15 April, 2015

Aloha to the members of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents,

I, Jaimee Kauanoeanuhea Sisiam, testify in opposition to the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) and any further desecration to the sacred Mauna a Wakea.

It deeply concerns me that despite the tremendous outcry of the Hawaiian people, residents of the state of Hawaii, and the international community of indigenous people, the University of Hawaii and its Board of Regents continue to turn a blind eye to the matter. To truly understand where the opposing majority are coming from you need to understand that as a child of this land, Hawai‘i, we are very much connected to the place of our birth and genealogy. Mauna a Wakea is the realm of our sky father Wakea who is the very creator of the Hawaiian people and the land we dwell on and honor. The ʻiwi (bones) and other remnants of our ancestors are still present on the mountain because they understood the spiritual connection of the mountain and the importance of this location as a whole. Just because the graves are unmarked does not mean they are not there. These things are very kapu (sacred) to us. Anything sacred must be protected not
destroyed and dishonored like our sacred iwi is by having an enormous TMT built right over them.

It also breaks my heart to find that there is a lease for Mauana a Wakea. I cannot believe that the most important and sacred land to Hawaiians is being leased at all, there is no price to its sacredness. All that desecration and dishonor for only money in return? It is degrading and prostituting the very epicenter of all things Hawaiian. You encourage your people to dig up the bones of our ancestors for "science"? For "education"? What an insult! They are our roots, you rip the roots from a tree you kill it. You rip out our iwi you kill the Hawaiians. Yes, our ancestors valued the stars and moon but we did not need to build telescopes, and destroy our temple to do so.

All developed telescope sites on maunakea are constructed over the Mauna Kea aquifer and the Waiakea watershed that feeds the entire island. This really shocks me because I am also concerned that the telescopes produces 120-250 cubic feet of solid waste a week including a 5,000 gallon tank underground for waste water that has toxic chemicals. When you put poison at the top of a aquifer what do you expect? It will soon trickle down to the rest of the island effecting every living thing that relies on that water. Once destroyed, an ecosystem can never truly be returned to it's original state.

This is not what the people of Hawaii want and we demand the that you stop the construction of the TMT. The protesting by the Hawaiian people, residents of the State of Hawaii and the global support we receive proves this. There are things that are priceless and worth much more than money, which includes Mauan a Wakea. That is why I oppose the building of the TMT and any
further desecration of Mauna a Wakea.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Kapu aloha, Jaimee Kauanoeanuhea Sisiam