

Presentation Before the Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations

State Capitol, Room 229

March 06, 2008, 1:15 P.M.

Hawai'i Tourism Authority – Board of Directors

By Leon D. Yoshida

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kim and members of the Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations, thank you for the opportunity to come before you to seek your support and consideration for my re-confirmation to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Board of Directors for another term commencing July 2008 – June 2012.

I was born in Tokyo, Japan and moved to Hawaii with my family when I was eight years old. I attended Liliuokalani, Jefferson and Kailua Elementary Schools and graduated from Waiialua High & Intermediate School. I have worked in the visitor industry for 36 years; of which 18 years were in sales and marketing with the hotel industry and remainder of the other 18 years as a marketing consultant and as President and CEO for a Japanese in-bound travel company.

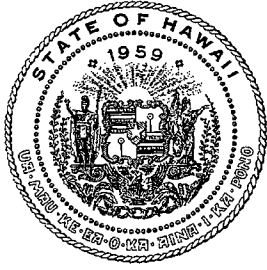
I am completing a three year term on the board of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority and have found it a humbling experience to deal with the many issues and challenges that come before the board. Although Hawai'i's economy and the visitor industry went through some of the healthier years during my first term, I envision a more turbulent and difficult time ahead beginning from April 2008 and into 2009.

I believe that some of the key issues that the Hawai'i Tourism Authority will need to focus on in 2008 and beyond will be:

1. Improving access for travel from Japan due to the decline in air seats on regular flights to Hawai'i. After losing many regional flights in the previous years through JAL as well as UAL direct flights from Osaka last October, we face yet another loss of a regular flight by Continental out of Nagoya from the 1st of next month. This will be compounded by a decrease of 100 seats by China Airlines when they covert their aircraft from current 747 to Airbus 300 as well as a decrease of wholesalers annual block by ANA. This combined loss of air seats means reduced opportunity for the wholesalers to sell tour packages to Hawai'i.
2. Addressing the workforce issues facing the hospitality industry. First, Hawai'i's unemployment rate rests at one of the lowest in the nation so there is a corresponding shortage of workers in the hospitality industry. There is also a looming problem with a shortage of adequate bilingual speaking workers who are capable of communicating in proper honorific form in Japanese, Korean, and Chinese. Most of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th generations born and living in Hawai'i are not capable of speaking in proper form to service the high-end visitors that visit Hawaii. Finally, as indicated by customer surveys, there is a growing decline in the quality of service at hotels, restaurants, retail stores, transportation companies, tours and activities by the current workforce.

There are many other issues that are important to managing Hawai'i's tourism industry. I feel that my 36 years of experience in Hawai'i's visitor industry as well as my dedication to the industry and the community will help the board as it looks for solutions to the challenges facing us.

I request your support of my re-nomination and thank you again for this opportunity to address your committee.



Hawai'i Tourism Authority

Hawai'i Convention Center, 1801 Kalākaua Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815
Website: www.hawaii-tourism-authority.org

LINDA LINGLE
Governor

REX D. JOHNSON
President and Chief Executive Officer

Telephone: (808) 973-2255
Fax: (808) 973-2253

Testimony of
Rex Johnson
President and Chief Executive Officer
Hawai'i Tourism Authority
on
G.M. 424

“Leon D. Yoshida” Gubernatorial Nominee to the
Board of Directors, Hawai'i Tourism Authority,
for a term to expire 06-30-2012

Senate Committee on Tourism and Government Operations
Thursday, March 6, 2008
1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 229

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kim and Members of the Senate Tourism and Government Operations Committee.

As President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), I strongly support the Governor's nomination of Leon D. Yoshida to the HTA Board of Directors. Mr. Yoshida has over thirty-five years of experience in Hawai'i's hospitality industry. I have had many opportunities to work very closely with Mr. Yoshida and can attest that his knowledge and experience have continually proven valuable to the HTA.

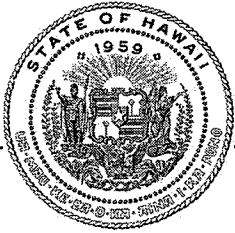
As an example, Mr. Yoshida was very instrumental in his capacity as a member of the Advisory Committee that worked with our Marketing Committee to review HTA's marketing program. Both groups put in many hours to review and evaluate the marketing presentations for Hawai'i's major market areas including Japan, Other Asia, Europe, Oceania and North America. As a result, in 2004, HTA took an innovative marketing approach. Instead of using one global contractor, HTA contracted with four top international agencies to promote Hawaii to their respective geographic markets. To date, the change has been very positive.

More recently, Mr. Yoshida who has much expertise and knowledge about the Asia markets, has provided policy guidance and directions with HTA's marketing efforts in Japan, China and Korea. As an example, to address concerns in the Japan market, the HTA has established the Japan-Hawai'i Tourism Council (JHTC), which replaces the Japan Hawai'i Economic Council. The purpose of JHTC is to address issues and opportunities relating to the development of our travel business between Japan and Hawai'i.

In addition to his marketing expertise, I've also worked closely with Mr. Yoshida when he was with the Honolulu Festival Foundation. The Honolulu Festival is one of Hawai'i's premier events celebrating the strong social and economic bonds between Japan and Hawai'i. The HTA supports this event through its Major Festivals and Events Program. This program is an excellent example of how multi-cultural diversity is an intrinsic part of the visitor experience which not only supports the goal of increasing visitor spending but also enhancing resident quality of life.

From a community standpoint, Mr. Yoshida is also an active member of this island's community and serves on a number of boards, including the Japan America Society of Hawaii and the Japan-Hawaii Travel Association.

In summary, I believe that Mr. Yoshida's thorough knowledge of the industry, his commitment and professionalism will continue to be of great contribution to the HTA Board. Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.



LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR
MARSHA WIENERT
TOURISM LIAISON

TOURISM LIAISON

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804

Telephone: (808) 586-2362
Fax: (808) 586-2370

Statement of
MARSHA WIENERT
Tourism Liaison
Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
Thursday, March 6, 2008
1:15 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

in consideration of
GM 424
**SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE BOARD OF
DIRECTORS OF THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY, GUBERNATORIAL
NOMINEE, LEON D. YOSHIDA, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2012.**

Chair Nishihara and Members of the Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism strongly supports the nomination of Leon D. Yoshida to the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) Board of Directors.

Mr. Yoshida has served both professionally and personally in numerous capacities within the visitor industry for many years. He is recognized by his peers for his knowledge, dedication and professionalism. He has been an active member of the HTA board for the past four years.

Mr. Yoshida's hotel, marketing and travel company background is an asset to the HTA board. His experience in the Japan market and his affiliation with the Japan-Hawaii Travel Association and Japan America Society of Honolulu will continue to bring a wealth of knowledge to the organization.

His commitment to the HTA mission and the State Strategic Tourism Plan has been admirable and I respectfully ask for your support of his nomination.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my support of Leon D. Yoshida.



20 February 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara

I write this letter to support the nomination of Leon Yoshida to serve another term on the board of the Hawaiian Tourism Board.

I first met Leon in 1985 when he worked with the Hyatt Regency Waikiki and have had the privilege of working with him ever since in bring convention and incentive groups to Hawaii.

He has a fantastic work ethic and a great knowledge and love for the Islands.

He is a real 'people person' who has become a great friend to me and many others in the travel industry throughout the world.

Leon will continue to add quality, common sense and his vast number world wide resources and contacts from around the world to the board in their effort to promote tourism.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss anything further.

Best Wishes

Robert K Christenson

Vision Weaver

212 F Pty Ltd

212°F Pty Ltd
Level 7, 606 St Kilda Road
Melbourne
Victoria 3004
Phone (03) 8620-7820
Fax (03) 8620-7810

BVLGARI
HOTELS & RESORTS

Hervé Humler
Managing Director

February 14, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara:

I am writing this letter in my capacity as Managing Director to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Leon Yoshida, whom I have known personally for the last twenty nine years. I had the immense pleasure and honor to work with him in Hawaii from 1979 to 1982.

I have no hesitation to recommend Mr. Yoshida as I have kept in touch with him over the years and we have been able to be in contact several times a year. In fact, our paths have crossed on different continents and I can say that Mr. Yoshida has been a great support to the whole leadership team of The Ritz-Carlton hotel Company, for which I also serve as President, International, and at all times, a true Ambassador of the State of Hawaii. Leon has passion in all he does and always leaves behind the lasting memory of a Great Professional.

I wish Leon Yoshida continuous success and from all of us in the travel industry, I would like to extend to him my best wishes in serving another term on the Board of Tourism of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Sincerely Yours,


Hervé Humler
Managing Director



THE RITZ-CARLTON®
HOTEL COMPANY, L.L.C.

HERVE HUMLER
PRESIDENT
RITZ-CARLTON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

February 14, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara:

I am writing this letter in my capacity as President, International to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Leon Yoshida, whom I have known personally for the last twenty nine years. I had the immense pleasure and honor to work with him in Hawaii from 1979 to 1982.

I have no hesitation to recommend Mr. Yoshida as I have kept in touch with him over the years and we have been able to be in contact several times a year. In fact, our paths have crossed on different continents and I can say that Mr. Yoshida has been a great support to the whole leadership team of The Ritz-Carlton hotel Company, and at all times, a true Ambassador of the State of Hawaii. Leon has passion in all he does and always leaves behind the lasting memory of a Great Professional.

I wish Leon Yoshida continuous success and from all of us in the travel industry, I would like to extend to him my best wishes in serving another term on the Board of Tourism of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Sincerely Yours,

Hervé Humler
President, International



P.O. Box 3590
Honolulu, Hawaii 96811-3590
Telephone 808-544-0500
Fax Line 808-531-2875



CENTRAL PACIFIC BANK

February 15, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara:

Having known Leon Yoshida personally over the past eight years, he has always conducted himself as a consummate professional. He will no doubt prove to be a valuable asset to your board.

I make no hesitation in recommending him to serve another four year term on behalf of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

If you need further information, please write or telephone.

Sincerely,

Keith K. Inafuku
Assistant Vice-President & Br. Manager

13 February, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara,

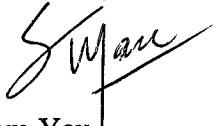
This letter is to recommend Mr. Leon Yoshida's nomination to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

In the four years that I have known Mr. Yoshida, he has always impressed me as hard-working, energetic, friendly and, above all, a man of integrity. He is a successful and well-known entrepreneur in the hospitality industry and his experience and in-depth knowledge in this business sector helps to bring in thousands of tourists each year to the Islands. Mr. Yoshida's excellent skills in management and business development have been key assets to Hawaii's tourism industry.

If confirmed, I am confident that he will continue to contribute greatly to the Board and therefore, it is with pleasure that I recommend Mr. Leon Yoshida's nomination to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. Should you have any further questions or concerns regarding to this letter, please don't hesitate to give me a call at 808 587 7763 ext 301.

Thank you.

Yours truly,



Tom Yau
President and CEO
eWorld Enterprise Solutions Inc.



Donald P. Yannell
Senior Vice President
and Area Manager
Waikiki Branch

February 13, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara,

Subject: Leon Yoshida

I am Donald Yannell, Senior Vice President and Area Manager for First Hawaiian Bank in Waikiki. I am also Treasurer of the Hawaii Hotel and Lodging Association, Waikiki Improvement Association and the Honolulu Festival Foundation.

I have known and worked with Leon Yoshida for the past 5 years and I support Governor Lingle's nomination of him to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

Mr. Yoshida's knowledge of the visitor industry, his positive attitude and willingness to serve will give the HTA board an active and dedicated board member that will support their efforts in increasing tourism to Hawai'i.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald Yannell", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Donald Yannell



Doug Sears
General Manager

Grand Hyatt Kaua'i
Resort & Spa
1571 Poipu Road
Koloa, Kaua'i, HI 96756 USA

Telephone: 808.742.1234
FAX: 808.240.6591
E-mail: dsears@hyatt.com

February 18, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism &
Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Letter of Recommendation for Leon Yoshida

Dear Senator Nishihara:

Thank you for your consideration of Leon Yoshida to serve another term on the board of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, commencing July 1, 2008 for four years.

Those of us in the hospitality industry certainly appreciate Mr. Yoshida's commitment, energy and efforts in representing us in past years and would definitely recommend that he continue to serve another term.

Please let me know if I may provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Sears".

Doug Sears
General Manager

DS/lis





Hilton Grand Vacations Club®

Written Testimony on:

GM 424: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the
Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority,
Gubernatorial Nominee, LEON D. YOSHIDA, for a term to expire 6-30-2012

Thursday, March 6, 2008 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 229 – State Capitol

Aloha, Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kim and Members of the Senate Committee on Tourism and Government Operations, I am Mark Wang, Executive Vice President of Hilton Grand Vacations Company, Hawaii-Asia Region.

I am writing in support of the appointment of Leon Yoshida to the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) to a term to expire June 30, 2012.

Leon has served very ably on the HTA board over the past several years – assuming a key leadership role as Vice Chair in 2006. I have no doubt that this rapid accession was due to his fellow board member's recognition of Leon's talent and abilities. Beyond his impressive knowledge and broad experience in Hawaii's hospitality industry, Leon brings a strong entrepreneurial background and deep understanding of what it takes to succeed in a highly competitive marketplace.

Like any successful business person, he seeks to identify customer needs and desires before determining how to meet them. He's a person who thinks creatively and gets things done. One of the most tangible examples of this is his involvement in the Honolulu Festival Foundation, which is now enjoying its 14th year as a valuable contributor to enriching the experiences visitors to Hawaii have.

The State is fortunate to have someone like Leon contributing to the success of our number one industry. He is deserving of your support and confirmation to a full four-year term on the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Mahalo.



February 12, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Leon Yoshida
Hawaii Tourism Authority Board Member nominee

Dear Senator Nishihara:

Please consider this letter an endorsement of Leon Yoshida and his ability to be a very successful contributing board member to the Hawaii Tourism Authority Board. Leon has been a leader in the tourism industry for over thirty years and is well respected in our local community but more importantly he is also recognized as a leader in the international community and most importantly in the Japanese community both in Hawaii and abroad.

Leon is an asset to Hawaii and will continue to do an exemplary job by representing our industry's needs at this most difficult time on the HTA Board. His skills as a quiet negotiator and consensus builder are those that can be drawn on by all of the members of our community for effective leadership.

Please feel free to contact me should you wish to discuss any aspects of my knowledge of Mr. Yoshida's leadership abilities.

I can be reached at 808-479-5577.

Aloha,

Mary Charles

Home of the

Grille



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 13, 2008

Senator Clarence Nishihara, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Tourism and
Government Operations
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senators Nishihara and Kim:

Re: Governor's Message 424

It is my honor and pleasure to write on behalf of Mr. Leon Yoshida, a nominee to the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) Board of Directors.

Mr. Yoshida has an extensive background in the visitor industry with more than thirty years of experience in the areas of sales, marketing, hospitality, and government relations. He also has established strong relationships locally as well as in Japan and Australia. Furthermore, Mr. Yoshida currently serves on HTA's Board and knows the inherent demands and challenges of Hawaii's visitor industry in the domestic and global markets. His reappointment would facilitate continuity of his knowledge of the HTA's short and long-range tourism strategies, its marketing and promotional plans and efforts, and all other collateral responsibilities.

In my former capacity as Chair of the House Committee on Tourism and Culture, I was fortunate to work with Mr. Yoshida and admired his knowledge and business know-how of the industry.

For these reasons, I respectfully request your confirmation of Mr. Leon D. Yoshida to continue to serve on the HTA's board of directors.

Sincerely,

JERRY L. CHANG
Chair – Higher Education

Ilima Tours & Transportation

February 15, 2008

Mr. Marvin Chang
President
Ilima Tours & Transportation
3230 Ualena Street
Honolulu, HI 96819-1918

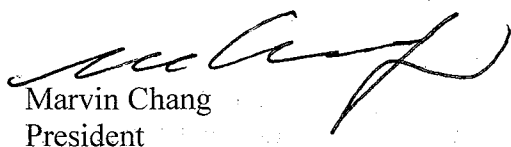
Senate Committee on Tourism & Governmental Operations
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations:

It is with great pleasure to offer my full support to Mr. Leon Yoshida for the appointment on the Hawaii Tourism Authority Board. I have known Leon through a business relationship and have since grown to know him as a man of great character and honesty for the past 25 years. Mr. Yoshida has always displayed a high degree of integrity and responsibility.

With Mr. Yoshida's vast experience in the travel industry and the respect in the local community, he would be a great asset to the Hawaii Tourism Association Board. I am very happy to give him my wholehearted endorsement!

Sincerely yours,



Marvin Chang
President



intrawest
placemaking

Suite 105, 3350 Lower Honoapi'ilani Road
Lahaina, HI USA 96761
T 808 270 1310 F 808 270 1323

February 13, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara,

It is my pleasure and indeed honor to again write you regarding the nomination of Leon Yoshida to another term on the Hawaii Tourism Authority. I have known Leon for over 25 years both professionally and personally.

I first worked with Leon in the early 80's when we both held positions with Hyatt Hotels Hawaii. Leon was a leader and innovator in the area of Asia Pacific sales then and remains one to this day.

Over the years I have held positions in senior management with other firms to include the then Aston Hotels and Resorts, Lanai Resort Partners, Starwood Hotels & Resorts, and in the visitor industry including the chair for the Maui Visitors Bureau. Whenever I had a question or needed insights into this critical market, Leon would be my first call.

We have partnered in business together for over five years and been friends as I mentioned above for decades. Leon is a person of honesty, integrity, intelligence, insight, and honor. He is thoughtful, innovative, and energetic. To sum up, there simply is not a more qualified person in the state of Hawaii to serve on the HTA.

If I can provide any additional information or be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Best regards,

Edward K. Sowers
General Manager
Honua Kai Resort Maui

*We create places where
amazing experiences happen*



IOLANI SPORTSWEAR, LTD.

1234 Kona Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814 • Telephone (808) 597-1044 • FAX (808) 591-8529

February 18, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

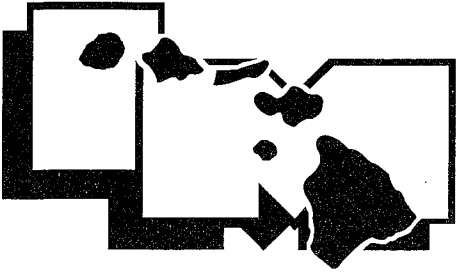
Dear Senator Nishihara:

I understand that Leon Yoshida has been nominated to serve another term on the Hawaii Tourism Authority. Leon's vast experience and knowledge of Hawaii's tourism industry along with his keen understanding of markets abroad make him an invaluable asset to this state.

I extend my full support to Leon and ask that your committee approve his nomination.

Mahalo,

Lloyd Kawakami
Iolani Sportswear Ltd.



ISLAND MOVERS_{INC.}

TOTAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

February 19, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara,

I am writing to support the re-appointment of Leon Yoshida to the board of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Over the many years that I have been involved in the activities of the tourism industry and of our community, I have known Leon Yoshida to be knowledgeable and supportive of the many aspects of the relationships between tourism, business, and our community as a whole.

Your favorable consideration of this nomination will be greatly appreciated. Mahalo.

Sincerely,

Donald M Takaki
Chairman and CEO

DMT: pas

JALPAK International Hawaii, Inc.

Waikiki Business Plaza, Suite 1600

2270 Kalakaua Ave., Honolulu, Hawaii 96815

(808) 926-4500

February 12, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: Leon Yoshida, Nominee to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority

Dear Senator Nishihara:

Thank you for your leadership in the Senate Committee on Tourism.

My name is Kiyohiko Matsui and I am the President & CEO of JALPAK International Hawaii, Inc., a major tour operator that handles Japanese visitors.

I am writing today to support the nomination of Mr. Leon Yoshida to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

JALPAK Hawaii has had the pleasure of working with him from over 17 years ago when he was Regional Director of Sales with Turtle Bay and then the Hyatt Regency Waikiki. When he started his own consulting company, Kagari, Inc., we used his services for arrangements of technical tours and entertainment for our group tours. With his wide experience and deep knowledge of the visitor industry, I believe he is well qualified for the HTA Board of Directors.

HTA Board of Directors will be well served with Leon Yoshida as a board member. In summary, I highly support his nomination and believe he has the qualities that this position requires.

Sincerely,



Kiyohiko Matsui
President & CEO

JALPAK
HAWAII



Japan Airlines International
Honolulu International Airport
300 Rodgers Boulevard, #21
Honolulu, Hawaii 96819-1830

April 19, 2008

**The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capital, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813**

Dear Senator Nishihara,

My name is Takashi Yamaoka, Vice President and Regional Manager of Japan Airlines in Hawaii. It gives me great pleasure and honor to recommend, without hesitation, Mr. Leon Yoshida, President of Sawayaka Hawaii, to the important Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

I am sure Governor Linda Lingle is nominating him for the second term because Mr. Yoshida did an outstanding job as a Director for the past four years on the Hawaii Tourism Authority Board.

Now is a crucial period in our Hawaii tourism industry, especially from Asia. Tourism from Japan has been declining due to the strong attractions of China, Korea and Southeast Asian countries. Hawaii was the most popular destination for the outbound Japanese till few years ago and we must reclaim these high spending Japanese tourists again by finding solutions to the many problems we have. From Korea, Visa-Waiver Program will likely be implemented this summer and we must find ways to attract the anticipated increase of Korean tourism. Similarly, outbound travel from China will increase rapidly due to their booming economy and we must attract them to Hawaii.

Mr. Leon Yoshida has the ability, knowledge and the experience in Japanese, as well as Asian tourism, that is sorely needed on the Hawaii Tourism Authority Board, to aggressively formulate and implement strategies to increase overall tourism to Hawaii.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Taka Yamaoka'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Takashi Yamaoka
Vice President & Regional Manager
Japan Airlines, Hawaii**



Letter of Recommendation

February 15, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara:

We are writing to extend our support and recommend Leon Yoshida for confirmation to the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Our company, JCL International Consultants, has work closely with Leon Yoshida and recognizes his vast knowledge and experience in the tourism industry. We strongly believe, he is a tremendous asset to the State of Hawaii and will continue to full-heartedly support the number one industry in Hawaii.

We urge you, in cooperation will with the entire senate to confirm Leon Yoshida on the board member of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John C.S.W. Lee', is written over the typed name.

John C.S.W. Lee
President
JCL International Consultants, Inc.



JTB HAWAII, INC.

HONOLULU

2155 KALAKAUA AVENUE, 9TH FLOOR
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96815-2351
TEL: (808) 922-0200
FAX: (808) 922-3473

February 14, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
Room 213, State Capital
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: Leon Yoshida
Nominee to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority

Dear Senator Nishihara

My name is Takashi Sugi and I am President & CEO of JTB Hawaii, Inc., an affiliated company of JTB Corp. which is the largest travel company in Japan.

I am writing today in support of the nomination of Leon Yoshida to Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

I have known Mr. Yoshida as being one of the most enthusiastic leaders in the Japanese Travel Industry. With over twenty years of experience in the hotel industry together with his current role in the travel and tourism industry, I believe that Mr. Yoshida is indispensable in developing the growth of future tourism. I have seen him in action as he once served as Executive Director of Honolulu Festival Foundation and today as President of Sawayaka Hawaii, Inc., he is continuing to help promote and increase Japanese visitors to Hawaii.

Senator Nishihara, JTB Hawaii, Inc., highly recommends Mr. Leon Yoshida at HTA's Board Member once again, representing the tourism industry and in specializing in the Japanese visitors market. It is an honor for me to support him.

Sincerely,

Takashi Sugi
President & CEO
JTB Hawaii, Inc.

K+W Kawakami & Wong, CPAs, LLC

Ala Moana Pacific Center
1585 Kapiolani Boulevard, Suite 1440
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Phone (808) 941-8865
Fax (808) 947-9396

February 11, 2008

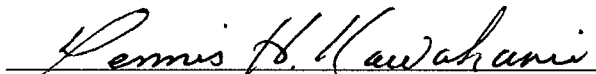
The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213

Dear Senator Nishihara:

I have known Leon Yoshida professionally and socially for over twenty years. Throughout our relationship, Mr. Yoshida has demonstrated acute knowledge of nearly all phases of the hotel and travel industry. His many years of experience as an executive of the Hyatt Corporation and currently as president of Sawayaka Hawaii, Inc., has been and is, a great asset to the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

My colleagues and I wholeheartedly support his nomination to the board of the Hawaii Tourism Authority for another term.

Sincerely,



Dennis H. Kawakami, CPA

Partner



MARC RESORTS
HAWAII

February 12, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, HAWAII 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara:

It is my privilege to recommend confirmation of Leon Yoshida to serve the residents of the State of Hawaii on the board of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, commencing July 1, 2008 for four years.

I have known Leon for over 25 years, as a competitor, a customer, a supplier and most of all a comrade. He has exhibited a tremendous love and respect for our state and our visitor industry in every job he has taken on. His knowledge of the Asian market, especially Japan, and his willingness to share his insights is an asset to the Hawaii Tourism Authority and to the continuing success of our visitor industry.

It is my pleasure to stand up for Leon Yoshida. Please feel free to contact me for more personal information if necessary.

Mahalo,

Paul Tomonari
Executive Vice President



North Asia, Hawaii & South Pacific Area Office

2255 Kuhio Avenue
Suite 1020
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815

February 14, 2008

Ed Hubennette
Vice President
North Asia, Hawaii & South Pacific
808/792-8887
808/792-8885 Fax

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara
18th Senatorial District
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 213
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Via email sennishihara@Capitol.hawaii.gov & USPS mail

Dear Senator Nishihara:

I understand that Leon Yoshida is under consideration for re-appointment to the Hawaii Tourism Authority Board of Directors. We very much hope that he has your support and that of your colleagues in the Senate.

I have known Leon for twenty years and I can honestly say I don't know anyone more dedicated to the correct growth for tourism in our state. Leon is extraordinarily respected by everyone in the Japanese travel market as well as those of us in the business who serve this market here in Hawaii. I personally know of Leon's efforts to do everything and anything he can to foster goodwill and to improve our relationship with this key market.

Leon's contributions have already been many and considering the importance of the travel industry to our state's economy we would hope to have individuals of Leon's quality and experience on the Board. I am more than happy to do whatever I can to assist in Leon's confirmation so please do not hesitate to ask.

Senator, thank you for all you do on our behalf and I hope to see you again soon.

Best regards, --

Ed Hubennette
Vice President
North Asia, Hawaii & South Pacific

CC: Leon Yoshida



February 18, 2008

The Honorable Clarence Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Hnl., HI 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara:

I am writing in support of Leon Yoshida, President and CEO of Sawayaka Hawaii, Inc., who has been nominated by the Governor to service another term on the Board of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Leon is uniquely qualified to serve on the Board as he understands and supports the two most important markets for Hawaii, Japan and the Mainland. Leon is highly regarded in the visitor community as an expert, influential leader and successful businessman.

As someone who grew up in Hawaii, Leon has a deep understanding of the Hawaiian culture, as well as the issues important to local residents.

I know Leon will continue to serve our community very well on the Board of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Resich'.

Chris Resich
President & CEO



February 15, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: Leon Yoshida, Nominee to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority

Dear Senator Nishihara:

My name is Danny Ojiri, I work for Outrigger Hotels & Resorts as Vice President/Japan Sales & Marketing responsible for the promotion of Outrigger's hotels in Hawaii and the Pacific region for the Japanese Market. I am writing to you regarding the measure proposing Leon Yoshida's re-appointment to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. I am testifying in favor of Leon's nomination to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Leon has been quite active during his first term; he has been instrumental in getting many leading stakeholders more involved to support the HTA process and activities. His direct involvement with the leaders of the industry gives him a better understanding of the needs of the marketplace from both west and eastbound markets. Most importantly, Leon understands that business needs must be integrated with sensitivities of culture and community

I truly respect Leon's commitment to Hawaii; he always has Hawaii's interest at heart and works hard toward to push initiatives and opportunities for the good of the State.

I am confident that Leon can continue to serve as an honorable member as a Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Ojiri", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Danny Ojiri
Vice President/Sales & Marketing Japan
Outrigger Hotels & Resorts

Pleasant Holidays®

HAWAII • MEXICO • TAHITI • FIJI • AUSTRALIA • NEW ZEALAND • ASIA • EUROPE • MAINLAND USA

18 February 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara:

As Vice President of Marketing for Pleasant Holidays, one of the largest Tour Operators serving the State of Hawaii, my views on effective tourism initiatives and sound governmental operating policies and procedures all stem from strong leadership, focused direction, action and a vast scope of all facets of tourism.

With that, I am testifying in support of Mr. Leon Yoshida's nomination to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. Mr. Yoshida's strength in Marketing, with an emphasis in the Asia and South Pacific Regions, surpasses most all in the tourism industry today. His knowledge and partnerships in very diverse market segments has allowed him to design, implement and execute programs—all in an effort to increase tourism to Hawaii.

I first started working with Leon Yoshida in 1986 when I joined Hyatt Resorts Hawaii's Sales & Marketing Team. His expertise in the Asia and South Pacific market allowed for double-digit growth year-over-year, for several years. From there, Mr. Yoshida went on to successfully launch a number of companies, all focused upon growing tourism to Hawaii--Kagari, Inc., Sawayaka Hawaii, Inc. and jointly formed Hospitality Solutions, LLC.

Though there are many in Hawaii who have the knowledge and expertise in various sectors of Tourism, Leon Yoshida possesses a strength in the Asia and South Pacific markets. I trust one would be challenged to find an expert in the industry who has the leadership skills, savvy and results-driven sense of style, plus a true understanding and appreciation of *Aloha*—all of which Leon Yoshida exemplifies.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Amy Terada
Vice President Marketing



February 15, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara:

This is to recommend that Mr. Leon Yoshida continue to serve on the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.


His experience for the last three decades in the tourism field has lead to many accomplishments in the field, as well as the respect of his fellow tourism professionals.

I believe it will behoove our state to once again select Mr. Yoshida, as his experience in many aspects of the Asia Pacific industry has lead him to understand the needs of the ever-changing Japan market as well as the requirements of the visitor industry. He is one of a few travel authorities with experience in the many-faceted dimensions of this vital industry including hotel management, wholesale travel and tourism consulting.

With his proficiency in both Japanese and English, he effectively communicates between the two cultures, providing a professional advantage for the HTA.

I have interacted with him in his many capacities, both on a vendor and client basis, and at all times, he has possessed leadership, dedication and creativity. He has the intelligence and experience needed to contribute toward innovative solutions needed in the upcoming years.

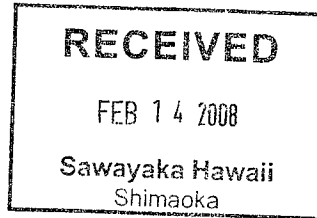
Sincerely,



Toshie Nakabayashi
Director of Sales, Wholesale Travel
PRINCE RESORTS HAWAII

TN:su

SeaHawaii, Inc.



February 12, 2008

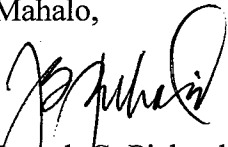
The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara;

Please accept this letter of recommendation for Mr. Leon Yoshida. I truly support his nomination to serve another term on the board of the Hawaii Tourism Authority because he is a business professional who is extremely well versed in Hawaii's tourism industry. It is always a pleasure working with him, because he understands our industry, is adept at analyzing international tourism strategies and tactics which can benefit the State of Hawaii.

Mr. Yoshida is unquestionably an exceptional candidate for this position. If you would like to contact me regarding Mr. Leon Yoshida's support, please call me at 808-221-7722

Mahalo,



Joseph G. Pickard
President
SeaHawaii, Inc.

1100 Alakea Street, Ste. 600
Honolulu, HI 96813
Tel: (808) 531-4252 ext #32
Fax: (808) 441-1918



THE KAHALA

HOTEL & RESORT

Honolulu, Hawaii

February 14, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, HI 96813

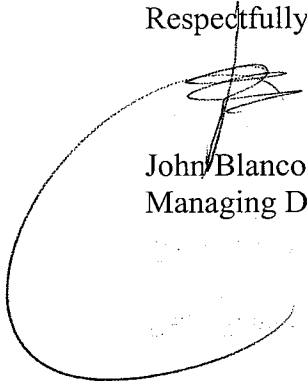
Dear Senator Nishihara:

We were pleased to learn that Governor Lingle recently nominated Mr. Leon Yoshida to serve another term on the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

We encourage you to vote favorably for his reelection as Mr. Yoshida has proven to be an exemplary public servant with a sincere interest in maintaining and promoting a healthy tourism industry in Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



John Blanco
Managing Director



THE LIMTIACO COMPANY
MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

February 11, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawai'i State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara,

It is with great pleasure that I support the nomination of Leon Yoshida to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority board.

I worked with Mr. Yoshida in the 1980s as a member of the marketing team for Hyatt Resorts Hawai'i. He then went on to establish his own highly-respected tour wholesale business.

I find him to be one of the consummate professionals in the tourism industry. His expertise in the east-bound market from Asia is invaluable and I am sure he will prove himself an indispensable member of the Authority.

Sincerely yours,

Ruth Limtiaco
Chief Executive Officer





HAWAII 5-0 GROUP, INC.
3215 Kaohinani Drive
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
TEL: (808) 971-7711 · FAX: (808) 971-7717

February 24, 2008

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Nishihara,

I am writing in support of Leon Yoshida, a gentleman that I have known for over twenty years. Leon is dedicated to the tourism industry and a man who has integrity and who will keep the best interest of our land and our people at heart.

Travel and tourism has been Leon's life's work and passion, and I believe that it would benefit our community to allow him to serve another term on the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration.

ALOHA ke AKUA ia `oe,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Kagawa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr. Kathleen Kagawa
President

cc: Leon Yoshida



**HAWAI'I HOTEL & LODGING
ASSOCIATION**

2270 Kalakaua Ave., Suite 1506
Honolulu, HI 96815
Phone: (808) 923-0407
Fax: (808) 924-3843
E-Mail: hhla@hawaiihotels.org
Website: www.hawaiihotels.org



30th Anniversary
Are You Walking???
May 17, 2008
(Always the 3rd Saturday in May)
www.charitywalkhawaii.org

**TESTIMONY OF MURRAY TOWILL
PRESIDENT
HAWAI'I HOTEL & LODGING ASSOCIATION**

March 6, 2008

**RE: GM 424 Submitting for consideration & confirmation
to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority,
Gubernatorial Nominee, LEON D. YOSHIDA,
for a term to expire 6/30/2012**

Good afternoon Chairman Nishihara and members of the Senate Committee on Tourism & Governmental Operations. I am Murray Towill, President of the Hawai'i Hotel & Lodging Association.

The Hawai'i Hotel & Lodging Association is a statewide association of hotels, condominiums, timeshare companies, management firms, suppliers, and other related firms and individuals. Our membership includes over 170 hotels representing over 47,300 rooms. Our hotel members range from the 2,523 rooms of the Hilton Hawaiian Village to the 4 rooms of the Bougainvillea Bed & Breakfast on the Big Island.

The Hawai'i Hotel & Lodging Association supports the nomination of Leon Yoshida to the HTA. Like Mr. Chang, Leon is being re-nominated to the HTA Board. We believe Leon brings experience and knowledge about the Hawaii visitor industry in general and the Japanese market in particular to the Board. Given recent downward trends in the Japanese market, we feel this experience is very timely and valuable for HTA.

Again, we thank you for this opportunity to testify today.