"We Will Persist in Our Sacred Commitment to Protect Mauna a Wākea":
Statement of faculty and staff of various University of Hawai'i system campuses

We, the undersigned UH faculty and staff, affirm our support for this statement and call the UH administration, Board of Regents, the TMT International Observatory LLC (TIO) and its members, to immediately cease pursuing construction of the TMT on Mauna a Wākea. We affirm our kuleana to protect this sacred piko of the lāhui Hawai'i, and we will persist in our sacred commitment to protect Mauna a Wākea.

On November 28, we celebrated Lā Kū'oko'a, in honor of the recognition of the Hawaiian Kingdom and Constitutional Monarchy as an independent nation-state by Great Britain and France, which opened the way for treaties of friendship and commerce between the Hawaiian government and other nations. Our call to terminate the construction of the TMT is made in acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the Hawaiian nation and its unbroken claim to Mauna a Wākea as part of the Hawaiian national lands and to respect and honor Native Hawaiian spiritual and cultural beliefs, customs and practices.

The proposed TMT would be 18 stories tall, 2 stories deep underground and spread out over 5 acres in the Mauna Kea Science Reserve. The construction footprint will extend out to 8 acres, pave 3,400 feet of new road and excavate 20 feet into the mountain to remove 64,000 cubic yards of earth. A commercial dump truck can hold 10-14 cubic yards of dirt. It will take over 4,700 dump truck loads to transport that amount of soil.

This will have a severe impact on the pristine and fragile ecosystem of the summit, obstruct the view plane of the most sacred and revered mountain in Hawai'i, degrade sacred cultural resources, and irreversibly impact irreplaceable natural resources that are integral to sustaining the primary source of freshwater on Hawai'i island.

Despite what a majority of the Hawai'i State Supreme Court may have decided, construction of a TMT on Mauna a Wākea is an intolerable breach of the trust to manage the summit as a conservation district, protecting its rare and precious cultural and natural resources.

As faculty and staff of the University of Hawai'i campuses throughout the islands, we gather to affirm our commitment to steadfastly hold the University of Hawai'i Administration (UH) accountable for its responsibility to manage and protect the sacred, cultural, natural and scientific resources and landscape of Mauna a Wākea. In the interest of protecting the most sacred and revered mountain summit in Hawai'i, we oppose and will continue to fight the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope.

We call upon the UH president and Board of Regents to:

- Terminate any and all agreements for the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) on the summit of Mauna a Wākea.
- Reject the current draft of Chapter 20-26, Hawai'i Administrative Rules, entitled "Public and Commercial Activities on Mauna Kea Lands." which targets and would, in effect, criminalize
those seeking to protect and sustain the mauna and restrict Native Hawaiian spiritual and customary practices.

We call upon TMT International Observatory LLC (TIO) and its Members--Caltech, the University of California, the National Institutes of Natural Sciences of Japan, the National Astronomical Observatories of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Department of Science and Technology of India, and the National Research Council of Canada--as well as funders, the Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation, to:

• Immediately cease pursuing construction of the TMT on our sacred mountain summit.

We call upon our UH community of students, faculty, staff and administrators to:

• Uphold our responsibility as scholars, researchers and academics to adhere to the highest ethical standards for research in relation to the people with whom and the places where we work.
• Oppose research that severely compromises the work that we have done to build an ethical relationship between the academy and our community in Hawai‘i and that undermines the UH goal to become a model indigenous serving institution.

We make these calls to cease construction based on four primary principles:

1. **WE UPHOLD ETHICAL RESEARCH.** The arrests of dozens of people, particularly the Native people of this land, for research infrastructure is an unacceptable cost for any kind of research and is a glaring contradiction to what many of us teach our students in a wide variety of disciplines about ethical relationships between research, researchers, place and community. Pursuit of the TMT is a breach of ethical research standards of respect for places and communities affected by research.

2. **WE SUPPORT THE DISSenting Opinion of Justice Wilson.** We agree that prior degradation of the summit by a proliferation of telescopes under decades of mismanagement by the UH does not reduce the impact to the summit nor justify the further degradation of the summit with the construction of the TMT. This regressive logic compromises decades of work by community members, researchers and policy makers who have contributed to environmental protections that are in place in Hawai‘i.

3. **WE OPPOSE RESEARCH UPHeld by Unethical Administrative Rules.** The current draft of UH administrative rules for "Public and Commercial Activities on Mauna Kea Lands" places a heavy burden upon and, in effect, criminalizes those exercising cultural practices and protecting the mauna.

4. **WE OPPOSE THE DIVERSION of RESEARCH AND TRAINING (RTRF) MONEY TO PAY MAUNA KEA LEGAL FEES.** TMT purports to bring in monies for the UH and the State; however, since August 2015, five percent of the indirect costs for research brought in by UH faculty throughout the system has been used to pay for permits, consultants,
and legal fees for the Thirty Meter Telescope, Office of Mauna Kea Management, the Daniel K. Inouye Solar Telescope on Haleakalā and other astronomy related programs.

In conclusion, the University of Hawai‘i has prioritized astronomy development at the expense of properly caring for Mauna Kea’s natural and cultural resources. Its continued support for the TMT prioritizes construction of research infrastructure over the well-being of students, staff and faculty who have committed to the protection of Mauna a Wākea. The policy and practice of UH must begin to prioritize the protection of the Mauna Kea and its natural and cultural resources, respect the protectors and Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners of Mauna Kea and begin to heal the degradation that has already occurred.

*This statement was first presented on Wednesday, December 5, 2018 in front of Hawai‘i Hall.

See attached spreadsheet of individual UH faculty and staff members who have signed in support of this statement. A longer version of this statement, which contains fuller explanation of our main points is also attached.
To: Board of Regents  

From: Kristeen Hanselman  
Executive Director,  
University of Hawaii  
Professional Assembly  

Re: Tuition Freeze  

There is nothing better than to acknowledge our citizens should have excellent, affordable public higher education—it would be best if our legislature engaged in the providing of a tuition-free education for all students seeking an undergraduate experience and others that seek workforce training. Alas we are not at that point. UHPA supports the tuition freeze and notes it should be implemented in a broader construct of increased revenue from other sources.

The proposal to freeze tuition has all the makings of a response to the skepticism expressed in the legislature and our communities about the University not being responsive to local students and the economic challenges of residing in a high cost of living state. The reality is more complicated than freezing tuition with the hopes this will increase enrollments. It is an incomplete response to the universities fiscal challenges. Cost is one element in whether students and families choose UH—another element is the access to talented teachers and the resources to explore and learn. If there is not the presence of highly qualified faculty delivering instruction UH will not attain it’s goal of increased, sustainable enrollment that is affordable.

Freezing tuition stalls a revenue source—as yet, there does not appear to be a replacement revenue that will support a highly credentialed faculty presence. Significant amounts of tuition dollars support the delivery of instruction which includes faculty and infrastructure such as electricity. These costs are not static with their rise and fall based on the decision made by the administration and BOR which includes who is hired; the number hired with the means to attract and maintain. There are already numerous state funded positions that are vacant because the funds have been expended to support filled positions. The lack of symmetry between affordable tuition and the necessary resources to sustain excellence in academics is concerning.