

**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
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
Thursday, February 28, 2008
12:40 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 414

in consideration of
SCR 52/SR 26
**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 English, Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Senate Committee on
Transportation and International Affairs.

The department would like to offer comments on SCR 52/SR 26. As you know, the State
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

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Testimony of

Rex Johnson

President and Chief Executive Officer
Hawai'i Tourism Authority

on

S.C.R. 52 and S.R.26

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.

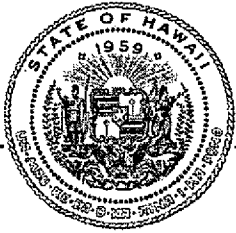
Senate Committee on Transportation and International Affairs
Senate Committee on Intergovernmenta and Military Affairs
Thurssday, February 28, 2008
12:40 p.m.
Conference Room 414

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is pleased to provide comments on S.C.R. 52, H.D. 1 and S.R. 26, which request 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. Specifically, HTT has an office in Taipei with a dedicated team of professionals. Marketing efforts by HTT include public relations efforts such as sales calls, monthly newsletters and press releases, travel trade seminars for key travel agents, travel agent and media fam tours, participation in trade shows including the Taipei International Trade Fair as well as other promotional campaigns.

Yet, despite the marketing efforts made by HTT, there are some critical challenges facing this market. These include limited airseat capacity and Taiwan not being included in the current visa waiver program. As such, the HTA has been working to address these challenges. In particular, I testified at a congressional hearing to have Taiwan included in the Visa Waiver Program.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.



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Written statement of
MARSHA WIENERT
Tourism Liaison

Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism
before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Thursday, February 28, 2008

12:40 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 414

in consideration of
SCR 52 / SR 26

**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 English and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation & International Affairs.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) would like to provide comments on SCR 52 / SR 26, 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 / SR 26.

Marvin Chang

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Senate Committee on Transportation and International Affairs
Thursday, February 28, 2008 at 12:40 P.M. – CR 414
In Support of SCR 52 / SR 26 – expand the visa waiver program to
include Taiwan

Aloha Chair English and members of the committee:

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.

Selene Wang

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Senate Committee on Transportation and International Affairs
Thursday, February 28, 2008 at 12:40 P.M. – CR 414
In Support of SCR 52 / SR 26 – expand the visa waiver program to
include Taiwan

Aloha Chair English and members of the committee:

In support of related government agencies to take actions
increasing more tourists from Taiwan, I just want to elaborate the
situation which happens in southern 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.