

More to the Story

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii (GRIH) is the neo-conservative group that seeks to eliminate the distinct U.S. Constitution-based status and rights of indigenous people. Once this group dispatches Hawaiians, GRIH and its right-wing partners on the continental U.S. will move on to extinguish the rights of American Indians and Alaska Natives. The next item on their agenda: kill off minority programs and affirmative action.

That's the background missing from the *Weekly* profile ("A likely Story," 9/17) about Texas resident Jamie Story, who arrived here six months ago as president of GRIH. Ms. Story takes over an organization with a history of conducting skewed "push" polls and scaring everyone into erroneously thinking if the Akaka bill becomes law, non-

Hawaiians will be kicked off their land, the state will secede from the nation and casinos will come to our shores.

Under Story's watch, this group is now hiring additional staff and conducting research that leads to irrational conclusions. Latest case in point...the GRIH "Good News" study claiming that Native Hawaiians are "as prosperous as everyone else."

Ms. Story should forward her "good news" press release to the disproportionate number of homeless and incarcerated Hawaiians and those with medical problems. She should read the noted Dr. Seiji Naya's recent report titled "Income Distribution and Poverty Alleviation for the Native Hawaiian Community." The report finds a "staggering number" of Native Hawaiians living under the poverty level.

After reading that report, we suggest Ms. Story then take a Hawaiian history class.

In the *Weekly's* profile, Story says the Office of Hawaiian Affairs "would not be in operation" if there wasn't a perception that Native Hawaiians are not doing as well as their neighbors.

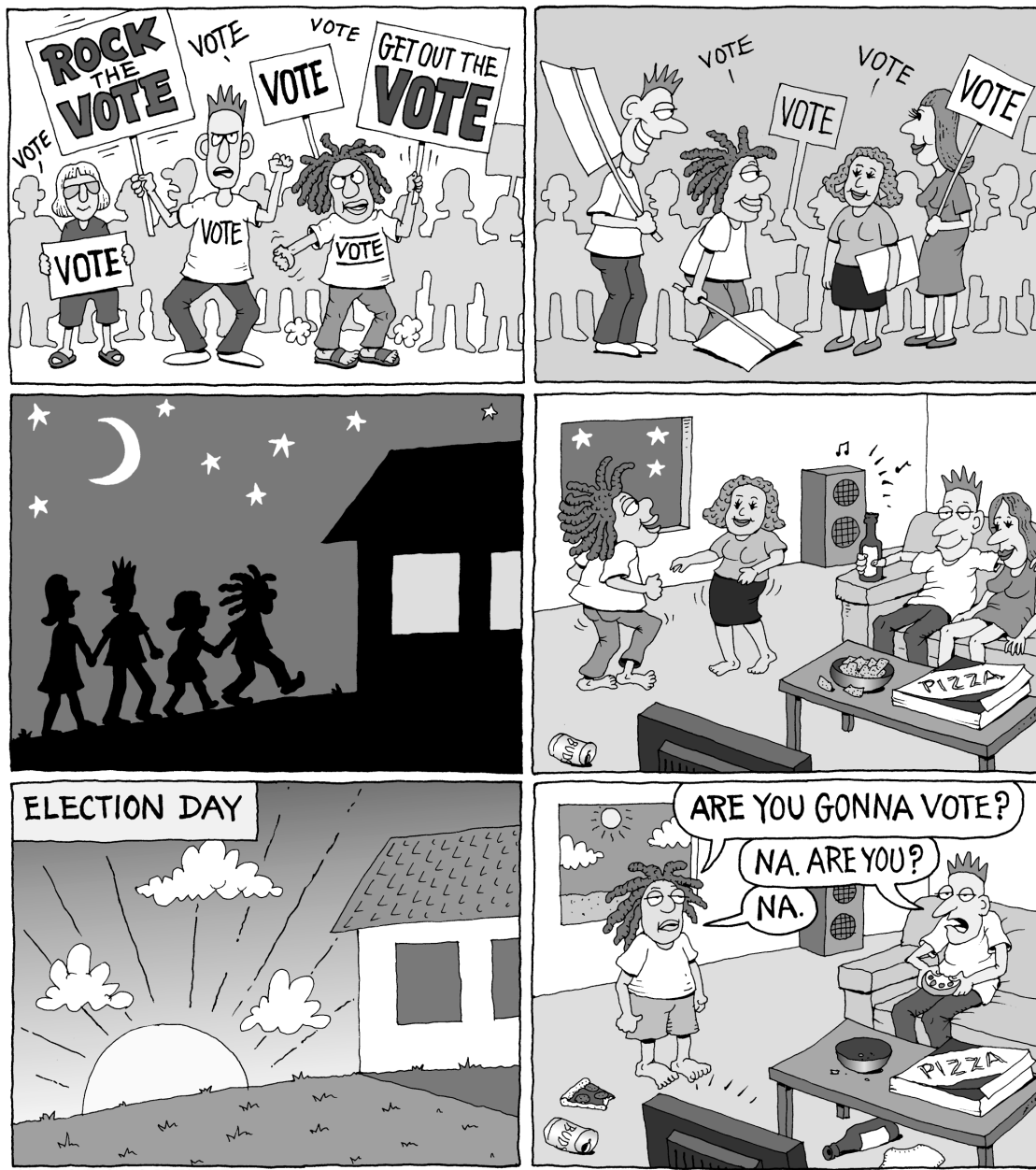
Not be in operation? Is she aware that the people of Hawai'i voted in 1978 to amend the State Constitution to assure that the federal policy of the rights of America's native people to self-determination and self-governance would be extended to Native Hawaiians? Is she aware that Native Hawaiians were members of a sovereign nation when in 1893 their kingdom was illegally overthrown with U.S. government support? Is she aware that one hundred years later Congress apologized and promised a process of reconciliation? Is she aware that OHA is designed to sunset once a new governing entity is formed to finally correct this historic injustice? Is she aware that indigenous peoples (American Indians and Alaska Natives) are currently recognized as a political class of people by the federal government and Native Hawaiians are asking that they be given fair and equal treatment?

We doubt that, because the "experts" she takes advice from are constantly and erroneously crying "race-based" and making a good living going to court in an attempt to take down programs that assist Hawaiians.

William Burgess is one of the leading litigators against Hawaiians. He is GRIH counsel and also got himself appointed to the Hawai'i State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. It was part of a national attempt to overturn the committee's prior support of the Akaka bill. Plaintiffs in Burgess' lawsuits along with members of the GRIH "board of scholars" were members of the local civil rights committee.

They failed in that attempt. But they are undaunted. They rely on a right-wing blog whose editor co-founded GRIH. They have in their arsenal those who donate big bucks without public exposure through a host of "non-profit" 501(c)(3) organizations that are opposed to native, racial and gender equality.

Bottom line, GRIH and the cabal of right-wing groups will continue to attack the programs that help the sickest, poorest and least educated in our state. If successful, they will



COPYRIGHT JOHN S. PRITCHETT

HONOLULU Weekly

Vol. 18, No. 42  
October 15-21, 2008

Our Mission:

To create a high-quality, profitable weekly O'ahu newspaper that provides its readers with independent, entertaining, provocative coverage examining local issues, arts and events in a visually striking format.

- Publisher** Laurie V. Carlson
- Editor** Ragnar Carlson
- Managing Editor** Adrienne LaFrance
- Arts & Entertainment Editor** Dean Carrico
- Calendar Editor** Margot Seeto
- Film Critic** Bob Green
- Staff Writer** Daniel Lee Floren
- Editorial Intern** Jade Ballard
- Contributing Writers** Nina Buck, Joan Conrow, Becky Maltby, Matthew Martin, Marcia Morse, Megan Rooney, Ryan Senaga, Leanne T. Sims, Steve Wagenseller, Kevin Whitton, Kalani Wilhelm, Jamie Winpenny
- Director of New Media & Production** Joe Edmon
- Production Manager** Manny Pangilinan
- Production Assistant** Darby Murphy
- Contributing Photographers** Malia Leinau, Justin Leong
- Cartoonists & Illustrators** Max Cannon, Lloyd Dangle, John Pritchett, Slug Signorino, Tom Tomorrow
- Sales & Marketing Manager** Laurie V. Carlson
- Senior Account Executive** Colleen Knudsen
- Account Executives** Ilma Anikow, Nicole Franco
- Promotions Manager** Nicole Franco
- Classifieds Coordinator** Ilma Anikow
- Classifieds Account Executive** Nick Baca, Lance Motogawa, Laura Quintal
- Distribution Manager** Kate Paine
- Bookkeeper** Pamela Farris, Bob Brooks
- Publisher's Assistant** Avery Keatley

Cover: Photograph by Chock Chong, Bishop Museum. Digital coloring by Joe Edmon.

ISSN #1057-414X  
Entire contents © 2008 by Honolulu Weekly Inc. All rights reserved.

Manuscripts should be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope: Honolulu Weekly assumes no responsibility for unsolicited material. Honolulu Weekly is available free of charge, limited to one copy per reader. Additional copies may be purchased at our office. No person may, without permission of Honolulu Weekly, take more than one copy of each Honolulu Weekly issue.



www.honoluluweekly.com

Phone: (808) 528-1475  
Fax: (808) 528-3144  
Classifieds: (808) 534-7024

editorial@honoluluweekly.com  
sales@honoluluweekly.com  
classifieds@honoluluweekly.com

succeed in hurting not just Hawaiians, but by extension every resident in our state.

That's the true story behind the Grassroot Institute of Hawaii.

*Hauani Apoliona  
Chairperson  
Board of Trustees  
Office of Hawaiian Affairs*

Wooley itch

Generations of my family have fought to protect the rural character of Windward O'ahu. "Keep the Country Country" was more than just a bumper sticker slogan in our household—it was a battle call to defend Ko'olau Loa from outside developers that sought to turn a quick buck at the expense of our unique environmental and cultural heritage. Thousands of local people joined the battle at Waiāhole-Waikāne and other sites, diverting massive urban development away from the narrow and environmentally fragile Windward coast.

It pains me, then, to see the *Honolulu Advertiser* endorse a pro-corporate, anti-environmentalist Republican for State House District 47 (He'eia-Lā'ie). Pro-Bush incumbent Colleen Meyer has done little to help stop the march of urbanization that still threatens the rich valleys and farmlands of Ko'olau Loa, and even less for the working families living there. The out-of-touch Meyer even disputes the science on global warming, parroting George W. Bush's ridiculous claim that there's no proof human activities are at fault.

With Meyer's disrespect for the generations-long struggle to Keep the Country Country, and her profit-induced refusal to "Keep the Earth

Earth," we can not afford to send her back to the Legislature for two more years of do-nothing-ism.

Friends and family, please elect Democrat Jessica Wooley to continue the struggle to preserve Ko'olau Loa!

*Patrick J. De Costa, Jr.  
Waipahu*

Rail not green

The rail our city is proposing will be a public service. It will operate 20 hours per day. Each station will require electric escalators and elevators that will also operate 20 hours per day. There are no express trains. Each train will stop at every stop. Each train will have to consume electricity continuously for 20 hours.

Even if we assume rush hour morning and evening add up to eight hours total, there are still 12 hours of non-rush hour time that the train will run continuously in both directions.

The department of energy data on the energy efficiencies of rail in different cities describes a range of energy consumption from very low in cities like New York, to very high in cities like Cleveland. Will our proposed rail have ridership numbers like New York? Do we want Waipahu and Kapolei to look like New York?

According to the Department of Energy, only rail in cities like New York, Atlanta and Oakland, is more energy efficient than the average car. Rail in Cleveland, Philadelphia, Boston, Miami, and Chicago is less energy efficient than the average car.

It sounds counter-intuitive that the average car uses less energy

than rail in cities like Boston and Chicago. However, the numbers are clear. In 20 years, rail will use the same amount of energy it does today. In 20 years our cars will use less energy.

As we have learned from the City engineers, rail will result in traffic congestion that is much worse than it is today. This will result in more wasted fuel.

If we are truly concerned about the carbon footprint of different types of mass transit, the proposed rail is a step in the wrong direction.

*John Brizdle  
Honolulu*

Correction

A 2005 story about the rejuvenation of Hotel Street ("Raising Hotel," 6/15/05), described the area as "harmless...even at 2AM." While vastly less dangerous than was once the case, the Hotel Street area cannot—and could not in 2005—accurately be described as "harmless," particularly at 2AM. *Honolulu Weekly* regrets the error.

*We love to get letters and print as many as space allows. Letters often are edited for length and clarity. Letters should be signed with the writer's full name and their town or city and state, as well as phone number for confirmation only.*

WRITE TO: *Letters to the Editor*, Honolulu Weekly, 1111 Fort Street Mall, Honolulu, HI, 96813. Fax to 528-3144 or e-mail to editorial@honoluluweekly.com.