Aloha All,

My name is Nicole Kenui and I would like to offer my testimony as to why I oppose the Thirty Meter Telescope atop Mauna Kea.

Firstly, the building of this structure is going to cause great damage to the landscape which is home to both rare and endangered species of native animal and plant life. It may be a big mountain, however, for the species that depend and thrive in that environment it is considerably small and the slightest change to the area can severely disrupt the ecosystem. You may say the construction and occupancy upon completion will not affect the surrounding plant and animal life but I find this extremely hard to believe as there will be huge machinery digging and chipping away at the site and massive waste produced when it is finished. No one can say there will be no short or long term effects, you cannot predict the future!

Another reason for my opposition is that this is a significantly sacred place to the people of Hawai‘i. It is a place reserved for royalty and has many shrines and burials some of which have not been discovered. This mountain is the beginning for the island, it is home to spirits and deities that make us who we are. The stories and legends make us who we are, it is our identity. To change the land and build buildings that will eventually be unusable but will remain is very disrespectful. And though you may say everything is being done and addressed with respect is untrue as changing the land in itself is disrespectful. The desecration of such a scared place is baffling and upsetting to me. The changing of our temple in the present is to disrespect our past and destroy it for our future!

These are the two main reasons why I do not support building a thirty meter telescope on Mauna Kea. I understand the need for learning and education but not at such great cost. And I don't mean the billion dollars that is going into this building but the cost of our culture and our future. I hope you will take this testimony into consideration in coming to an acceptable outcome for everyone.

Mahalo,
Nicole Kenui