

October 13, 2008

President George Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush,

On behalf of the Aha Ki'ole Advisory Committee, of the State of Hawaii, we strongly oppose the establishment of a national marine monument in the three islands north of Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The Aha Ki'ole Advisory Committee was created when the Hawaii State Legislature unanimously passed Senate Bill 1853, a Bill that created the Aha Moku System – a natural resource ecosystem management process in Hawai'i that integrates empirical knowledge into current land and ocean-use policies. This Act was written by almost 100 Native Hawaiian ocean and land resource practitioners representing the forty (40) traditional land districts in the State of Hawaii. It encompasses all of the main Hawaiian Islands. Governor Lingle signed this Bill into law in June 2007, thus creating Act 212.

The Native Hawaiian communities have followed the progress of the Pew Foundation's attempts to establish another national marine monument in CNMI with anger, trepidation, and despair. These strong and passionate emotions are universally felt by Hawaiians whenever the word "Papahānaumokuākea" is mentioned. This is the name your administration picked for our islands. When you created the national marine monument of the Northwest Hawaiian Islands, it was done without the participation of the Native Hawaiian people. Except for a handful of people, Hawaiians did not know that the Pew Foundation was planning to take three-fourths of Hawaiian lands and make it into a monument. Hawaiians found out by reading the newspaper after the fact – just like everyone else. But, Hawaiians are not "everyone else" – they are the indigenous people of Hawaii and this monument was considered a "taking" by the Bush Administration.

We ask that you not compound your grave mistake with Hawaii by creating another monument in CNMI against the wishes of their people. The indigenous people of the Northern Marianas need protection for their heritage. All of the elected officials of the Mariana's, including Governor Ben Fitial, Senate President Peter Reyes, Speaker of the House Arnold Palacios and all four mayors of the CNMI emphatically said "NO" to the establishment of this monument. As leaders elected by the people to represent them, why will you not listen to them?

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The Aha Ki'ole is an Advisory Committee established by Act 212 of the 2007 Hawaii State Legislature
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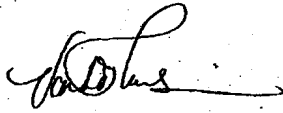
The actions of the Pew Foundation reflected by the actions of your Administration show that there is no consideration for the indigenous people of CNMI – any more than there was any consideration for the Native Hawaiians. Native people do not have a voice with you or your administration.

Have you even realized that your actions have taken away a huge part of the Hawaiian culture and heritage, and now will take an integral part of the CNMI culture away from the native people – with no hope of ever getting this part of their heritage back? Another pacific island culture forever changed by the actions of a different culture too far away to even understand the ramifications of their actions.

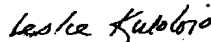
The trust of the Hawaiian people in you and your administration, as well in the Republican Party has been irrevocably broken by the taking of the Northwest Hawaiian Islands. You are breaking the trust of the native people of the Northern Marianas.

We urge you, President Bush, to please listen to the people of CNMI – as you never listened to the Native Hawaiians. We will forever mourn the loss of our north western islands. Please do not inflict this heartbreak and rage on another pacific culture.

Respectfully yours,



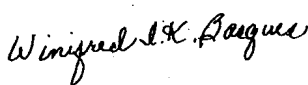
Vanda Hanakahi, Chair
Kiolo, Moloka'i



Les Kulolio, Vice-Chair
Kiolo, Kahoolawe



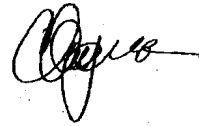
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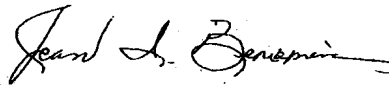
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