Aloha to the University of Hawai‘i Board of Regents,

As a member of the Pūkoʻa Council, the Native Hawaiian advisory council of the University of Hawai‘i, as a member of the Ho’oolulu Council, the Native Hawaiian advisory council of Hawai‘i Community College, as a member of the Hawai‘i island community, as a mother, as an educator, as a Native Hawaiian and as a descendant of explorers, navigators, astronomers, and a people who mastered STEM knowledge to thrive in their world, I am writing to stand firmly against the TMT project and to urge you to act as the policy you established states. I urge you to "embrace your unique responsibilities to the indigenous people of Hawai‘i and to Hawai‘i’s indigenous language and culture" and to "ensure active support for the participation of Native Hawaiians at the University and...support for the Hawaiian language, history culture."

The Hawai‘i Papa O Ke Ao document, which outlines the plan to make the University of Hawai‘i a leader in indigenous education, opens with the following statement and question - "Everything we do is, or should be, imbued with Hawaiian values and respectful of the traditions practiced here for centuries, long before the ancestors of other ethnicities landed on our shores. It is incumbent on Hawai‘i’s only public institution of higher education to both educate Hawaiian youth of our islands to prepare them for productive lives, and continue to play a key role in preserving and perpetuating the culture that exists no where else on earth. It is a gift and an obligation of which we are keenly aware. If not the University of Hawai‘i, then who?"

Indeed, if not the University of Hawai‘i, then who? It is your kuleana, your responsibility, to play a key role in preserving and perpetuating the culture that exists no where else on earth. NO WHERE ELSE ON EARTH.

It is incumbent upon you to ensure that the TMT is does not destroy, does not desecrate that which exists NO WHERE ELSE ON EARTH.

Fulfill your mission, fulfill your responsibility and BE what you claim to be, BE a Hawaiian place of learning, BE a LEADER in indigenous education and STOP CONSTRUCTION of the TMT.

(Hawai‘i Papa O Ke Ao document - https://www.hawaii.edu/offices/op/hpokeao.pdf)

Me ka ʻoiaʻiʻo,
Dorinna Manuel-Cortez
Pūkoʻa Council
Hoʻoolulu Council