To the University of Hawai‘i Board of Regents:

This is my formal written testimony opposing any current and future development atop Mauna Kea. According to Kealoha Pisciotta, a Native Hawaiian Practitioner, development is not good for Mauna Kea because the public will be adversely affected by it. Building TMT high on the summit of Mauna Kea will displace many Hawaiians who practice culture because of the desecration of this place held most sacred by Native Hawaiians. Further development on this site will not only impact Native Hawaiians but the non-Hawaiian population as well for it will eliminate endangered species found no where else in the world and have profound effects on the natural resources, beauty of the landscape, and fragile ecosystem of the island. The site planned for development of the TMT is renowned for the world’s only Tropical Alpine Dessert, drilling and grading in this exclusive area will be an environmentalist’s nightmare. Pisciotta goes on to explain that even the university’s own environmental impact statements reveal that in summation the effect of past and current actions on cultural, archaeological, and historic resources is and would be so vast, significant, and detrimental. The TMT project will effect myself, my ‘ohana, and the general public, in a way that no other disease, disability, pollution ever will. Because Mauna Kea stands for strength, security, purity, integrity as well as so much more that the people of Hawaii may experience a sort of cultural trauma with symptoms unknown.

George Helm a Native Hawaiian activist of the 1970’s summed it up best when he stated, "we are in a revolution of consciousness," we are looking for the truth." This reflects the mana’o that it almost seems as though the UH Board of Regents did not do its part in making the public aware, informing, and educating the general population. I feel that there was a lot more that the university could have done to get the word out to the general public. In fact, I learned more about the TMT project and its adverse effects to Mauna Kea and the people of Hawai‘i in the last two and a half weeks through social media, than in the seven years plus that Native Hawaiians and TMT been battling it out in court. It almost seems as if the UH BOR thought that they could keep the Hawaiians ignorant to what is going on. I completely and utterly agree with Kumu Kealoha Pisciotta when she stated that the Mauna Kea struggle is not only a fad; "it is a commitment to Native Hawaiian issues past, present, future." They have awaken a "sleeping giant," in the Hawaiian people, and we will stand up for what is right (author unknown).

I will leave this Board with one last quote as my closing argument for the opposition of TMT by the late George Helm. "There is man and there is environment. One does not supersede the other. The breath of man is the breath of Papa. Man is merely the caretaker of the land that maintains his life and nourishes his soul. Therefore, the 'aina is sacred. The church of life is not a building, it is the open sky, the surrounding ocean, the beautiful soil." University of Hawaii and the Office of Mauna Kea Management were charged with the kuleana of caretaker of this beloved, most sacred Mauna but failed to protect and conserve it by approving construction for TMT, as well as the dozen other telescopes. This is not only a race, archaeological, ethical, environmental, historical, and/or political struggle, but because these key players did not fulfill their duty as caretakers, it becomes a trust issue. Broken trust, broken promises, the lines of communication may now be closed. Please reconsider any further development on Mauna a Wakea to regain trust that was lost and mend broken promises.

Mahalo nui loa,
Shermaih Iaea, IV

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