Hawai‘i Island Chamber of Commerce

April 16, 2015

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I AND THE OFFICE OF MAUNA KEA MANAGEMENT

Aloha regents,

My name is Miles Yoshioka and I am the Executive Officer for the Hawaii Island Chamber of Commerce. The Hawaii Island Chamber of Commerce has been a part of our island’s business community for nearly 120 years. Our membership includes over 270 businesses, professionals, and university students and represents nearly 640 individuals.

We support the University of Hawaii at Hilo and the OMKM’s continued management and stewardship of Maunakea. We believe that the University and OMKM have done their best in utilizing natural resource managers, cultural advisors and scientists to formulate a plan which will work for the mountain.

They are on the right track and through the years, we have seen the positive evolution of the use of the mountain through the strategies and actions taken by OMKM to protect our mountain’s natural and cultural resources. We hope to never again see those days of truck tire tracks scarring the slopes of a cinder pu‘u or piles of trash left on the side of trails.

We have a stake in this, and it’s not just the economic benefits that many may believe. Many of our members were born, raised and brought up our families here. Like everyone here today, we care about the mountain and we want to do what’s best for our future generations. Our members have volunteered with OMKM to help control invasive species on the mountain through noxious weed control, also called “pulling fireweed” and have done outplantings of native seedlings.

We have come a long way and it’s working. But even the best of plans can always be made better and we feel confident that the Office of Mauna Kea Management will continue to facilitate the discussions and dialogue by open minds of all parties to balance the cultural, scientific and natural resources of Maunakea.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Miles Yoshioka
Executive Officer