

**TESTIMONY**  
**GM 375**

February 12, 2009

The Honorable Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 228  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: GM 375 Rebecca Alakai, Gubernatorial Nominee  
Natural Area Reserves System Commission, For a Term to Expire 06-30-2013  
Confirmation Hearing Date: Monday, February 16, 2009, 11:00 a.m.

Thank you for your letter dated February 11, 2009 requesting that the following information be submitted to your office regarding the subject confirmation process. My name is Rebecca Alakai and I am honored to be nominated for a second 4-year term on the Natural Area Reserve Commission (NARSC) and would appreciate the opportunity to continue my service to the State of Hawaii.

I have a B.A. in Zoology and M.A. in Geography (Water Resources) from the University of Hawaii. My 10 years of employment as a Water Planner and Resource Management Specialist with the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) brings a broad and practical perspective to the NARSC. I assisted DHHL and the Attorney General's Office in administrative hearings before the Water Commission and Hawaiian Homes Commission. During that time, two cases went to the State Supreme Court regarding precedent setting native Hawaiian water rights that were decided in favor of DHHL. I was very proud to be part of that. Other projects included engineering and drainage plans, rate hikes, residential and commercial property development, forestry and invasive species projects. The opportunities that DHHL gave me brought a wealth of experience in hydrology, law, history, culture, and ecology. I am currently employed as the Senior Planner in the Office of Environmental Quality Control. I foresee no conflict of interest during any future service with the NARSC.

I have represented Water Resources on the NARSC for the last four years and it has been a great experience working with the NARS staff. They are dedicated and passionate about environmental protection and it's been an honor working with them. During this time, we:

- Established new Rules for temporary closures of NARS for the protection of environmental values. These are the first new Rules for NARS in over 15 years. The Rules support enforcement actions in the Ahihi-Kinohiwa Natural Area Reserve, the only Marine Reserve, currently besieged by overuse.
- Passed the Strategic Plan which will guide the future direction of the NARS Program.
- Updated the application and review process for NARS Permits.
- Supported the passage of the Legacy Land Act which resulted in the formation of the Legacy Land Conservation Fund.

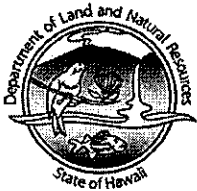
I believe the NARS system has been significantly strengthened by the Commission's activities in the past four years and am proud to have been a part of those activities. Despite the challenging economic situation, it has always been the hope of NARS staff to increase their land inventory. During the next four years, I hope to support staff goals by establishing new NARS areas. I look forward to the opportunity to continue these efforts and respectfully request your confirmation on the NARSC.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Alakai

Enc: Resume of Rebecca Alakai

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of  
LAURA H. THIELEN  
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on  
WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE, AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Monday, February 16, 2009  
11:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of  
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 375 - SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION  
AND CONFIRMATION TO THE NATURAL AREA RESERVE SYSTEM  
COMMISSION, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, REBECCA R. ALAKAI,  
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2013.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports Governor's Message (GM) 375 to reappoint Ms. Rebecca Alakai to the Natural Area Reserves (NARS) System Commission to provide scientific expertise in zoology and with additional expertise in water resources and geography, as well as perspectives on customary and traditional practices to the Commission for a term to expire 6-30-2013. Per the requirements of §195-6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, Ms. Alakai is a resident of O'ahu and possesses scientific qualifications evidenced by a Bachelor of Arts in Zoology and a Masters in Geography with emphasis in water law and policy, from the University of Hawai'i.

Ms. Alakai was a former Planner and Resource Management Specialist with the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. She also served as a Planner with the Office of State Planning for two years, where she reviewed development proposals, keeping in mind cultural and environmental considerations.

The responsibilities of the NARS Commission include advising the Board of Land and Natural Resource and the Governor on matters that have to do with the protection and enhancement of native ecosystems in as unmodified a condition as possible, to review, consider and make recommendations for strengthening the Natural area reserves System, as well as to review and recommend management plans, policies, and permitted uses within the NARS.

Ms. Alakai has served the Commission well and will continue to bring expertise in zoology and with additional expertise in water resources and geography, as well as perspectives on customary and traditional practices. The Department looks forward to continuing to work with her in the future.

RUSSELL Y. TSUJI  
FIRST DEPUTY

KEN C. KAWAHARA  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

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Statement of  
**BEN HENDERSON**

Before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**  
Monday, February 16, 2009  
11:00 a.m.

In consideration of the  
**CONFIRMATION AND REAPPOINTMENT OF  
REBECCA ALAKAI**

**To the Natural Area Reserves System Commission**

Chair Hee, Vice Chair Tokuda, and members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I am pleased to provide testimony as a private citizen in **strong support** of the confirmation and reappointment of **Rebecca Alakai** to the Natural Area Reserves System Commission (NARSC).

In my former positions as Executive Assistant and Deputy Director of the Department of Hawaiian Home Land (DHHL), I had the opportunity to work with Ms. Alakai for 10 years when she was DHHL's Water Planner and Resource Management Specialist. Her 15 years of experience working with public agencies, developers, private organizations, and native Hawaiian water rights advocacy groups was critical to establishing good working relationships and providing recommendations to her Supervisor and the Chairman's Office. Initially, she spent a good portion of her time working with the Attorney General's Office regarding precedent setting native Hawaiian water rights. The decisions before the State Supreme Court were in favor of DHHL. Her knowledge and practical experience working with the myriad of water issues before DHHL will be an asset to the NARSC.

I urge your committee to support Rebecca Alakai's continued work with the NARSC. Mahalo.

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**From:** Segundo, Leslie [lsegundo3@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:20 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony on GM 375

TESTIMONY OF LESLIE SEGUNDO ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 375, NOMINATION OF MRS. REBECCA R. ALAKAI TO THE NATURAL AREA RESERVES SYSTEM COMMISSION BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE, AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, SENATORS CLAYTON HEE (CHAIR) AND JILL TOKUDA (VICE CHAIR), FEBRUARY 16, 2009, AT 1100 HOURS, IN CONFERENCE ROOM 229, STATE CAPITOL

Honorable Senator Hee, Senator Tokuda, and Honorable Member Senators:

I am Leslie Segundo, a colleague of Mrs. Rebecca Alakai in the Office of Environmental Quality Control (OEQC), and the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA) Union Steward (Bargaining Unit 13) for OEQC. I understand that Mrs. Alakai is a current member of the Natural Area Reserves System Commission of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

I stand opposed to the confirmation of my colleague Mrs. Alakai to the Natural Area Reserves System Commission pursuant to Governor's Message 375 for the following reasons:

1. After witnessing various incidents involving Mrs. Alakai, I had alleged to OEQC Director Mrs. Katherine Puana Kealoha that Mrs. Alakai has been insubordinate to the OEQC Director's instructions and directions, thereby disrupting the daily operations of the Office of Environmental Quality Control.
2. Complaints concerning Mrs. Alakai's alleged insubordinate behavior by myself and my colleagues (Mr. Herman Tuiolosega, BU-13, Planner III, and Ms. Aislyn Siangco, BU-03, Secretary II) to Mrs. Katherine Puana Kealoha, Director of Environmental Quality Control have resulted in several referrals for by Director Puana Kealoha for investigation and action to Mrs. Rita Hoopii-Hall, Human Resources Officer for the Department of Health. To date, the Department of Health has yet to investigate and act on Director Puana Kealoha's referrals. The apparent lack of investigatory action on the part of the Department of Health has lead to the formation of a hostile workplace environment where Mrs. Alakai continues to disregard Director Kealoha's instruction and direction.

I believe that appointments to government service, at a minimum require a candidate to possess moral integrity. It is my feeling that Mrs. Alakai's behavior toward her Director evinces a marked lack of such integrity. Director Puana Kealoha has been patient in her dealings with Mrs. Alakai. I have reasons to believe that the reasons behind Mrs. Alakai's behavior derive in part from the fact that she was appointed to her position as Senior Planner for the Office by the former Director of Environmental Quality Control, Mrs. Genevieve Kam Yuk Salmonson, currently the Environmental Ombudsman and Compliance Assistance Officer for the Department of Health's Environmental Health Administration.

I need to disclose here that I have been the object of Mrs. Salmonson's several attempts to terminate my tenure in my position as Environmental Health Specialist III for the Office of Environmental Quality Control. During her tenure, Mrs. Salmonson was unsuccessful at removing me, thanks in large part to the dedicated representation of Mrs. Susan Goya and Ms. Carrie Nakagawa of the HGEA. Thanks to their dedication and example, I was moved to take a more active part in the HGEA as a union steward for OEQC.

Upon her appointment to OEQC as Senior Planner, I have maintained what I thought to be a good rapport between myself and Mrs. Alakai. I had offered her assistance in many areas including professional and union activities. In early 2008, my colleague Mr. Tuiolosega informed me that during a meeting of the Environmental Council at which I was absent, Mrs. Alakai

proceeded to speak disparagingly about myself and my work performance during the course of an open meeting of the Environmental Council. I was shocked.

There are many other instances of Mrs. Alakai's behavior that I can present that would support my observation that the nominee to the Natural Area Reserves System Commission evinces a marked lack of moral integrity, but in the interest of brevity of testimony, I will not detail these instances here.

What is truly disturbing is the apparent lack of action by the Department of Health's Human Resources Officer. This truly deserves scrutiny. When I was charged by former Director Salmonson for insubordination and having pornographic materials (patently untrue and the product of the former Director's imagination) on my work computer, the Human Resources Officer of the Department of Health immediately convened an investigatory panel and commanded my appearance (with my HGEA representative) before it. When my former colleague Mr. Tuiolosega was wrongly accused by a former Secretary of OEQC of threatening a secretary with a knife in 2007, the Department of Health immediately commenced an investigation of Mr. Tuiolosega. Why is it then, that when an employee whose colleagues have complained about insubordinate behavior to a superior is shown favor by the agency whose duty it is to provide personnel and budgetary support services to OEQC? Is it because that employee is "privileged" by serving on a board/commission? Or, is it because the employee has political ties to a former director of OEQC? I would like to think that the Human Resources Officer of the Department of Health has moral integrity and would not be swayed by personal feelings of any kind. I would like to think that the urgency with which the Department of Health acted in the personnel instances cited above involving myself and Mr. Tuiolosega had nothing to do with the color of our skin (brown) or our sex (male). I would like to think that as people living in modern Hawaii, we have learned to disregard racial barriers such as that presented by the Massie-Kahahawai case in the 1930's.

Senators, I oppose the nomination of Mrs. Alakai because I believe that the State of Hawaii needs to carefully examine its potential employees and board and commission members prior to appointment. I oppose the nomination of Mrs. Alakai because the Department of Health has failed to investigate Director Puana Kealoha's referrals to Mrs. Rita Hoopii-Hall. The Department of Health needs to clean its Augean stables. I respectfully request that you recommend that the Senate not issue consent in this gubernatorial appointment. I further request that you recommend that the Senate convene an investigatory panel to examine the actions (or lack thereof) of the Human Resources Officer of the Department of Health. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I would welcome the opportunity to be subpoenaed, if necessary.

Most respectfully,

Leslie Segundo  
LSEGUNDO3@hawaii.rr.com  
(808) 728-8886  
February 15, 2009

Statement of  
**KATHERINE PUANA KEALOHA**

Before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**  
Monday, February 16, 2009  
11:00 a.m.

In consideration of the  
**CONFIRMATION AND REAPPOINTMENT OF  
REBECCA ALAKAI**

**To the Natural Area Reserves System Commission**

Chair Hee, Vice Chair Tokuda, and members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

This is my personal statement indicating **Strong Support** for the confirmation and reappointment of Rebecca Alakai to the Natural Area Reserves System Commission (NARSC).

My acquaintance with Rebecca Alakai is through my official duties as Director of the Office of Environmental Quality Control (OEQC). However, I wish to make it clear that this statement is solely my own and does not have any official sanction of State government.

I have had the pleasure of working with Ms. Alakai for the past year since my appointment as Director of OEQC in 2008. During this time, Ms. Alakai has consistently demonstrated leadership and initiative uncommon to many employees. I'd give her a promotion if I could. Her 15 years of experience working with public agencies, other jurisdictions, developers, private organizations, and environmental advocacy groups is critical to establishing good working relationships and providing recommendations to those navigating through the Chapter 343, HRS Environmental Impact Statement process. Her experience is an asset to the Office and I'm confident she will be an asset to the NARS Commission.

I urge your committee to support Rebecca Alakai's continued work with the NARSC. Mahalo.

**TESTIMONY**  
**GM 375**  
**(END)**