April 16, 2015

To Members of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents:

Supporters of TMT, astronomers, students and staff have shown extraordinary patience in not lowering to the intimidation, name calling, and disregard of the law demonstrated by some of the protesters.

Some leaders of the protest movement have apologized for the rude acts by some in their group at the VIS, even volunteering to clean the VIS bathrooms when feces were spread on the wall, and agreeing to turn off their bright lights during stargazing demonstrations. However, there is a long list of other disrespectful acts committed that have not been addressed. A few protesters show blatant rudeness to observatory staff and visitors through hand gestures, facial expressions, signs, and road blockages.

UH and observatories have already paid for extra pumping of septic tanks and luas at the VIS, repairing the broken trellis to the crawl space where apparent camping took place under the building; paying for extra water hauls for toilets, drinking water, hot water, and electricity as protesters use the outlets for telescopes on the stargazing patio.

I urge the UH Board of Regents to stand for education; to stand for Astronomy; to stand for TMT. Support the court decision that has upheld the permit process. Support the EIS and Comprehensive Management Plans.

Lack of action by UH only encourages more of this “occupy” strategy, anti-education, anti-science mentality. I’d like to see strong, unwavering support of astronomy, education, UH staff, UH managed lands, and TMT from UH Board of Regents.

Sincerely,

Gwen Biggert

Maunakea Observatories Support Services