



HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 2, 2013

**Legislature Passes \$9.6 Million for DHHL Operations,
Largest General Funds Appropriation In Department's History**

First appropriation of general funds for the state agency since 2010

KAPOLEI, HAWAI'I — The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) today received critical legislative support for a new FY 2014 operating budget which includes \$9.6 million of general funds for administrative and operating costs, allowing the trust fund and other revenues generated by the Department that currently fund department operational expenses to now be made available for the future development of Hawaiian Homestead projects and programs.

The Legislature's important decision and action comes in light of the May 2012 Hawai'i Supreme Court ruling in *Nelson v. Hawaiian Homes Commission* that affirmed the Intermediate Court of Appeals judgment, which opined that a determination could be made for what constituted "sufficient sums" for DHHL's administrative and operating expenses to carry out the purposes of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. The case is still ongoing and the definition of what is "sufficient sums" for DHHL's administrative and operating expenses is still to be judicially determined.

The department has experienced an exponential increase in its daily workload over time, while state funds supporting these expenses have been limited or non-existent. The department last received General Funds for operations in FY 2010. Prior to that, DHHL had received appropriations up to \$1 million per year, with the highest previous amount, \$3.5 million, appropriated during the administration of Gov. John Waihe'e.

"Our appreciation goes out to Gov. Neil Abercrombie for his steadfast leadership, and to the State Legislature for engaging in the discussion of what is 'sufficient' funding to administer and operate the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands," said Jobie Masagatani, Chair of the Hawaiian Homes Commission and Director of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. "In addition to Gov. Abercrombie, we would also like to recognize and thank Senator Brickwood Galuteria and Representative Faye Hanohano for their unwavering support of Hawaiian programs, Senator David Ige and Representative Sylvia Luke and the members of the Senate and House money committees for providing us with much needed general funds, and Senator Michele Kidani and Representatives Ty Cullen, Ken Ito, Sharon Har, and Mele Carroll for their support of our program, our beneficiaries and our mission."

Concluded Masagatani, “We look forward to continuing this important conversation and dialog in working with the Legislature in the coming years toward furthering our efforts to obtain “sufficient” funds essential to revitalizing our programs, increasing development on homestead projects, and placing more native Hawaiian families onto Hawaiian home lands.”

The Legislature’s appropriation of \$9.6 million, while more than any previous appropriation, was less than the request of \$14.68 million for DHHL that Gov. Abercrombie submitted in the Executive Budget on December 17, 2012 or the nearly \$26 million that the Hawaiian Homes Commission and the department had developed and proposed to “sufficiently” cover administrative and operating costs in response to the *Nelson v. HHC*.

The \$23.9 billion biennium budget now goes to Gov. Abercrombie for final approval.

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