DRAFT

COMMITTEE ON BENEFICIARY ADVOCACY AND EMPOWERMENT (BAE)

April 15, 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=rxhyyg0eJGQ&t=146s

MINUTES

TRUSTEES PRESENT
Brickwood Galuteria, Chair
Kaleihikina Akaka, Vice Chair
Dan Ahuna
Keli'i Akina
Luana Alapa (arr. 10:10 a.m.)
Kaiali'i Kahele
Carmen Hulu Lindsey
Keoni Souza
John Waihe'e, IV (arr. 9:13 a.m.)

BAE STAFF
Lei-Ann Stender Durant
Mark Watanabe
Momi Ka'aihue (Temporary Hire)
Nathan Takeuchi
Richelle Kim (Aide for Trustee Souza)

BOT STAFF
Carina Lee
Pōhai Ryan

ADMINISTRATION
K. Sean Kekina, COO
Bill Brennan
Daniel Santos
Deja Ostrowski
Hailama Farden
Leina'ala Ley
Ryan Lee

BOARD COUNSEL
Kapono Kiakona

GENERAL COUNSEL
Everett Ohta

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Galuteria called the April 15, 2026 meeting of the Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment to order at 9:08 a.m.

Chair Galuteria shared that the BAE Committee serves as the voice and bridge between our Native Hawaiian beneficiares, OHA policies, programs, and resources. Through OHA‘s advocacy and collaboration, we build pathways for empowerment. This committee‘s kuleana spans many areas including education, health, housing,culture, and economic wellbeing. We also work in close partnership with the Hawai‘i Legislature as we move forward with this legislative session.

Chair Galuteria acknowledged his trustee aide, Lei-Ann Stender Durant, serving as the Committee Recording Secretary and his secretary, Momi Ka‘aihue, and Richelle Kim (*Trustee Souza‘s aide*), serving as the Committee Technology and Information Specialist.

Chair Galuteria called for the roll to confirm attendance.

Roll Call
Seven (7) trustees in attendance; quorum established
Present: *Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Akina, Kahele, Lindsey, Souza, Chair Galuteria*
Excused: *Trustees Alapa (arrived at 10:10 a.m.) and Waihe‘e, IV*

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

.(Time Stamp: 14:37/1:41:50)

A. January 28, 2026

Public Testimony
None

Motion made by **Chair Galuteria** to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2026 BAE Committee Meeting.
(Time Stamp: 14:53/1:41:50)

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

Roll Call
Motion carried (7 – 0)
Excused: *Trustees Alapa and Waihe‘e IV*
(Time Stamp: 14:56/1:41:50)

** **Chair Galuteria** requested unanimous consent from the committee members to take Agenda Item **IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION§** out of order. Hearing no objections, **Chair Galuteria** moved to resolve into Executive Session and called for the vote.
(Time Stamp: 15:55/1:41:50)

Roll Call
Motion carried (8 – 0)
Excused: *Trustee Alapa*
(Time Stamp: 16:15/1:41:50)
**The Committee resolved into Executive Session (Time Stamp: 16:17/1:41:50)*

Vice Chair Akaka calls for a Recess (Time Stamp: 45:28/1:41:50)
*** Committee returned to Public Session (Time Stamp: 51:39/1:22:37 ~ Real Time: 10:23 a.m)*.

Chair Galuteria reported that the Committee consulted with OHA's legal counsel regarding the Committee's powers, duties, privileges, and immunities and liabilities with respect to the Public Land Trust bills identified at the 2026 Legislature or a position on bills and measures affecting the Public Land Trust **– Matrix 3**.

The meeting continues in order.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. ADMINISTRATION UPDATE: 2026 Legislative Session and Rapid Response Approval Testimony submittal. **No discussion, deliberation, or decision-making*
(Time Stamp: 52:32/1:22:37)

Public Testimony
None

Update
Public Policy Manager, Deja Ostrowski, reported that there were no rapid resonse testimonies this week.

III. NEW BUSINESS

B. ADMINISTRATION UPDATE: 2026 Federal and County Level Legislative Proposals Affecting Native Hawaiians. **No discussion, deliberation, or decision-making*
(Time Stamp: 52:00/1:22:37)

Public Testimony
None

Update
Public Policy Manager, Deja Ostrowski, provided an update on OHA's legislative package as bills move into conference committee.

- **HB2101 (Commercial Aquarium Collection Ban):** Staff reported that competing versions of the bill currently limit the ban either to Hawai'i Island or O'ahu. OHA's position remains to seek restoration of the original intent of a statewide commercial aquarium collection ban and to communicate that position to conference committee members once appointed.
- **HB2104 (Island Burial Council Bill):** Staff advised that OHA would seek amendments in conference regarding compensation for Island Burial Council members. Recent changes incorporated comments from the Attorney General related to reimbursement of documentation requirements. OHA's preferred approach is to model council service compensation after jury duty compensation, while maintaining DLNR responsibility for expense reimbursement.
- **Historic Preservation Package Language:** Staff noted that language from OHA's historic preservation bill repeal has been incorporated into **HB1710**, which is agendized under a later matrix item. Further discussion would occur under Matrix 9.
- Staff stated that OHA package language is advancing through three separate bills entering conference committee and expressed confidence in their progress.
  (Time Stamp: 53:05/1:22:37)

C. OHA positions on 2026 legislative bills

1. 2026 OHA State Legislative Bill Package – Matrix 1
(Time Stamp: 55:22/1:22:37)

Public Testimony
None

Update
None

Discussion
None

**No motion or vote on Matrix 1*

2. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills and Measures Naming OHA – Matrix 2
(Time Stamp: 55:53/1:22:37)

Public Testimony
None

Update
** No motion or vote on Matrix 2*

- Staff highlighted HB2050 (Public Campaign Financing), for OHA and statewide elections, as a key bill advancing to conference committee.
- Staff noted that amendments sought by OHA to place OHA elections on parity with the Lieutenant Governor and other statewide elections have not yet been incorporated.
- No additional amendments are being recommended by staff at this stage because the bill is entering conference committee.
  (Time Stamp: 56:08/1:22:37)

Discussion
None

3. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills and Measures Affecting he Public Land Trust – Matrix 3
(Time: 56:50/1:22:37)

Public Testimony
None

Update
** No motion or vote for Matrix 3*

- Staff provided an update on SB2001 (Banyan Drive) bill is moving into conference committee.
- OHA continues to have comments on the measure, including *Support* for adding lineal descendant representation language to the bill.
- Staff noted that the bill does not currently include OHA as a member, and it is not anticipated that such a provision will be added.
- OHA's focus remains on supporting community requests for lineal descendant representation in Banyan Drive decision-making.
- No changes to Matrix 3 were recommended at this time, but staff identified the bill as a key measure entering conference.
  (Time Stamp: 57:05/1:22:47)

Discussion
None

4. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills Affecting Natural Resources and Nati ve Hawaiian Traditional and Customary Practices – Matrix 4
(Time Stamp: 57:54/1:22:37)

Public Testimony
None

Update
- Staff presented HCR 178, which urges the Department of Land and Natural Resources to prioritize issuance of a set-aside to Maui County through executive order to support management of public trust water resources in East Maui.
- Staff recommended *Support with Amendments*, noting proposed technical language revisions related to water set-asides and water management. The recommendations were based on guidance provided by a former Land Use Commission member.
- Staff clarified that the recommendation involved OHA's published position only and did not require changes to the matrix.
(Time Stamp: 58:13/1:22:37)

Motion made by **Chair Galuteria** to approve OHA staff's position recommendations for bills and measures affecting natural resources and Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices as presented in Matrix 4.
(Time Stamp: 1:00:20/1:22:37)

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

Roll Call
Motion carried (6 – 0)
Yes: *Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Alapa, Kahele, Waihee, and Chair Galuteria*
Excused: *Trustees Akina, Lindsey, and Souza*
(Time Stamp: 1:00:45/1:22:37)

5. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills and Measures Affecting Native Hawaiian Housing – Matrix 5
(Time Stamp: 1:01:03/1:22:37)

Public Testimony
None

Update
- Staff reported a recommended position change for SB3048 following a gut-and-replace amendment.
- Originally, SB3048 was a tax measure on which OHA had taken no position. However,

language from HB2049, relating to conveyance tax changes and funding for the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL), was inserted into SB3048 after HB2049 did not advance to conference.
- The amended measure would modify the conveyance tax structure and dedicate approximately $60 million annually to DHHL.
- Staff, therefore, recommended changing OHA's position to *Support* of SB3048.
(Time Stamp: 1:01:16/1:22:37)

Motion made by **Chair Galuteria** to approve staff recommendations for bills and measures affecting Native Hawaiian housing as presented in **Matrix 5**.
(Time Stamp: 1:02:46/1:22:37)

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

Roll Call
Motion carried (6 - 0)
Excused: *Trustees Akina, Lindsey, and Souza*
(Time Stamp: 1:03:00/1:22:37)

6. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills and Measures Affecting Native Hawaiian Health – Matrix 6
(Time Stamp: 1:03:16/1:22:37)

Public Testimony
None

Update
**No motion or vote for Matrix 6*

- Staff highlighted HB1769 (Public Safety and Criminal Justice)**,** which would support the incremental return of Hawai‘i inmates housed out of state. Staff noted the measure is advancing to conference committee, has gained significant traction this session, and has been supported by OHA through advocacy and public action alerts.
- Staff also highlighted SB2588**,** relating to Compassionate Release for incarcerated individuals with terminal illnesses. Staff noted that Hawai‘i currently lacks a compassionate release law and that OHA position is to *Support* the measure alongside the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation and other coalition partners.
- Staff reported that OHA supports SB2588 with proposed amendments to clarify eligibility criteria for compassionate release.
- Both measures were identified as key bills advancing to conference committee.

- No action or changes to Matrix 6 were requested.
  (Time Stamp: 1:03:35/1:22:37)

Discussion
None

7. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills and Measures Affecting Native Hawaiian Education – Matrix 7
(Time Stamp: 1:04:5:10/1:22:37)

Public Testimony
None

Update
**No motion or vote for Matrix 7*

- Staff provided an update on SB3123, which clarifies that free tuition provided by private educational institutions, where no tuition or other monetary consideration is required, is permissible.
- Staff noted the measure, referred to as the Kamehameha Schools bill, passed the Legislature, was sent in to the Governor, and has been signed into law.
- OHA supported the measure during the legislative process.
- Staff reported that the bill will not proceed to conference committee because it has already been enacted into law.
- No motion required for Matrix 7
  (Time Stamp: 1:05:23/1:22:37)

Discussion
None

8. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills and Measures Affecting Native Hawaiian Economic Stability – Matrix 8
(Time Stamp: 1:06:05/1:22:37)

Public Testimony
None

Update
- Staff presented SR31, a new resolution requesting state and county agencies to develop a Food SecurityPlan.
- Staff reported that OHA has a position of *Support* for the resolution in coordination with a coalition and noted that this is a new legislative position that had not appeared in previous matrices.
  (Time Stamp: 1:06:23/1:22:37)

Motion made by Chair Galuteria to approve staff recommendations for bills and measures affecting Native Hawaiian economic stability as presented in **Matrix 8**.
(Time Stamp: 1:06:09/1:22:437)

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

Roll Call
Motion carried (6 – 0)
Excused: Trustees Akina, Lindsey, Souza
(Time Stamp: 1:07:32/1:22:37)

9. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Bills and Measures Affecting Hawai‘i Revised Statutes Chapter 6E (Iwi Kūpuna and Historic Preservation – Matrix 9
(Time Stamp: 1:07:43/1:22:37)

Public Testimony
None

Update
**No motion or vote for Matrix 9*

- Staff highlighted HB1710 (Historic Preservation and Related Measures) describing it as the vehicle carrying OHA's historic preservation package language. Staff reported continued collaboration and agreement on the bill language among State of Hawai‘i Historic Preservation Division (SHPD), community stakeholders, and county archaeologists as the measure advances.
- Staff noted that certain published *Support* and *Oppose* positions included in Matrix 9 are carryover positions from prior measures and were added in the event those measures become active during conference committee proceedings.
- Staff advised that the remaining measures in Matrix 9 are associated with OHA's legislative package.
- No changes to positions were recommended, and no motion or vote was required for Matrix.9.

10. 2026 Legislature: OHA Position on Governor‘s Messages for State Board and Commissions Confirmation – Matrix 10
(Time Stamp: 1:09:08/1:22:37)

Public Testimony
None

Introduction

- Staff presented a recommendation to revise OHA's approach toward certain gubernatorial nominees to the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. Staff noted that, given the controversial nature and policy significance of these bodies, OHA may be better served by remaining neutral on individual nominees and focusing advocacy on policy positions rather than endorsements of specific individuals.
- Committee members discussed the proposed shift from supporting nominees to monitoring appointments. Concerns were raised that endorsing some nominees while remaining silent on others could be interpreted as opposition and could create unnecessary controversy.
- Staff also reported community pushback regarding support for certain Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority nominees and suggested that OHA consider developing its own nomination recommendations in the future.
- Trustees discussed balancing participation in public conversations with maintaining neutrality. Members acknowledged the strategic rationale for monitoring appointments while continuing to advocate for OHA's policy interests.

- **Vice Chair Akaka** also brought attention to GM 769, concerning the gubernatorial nomination of Patrick Branco to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, but no discussion or deliberation occurred as the matter was not on the agenda.
(Time Stamp: 1:09:28/1:22:37)

Motion made by **Chair Galuteria** to adopt OHA's positions on Governor's Messages for state board and commission confirmations as presented in Matrix 10, except to change the following positions from *Support* to *Monitor*:

- Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission gubernatorial nominees:
  - Gilbert Kualiʻi
  - Philip Fernandez
- Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority gubernatorial nominees:
  - Paul Horner
  - Noenoe Wong Wilson
  - Richard Matsuda
  - John Komeiji

(Time Stamp: 1:19:01/1:22:37)

Roll Call
Motion carried (**5 –** 0)
Yes:*Trustees Ahuna, Akaka, Alapa, Kahele, Chair Galuteria*
Excused: *Akina, Lindsey, Souza*, *Waihe'e IV*
(Time Stamp: 1:19:48/1:22:37)

V. COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS

None presented

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Kahele extended birthday wishes to staff member, Pōhai Ryan.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The committee was reminded of the Board meeting scheduled for the following day at **9:00 a.m.**

> **Motion** made by **Vice Chair Akaka** to adjourn the April 15, 2026 meeting of the Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment.
> (Time Stamp: 1:21:17/1:22:37)

Roll Call
Motion carried (6 – 0)
Excused: *Trustees Akina, Lindsey, Souza*
(Time Stamp: 1:21:27/1:22:37)

The meeting adjourned with no further business at 10:24 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lei-Ann Stender Durant, Trustee Aide
Committee Recording Secretary

Brickwood Galuteria, Trustee At-Large
Committee Chair

Date Approved: