Dear Members of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents:

I write in favor of the Thirty Meter Telescope project:

1. The project will further humanity's knowledge of the universe. New knowledge is always valuable.
2. The project is in keeping with the Hawaiian culture's long history of leadership in celestial navigation.
3. The project is unique in that it will provide significant monetary input into the State's and the Island of Hawaii's economies with minimal negative impact on the Island's environment.
4. The project earmarks a lot of money for education of Hawaii's youth; a good thing.
5. The summit of Mauna Kea is the premier location on earth for optical/infrared telescopes. There really isn't a reasonable second choice of locations for the TMT.
6. The project has been thoroughly vetted over more years than many organizations would have been willing to spend. The TMT needs to be rewarded for its patience and good-citizen behavior. It needs to be supported – unequivocally.

My having to write this testimony is shocking. The project should now be underway. Instead the Governor, the State, and the University are back-peddling on something they KNOW is both righteous and legal. They do so in the face of an uncompromising and very vocal group of people which has, unfortunately, turned misguided opposition to the TMT into a sovereignty issue.

Are we a society of laws? If we are, then the Governor, the State, and the University need to step up and take the lead on the TMT moving ahead. You have already blinked on this one, giving the opponents hope and likely making the ultimate confrontation worse. If you allow the TMT to be scuttled, where will the demands stop? Certainly all of the existing telescopes would have to go. What then? The scenario is more than worrisome.

Please do the right thing and speak out, unequivocally, in support of the TMT. Thank you for considering my opinion.
Sincerely, Leon E. Hallacher