Sent to Council Member Mike Molina at mike.molina@mauicounty.us

Aloha Council Member Mike Molina,

I am a native Hawaiian artist currently living on O'ahu.  The increase of difficulty to survive where my kupuna have resided for thousands of years, feeling priced out, opted out, overlooked and held at bay, by institutions meant to protect and support descendants like me, parallels the steady exploitation and destruction of Hawai'i.

As the military and tourism maintain strong foundational economies on the homeland of Hawaiians, we are still treated as second class citizens.  Treated like a topic of interest for visitors and occupiers.  Actors in the fairy tale that Hawai'i is a willing partner of the Republic.  Still not acknowledged as a nationality with the right to self governance and self determination.

My work brings me in direct contact with tourism, my discussions about this glaring issue usually come directly from the tourist.  It is an obvious, evidential observation.  Visitors whether temporary or permanent, can see the difference between the communities, that homesteads often resemble a native American reservation.  This is no coincidence.  Our culture has been hijacked and turned into entertainment value.  While reality keeps us in a state of invisibility, pushed off to exist in the background.  Visitors are aware of the disparaging and visible aftershock of colonization, and there's a real guilt felt by many.

 Indigenous and aboriginal people who were thriving before colonization, can only find a real identity and place within that occupation as a nationality, with the legal protection to self determination and self governance.  Official apologies and piecemeal groups meant to aid and abet struggling Hawaiians are not designed to work, but to continually subjugate us as second class citizens.

We are Hawai'i. Why is the state failing to acknowledge that this is our homeland, and that we as descendants have to be invited to sit at the table, as a nationality protected with the rights for self determination and self governance, as lawful restitution for correcting history, for the sake of Hawai'i.  Please recognize this.

I'm asking you to support a resolution urging The Native Hawaiian Convention to convene a working group to create Hawaiian Nationality, as a protected class for purposes of Hawaii's anti-discrimination laws (GET 58)

Me ka mahalo nui,

**Haunani Hess**

**Visual Artist**

**haunanihess.com**