Aloha,

My name is Pua Wong and I am a senior at Kamehameha Schools Hawaii Campus with intent to enroll at University of Hawaii at Manoa with a major in biology and a dream to become a medical doctor in Hawaii. With a strong background in my Hawaiian culture and a love for science I understand both sides of the issue but I do not support the building of TMT on Hawaiian conservation lands because of the negative effect it has on the land and the people. I ask myself what will the building of TMT advance? We say mankind but, how? The information they get will most likely not be shared with the public and if it is what could we do with it?

I feel that if we want to advance mankind and science through the observation of space we should continue to send humans to space and to not just look at it through a gigantic telescope on top a mountain in paradise. I love science but I also do not believe nor do I support the desecration of the thriving native Hawaiian cultures sacred Mauna Kea. We cannot have a future without a past so we must cherish and protect all that we have left while continuing to "advance mankind" in a way that has the least environmental impact as possible. Most importantly we must have the dignity and respect to preserve the mountain that has protected residents of the Island of Hawaii both non-Hawaiian and Hawaiian, like myself, from many natural disasters etc.

My uncle told me that my generation must to speak up. They are doing what they can and it’s our age groups kulena to continue on. Mauna Kea is sacred to my ancestors for many years before my and family and I even settled here. My actual bloodline of the Keawemauhili walked, worshipped, and land managed that entire area as far as you can drive. I of all people am vested in the protection of Mauna Kea and Hawaii Island itself. And for another telescope on that Mauna that will be the size of a Stadium with all its chemicals and waste up there so that they can look into the deepest regions of space and yet they cannot even take care of looking into our own planet here with all the destruction and desecration we are causing here where we live right now. The Hubble Telescope can already do what this telescope will be able to do.

I was told that this TMT will be able to see 11.6 billion light years away. That's almost to the start of the Big Bang. The TMT unfortunately needs to be planted in one of the most sacred places to its people. The choice of advancement vs. history is a tuff choice. We as humans thrive on progress but yet preserve our past. They both can be used to advance our knowledge but which is needed in this day and age?

Having the ability to see 11.6 billion might years away is of no use if our leaders and scientists cannot look into their own hearts and souls. Into our own islands and oceans first to see the devastation and destruction we are doing to our own planet. In truth the fight is not really this telescope and what it can do. If our Ali'i were managing the land today they would be all for science. But they would respect protocol and land management and wao akua. In 1966 the management at be allowed 1 telescope, now we have 13! The last 12 has to be permitted after the fact because they must any ahead and built them without permission from the people. Now they are going to build the largest of them all on crown lands of our people. The Mauna has become a cash cow for the state and for foreign investors... Not for our Kanaka, our cultural practitioners, our Kanaka scientists. This progress as we call it was not done in a pono way, as you can see that people across the islands and around the world are gathering to protect this Mauna.

Sincerely,
Pua Wong