Note 1

PONO – The Original Constitution for the Hawaiian Nation is very simply stated. Pono. It is not a written document, it is the enduring words from the father of Hawaii, King Kamehameha, when on his death bed and asked, what are his last words for his people said, “E na`i wale nō `oukou, i ku`u pono `a`ole pau, i ke kumu pono `o Hawai`i, e mau ke ea o ka `āina I ka pono.” Portions of this statement was borrowed and included in Kauikeaouli’s address upon the restoration of the government in which he stated, “Ua mau ke ea o ka `āina I ka pono.” It is the engraved motto of our Hawaiian nation and borrowed by the territorial and State governments which have subsequently controlled Hawai`i.

Hawai`i’s various written constitutions from the Lua`ehu Constitution of 1839 to the present State of Hawaii Constitution, are amendments to the central and deep constitution of Hawai`i. They are merely expressions of the governing body - of how the government is to operate, given its circumstances at the time. However, in all of this, Pono persists.

The next written constitution of Hawaii must contain pono as its most important focus. It must give the enduring guidance for all aspects of Hawaii’s life, beaconing us all to the values of `olu`olu, lokahi, and aloha – O.L.A.