



## Office of the Senate President

STATE CAPITOL  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

June 16, 2016

Aloha

I wanted to take this opportunity to give you an update on President Barack Obama's proposed expansion of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (hereinafter referred to as "Monument") through exercise of the Antiquities Act. The Antiquities Act allows "the President, in his discretion, to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated upon lands owned or controlled by the Government of the United States to be national monuments, and to reserve as a part thereof parcels of land, the limits of which in all cases shall be confined to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected".

The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Marine National Monument was established on June 15, 2006 by Presidential Proclamation 8031 and was officially designated as the aforementioned Monument in 2007. Currently, the Monument designates nearly 140,000 square miles as a protected marine area. The Monument overlays the fifty nautical mile Protective Species Zone of the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council.

At the time the concept of expanding the Monument was raised in late January of this year, many Kauai residents informed me that they were very concerned about the proposed expansion and its effects on their ability to continue fishing in the area above Kauai and Niihau. I also heard from numerous Kauai constituents that they were in favor of expanding the Monument to foster a large, protected marine reserve and sanctuary.

In an attempt to reach a balance between fishing interests and environmental, historical and scientific interests relating to the proposed Monument expansion, I had meetings with the proponents of the Monument expansion, facilitated a meeting between fishermen and the Monument expansion proponents, sent a letter to President Obama requesting that any proposed expansion be limited to the "smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected" (as required by the Antiquities Act), and met with federal government agency representatives and Hawaii congressional representatives on several occasions, expressing that the Monument expansion should take residents' fishing interests into consideration and to request that at least one meeting be held on Kauai.

I recently received the first proposed expansion map for the Monument from Senator Brian Schatz's Chief of Staff, Andrew Winer. The blue outline is the current Monument and the red outline shows the proposed Monument expansion. (A copy of this map is enclosed for your review.) In reviewing the proposed Monument expansion, it is clear that residents' concerns were taken into account as the bottom portion of the proposed Monument expansion carves out areas frequented by Kauai fishermen, while expanding the rest of the Monument addresses purported environmental, scientific and historical concerns, including a large, strongly protected marine reserve and sanctuary that would be more resilient to climate change in hopes of mitigating the impacts of global warming.

This is a promising starting point as federal officials have further informed me that they will have at least two meetings in Hawaii, with one of them being held on Kauai to receive input and comment. After these two meetings in Hawaii and review of comments and input from Hawaii residents, further discussion will take place relating to the proposed Monument expansion.

Thank you for your support and efforts and if there are any questions with regard to the foregoing, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



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RONALD D. KOUCHI  
Senate President  
8<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District – Kauai and Niihau