

**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

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Statement of  
**THEODORE E. LIU**  
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM AND CULTURE**

Thursday, April 10, 2008

10:00 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

in consideration of

**SCR52, HD1**

**REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
AND TOURISM AND THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY TO IMPLEMENT  
PROGRAMS TO INCREASE VISITORS FROM TAIWAN, AND REQUESTING THE  
SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY TO EXPAND THE VISA WAIVER  
PROGRAM TO INCLUDE TAIWAN.**

Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Manahan and Committee members:

The department would like to offer comments on SCR52, HD1. The State of Hawaii has an office in Taipei which actively pursues business and investment opportunities for Hawaii. From a tourism standpoint, this helps to increase the number of business visitors to Hawaii.

One of the areas in which the Taipei Office has been quite aggressive is promoting Hawaii products. In 2006, this office helped Hawaii companies export a total of **\$1.2** million worth of Hawaii products to Taiwan. This resolution requests that the department develop a list of Hawaii products appropriate for exportation to Taiwan, and we are prepared to do so if this measure is adopted.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.



# Hawai'i Tourism Authority

Hawai'i Convention Center, 1801 Kalākaua Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815  
Website: [www.hawaii-tourism-authority.org](http://www.hawaii-tourism-authority.org)

LINDA LINGLE  
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REX D. JOHNSON  
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Testimony of  
**Rex Johnson**  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
on  
**S.C.R. 52, H.D. 1**  
**Requesting the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism and the  
Hawai'i Tourism Authority to Implement Programs to Increase Visitors from Taiwan, and  
Requesting the Secretary of Homeland Security to Expand the Visa Waiver Program to  
Include Taiwan.**

House Committee on Tourism and Culture  
Thursday, April 10, 2008  
10:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 325

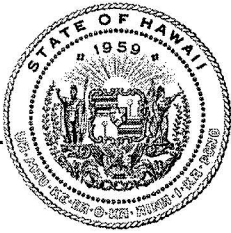
The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is pleased to provide comments on S.C.R. 52, H.D. 1, which requests the Department of Business, Economic Development (DBEDT) and the HTA to implement programs to increase the number of visitors from Taiwan, and requests the U.S. Citizenship and Immigrations Services and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to facilitate the inclusion of Taiwan on the visa waiver list.

Since 2004, the HTA has contracted with Hawai'i Tourism Taiwan (HTT) to promote Hawai'i to Taiwan. Programs to increase visitors from Taiwan, however, will not be effective until travelers from Taiwan are able to obtain a visa to travel to the United States.

As such, the HTA has been working to address this challenge. In particular, the HTA has testified at a congressional hearing to have Taiwan included in the Visa Waiver Program.

S.C.R. 52 should be amended to focus on expediting the inclusion of Taiwan in the Visa Waiver Program. DBEDT, through the Tourism Liaison, has been working with the Federal government on the modernization of the Visa Waiver Program, which is the main impediment to increasing visitors from Taiwan. Until this is done, it will be difficult to implement programs to increase the number of visitors from Taiwan.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.



## TOURISM LIAISON

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Written statement of  
**MARSHA WIENERT**

**Tourism Liaison**

Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism  
before the

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM & CULTURE**

Thursday, April 10, 2008

10:00 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

in consideration of

**SCR 52 HD1**

**REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
AND TOURISM AND THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY TO IMPLEMENT  
PROGRAMS TO INCREASE VISITORS FROM TAIWAN, AND REQUESTING THE  
SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY TO EXPAND THE VISA WAIVER  
PROGRAM TO INCLUDE TAIWAN.**

Chair Yamane and Members of the House Committee on Tourism & Culture.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) would like to provide comments on SCR 52 HD1, which encourages Hawaii tourism promotion in Taiwan, as well as requests the Secretary of Homeland Security to include Taiwan in the U.S. Visa Waiver Program.

We agree that Taiwan has the potential to be a strong visitor market for Hawaii, and therefore, both DBEDT and the Hawaii Tourism Authority currently engage in tourism and business opportunities through their respective offices in Taiwan. Furthermore, I have been working with the Federal government on the modernization of the Visa Waiver Program and have offered our state's support and any necessary assistance in implementing the provisions of the federal law passed last year.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on SCR 52 HD1.

**CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF HAWAII**

夏 威 夷 中 華 總 商 會

Established 1911

April 7, 2008

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**TESTIMONY in Support of SCR 52, HD1**

Representative Ryan Yamane and Members of the House Committee on Tourism and Culture

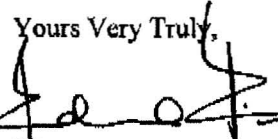
My name is Edward Pei and I am the President of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii. We testify in support of the passage of Senate Concurrent Resolution #52, HD1, Requesting the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism and the Hawaii Tourism Authority to implement programs to increase visitors from Taiwan and requesting the Secretary of Homeland Security to expand the waiver program to include Taiwan.

We all know that 70% of Hawaii's economy is reliant on tourism. There is tremendous competition worldwide for the tourism business and Hawaii cannot rely just on its natural beauty, wonderful climate, and excellent cultural diversity to attract visitors from other countries. We need to make it easy and convenient for these visitors to pick Hawaii as a destination.

The United States has a Visa Waiver program for countries that meet certain requirements. Taiwan meets all of those requirements and we believe they should be included in this Visa waiver program. While the number of visitors from Taiwan numbered only 15,450 in 2007, it represents less than 1% of the total Taiwan outbound traveler population. The number of Taiwanese visiting Guam greatly exceeds the visitor count to Hawaii, because they can visit Guam without a visa. Taiwan residents are traveling more than 10 million times outside of the country annually and Hawaii would benefit greatly if more of their visitors chose to come here for their vacation.

The US visa application rejection rate for Taiwan passport holders by American Institute in Taiwan is less than 3.1%. But, in Taiwan, all applicants for a US visa must go to Taipei to personally apply. This is a huge inconvenience for anyone not living in Taipei and has undoubtedly discouraged travel to the US. Instead, Taiwan residents travel to Japan, Guam, and other southeast Asian countries that do not require visas. Relaxing this visa requirement will most surely increase Taiwan visitors to the United States and, more particularly Hawaii.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and we seek your support of this Senate Concurrent Resolution.

Yours Very Truly,  
  
 Edward Y. W. Pei

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# *Ilima Tours & Transportation*

March 24, 2008

Testimony in support of SCR52

Aloha Chair Ryan Yamane and members of the committee,

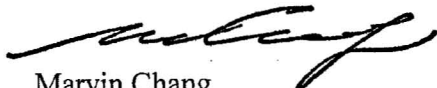
My name is Marvin Chang, President of Ilima Tours, testifying on support SCR52, requesting the DBEDT and the Hawaii Tourism Authority to implement programs to increase visitors from Taiwan and requesting the Secretary of Homeland Security to expand the waiver program to include Taiwan.

To encourage more Taiwanese tourists to come to Hawaii through visa application procedures, there are some current status I would like to provide you:

1. In year 2007, Taiwan visitors arrival in the USA reached 587,872 person/time. This represents only 6.5% of the total Taiwan outbound travelers, a decrease compared to the previous years, which traveling to the USA used to take a 10% share of the total outbound travel.
2. In 2006, according to the DBEDT of Hawaii, Taiwan has 15,450 visitors who visited Hawaii.
3. The Republic of China (Taiwan) passport holders can visit Guam as tourist without having a visa since Guam government waived Taiwanese tourist visa in 1992.
4. The visa application rejection rate of ROC (Taiwan) passport holders by American Institute in Taiwan is less than 3.1 %.
5. Taiwan passport holders usually receive 5-year validity with multiple entry B1/B2 visa to visit U.S.A. as tourists.
6. Korea passport holders receives 10 years validity visa B1/B2 to visit U.S.A. and will be given visa waiver soon.

Thus, we seek your support to urge related federal agencies to expand the visa waiver program to include Taiwan.. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Marvin Chang  
President



## **Dragon Tours & Travel**

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Website: [www.dragontours.com](http://www.dragontours.com)

March 21, 2008

Testimony in support of SCR52

Aloha Chair Ryan Yamane and members of the committee,

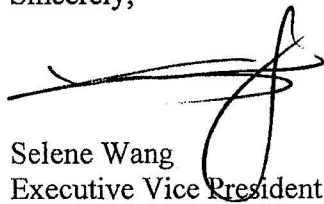
My name is Selene Wang, Executive Vice President of Dragon Tours & Travel, testifying on support SCR52, requesting the DBEDT and the Hawaii Tourism Authority to implement programs to increase visitors from Taiwan and requesting the Secretary of Homeland Security to expand the waiver program to include Taiwan.

After 9-11, in southern Taiwan, except the passport holders who are older than 80 years, all applicants for a U.S. B1/B2 visa need to go to Taipei (350 km away). Most of applicants need to stay in Taipei overnight for interviews, and it has already reduced their willing to visit Hawaii as well as other parts of USA since Japan and many South East Asian countries offer visa-free status to Taiwanese.

Therefore, I fully support this resolution to expand the visa waiver program to include Taiwan. It will attract many Taiwanese tourists if they are visa-free.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Selene Wang  
Executive Vice President



91-1440 Farrington Hwy, Kapolei, Hawaii 96707

Phone: (808) 677-9516 Fax: (808) 677-9412

April 8, 2008

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2008

The Honorable Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
Rep. Joey Manahan, Vice Chair  
Committee on Tourism and Culture  
Conference Room 325  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**RE: TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT:  
SCR52- VISA WAIVER-TAIWANESE**

Representative Yamane, Rep. Manahan,

I would like to express my support of SCR52 in making a statement that Hawaii will back and support the Visa Waiver of Taiwanese to enter the United States, especially Hawaii. I truly feel that until one day when the greater Asia, particularly those countries such as Taiwan that have been a long time Allied friend of United States can enter our country under the same condition that they shared their "Aloha" to American citizens, Hawaii would only then experience the great potential of being the CENTER for East-West social and economic growth.

Taiwan is an Island Nation and there are so many social and economic experiences that we, the people of Hawaii have in common with Taiwan that we can only gain with the Waiver of Travel visa to the USA. Taiwan has a cultural office in Hawaii, (1 of 13) in the United States and with that we've already shared soo many great inter social and economical exchanges with the Counsel General of past and present, the Honorable, Phillip Wang.

I thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony of support for SCR52.

Sincerely,

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