

Ko`olauloa-North Shore Alliance

Widespread Support for the Turtle Bay Resort Initiative

New Network of Organizations Support the Governor's and the Legislature's Plans

The Ko`olauloa-North Shore Alliance is a newly formed umbrella group for dozens of organizations who support the initiative to purchase the undeveloped lands at the Turtle Bay Resort.

Governor Lingle showed true leadership in her State of the State Address when she proposed acquiring these pristine lands. Now that the property is being foreclosed, the State has its best opportunity to help preserve the rural nature of Oahu's North Shore.

We applaud the Senate Water and Land Committee and its chairman Clayton Hee for hearing SB 2423 SD1 today. This bill to purchase the undeveloped parcels of the Turtle Bay Resort shows that Keeping the Country Country is an important, non-partisan issue.

Many important preservation efforts are being conducted throughout the state and we support the right of communities to help shape their own futures. In addition to the invaluable efforts of private citizens and non-profit organizations, the State has played important roles in preserving important lands. Examples include Wao Kele O Puna on Hawaii, Mu`olea Point on Maui and Lumahai Beach on Kauai.

The Governor and the Legislature have no intention of buying and operating the Turtle Bay resort, but rather they are working on viable alternatives to preserve the open space while also supporting the existing hotel operations. The current resort facilities provide valuable jobs to area residents, so finding solutions now, while the property is being foreclosed, is essential.

The plan to develop a large resort on the North Shore goes back decades to a time when sugar production was waning and the development of Waikiki into a profitable tourist destination encouraged plans to replicate that success. The existing hotel opened at Kuilima in 1972 and a plan to dramatically increase the resort was approved in 1986. Much has changed since then, including the rationale for the expansion.

As Oahu's population continues to rise and the number of Oahu visitors exceeds five million per year, the need to preserve open space for relaxation and recreation increases. Maintaining a balance between the urban areas of Honolulu and the rural areas of the North Shore is vital not only for residents, but for the tourism industry as well. Overdevelopment of the entire island must be avoided.

If the State fails to act now that the property is being foreclosed, it might be possible for another developer to come along and build 3500 more resort units 22 years from now, still based on the 1986 approval.

Two-lane Kamehameha Highway cannot support the current volume of traffic, let alone thousands of new cars the expanded resort would generate. Failing to act now may obligate the State to invest billions of dollars later for a new highway to an area that will no longer be rural.

On Oahu, we have seen successful preservation efforts at Waiahole and Waikane Valleys, Sacred Falls, Kaiaka Park, the Ka Iwi Coastline, Waimea Valley and Pupukea-Paumalu. This Turtle Bay initiative is the most complex effort yet, but it will set a great precedent for other important preservation efforts now underway throughout the State of Hawaii.

We proudly support the initiative to preserve the rural character of the North Shore by acquiring and preserving the open spaces of the Turtle Bay Resort.

Ko'olauloa-North Shore Alliance

Beach Access Hawaii
Hawaii State Bodysurfing Association
'Ilio'ulaokalani
Keep the Country Country, Inc.
Keep the North Shore Country
Livable Hawaii Kai Hui
North Shore Community Land Trust
Sierra Club, Hawaii Chapter
Trust for Public Land

Defend Oahu Coalition
Hui Malama O Pupulea Waimea
Kahea
Keep Kahuku Country
Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club
Mokuleia Community Association
Punalu'u Community Association
Surfrider Foundation, Oahu Chapter
Waiahole-Waikane Community Association

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