



WAIKIKI IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Statement of
Rick Egged
President, Waikiki Improvement Association
Before the
Senate Committee on Tourism and Government Relations
Tuesday, April 1, 2008, 1:30 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

Regarding Governor's Message 541
Nomination of Sharon R. Weiner
To the
Hawaii Tourism Authority Board of Directors

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4/1/08 12:55pm

Good Afternoon Chair Nishihara, Vice-Chair Kim and members of the Committee:

I am Rick Egged appearing on behalf of the Waikiki Improvement Association. WIA is a nonprofit organization representing 170 leading businesses and stakeholders in Waikiki.

Sharon Weiner has served our state well as a member the Hawaii Tourism Authority Board of Directors. We enthusiastically support her reappointment. Sharon brings to the table over twenty years of experience in public relations and over thirty years of involvement in Hawaii's visitor industry. Sharon Weiner also has been a tireless contributor to numerous community activities including the Hawaii Foodbank, Hawaii Public Television, the Boy Scouts of Hawaii, the Honolulu Symphony and Aloha United Way. Her efforts help create a vital link between our visitors and the community.

On the HTA Board, she has exerted the leadership necessary to strengthen the State's marketing initiatives particularly in regards to Japan. At a time of much transition the marketing of Hawaii has remained aggressive and cohesive.

The mission of HTA extends well beyond marketing. Sharon Weiner has advocated an expansion of HTA's support for research, and planning. The role of HTA includes maintaining our position as a premier visitor destination with a dynamic ongoing product development program. It is in this area as well that Sharon has excelled. She has emphasized the importance of our host culture and support for an expansive offering of events and activities that continue to make Hawaii one of the most interesting and exciting places in the world.

Hawaii, Waikiki, the public and the visitor industry have benefited from the experienced and enlightened leadership of Sharon Weiner.

Thank-you for this opportunity to testify.