To the members of the Board of Regents:

I am submitting this testimony against the Thirty-Meter Telescope (TMT) and the process that the University of Hawai‘i has thus far taken to ensure the construction of this telescope. For the public record, I was born on O‘ahu but my family before me were all born on the island of Hawai‘i for the last 400 years. Some of my female ancestors prior to the arrival of Christianity were among the appointed kahu of Lake Waiau. The bones and umbilical cords of my ancestors are still on that sacred mountain. During the time of the constitutional Monarchy, my family had leased pasturing lands from the Hawaiian Crown on the slopes of Mauna Kea. Mauna Kea therefore is an important part of my family's genealogy and the genealogies of many other Hawaiian families. This issue is also very personal to me because of this genealogy and because of the dehumanizing attacks that have come out in support of the TMT.

I have come to understand from the e-mails being circulated by Drs. Sandra Faber and Alexei Filippenko that such a historical and cultural connection to any land is meaningless to them. By their views and choice of words, they have shown that science is not value-free but still based on Western values that privilege the few at the expense of the many. I have also come to understand that many of the Board of Regents of this public university probably feel the same as those persons mentioned above. But that is not the point. As a public university, the Board held meetings and “consulted” with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, a government agency that many do not believe actively protects the interests of the Hawaiian people. But the university discounted all opposition opinion and did not in any shape or form look to compromises. It ignored the majority opinion of Hawaiians who testified in the last seven years which recommended to the university not develop this last piece of Mauna Kea. The university instead the university has acted like a spoiled sugar plantation owner arresting union strikers. There were many chanced that the university could have compromised on the location, the structure, and the access but up until now, the university has not done so. It instead resorted to mass arrests and a public relations firm. In doing what the university has done, it itself has violated scientific ethics, the public's interest, the State constitution, internationally recognized indigenous rights, and basic principles of democracy.

In asserting itself in Mauna Kea, the university has also done two major things. First, it has released the shadow of colonialism and racism, which has always discreetly existed, into public forums and the media. It is very apparent that there is a great need for the academic and scientific community to have a strong discourse within itself on issues of privilege, gender, racism, ethics and indigenous rights. Second, the university in ignoring the majority, has awakened a new sense of Hawaiian resolve. Hawaiians from Maine to Afghanistan are united in one cause and one voice—in direct opposition to the TMT and the university. Non-Hawaiians of all walks of life from celebrities to farmers and from nations as far away as Bulgaria to England to Aotearoa/New Zealand are also united in common cause
with Hawaiians over protecting Mauna Kea. The university is not dealing with a one group of Hawaiians, but of an entire people who are once again rediscovering their voice and who will stand up to the TMT and your public university for years to come.

The best course of action for the university at this stage would be drop construction and look at alternatives because even if the university were to win legal challenges, the TMT has already become a poisonous oleander plant for the university. It will poison the university's relations with the general public and with the Hawaiian community for generations to come. If the university truly believes in the motto that is attached to every University of Hawai'i degree--"Ua mau ke ea o ka 'āina i ka pono”, the university must either drop this project or drop its motto.

Sincerely,

Adam Keawe Manalo-Camp