September __, 2025

Governor Josh Green
State of Hawai'i
Executive Chambers
State Capitol
415 South Beretania St.
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Governor Green;

As a network of Native Hawaiian organizations, committed to the protection of our ʻāina, culture, communities, and people, we stand united in calling on the State of Hawaiʻi to uphold its legal and moral responsibilities by ensuring Native Hawaiian community representation in all decision-making related to expiring U.S. military land leases across the Hawaiian Islands.

In recent weeks, U.S. Secretary of the Army Daniel Driscoll called for a more aggressive timeline for the negotiations over Pōhakuloa Training Center. Fast-tracking new land agreements or "frameworks" for Pōhakuloa and the other leases expiring in 2029/2030 would be a serious misstep.

The U.S. military land holdings in Hawaiʻi total nearly **222,000 acres,** including over 91,890 acres of Hawaiian Kingdom crown and government lands transferred between 1917 and 1964 from the Territory of Hawaiʻi and State of Hawaiʻi to the U.S. military, over 5,258 acres taken from the trusts of Queen Emma and Ke Aliʻi Pauahi by the U.S. military, and **39,000 acres** of State-leased public lands for the Army, Navy, and Air Force military training and activities at **Pōhakuloa Training Area (PTA)** on Hawaiʻi Island; **Kahuku Training Area**, **Mākua Military Reservation**, and **Kawailoa-Poamoho Training Area** on Oʻahu; **Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF)** on Kauaʻi; and at various other locations throughout the islands.

These are Hawaiian national lands and sacred ancestral lands, which are currently entrusted to the State for the benefit of present and future generations.

As stated in Public Law 103-150, the Hawaiian people **never directly relinquished our claims** to **sovereignty** as a people or over our **national lands** to the United States, either through our monarchy or through a plebiscite or referendum. We emphasize that these are ***our*** claims, and therefore no state actor should make unilateral determinations on the best course of action for the benefit of Native Hawaiians with regard to lease negotiations.

We further emphasize that the military's long-term presence in Hawai‘i has had wide-ranging and harmful effects on the well-being of Native Hawaiians and other impacted communities, including:

- **Forced displacement of Native Hawaiians** from their homes to make way for military installations, as in Mākua Valley.
- **The degradation of environmental and cultural sites** through live-fire training, unexploded ordnance, fuel spills, contamination, and wildfires. Notable examples are Pōhakuloa, Kaho‘olawe, and Red Hill.
- **Severely restricted access to land for traditional practices and subsistence.**
- **Exacerbation of Hawai‘i's housing crisis**, as military personnel and resources increase competition for limited housing, inflating prices and reducing availability for local families.
- **Chronic underinvestment in land restoration and community health**, even as military use continues.

Given these conditions, we call on you, Governor Green**,** as well as the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR), and the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to take the following steps:

1. **Include Native Hawaiian Community Representation in Decision-Making**
   As a people recognized by the United States as having never relinquished our claims to sovereignty or our national lands, and as named beneficiaries of the Public Land Trust under the Hawai‘i Constitution, Native Hawaiians must have representation in decision-making and in **all** ongoing discussions concerning lands to which we hold national, ancestral, and spiritual ties, especially Native Hawaiian communities, organizations, and individuals who have fought for the care and return of these lands for many years.
2. **Vigorously Pursue the Cleanup and Return of all Lands Leased to the Military** The State must enter negotiations with the explicit aim of significantly reducing the military‘s geographic footprint and impact in Hawai‘i, securing the prompt return of land to Native Hawaiian community stewardship for cultural, conservation, agricultural, and housing uses. The reduction must go well beyond Mākua Valley, which the Army already relinquished use of over 20 years ago. We strongly oppose any attempts to ***expand*** the military's control over Hawaiian lands.
3. **Center Accountability, Oversight, and Restitution**
   Negotiations must seek **bold compensation and/or restitution** for the military's past egregious breaches in lease terms and for the historic and ongoing impacts of militarization.
4. **Follow the Law**
   All proposed land agreements must undergo rigorous environmental, cultural, and legal review in compliance with the Hawai‘i State Constitution, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes, National Environmental Policy Act, Hawai‘i Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and other applicable laws.

5. **Commit to Transparency and Consent**
   Principles of free, prior, and informed consent are critical. This requires a transparent, inclusive process that engages impacted communities directly, allows sufficient time for deliberation, and ensures full public access to all relevant information — not token consultation or selective outreach to pre-approved representatives. No agreements should proceed otherwise.

This is a moment of consequence. The decisions made over the next few years will shape the future of our lands for generations. As organizations rooted in kuleana, aloha ʻāina, justice, and self-determination, we urge the State to resist Federal pressure to act with haste—but rather with the values aligned with the ancestral kuleana to steward the lands and govern for the people of Hawaiʻi on behalf of past and future generations.

Do not bypass the people.

Do not negotiate away our future.

We stand ready to engage and protect our land and community in a respectful, inclusive, and solutions-oriented process in which we are rooted in the core value aloha ʻāina—one that honors our shared kuleana to protect in a peaceful and pono manner, the health of our land, water, and lāhui.

Signed,

PROTECT KAHOʻOLAWE ʻOHANA

MĀLAMA MĀKUA

NĀ KIAʻI O PŌHAKULOA

KOʻOLAU WAIALUA ALLIANCE

ROYAL ORDER OF KAMEHAMEHA I

HAWAIʻI COUNCIL OF THE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS

KOʻOLAULOA HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB

ʻĀINA ALOHA ECONOMIC FUTURES

HAWAIʻI UNITY AND LIBERATION INSTITUTE (H.U.L.I.)

HUI ALOHA ʻĀINA

KANAEOKANA

ʻĀINA MOMONA

LĀ HOʻIHOʻI EA HONOLULU

I OLA WAILUANUI

HUI IWI KUAMOʻO

HAWAIʻI PEACE AND JUSTICE
PĀ KĀKAU UHI HAWAIʻI
HUI O KUAPĀ
NĀ ʻAIKANE O MAUI
ʻĪLIOʻULAOKALANI COALITION
HŌʻĀ, LLC
KUMANO I KE ALA
ALOHA KUAMOʻO ʻĀINA
ʻAHA KĀNE FOUNDATION
NOHOPAPA HAWAIʻI
HULIAUAPAʻA
LĀLĀKEA FOUNDATION
HOʻIWAI FUND
HAWAIʻI INVESTMENT READY
HAUʻOPO A KŪLAʻIĀKEA
KĀKALAIOA (OAHU)
KA POHOLIMA KĀʻEO (MAUI)
LAU ʻALE LEHUA O ALAKOKO (KAUAʻI)
HALE MUA O KOʻOLAU
KŪPAʻA KUILIMA
LĀHUI FOUNDATION
DEFEND OʻAHU COALITION
KEEP HAWAIʻI PONO
KEEP THE COUNTRY COUNTRY

CC: Dawn Chang, Chair, Board of Land and Natural Resources