Hot Topics at the 2017 Legislature: What’s in Store for Native Hawaiians

On January 18, 2017, the 29th Hawaiʻi State Legislature convened. In a session that will run through early May, thousands of bills were introduced and are embarking on a long process with the potential to become law. Come to learn more about both the legislative process and how you can engage. Our panelists will also share their insider perspectives on major issues impacting the Kānaka Maoli community this session.

Representative Kaniela Ing
Representative Ing was born and raised on Maui and was elected to serve the 11th House District (South Maui: Kihei, Wailea, Makena) in 2012. He chairs the House Committee on Ocean, Marine Resources, and Hawaiian Affairs and serves on other committees with the kuleana of reviewing bills that directly impact the Kānaka Maoli community and the resources upon which our culture depends. Representative Ing is the youngest member of the State Legislature and, thus, looks intently to Hawaiʻi’s future in his policy-making. He is a proud graduate of the Kamehameha Schools Maui, the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa, and American University in Washington D.C.

Marti Townsend
Marti became the Director for the Sierra Club of Hawaiʻi in June 2015. She previously served as Executive Director of The Outdoor Circle, and also as Program Director and interim Executive Director for KAHEA: The Hawaiian-Environmental Alliance, where she helped establish the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and litigate the case against construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope, among other accomplishments. A proud graduate of this Law School, Marti played an integral role in advocating for the law establishing Hawaiʻi’s Environmental Court.

Wayne Chung Tanaka
Wayne is a Public Policy Advocate at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, where he develops policy recommendations and advocates for the protection of cultural practices and nearshore marine and fresh water resources throughout Hawaiʻi nei. He is a board member for the Conservation Council for Hawaiʻi, as well as the Advocates for Public Interest Law Community Board. Wayne co-authored the Konohiki Fishing Rights and Papahānaumokuākea chapters in Native Hawaiian Law: A Treatise and is a proud graduate of this Law School.

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