

Representative Mele Carroll, Chair
Representative Maile Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

LATE TESTIMONY

Support HB 1662 Relating to Historic Preservation

Aloha,

My name is Kerri Kahape'a-Aquino and I am in support of H.B. 1662. I am a MSW student at the University of Hawaii, a mother, and a Hawaiian who is advocating for the protection and preservation of ancestral burial sites in place and undisturbed. I believe that the protection and preservation of all Hawaiian cultural sites is a social justice issue that must be addressed. Protection of ancestral and cultural sites both seen and unseen must be supported by the State of Hawai'i. Lava tubes or caves must be protected in its entirety and the State has a responsibility to ensure the preservation of these sacred areas.

I agree with the proposed changes to add the definition of "burial cave" and the proposed amendment to the definition of "burial site". I believe that this will provide for greater protection for the ancestral Native Hawaiians and their burial artifacts. I believe it is the responsibility of the State to insure that all measures are taken to preserve all cultural sites. Many families have already been affected due to development on lands that contain their ancestral 'iwi and better protection needs to be put in place to ensure that burial caves and lava tubes are not desecrated.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Kerri Kahape'a-Aquino