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March 11, 2019

Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
Representative Chris Todd, Vice Chair  
Committee on Water, Land, and Hawaiian Affairs

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Todd, and Committee Members:

**RE: SB 914, SD2 Relating to Land Development**

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on SB 914, SD2 and the Waiakea Peninsula in Hilo, Hawai'i.

Simply stated, we support any legislation that will help the revitalization of Banyan Drive and the rest of the Waiakea Peninsula. Virtually everyone familiar with this area agrees that it is underutilized and in disrepair. It is the center of tourism in East Hawai'i, but it is a jewel that is quite tarnished at the present time.

Hawai'i County has taken first steps toward revitalizing the peninsula. The administration, Council, community, and Big Island legislators have found common purpose; the redevelopment area has been defined; the Banyan Drive Hawai'i Redevelopment Agency (BDHRA) is functioning, and a conceptual master plan has been created as a starting point. Now funds are needed to conduct the environmental impact statements necessary to complete the redevelopment plan and move forward.

The Hawai'i County budget is severely strapped, and I have already had to impose increases in our property, fuel, and vehicle weight taxes. Therefore, I am hoping the State will provide funds for the EIS. We believe that it is just and proper to ask the State to share in the EIS expense, given that the redevelopment area consists almost entirely of State land. It will be difficult for the County to find the matching funds, so I would ask you to be as generous as you can.

There may be other paths forward that build on work already done, and we do not want to risk having this Legislature take no action at all. Therefore, we will support any measure that directs resources, both statutorily and financially, toward the redevelopment of Banyan Drive.

I hope you will act favorably on SB 914, SD2.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Kim  
MAYOR