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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OHA BOARD APPROVES RESOLUTION ON MAUNAKEA

HONOLULU – The OHA Board of Trustees today approved a resolution that calls on Gov. David Ige to rescind his Emergency Proclamation for Maunakea and authorizes the OHA administration to advocate for the rights, safety and well-being of Native Hawaiian protectors and provide related-assistance as appropriate.

“Our hearts go out to our beneficiaries peacefully demanding the protection of Maunakea,” said Trustee Dan Ahuna, chair of the OHA Board’s Ad Hoc Committee on Maunakea. “Regardless of your position on the Thirty Meter Telescope, we all want the same thing: to mālama the mountain. Unfortunately, the state and the University of Hawai‘i have spent the last half century failing their management responsibilities for this special place. Their longstanding stewardship failures are the real emergency on Maunakea. This is why we are suing the state and the university.”

Over the last two weeks, thousands of Native Hawaiians and others have gathered at Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu at the base of Maunakea to call for the protection of Maunakea. Kia‘i leaders have formally asked OHA to help cover the cost for supplies to maintain the pu‘uhonua. OHA has also been asked to help coordinate or provide for legal observers and other health, safety and legal needs.

“Our community is asking for OHA’s help,” said Trustee Ahuna. “Today’s resolution directs the OHA administration to review these requests and respond appropriately.”

With the approval of today’s resolution, the OHA Board also took the following positions:

- To implore that the state take steps to eliminate the potential for harm to Native Hawaiians seeking to uphold their cultural and spiritual beliefs and to voice their opposition to the decades-long pattern of mismanagement of Maunakea, by
 - Condemning and prohibiting any further government action to provoke or intimidate Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners and others seeking to protect Maunakea;
 - Coordinating with government officials, UH, OHA and Native Hawaiian community members to meaningfully alleviate tensions;
 - Prohibiting the use of unwarranted force against those engaged in peaceful protest on Maunakea; and
 - Ensuring the safety of all who wish to exercise their cultural practices and right to peaceful expression and opposition;
- To strongly oppose the use of unwarranted force against Native Hawaiians engaged in peaceful protest on Maunakea; and
- To call upon the Governor to rescind his Emergency Proclamation.

For more information on OHA’s lawsuit against the state and UH, visit www.oha.org/maunakea.

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About the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

Established by the state Constitutional Convention in 1978, OHA is a semi-autonomous state agency mandated to better the conditions of Native Hawaiians. Guided by a board of nine publicly elected trustees, OHA fulfills its mandate through advocacy, research, community engagement, land management and the funding of community programs. Learn more at www.oha.org.

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