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February 24, 2023

TO: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair, and  
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Alice L. Lee  
Council Chair

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 28, 2023; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF  
SB 1609, SD1, RELATING TO NATIVE HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this important measure. The measure's purpose is to provide grants to tax-exempt nonprofit organizations that have experience and expertise in supporting and advancing Native Hawaiian communities.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **support** this measure for the following reasons:

1. This measure would provide support to improving Native Hawaiian communities and culture through various assistance programs, including for historic preservation, business training, entrepreneurship, and mentoring.
2. Supporting organizations that have experience and expertise in supporting and advancing Native Hawaiian communities perpetuates the Hawaiian culture while also encouraging innovation for local businesses and keeping Hawai'i's skilled labor from moving away for better opportunities.
3. This measure advances the following Maui County General Plan objective: "Perpetuate the Hawaiian culture as a vital force in the lives of residents."

For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.