



MUFI HANNEMANN | LES CHANG on Native Hawaiian Issues

Les Chang and I are answering the call of public service at this critical juncture in Hawai'i's history. We both love Hawai'i and feel blessed that we were born and raised here. We have always been proud to say, no matter where we lived or traveled, that Hawaii is home. We want to give back and believe that Hawai'i needs experienced leadership to bring together residents from all communities and backgrounds to address the challenges that face our State. For too long, we have been divided by the agendas of a few. We realize that what makes Hawai'i special is that it has always embraced diversity. It has always welcomed different groups, while holding fast to its local roots and the Hawaiian host culture.

In keeping with this view and in collaboration with the Native Hawaiian community, we want to work together on breaking through political gridlock to find solutions to longstanding issues that are central to the future of Hawai'i.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN NATION-BUILDING EFFORTS

In light of the serious concerns raised by Native Hawaiians during the recent U.S. Department of the Interior hearings, our administration would seriously consider dissolving the Native Hawaiian roll commission as is the authority granted the governor under Act 195 (2011). We would consider placing a two year moratorium on all roll activities and instead support nation-building efforts through a vigorous two year education campaign that works to educate Native Hawaiian communities as well as non-Native Hawaiians, across Hawaii on the various nation building options. We would look to appoint a special advisor on Native Hawaiian governance and resources to my administration to ensure that Native Hawaiians always have the opportunity to be heard directly by my office on these critical issues.

OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

In 2006, Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA) portion of the public land trust was set at an interim amount of \$15.1 million annually, with an expectation that the Legislature

would take further action on the issue to determine how the state should satisfy its constitutional obligations to Native Hawaiians. Recent state agency reporting reflects 20 percent of funds derived from the public land trust are now at least \$30 million annually. My administration would revisit the amount of OHA's pro rata portion of the public land trust to determine how the State should satisfy its constitutional obligations to Native Hawaiians.

At the same time, I am opposed to any development of high rise residential properties in Kakaako makai. My opposition is not that the State conveyed the 30 acres of land as a way to resolve its \$200-million debt to OHA but because there are too many luxury high rise developments in the area. Currently, the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) is the State agency overseeing the development of the Kaka`ako area. After three decades of tentative efforts, HCDA has quickly moved to approve a number of plans that are proving to be controversial because the public is questioning who will most benefit from the commercial development. They are concerned there is not enough affordable housing, open space and beach access as well as anxious about the environment and public safety. Thus, we would be open to listening and supporting alternative proposals from OHA that have been vetted by the community and stakeholders.

We also want to work with the OHA Board of Trustees and its newly appointed director of land and property to find ways to make available more affordable housing as well as homes for middle class families. Since the underlying problem is a supply issue, we believe the State government can play a critical role in facilitating the construction of new homes as well as converting and renovating existing properties into affordable rental units and housing. The State should work with government agencies, including both OHA and Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, private developers and the counties making available government lands, supporting needed infrastructure, and working through the permitting and zoning processes.

HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

As Governor and Lt. Governor, we will provide the necessary leadership to transform the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. The Hawaiian Home Land Commission Act was one of the greatest gifts of Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole to the native Hawaiian people. The purpose of the Act was to set aside 200,000 acres to establish a permanent homeland for his people. For too long it has been too hard for native Hawaiians to reap the benefits of the generous gift. Hawaiians should not have to sue the State of Hawai'i to have the State do right by them.

Our administration will ensure that the Hawaiian homestead beneficiaries are treated fairly and the Trust is secure. We plan to do this through the following steps:

- Appoint trusted and skilled leadership to Department of Hawaiian Home Lands administration and Hawaiian Homes Commission;
- Conduct a management review of Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to ensure efficiency and accountability of its operations;
- Develop a comprehensive legislative package to meet the needs of Department of Hawaiian Home Lands;
- Prioritize placing beneficiaries in housing;
- Work across homestead communities, beneficiaries and stakeholders to leverage resources to develop collaborative solutions; and
- Empower local and regional homestead communities to implement their own initiatives.

As Hawai'i nears the 100th anniversary of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, we are ever more obligated to realize Kūhiō's vision. We are deeply committed to helping this legacy thrive.

HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Countries Samoa and Aotearoa have effectively integrated their native languages into all aspects of their societies. There is no reason why this could not be the case in Hawai'i, especially with Hawaiian an official language of the State and a constitutional mandate for the State to promote the study of Hawaiian culture, history, and language through our public schools.

Similarly, we must work to ensure that State staff and officials have a clear understanding of Native Hawaiian rights, especially as it relates to ancestral and cultural artifacts as well as ceremonial and burial grounds. Thus, my administration strongly supports the continuation of the program that OHA and Ka Huli Ao Hawaiian Law Center offers to state staff and officials regarding such matters. Our administration will work with OHA and Ka Huli Ao to determine which state boards, councils, and commissions this training may be required.

Consistent with this approach, my administration also supports greater funding to the Department of Land and Natural Resources, State Historic Preservation Division and Aha Moku Council. Unfortunately, they have been inadequately funded under the Lingle-Aiona and Abercrombie-Tsutsui administrations, including the past three years when Senator Ige was Chair of Ways and Means.

EDUCATION

Given that there will never be enough resources to address all our educational needs and wants, we must agree on the most critical priorities and stay focused on seeing them through. Budgets and time lines should reflect this. For me, creating hospitable and livable learning environments for children takes precedence, this includes charter schools. Many of our students who find it difficult to learn in traditional classroom settings have blossomed in these learning environments even though they are often underfunded and undercapitalized. It is for this reason that we believe the Department of Education should work with charter schools to identify state buildings and facilities for appropriate usage. For example, the Liliuokalani Elementary School continues to sit empty while charter schools continue to struggle to find and pay for space.

ENVIRONMENT

Finding the balance between new development and protecting our natural resources begins with working with the HCL and existing State and County community development plans. Often time projects run into problems because they seek exemptions from approved plans, zoning and permitting rules.

Also, new development must take into account issues that are of concern to the communities that are being affected. It must also factor in the impact it will have on our natural resources such as our watersheds.

As Honolulu Mayor, I effectively demonstrated the ability to balance growth and our environment. The protection of Waimea Valley from development highlights my ability to bring parties together to protect significant cultural and environmental landscapes in perpetuity from new development. The net result is OHA is the rightful steward of Waimea Valley and I am proud to have played a part in helping to make that happen. I also led similar efforts to keep three parcels of land in Pupukea, Paumalu, and Sunset Ranch protected from development. Such practices require an experienced leader who knows how to work with multiple stakeholder groups and reach workable solutions.