

For Immediate Release: July 14, 2019

Press Release by: Councilmember Tamara Paltin

**COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN ISSUES URGENT APPEAL TO UH
PRESIDENT TO STAND DOWN ON TMT DUE TO INVALIDITY OF UH'S
GENERAL LEASE AND SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL
LAW**

WAILUKU, Hawaii – In an urgent plea, Maui County Councilmember Tamara Paltin announced that she has asked University of Hawaii President David Lassner to put a hold on moving forward with the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope (“TMT”) planned for the summit of Mauna Kea.

Paltin issued a letter of inquiry to President Lassner on Friday, July 12th in response to Governor Ige’s news conference last week announcing that construction would begin next week on July 15th. In her letter Paltin expressed “grave concerns for the safety of Maui County’s residents and all individuals mobilizing to access and assemble atop Mauna Kea.”

It is anticipated that kupuna to keiki and all ages in between from all islands will be present to exercise traditional Native Hawaiian cultural and religious access, as well as protest the construction of the TMT. With emotions high, extreme weather conditions, law enforcement presence and talk of the potential deployment of LRAD (Long-Range Acoustic Hailing Devices) for crowd control, Councilmember Paltin fears for the safety and protection of all who will be present on the summit.

Councilmember Paltin sought out insight from Dr. Keanu Sai who has served as a resource for and provided training presentations to the Council’s Planning and Sustainable Land Use Committee, of which Paltin chairs, concerning the proposed construction of the TMT on the summit of Mauna Kea, in light of the ahupua`a of Ka`ohe being so-called ceded lands.

Paltin’s letter reiterates Dr. Sai’s focus on three topics underlying the proposed TMT construction: the invalidity of General Lease No. S-4191 between the State of Hawai`i Board of Land and Natural Resources, as the lessor, and the University of Hawai`i, as the lessee; the war crime of destruction of property on the summit of Mauna Kea by the previous telescopes; and the third topic of native tenant rights within the ahupua`a of Ka`ohe, and describes Dr. Sai’s response as “quite illuminating to say the least.”

Councilmember Paltin requested that President Lassner have the University's legal counsel review Dr. Sai's assessment of the situation, and stated that, "this is not a political issue, but an issue of the rule of law, which is foundational, and for our communities throughout the islands to have confidence that the State of Hawai'i officials, to include the Counties, believe in and abide by."

A full copy of Councilmember Tamara Paltin's letter to UH President Lassner can be located at mauicounty.us/paltin/.

For more information, please contact Councilmember Paltin's office.

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