

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



BRENNON T. MORIOKA
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors
MICHAEL D. FORMBY
FRANCIS PAUL KEENE
BRIAN H. SEKIGUCHI
JIRO A. SUMADA

IN REPLY REFER TO:

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

February 27, 2009

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HOUSE BILL NO. 754, H.D.1,
RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY.

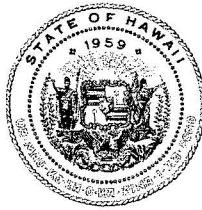
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Department of Transportation (DOT) objects to any attempt to eliminate the Director of Transportation (or his designee) from being a member of the board of directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA). For this reason, the DOT **strongly opposes** this bill.

From its inception, the board of directors of the HTA included the Director of Transportation as a member. Act 156, SLH 1998. The purpose of including the Director of Transportation as a member of the HTA board of directors was clearly evident. One of the expressed statutory goals of the HTA was to "work to eliminate or reduce barriers to travel in order to provide a positive and competitive business environment, including coordinating with the department of transportation on issues affecting airlines and air route development." (Emphasis added.) This HTA goal still exists today. HRS Section 201B-3(a)(18). Accordingly, there is no good reason to eliminate the Director of Transportation from the HTA board of directors. In fact, eliminating the Director of Transportation from the HTA board of directors could prove detrimental to HTA's ability to successfully achieve the necessary level of coordination with the DOT. In light of the role that the DOT plays in our tourism industry, the DOT strongly recommends that H.D.1 be amended to leave the Director of Transportation on the HTA board of directors.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
LAURA H. THIELEN
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
FINANCE**

**Friday, February 27, 2009
3:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 754, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY**

House Bill 754, House Draft 1 proposes to amend the membership of the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) Board by eliminating the ex officio non-voting membership of the Director of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, Director of Transportation, Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, and Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, and places them in an advisory group to HTA. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) does not support this measure.

The Legislature included the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources on the Hawaii Tourism Authority Board in recognition of the integral relationship between the visitor industry and Hawaii's natural and cultural resources. This provides a regular open line of communication at the policy level between the agencies most directly responsible for managing the visitor industry, and those natural and cultural resources that, in many cases, are what draw visitors to Hawaii. It is imperative to continue this relationship to allow the Department to serve on a decision-making body, rather than in an advisory capacity, to ensure that priority be given to preservation and protection of the natural and cultural resources while allowing for visual and active experiences. The Department notes that one of the goals in the Hawaii Tourism Strategic Plan 2005-2015 is "To respect, enhance and perpetuate Hawaii's natural resources to ensure a high level of satisfaction for residents and visitors." The importance of the State's natural and cultural resources can't be overstated, and to place the Department in an advisory capacity would effectively reduce the importance by removing it from the policy body.

LAURA H. THIELEN
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

RUSSELL Y. TSUJI
FIRST DEPUTY

KEN C. KAWAHARA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

HAWAII
STATE
FOUNDATION
ON
CULTURE
AND
THE ARTS

TESTIMONY OF THE
STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ON

February 27, 2009

H. B. 754, HD 1



RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY

Chair Oshiro and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you on H. B. 754, HD 1.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts opposes this bill.

The seat that I occupy on the Board of the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) was created to provide direct communication to the HTA Board on matters relating to cultural tourism and to build collaborative efforts between our agencies to infuse Hawaii's visitor industry with diverse artistic and cultural attractions. At the same time, the SFCA stands for preserving cultural integrity in products and experiences. This viewpoint needs to be represented while decisions are being discussed and courses of action determined.

While an advisory committee serves a purpose to allow input into the decision-making process, it is decidedly not as immediate and therefore has less authority and impact on matters at hand.

I do not believe the contributions of the State Foundation or those of the other State agencies serving in an ex-officio capacity should be subordinated or further removed from the HTA Board. Our participation

LINDA LINGLE
Governor

RUSS K. SAITO
Comptroller

LORI V. THOMAS
Chairperson

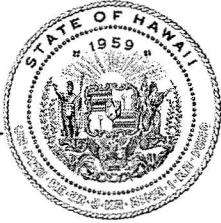
Commissioners:
SANDRA ALBANO
MARY BEGIER
BINA CHUN
MARIA JO FARINA
SANDRA FONG
TERI FREITAS GORMAN
DAVID E. HELDER
PETER ROSEGG

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Web Page: www.hawaii.gov/sfca

as Board members has been beneficial to both the HTA and our respective agencies. I hope that such relationships can continue.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR
MARSHA WIENERT
TOURISM LIAISON

TOURISM LIAISON

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Statement of
MARSHA WIENERT
Tourism Liaison

Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism
before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Friday, February 27, 2009

3:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

in consideration of

HB 754 HD1

RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY.

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee and Members of the House Committee on Finance.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) respectfully opposes HB 754 HD1, which removes the directors of DBEDT and transportation (DOT), the chairperson of the BLNR, and executive director of the state foundation on culture and the arts (SFCA) from the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) board and places them in an advisory group to the HTA.

We oppose HB 754 HD1 because we do not believe that there is a reason for changing the composition of the HTA board. We feel strongly that the makeup of the board has been effective and operating in a satisfactory manner for many years and the rationale for changing it is unclear.

We support the findings and recommendations in the State Tourism Strategic Plan (TSP) and agree that the DOT, DLNR, SFCA and DBEDT play an integral role in tourism's success. Participation by these entities on the HTA board ensures policy "buy-in" and that action plans identified will be taken into consideration in their respective agencies' plans and visions.

Therefore, we must strongly oppose HB 754 HD 1 because: 1) we do not believe that there is a justifiable reason to change the makeup of the HTA board of directors; 2) the State TSP identifies the important role that these entities play in tourism's success; and 3) tourism and our economy are facing many challenges and we must foster cooperation and coordination, now more than ever, between all state agencies. Now is not the time to hamper communications and involvement, on the policy level, between HTA and state agencies charged with ensuring the sustainability of tourism within our islands.

We request that HB 754 HD1 be held. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to voice our strong opposition to HB 754 HD1.

C L A S S I C R E S O R T S

February 25, 2009

Hawaii Finance Committee

Subject: HB 1763 & HB 754 HD 1


I am writing in opposition to these bills. In these extremely difficult economic times, now is not the time to re-invent the wheel by reorganizing the Hawaii Tourism Authority. Why not focus on increasing the funding for HTA so that it can continue promoting the State's most necessary industry.

The people that HB 754 would eliminate from the HTA are critical to the enhancement of the guest experience.

These bills are unnecessary and ill-conceived diversions in this critical period of tourism marketing.

Thank you for considering my input.

Sincerely,
Classic Resorts Limited



Jeff Halpin
President

P.S. Classic Resorts employs over 250 people in the visitor industry.

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2009 9:59 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: chris_resich@mcahawaii.com
Subject: Testimony for HB754 on 2/27/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for FIN 2/27/2009 3:00:00 PM HB754

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Chris Resich
Organization: Individual
Address: 615 Piikoi St., #1000 Hnl., HI., 96814
Phone: 589-5516
E-mail: chris_resich@mcahawaii.com
Submitted on: 2/26/2009

Comments:

Aloha Members of the House Finance Committee,

I represent MCA, Inc., Hawaii's largest travel destination and event management company. We employ 175 associates and operate on all Islands.

I am writing in opposition of HB 754. The HTA needs strong and direct representation not only from the visitor industry and public, but also the State government.

Aloha,
Chris Resich
President, CEO
MCA, Inc.
615 Piikoi St., Suite 1000
Hnl., HI., 96814
808-589-5516
The Quality Leader in Destination Management - A Decade in Leading the DMC Industry

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2009 10:47 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: Toni@a3h.org
Subject: Testimony for HB754 on 2/27/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for FIN 2/27/2009 3:00:00 PM HB754

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Toni Marie Davis
Organization: Activities & Attractions Association of Hawaii
Address: 1361 Makawao Ave Makawao, Hawaii 96768
Phone: 808-871-7947
E-mail: Toni@a3h.org
Submitted on: 2/26/2009

Comments:

Keeping the DOT, DLNR, DBEDT and other state entities on the HTA is a no brainer - please oppose this BILL. The intellectual capital that these people bring to the table is priceless. Now is NOT time for changes to our Tourism Authority funding or structure. Now is a time to sharpen pencils and work smarter!