Dear Regents:

I understand that there is a special session today of the BoR to discuss the Thirty Meter Telescope. Despite the small number of vocal opponents to this project, I wish to go on record as a strong supporter of the telescope and wish to encourage you to continue your support of the project.

I have been a faculty member at UH Manoa for the last 33 years, working in the School of Ocean, Earth Science and Technology. I am also one of the UH System members of the State’s Aerospace Advisory Committee, which is appointed by the Governor. In both capacities, I see major advantages of the telescope. First and foremost, it maintains Hawaii’s world leadership in astronomy which was originated by the Polynesian explorers who discovered these islands. This leadership significantly enhances the reputation of both our faculty and graduate students, as well as contributes resources to the State through the employment of these people and the enhancement of infrastructure.

As a member of the Hawaii Aerospace Advisory Committee, I can report that there is strong support for the TMT on the basis of the technology enhancement in the State, the important contributions it will make to the State’s STEM education program, and the enhancement of the Big Island’s economy. As Hawaii strives to diversify its economy, the TMT is an important component of this diversification.

I recognize that any development in Hawaii must be done in a manner that is aware of the concerns of the native population. Through many years of discussions that have brought us to this point, I believe that the concerns of the vast majority of the community have been addressed. For the benefit of the entire State, in terms of economic benefit and international reputation, I therefore urge you to continue to support the TMT.

Sincerely,
Pete Mouginis-Mark

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