

HISTORIC HAWAII FOUNDATION

VIA EMAIL: TCItestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

To: Rep. Joey Manahan, Chair
Rep. James Kunane Tokioka, Vice Chair
Committee on Tourism, Culture & International Affairs

From: Kiersten Faulkner
Executive Director, Historic Hawai'i Foundation

Committee Date: Saturday, February 7, 2009
9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 312

Subject: **Support of HB963, Relating to Works of Art Special Fund**

On behalf of Historic Hawai'i Foundation (HHF), I am writing to support HB963, which would allow expenditures from the works of art special fund for costs related to the acquisition, display, disposal, upkeep, maintenance, repair, and restoration of works of art, artifacts or historic buildings for 'Iolani Palace and Bishop Museum.

HHF supports efforts to preserve and protect the historic and cultural resources of the Hawaiian Islands. 'Iolani Palace and Bishop Museum are important institutions that protect, preserve and interpret collections of art and artifacts that tell the rich history and storied legacy of Hawai'i. The historic buildings that house these collections are also fundamental to understanding and celebrating Hawai'i's past and making it accessible and relevant to present and future generations.

By extending the works of art special fund to support the palace and the museum, these two institutions will have greater financial resources to support their important work. Many additional members of the public—both visitors and kama'āina—will be able to enjoy these special places. This is an appropriate use of the works of art special fund, and will greatly increase the numbers of people with access to products from the fund.

Besides being a public benefit in its own right, the investment in these important historic and cultural resources will also serve a general economic development goal. In a study into the economic benefits of historic preservation completed last year, HHF found that improving historic resources attracts cultural heritage tourism. The National Trust for Historic Preservation lists the economic benefits of heritage tourism as creation of jobs, increased tax revenues, diversification of the local economy, opportunities for public-private partnerships, increasing historic attraction revenues, preserving local traditions and culture, generating local investment in historic resources, and building community pride in its heritage. A 2002 study by the Travel Industry Association of America reported that heritage and cultural tourists consistently stay in a place longer and spend more money than other types of travelers.

Since 1974, Historic Hawai'i Foundation has been a statewide leader for historic preservation. HHF works to preserve Hawai'i's unique architectural and cultural heritage and believes that historic preservation is an important element in the present and future quality of life, economic viability and environmental sustainability of the state. HHF's policy and practice is to follow strict procedures on conflicts of interest for its board members and staff. HHF's board president has not participated in developing the organization's position or testimony on this matter due to his position as president of Bishop Museum.

