria called the meeting to order, and asked Lei-Ann Stender Durant, Committee Recording Secretary, to call the roll to confirm attendance.
(Time Stamp:5:44/1:24:05 – Real Time: 9:07:37 a.m.)

Roll Call

Present: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Lindsey, Souza, and Chair Galuteria – six (6) trustees constitutes a quorum.

Excused: Trustees Kahele and Waihe‘e, IV

Not present at time of roll call: Trustee Alapa

Chief Operating Officer, K. Sean Kekina, introduced administrative staff that were present (see page one).

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Time Stamp: 7:23/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:09:16 a.m.)

A. November 12, 2025

Public Testimony

None

Motion made by **Trustee Akina** to Approve the November 12, 2026 Minutes of the Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment.

(Time Stamp: 7:48/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 09:09:41 a.m.)

Discussion

None

Roll Call (Time Stamp: 7:57//1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 09:15:48 a.m.)

Motion carried (6-0)

Yes: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galuteria

Excused: Trustees Kahele and Waihe‘e, IV

Not present at time of vote: Trustee Alapa
B. Decemer 3, 2025

Motion made by **Trustee Souza** to Approve the December 3, 2026 Minutes of the Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment.
(Time Stamp: 8:30/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 09:10:23 a.m.)

Public Testimony

None

Discussion

None

Roll Call (Time Stamp: 9:30/1:1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:11:46 a.m.)

Motion carried (6-0)

Yes: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galuteria

Excused: Trustees Kahele and Waihe'e, IV

Not present at time of vote: Trustee Alapa

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2026 OHA State Legislative Bill Package Matrix 1**

(Time Stamp: 9:55/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:11:48 a.m.)

Public Testimony

None

Motion made by **Trustee Souza** to Approve/Amend the 2026 OHA State Legislative Bill Package - Matrix 1** (Time Stamp: 13:55/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 09:15:48 a.m.)

Discussion

Public Policy Manager, Deja Ostrowski, presented **Matrix 1****, stated that this package was prepared on opening day; but due to timing and Sunshine Law, a more recent matrix could not be included, nor could the Advocacy staff review the Governor's bill package prior to this meeting. More robust matrixes will be included as the session continues. This package outlines recommended legislative positions for bills affecting Native Hawaiian beneficiaries and OHA policy priorities. Staff provided background on each measure and explained the rationale for recommendations including *Support*, *Support with Amendments*, *Oppose*, *Monitor*, or *Comment*.

Introduced:

- **HB2104 and SB2538: Relating to Island Burial Councils**

To be introduced:

- **HB2102** and **SB2536** - Repeal back for **Historic Preservation**
- **HB2103** and **SB2537** - Relating to **Land Use Commission and Prohibition on Commercial Aquarium Fish Extraction**
- **HB2101** and **SB2535** - Relating to a **Constitutional Amendment Banning Military Live Fire on Public Land Trust Lands**
- **HB2105** and **SB2539** - Relating to **Rent Stabilization**

Staff clarified that some measures were recommended for monitoring rather than formal positions to allow OHA to track legislative developments without committing advocacy resources at the current stage of the legislative process. Trustees emphasized the importance of ensuring that legislative positions reflect long-standing OHA priorities, particularly those related to land, cultural resources, and beneficiary protections.

Trustee Akina stated that he would vote yes, in terms of OHA adopting this package and moving forward with it because there is much value in the discussion and in going to the Legislature [with this package]. He wanted to state, for the record, that he does not mean that he necessarily agrees with all provisions of the proposed legislation that OHA was going ahead with. He does, however, agree this is a good package for OHA to enter the discussion with.

There being no further discussion, **Chair Galuteria** called for the vote.

Roll Call (Time Stamp: 14:45/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:16:49 a.m.)

Motion carried (6 – 0)

Yes: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galuteria

Excused: Trustees Kahele and Waihe'e, IV

Not present at vote: Trustee Alapa

B. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Naming OHA – Matrix 2**

(Time Stamp: 15:22/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:17:15 a.m.)

Public Testimony

None

Discussion

Staff presented **Matrix 2**** and highlighted several recommended position changes based on updated legislative developments and internal policy review.

Key items discussed:

- **HB 1615 -Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation:** Staff believes OHA should accept a seat at the table, but they do not necessarily support some of the underlying premises of the task force talking about a blue economy that uses marine resources for commercial purposes. Staff recommended changing the position from Support with Amendments to Comment due to concerns regarding commercial implications and uncertainty regarding how the bill may impact state resources.
- **SB 2109 – Emergency Preparedness and Communications:** Staff recommended changing the position from No Position to Support. Trustees discussed the importance of strengthening statewide emergency communication systems, particularly for rural and underserved communities. Staff noted that OHA's communications team would assume kuleana for coordination should the measure advance.
- **SB 2083 – State-Owned Historic Properties:** Staff recommended changing OHA's position from Support with Amendments to Comment. Discussion focused on the potential for unfunded mandates that could create additional responsibilities without identified funding sources. Trustees emphasized the importance of ensuring that any task force or programs created by legislation include adequate funding to carry out their responsibilities. Trustees discussed the potential fiscal impacts of several bills and how the measures align with OHA's statutory responsibilities and strategic priorities. Questions were raised regarding implementation requirements, potential administrative burdens, and the possible effects on beneficiary communities. Trustees further discussed the importance of balancing advocacy efforts with available staff resources and ensuring OHA remains engaged on measures with the greatest potential impact to beneficiaries.

Motion made by **Trustee Akaka** to Approve/Amend the 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Naming OHA – Matrix 2** as amended:

- **HB1615** - Relating to the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation from Support with Amendments to Comment
- **SB2019** – Relating to State-Owned Historic Properties from Support with Amendments to Comment
(Time Stamp: 22:49/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:24:42 a.m.)

There being no further discussion, **Chair Galuteria** called for the vote.

Roll Call (Time Stamp: 23:39/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:25:34 a.m.)

Motion carried (6-0)

Yes: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galuteria

Excused: Trustees Kahele and Waihe'e, IV

Not present at vote: Trustee Alapa

Note: Chair Galuteria recognized Trustee Alapa as she joined the meeting.

(Time Stamp: 24:10/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:26:03 a.m.)

C. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Affecting the Public Land Trust – Matrix 3** (Time Stamp: 24:19/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:26:12 a.m.)

Public Testimony

None

Motion made by **Trustee Souza** to Approve/Amend the 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Affecting the Public Land Trust – Matrix 3** as amended:

- **SB 2001** – Relating to Banyan Drive in Hilo: Staff recommended a change from Support with Amendments to Comment
- (Time Stamp: 26:07/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:28:00 a.m.)

Discussion

Administrative staff introduced **Matrix 3****, noting that the matrix contained a limited number of measures primarily related to public land use and resource management. Staff explained recommended position adjustments based on policy review and legislative developments.

Key items discussed:

- **SB 2182** – Relating to 99-Year Leases: Staff recommended maintaining a Monitor position. Trustees discussed the historical context of long-term lease arrangements and the importance of monitoring the 99-year leases and any legislation that could affect the Public Land Trust or lands historically associated with Native Hawaiians
- **SB 2001** – Relating to Banyan Drive in Hilo: Staff recommended changing the position from Support with Amendments to Comment. Discussion focused on potential impacts to historic preservation requirements under Chapter 6E, ensuring cultural and archaeological protections remain intact during infrastructure development. Because these are crown and government lands, it is required by law that the Trustees be consulted.

In response to **Trustee Akaka**'s inquiry, **Public Policy Manager, Deja Ostrowski**, confirmed that the Banyan Drive lands are considered Crown and Government Lands and recalled there have been discussions about what the composition of Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) is; OHA already has a seat and can give some comment as it is up to the Trustees if they feel the need to weigh in. **Deja** further explained that due to the bills relating to other things, the Advocacy team wanted to prioritize submitting testimony for those other bills. **Trustee Akaka** asked that the Team consider requiring the OHA trustees be consulted in the future. **Trustee Akaka** confirmed that changing OHA's position from Support with Amendments to Comment.

Trustees also discussed prioritizing legislative advocacy efforts on measures most closely tied to OHA's core policy responsibilities.

There being no further discussion, **Chair Galuteria** called for the vote

Roll Call (Time Stamp: 28:12/1:24:05 ~ Real Time:9:30:05 a.m.)

Motion carried (7-0)

Yes: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Alapa, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galuteria

Excused: Trustee Kahele and Waihe'e, IV

D. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Native Hawaiian Traditional and Customary Practices Matrix 4** (Time Stamp: 29:00/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 09:30:53 a.m.)

Discussion

Staff presented **Matrix 4****, which included measures related to housing development, county permitting, and programs intended to increase housing opportunities for Native Hawaiian beneficiaries.

Key Items discussed:

- **HB1543** - Relating to Environmental Assessments and the Hawai'i Environmental Policy Act (HEPA) process dealing with the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Often, when there is cultural consultation, an EIS is done and the project will just sit for awhile so this will create a time frame for the wait time being too long and will dictate a shelf life for an EIS. Position will change from Support to Monitor.
- **SB2084** - Relating to Marine Life Conservation Districts and OHA's bill relating to Commercial Aquarium Fish Trade. Due to OHA's differing philosophy, the team's recommendation is to change OHA's position from Oppose to Monitor in order to preserve pushing OHA's own measure as well as other measures that have been introduced.
- **HB1619** - Relating to Electric Vehicle Infrastructure. There are those in support of the electric vehicle infrastructure, but the OHA team worried that someone changing the definition of development may be deviating from the situation. After further review, staff recognized the most important parts of the project would go through HRS 6E which protects 'iwi kūpuna. Staff recommended changing OHA's position from Oppose to Monitor. Staff felt that not weighing in on Special Management Area (SMA) permitting would allow them to concentrate on the most important part of this bill, which is that Chapter 6E still exists for historic preservation for 'iwi kūpuna. Trustees discussed the complexity of county permitting systems and acknowledged that while the issue affects housing development timelines, OHA may benefit from continuing to observe the measure's progress before taking a stronger position.
- **SB2078** – Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources. This bill is similar to OHA's Commercial Aquarium Fish Trade bill that is part of OHA's legislative package, but this bill establishes criminal penalties and monetary fines for aquarium fishing violations. The advocacy team recommended a change from Monitor to Comment in order to highlight OHA's own advocacy and mentioned that OHA also has a bill that they feel is the more appropriate way for regulating the Commercial Aquarium Fish Trade.

- **SB2161** – Relating to Land Use which authorizes rodeos and rodeo activities on lands that are zoned for agricultural use. Defines the term “rodeo” and “rodeo activities.” On the matrix, the position is to oppose, however, that seems to be a human error in OHA’s tracker system. Position change recommended from Oppose to Monitor.

Public Testimony

None

Motion made by **Trustee Akina** to Approve/Amend the 2026 OHA Legislature: Position on Bills Affecting Resources and Native Hawaiian Traditional and Customary Practices – Matrix 4** as amended:

- **HB1543** - Relating to Environmental Assessments and the Hawai’i Environmental Policy Act (HEPA) process dealing with the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) from Support to Monitor
 - **SB2084** - Relating to Marine Life Conservation Districts and OHA’s bill relating to Commercial Aquarium Fish Trade from Oppose to Monitor
 - **HB1619** - Relating to Electric Vehicle Infrastructure from Oppose to Monitor
 - **SB2078** - Relating to Commercial Aquarium Fish Trade establishing criminal penalties and monetary fines for aquarium fishing violations from Oppose to Monitor
 - **SB2161** - Relating to Rodeo Use on Agricultural Land from Oppose to Monitor
- (Time Stamp: 34:23/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:36:20 a.m.)

Trustees discussed potential impacts of several measures on culturally significant lands and environmental stewardship. Staff explained that some measures were recommended for Support due to alignment with OHA’s statutory responsibilities, while others were recommended for Monitor to allow staff to observe developments and provide testimony if necessary.

Trustees emphasized the importance of protecting cultural landscapes and ensuring that any environmental legislation recognizes the traditional and cultural connections Native Hawaiians maintain with land and natural resources.

There being no further discussion, **Chair Galuteria** called for the vote.

Roll Call (Time Stamp: 34:38/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:36:31 a.m.)

Motion Carried (7-0)

Yes: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Alapa, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galuteria

Excused: Trustees Kahele and Waihe’e. IV

E. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Affecting Native Hawaiian Housing – Matrix 5** (Time Stamp: 35:00/1:34:05 ~ Real Time: 9:36:53 a.m.)

Public Testimony

None

Discussion

Staff continued the housing policy discussion through **Matrix 5****, which contained additional housing-related legislation.

Key items discussed:

- **SB2066** – Relating to County Permitting and Inspection. After looking through this bill, staff revisited earlier discussion points regarding county permitting processes and the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP). Staff reiterated that adjusting positions from Oppose to Monitor allows OHA to maintain engagement with housing policy discussions while prioritizing measures with the greatest potential impact on beneficiary housing access.
- **SB2342** – Relating to Housing. This bill is moving; and, historically, OHA has had a long-term advocacy history of commenting on the QAP – the scoring system for how OHA awards low income housing tax credits. Advocacy would like to change from OHA’s position of No Position to Support. Advocacy would like to start weighing in on the QAP scoring system. Staff further explained how participation in QAP discussions could help shape long-term housing policy outcomes that align with OHA’s mission. Other jurisdictions prioritize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act (NAHASDA) funding in native communities. OHA has historically testified on this.
Trustees discussed broader policy strategies to address the housing shortage affecting Native Hawaiians, including the importance of ensuring that financing tools, development incentives, and housing programs remain accessible to beneficiary communities.

Motion made by **Trustee Akaka** to Approve/Amend the 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Affecting Native Hawaiian Housing – Matrix 5** as amended:

- **SB2066** – Relating to County Permitting and Inspection from Opposed to Monitor
- **SB2342** - Relating to Housing from No Position to Support
(Time Stamp: 37:00/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:38:53 a.m.)

Trustees emphasized the ongoing housing crisis in Hawai‘i and discussed the importance of leveraging policy opportunities that may expand housing access for beneficiaries.

There being no further discussion, **Chair Galuteria** called for the vote.

Roll Call (Time Stamp: 37:41/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:39:34 a.m.)

Motion Carried (7-0)

Yes: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Alapa, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galuteria

Excused: Trustees Kahele and Waihe'e, IV

F. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Affecting Native Hawaiian Health –

Matrix 6** (Time Stamp 38:08/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:49:01 a.m.)

Public Testimony

None

Discussion

Staff introduced **Matrix 6****, which included legislation related to environmental policy, land management, and natural resource protections.

There were no changes to this matrix, however, **Advocacy Manager, Deja Ostrowski** wanted to highlight **HB1626** - Relating to Youth Penalties or Youth Fees and Fines. OHA's health advocacy has always worked around those who are facing incarceration. This bill prohibits the assessment of fees and fines for minorities and for kids. It encourages 'āina based community service rather than fees, fines, and incarceration. The position on this bill is Support. Staff also discussed the strategic allocation of advocacy resources and the need to prioritize measures that directly impact beneficiaries.

Motion made by **Trustee Akaka** To Approve the 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Affecting Native Hawaiian Health – Matrix 6**

(Time Stamp: 39:12/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 10:41:05 a.m.)

There being no further discussion, **Chair Galuteria** called for the vote.

Roll Call (Time Stamp: 39:30/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:41:23 a.m.)

Motion carried (7-0)

Yes: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Alapa, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galuteria

Excused: Trustees Kahele and Waihe'e, IV

G. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Affecting Native Hawaiian Education –

Matrix 7** (Time Stamp: 39:57/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:41:50 a.m.)

Public Testimony

None

Discussion

There are two bills in this matrix and OHA recommends a position of Monitor on both bills as is. There are no changes:

- **HB1561** – Relating to School Meals. Position is Monitor.
- **SB2024/HB1783** – Relating to Charter School Facilities. Position is Monitor.

Motion made by **Trustee Akaka** to Approve the 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Affecting Native Hawaiian Education – Matrix 7**
(Time Stamp: 41:25/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:43:18 a.m.)

There being no further discussion, **Chair Galuteria** called for the vote.

Roll Call (Time Stamp: 41:36/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:43:29 a.m.)

Motion carried (7-0)

Yes: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Alapa, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galuteria

Excused: Trustees Kahele and Waihe'e, IV

H. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Affecting Native Hawaiian Economic Stability – Matrix 8** (Time Stamp: 42:08/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:44:01 a.m.)

Public Testimony

None

Discussion

Matrix 8** included legislation affecting cultural programs, historical preservation, and public land management.

Key discussion points:

- **HB1585** – Relating to the General Excise Tax. OHA's current position is Support; however, because this bill will exempt groceries from the General Excise Tax, it would be a revenue loss to the State and the terms of GET tax that is paid for by residents as well as tourists. It is also understood that the tax coalition may have other targeted measures that is more appropriate for OHA to support at this time. Because of the revenue decrease to the state, OHA staff is recommending a shift in position.

***Note:** The next three bills are those that OHA supports the intent, but these three bills deal with appropriation programs. Staff recommended OHA change its position from Support to Monitor and not weigh in on these appropriations at this time.

- **SB2082** - Relating to Teacher Workforce Housing. Recommendation is to move from Support to Monitor and not weigh in at this time.

- **SB2091** and **HB1770** – Relating to School Bus Drivers. These bills address the transportation issue that is problematic for families getting transportation for their keiki to get to schools affected in the public school system. OHA supports the intent, but this bill deals with appropriations along with a report to the Legislature so staff is recommending OHA not weigh in but take a position of Support.
- **SB2291**- Relating to Family Caregiver Support is a child care subsidy for those caring for kūpuna at home. Staff appreciates the intent, however, this is also an appropriations bill so the recommendation is for OHA to change its position from Support to Monitor.

Staff highlighted measures that monitor or protect historic and culturally significant sites. Trustees discussed potential unintended consequences and coordination with state and county agencies and avoiding overextension of staff resources.

Motion made by **Trustee Akaka** To Approve/Amend the 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Affecting Native Hawaiian Economic Stability – Matrix 8** as amended:

- **SB2082** - Relating to Teacher Workforce Housing
 - **SB2091** and **HB1770** – Relating to School Bus Drivers
 - **SB2291** – Relating to Family Caregiver Support
- (Time Stamp: 45:25/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:47:18 a.m.)

Discussion (continued)

Trustee Akina expressed that he was pleased with the reporting from our policy staff and appreciated the nuances put into understanding the various pieces of legislation being considered and appreciated the thinking going on in policy. He also expressed the nuances that considered OHA's own capacity to pursue something as an organization.

Regarding **HB1585**, Trustee Akina asked what the reason was for recommending OHA's position be changed from Support to Monitor.

Deja explained that the change in position was only a recommendation and that the ultimate decision would be up to the Trustees. The Advocacy team felt the way the GET may not necessarily be easy in helping our beneficiaries. Points considered included:

1. Should the food excise tax credit be applied only to local residents
2. Should the GET be eliminated which would mean tourists who are paying for groceries and other food not pay the GET to our economy and contribute revenue to our state?

Trustee Akina expressed that eliminating the GET for our beneficiaries could help and that could also apply to the cost of medicine, but he respects the position recommendation of staff.

There being no further discussion, **Chair Galuteria** called for the vote.

Roll Call: (Time Stamp: 37:41/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:39:34 a.m.)

Motion Carried (7-0)

Yes: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Alapa, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galueria

Excused: Trustees Kahele and Waihe'e, IV

I. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Affecting Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 6E ('Iwi Kūpuna and Historic Preservation) – Matrix 9**

(Time Stamp: 51:38/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:53:31 a.m.)

Public Testimony (Time Stamp: 52:34/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 9:54:27 a.m.)

 **James Maioho** (see attached testimony). **Mr. Maioho** stands by his testimony, and urged OHA to change its position on **SB2341** and **HB1710** (Relating to Historic Preservation) because:

- these bills introduced a phased review during the process that had a loophole that allows for an assumed concurrence if timelines aren't met
- the burial councils take too long, and deadlines could be missed
- the bills need to be reworked or OHA could take a position of Oppose

Mr. Maioho also expressed concerns about **SB1650** - Relating to Environmental Assessments under section 343-5, HRS:

- bill completely removes historic sites from certain areas
- we should not be removing layers of protection for 'iwi and for sacred sites for any type of development process
- if OHA is recommending a position of Comment, while the burial council is trying to do more 'iwi centric things, it should be consistent across the board

Mr. Maioho's ask is that we not have competing bills and that OHA withdraws their bill:

- the community wants an advisory committee with the actual stakeholders of Mauna'ala
- it has been disappointing that OHA does not support the return of his family to Mauna'ala

Discussion

Matrix 9** addressed health, housing, and cultural practice legislation. Staff reviewed each bill, providing context and rationale for recommended positions.

Key items discussed included:

- **Native Hawaiian Health Measures:** Staff recommended Support for bills that directly improve health outcomes for beneficiaries. Trustees discussed funding implications and alignment with statewide health priorities.

- **Housing Initiatives:** Staff highlighted the importance of maintaining access to housing resources for Native Hawaiian communities. Trustees discussed long-term impacts and integration with previously discussed housing matrices.
- **Cultural Practices:** Measures affecting cultural practices were reviewed. Staff recommended Comment or Monitor to ensure appropriate engagement without overcommitting resources. Trustees emphasized the importance of protecting traditions while balancing legislative priorities.

MOTION made by **Trustee Souza** to Approve the 2026 Legislature: OHA position on bills Affecting Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 6E9) 'Iwi Kūpuna and Historic Preservation – Matrix 9**
(Time Stamp: 1:04:41/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 10:07:34 a.m.)

Roll Call

Motion carried (7-0)

Yes: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Alapa, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galuteria

Excused: Trustees Kahele and Waihe'e, IV

IV. COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS

(Time Stamp: 1:05:51/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 10:07:44)

- ✚ **Walter Ritte** (Time Stamp: 1:06:09/1:24:05 ~ Real time: 10:08:02 a.m.)
 - Spoke about celebrating 50 years since military stopped the bombing on Kaha'olawe, and since the military land leases are up for renewal, he asked the Board of Trustees to please support him and his community in stopping the renewal to happen and to dedicate financial resources to do so
 - Expressed the importance of three things with regard to the Buckeye Analysis:
 - Requires the identification of resources; asks OHA to make sure there's a clear analysis of what is happening to these lands and try to establish what the impacts will be. Kaho'olawe is a good example of what kinds of impacts we can expect and that the government agreed to clean up the island but they never did
 - 2. Water. Our people have had bad relationships with the military when it comes to protecting our water. The community needs to get standing in order to be able to engage with the military regarding water resources. Article 12, Section 7 addresses the fact that Hawaiians are able to show a strong position in opposition of them diverting the water
 - 3. The military doesn't pay for any of the lands they use so they need to be followed up on..

The community does not support the military's land leases and are seeking help to get started pulling people together to let their voices be heard.

Trustee Akaka provided one final thought that was based on the myriad of meetings that have been held regarding military leases. It has been very evident that community members that have been attending meetings are not in support of military land leases continuing and that there may be a proper cleanup of our crown and government lands. She is also continuing to advocate for these lands. Although some of the lands were taken under executive order, they are still crown and governments lands despite being under the jurisdiction of the federal government. There is still live firing in Pōhakuloa. In addition, **Trustee Akaka** that our people are so vocal, the military prefers communication not continue.

She expressed she is very interested in hearing from OHA's Permitted Interactive Group (PIG) members their mana'o in terms of the recommended \$500,000 makes sense. She is also interested in hearing mana'o from community members about the monetary figure as well as what it would take to properly advocate on the county, state, and federal level.

Chair Galuteria suggested we start with having OHA's administrative staff reach out to Trustee Akaka to come up with a rationale or a monetary number and go from there. **Trustee Akaka** agreed.

Walter Ritte reminded the Trustees that the Governor tried to resolve this issue earlier, but Mr. Ritte stated that the Governor could not resolve this issue by himself because the Hawaiians have a direct interest in these lands. Article 12 and Pa'akai gives us the ability to do something about this and not let the state government do things that are going to have major impacts on the Hawaiians and what they believe in.

Trustee Lindsey suggested this conversation be continued in a future Budget and Finance Committee (BF) meeting because the subject is not agendized. Chair Galuteria agreed and offered that **Interim CEO, Summer Sylva**, will reach out to Trustee Akaka regarding the funds and that this topic will continue from there.

-  **Germaine Meyers** requested her entire concern be written for the record:
(Time Stamp: 1:16:45/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 10:18:88 a.m.)
- First, concerns were raised on behalf of OHA beneficiaries and the general public regarding Sunshine Law. These concerns are not abstract and addresses public notice, transparency, and the public's right to meaningfully participate in the decisions of this board.
 - Meeting start times and public notice under guidance from the Office of Information Practices (OIP) confirms that Sunshine Law requires that public meeting notices state a specific and reliable date, time, and place be posted at least six calendar days in advance [of a meeting].
 - A meeting stated to begin after adjournment of a previous meeting [with no specific starting time] does not provide the public with a fixed or reliable notice. A notice that says 10 a.m.

- or following the adjournment of another meeting does not meet the standard of meaningful notice.
 - Community members must often plan their lives around posted times. Working families, kūpuna, people with disabilities, and those who rely on public transportation cannot standby for hours for a meeting to begin.
 - It is not simply an inconvenience, it undermines the public's statutory right to attend and testify.
 - It is important to clarify that this situation is not a lawful continuation which applies only when the same board is unable to complete its own agenda.
 - A separate meeting waiting to convene must begin at the time that was noticed.
- Second, my appeal to OIP also addressed the Sunshine Law compliance for Executive Session.
 - For the record, Ms. Meyers stated she submitted a Sunshine Law appeal to OIP concerning the the OHA BOT meeting held September 23, 2025.
 - The appeal requested a determination as to whether or not the Board violated Part 1 of Chapter 92.
 - She cited Sections 92-392-5A2 and 92-7 when the Board entered into Executive Session without notifying the public that the session was intended to discuss, evaluate, or remove then Administrator/Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Stacy Kealohalani Ferreira, and subsequently vote to appoint then Chief of Staff (COS) Summer Sylva to be the Interim CEO.
 - A copy of the appeal was transmitted to **Chair Kahele** on December 2, 2025.
- Third, OIP required OHA or the Board Chair to take specific actions that weres requested to be a part of this record:
 - OHA was required to respond, in writing, within 10 business days of receiving the Notice of Appeal. That written response gave OHA the opportunity to justify its actions and provide additional information for OIP's consideration.
 - OIP reminded OHA that the Sunshine Law must be interpreted to favor openness and to disfavor closed meetings except in limited dircumstances; that every meeting of all borads shall be open to the public and all persons shall be permitted to attend as required Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) Section 92-3.
 - OIP stated that when a complainant alleges a Sunshine Law violation, the burden is on the Board, not the public, to justify any departure from the law's general requirement of openness.
 - OIP requested OHApovide a written response to the appeal which should include unaltered copies of the agenda minutes - including executive session minutes - along with a recording of

the September 23, 2025 meeting. It was asked that these materials be submitted no later than 10 business days from receipt of the notice.

- To date, no response has been sent. **Ms. Meyers** raised this issue to ensure the record reflects what OIP required and that Sunshine Law compliance includes not only how meetings are noticed and conducted, but also how boards respond when concerns are formally raised for transparency.
- Beneficiaries were blind copied on Ms. Meyers' correspondence to the Trustees.
- In closing, **Ms. Meyers** reminded the trustees that transparency is not discretionary, public notice is not a formality, and participation delayed is participation denied.
- **Ms. Meyers** respectfully urged the BOT to provide clear, fixed meeting start times to ensure accurate and complete Executive Session notices as a core obligation to beneficiaries and the public.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS (Time Stamp: 1:22:52/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 20:24:45 a.m.)
None

VI. ADJOURNMENT (Time Stamp: 1:23:04/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 10:24:57 a.m.)

There being no further business, Chair Galuteria called for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION made by **Trustee Souza** to adjourn the January 28, 2026 meeting of the Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment.
(Time Stamp: 1:23:09/1:24:05 ~ Real Time: 10:25:02 a.m.)

There being no discussion, **Chair Galuteria** called for the vote.

Roll Call

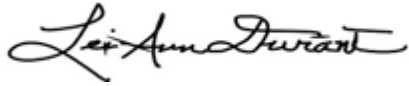
Motion carried (7-0)

Yes: Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Alapa, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galuteria

Excused: Trustees Kahele and Waihe'e, IV

The January 28, 2026 meeting of the Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment (BAE) was adjourned at 10:25:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lei-Ann Durant".

Lei-Ann Durant, Trustee Aide
Committee Recording Secretary

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brickwood Galuteria".

Brickwood Galuteria, Trustee At-Large
Committee Chair

Date Approved: 04/15/2026