

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF BUILDING THE THIRTY METER TELESCOPE (TMT) ON MAUNA KEA

WHEREAS, Hawai‘i’s economy has been significantly impacted by the current COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, construction projects like TMT will lead the way out of the economic crisis before the visitor industry can get back to some kind of normalcy; and

WHEREAS, the State has pushed for diversifying our local economy to wean us off of our overdependence on tourism and to help offset severe economic downturns, exactly like the one currently being experienced as a result of COVID-19 induced lockdowns; and

WHEREAS, TMT is shovel-ready, and over the 10-year construction period will create approximately 300 local jobs that will put Hawaiian citizens back to work, building their self-confidence and reducing their reliance on government bailout funds that will need to be repaid by the future taxes of our keiki; and

WHEREAS, 20 to 30 percent of TMT’s construction budget, currently estimated at \$2.4 billion, will be spent on Hawai‘i Island; and

WHEREAS, once completed, TMT will expend approximately \$50 million in observatory operations and employ approximately 140 telescope employees; and

WHEREAS, building TMT in Hawai‘i will make the University of Hawai‘i one of the premier Universities in the world for the study of astronomy, opening up the opportunity for billions of research dollars to be funneled to the University of Hawai‘i, benefitting Hawai‘i’s citizens, taxpayers, and students; and

WHEREAS, Mauna Kea is the ideal location for the TMT because it is uniquely situated above approximately 40 percent of Earth’s atmosphere, and it has a climate that is particularly stable, dry, and cold, all of which are important characteristics for capturing the sharpest images and producing the best science; and

WHEREAS, on October 30, 2018, the Supreme Court of the State of Hawai‘i validated TMT’s right to proceed, with construction, after over 10 years of due process; and

WHEREAS, TMT will pay \$1 million a year in rent annually, \$800,000 of which will contribute to the operations of the Office of Mauna Kea Management, and \$200,000 of which will go to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, making TMT the only telescope on Mauna Kea paying more than \$1 in rent per year, thereby providing significant benefits to the taxpayers of Hawai‘i; and

WHEREAS, TMT makes an annual \$1 million contribution to The Hawai‘i Island New Knowledge (THINK) fund to assist Hawai‘i students in mastering STEM subjects to prepare for higher paying science and technology careers; and

WHEREAS, as of 2020 Hawaiian students, teachers, and families have benefitted from over \$5.5 million TMT donations to the THINK funds administered by the Hawai‘i Community Foundation and the Pauahi Foundation; and

WHEREAS, there is a direct line from the ancient celestial navigators that found Hawai‘i to the study of the stars that will be enabled by TMT, making Hawai‘i the ideal location to further the unity of culture and science; and

WHEREAS, scientific polling has consistently shown the vast majority of Hawai‘i’s citizens support TMT, including a poll taken right before the start of the current COVID-19 lockdowns; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, that the Hawai‘i Republican Party in virtual convention on 25 July 2020, that Hawai‘i Republicans most strongly urge the Governor of the State of Hawai‘i and the Board of the Thirty Meter Telescope International Observatory to take necessary measures to begin construction of TMT.

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be posted on the Hawai‘i Republican Party website, transmitted to the Governor of the State of Hawai‘i; members of the Hawai‘i State Legislature and the Mayors of all Hawai‘i Counties.