My name is Jesslin and I am a student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa submitting a written testimony. I am against the construction of the thirty meter telescope atop Mauna a Wākea. I am asking for the discontinuation of construction on this project. There are several reasons for this. According to those who are for the building of this large telescope, it has passed all eight criteria for a conservation district use permit issued by BLNR. However, I do not agree with the idea of this telescope fulfilling all eight. First of all, the construction itself will cause adverse impact to existing natural resources. The construction industry contributes to 23% of air pollution, 50% of landfill wastes, 50% of climate change gases, and 40% of drinking water pollution. Therefore, the telescope does not meet this criteria when it is in its construction phase. Second, it supposedly will be compatible with the surrounding area and preserve the existing physical and environmental aspects. From the perspective of a Hawaiian, the land is meant to help nourish and feed its people, in this case, Mauna a Wākea sits atop the largest aquifer on the moku o Keawe. This telescope is claiming to be zero waste, but how will you monitor the cleaning and disposal of waste? How does using 8 acres of land to build an 18 story telescope, that is already in the works in Chile, preserve the existing physical aspects? It doesn’t. It will be an obstruction on a mountain that is held sacred to the Native Hawaiians. Compare the building of this telescope atop a mountain a culture holds sacred to asking you to place it on top of Mount Rushmore, a sculpture carved into mountains to remind America of its past political figures. Maunakea is more than just a “great” place for astronomy, it is
the piko of the Hawaiian people. And as a University, who’s goal is to educate, this telescope will only benefit those in the Astronomy department, because I fail to see how it will educate students in the various majors (such as Family Resources or the Academy of Creative Media). To add to these reasons, the court has no say in the Hawaiian Kingdom. Just as the judge on the Moloka‘i case admitted, the Kingdom does exist, when he was presented with factual evidence from an international law perspective. The Kingdom does exist, and this is another reason why TMT cannot be constructed. American laws do not apply here. How can this thirty-meter telescope be constructed in order to advance the human race when it desecrates and destroys land just to pursue discoveries of places we will never travel to? As the human race, we need to stop seeing progression in terms of money acquirement and construction of more buildings and infrastructures. We must start seeing progression in terms of housing people without homes, feeding those without food, and taking care of the land we have because these resources are limited, no matter how much money you have. In conclusion, I am against the construction of TMT because, as a student of the University, I fail to see how this telescope will benefit all when it desecrates a sacred place. Thank you for your time.

Board of Regents
University of Hawaiʻi at Hilo