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October 8, 2025

Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources
Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW)
Attention: Habitat Conservation Planning
1151 Punchbowl Street, Room 325
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: KAUA'I ISLAND UTILITY COOPERATIVE SECOND DRAFT HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN (HCP)

I am writing as an individual Councilmember and as Council Chair of the Kauai County Council to express my strong support for the Kauai Island Utility Cooperative's (KIUC) Second Draft Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), currently under review by the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW).

KIUC's Draft HCP reflects a proactive and scientifically grounded effort to address the impacts of necessary utility operations on federally and state-listed threatened and endangered species. These species are integral to Kauai's native ecosystem, and their protection is a shared responsibility that requires coordinated action from both public and private sectors. This second draft addresses comments from the public and Endangered Species Recovery Committee, and multiple sets of comments from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and DOFAW.

The Cooperative's proposed mitigation strategies – such as predator control, colony enhancement, light attraction minimization, and habitat restoration – demonstrate a sincere commitment to both conservation and compliance with state and federal law. These measures will help stabilize and recover imperiled seabird populations while enabling KIUC to continue delivering essential electrical services to the people of Kauai.

As a government official committed to the sustainability of Hawaii's natural and built environments, I commend KIUC's efforts to engage in transparent planning, community consultation, and meaningful environmental stewardship. The Draft HCP represents a significant and commendable step toward balancing infrastructure resilience with biodiversity protection on Kauai. As reflected, KIUC has demonstrated a strong commitment to conservation of these species by implementing a majority of the HCP prior to it being finalized and approved, and by the significant amount of powerline minimization that can be seen on powerlines across the island.

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR KAUA'I ISLAND UTILITY COOPERATIVE SECOND
DRAFT HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN (HCP)

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I respectfully urge DOFAW to continue its support for this important initiative and to work toward the timely approval of KIUC's final HCP. Your leadership in this process is critical to ensuring that Kaua'i's native species and human communities can thrive together for generations to come.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to conservation and for allowing me to provide testimony in support of KIUC's Second Draft HCP. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 241-4188.

Sincerely,



MEL RAPOZO

Council Chair, Kaua'i County Council

LMY: