



LINDA LINGLE
Governor

LLOYD I. UNEBASAMI
Interim President and
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Testimony of
Lloyd I. Unebasami
Interim President and Chief Executive Officer
Hawai'i Tourism Authority

on
S.B. 271, S.D. 2
Relating to Tourism Emergency

House Committee on Tourism, Culture, & International Affairs
Monday, March 16, 2009
8:30 a.m.
Conference Room 312

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) supports S.B. 271, S.D. 2 which adds a national and/or global economic crisis to situations considered a tourism emergency.

The current law identifies a world conflict, terrorist threat, natural disaster, outbreak of disease, or other catastrophic events as a tourism emergency but is not clear that the Tourism Emergency Trust Fund could be used to respond to a national or global economic crisis such as the one we are in currently. The economic crisis is resulting in a substantial interruption of commerce and adversely affecting the welfare of the people of Hawai'i, but is not caused by the events described in the current law.

We also supported H.B. 960, which added regional or world-wide crisis, and may allow a response to a situation that may not be national but affects a region.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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LINDA LINGLE
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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 TOURISM, CULTURE & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
Monday, March 16, 2009
8:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

in consideration of
SB 271 SD2
RELATING TO TOURISM EMERGENCY.

Chair Manahan, Vice Chair Tokioka and Members of the House Committee on Tourism, Culture and International Affairs.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism supports SB 271 SD2, which would amend Section 201B-9 (a), Hawaii Revised Statutes, by adding a "national or global economic crisis" to situations considered when declaring a tourism emergency.

We strongly believe that the current world economic crisis has had the same effect that a world conflict, terrorist threat, natural disaster or outbreak of disease would have on Hawai'i's tourism industry and the state's economy. Therefore, allowing access to the tourism emergency fund for this reason is justifiable.

Once the tourism board asks the governor to declare a tourism emergency, the authority shall develop and implement measures to respond to the emergency. While we appreciate the specification of this bill that no action may be taken by the authority *without the governor's express approval* as it relates to a national or global economic crisis, we do not believe that this language is needed since the governor, in theory, has already given approval by declaring the emergency.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment on SB 271 SD2.

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AIRLINES COMMITTEE OF HAWAII



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March 16, 2009

The Honorable Joey Manahan, Chair
The Honorable James Tokioka, Vice Chair
House Committee on Tourism, Culture and International Affairs

Re: **SB 271 SD2 – RELATING TO TOURISM EMERGENCY – Support**
Committee on Tourism, Culture and International Affairs
Conference Room 312, 8:30 a.m. - March 16, 2009

Aloha Chair Manahan, Vice Chair Tokioka and Members of the Committee:

The Airlines Committee of Hawaii*, which is made up of 21 signatory air carriers that underwrite the Hawaii State Airport System, supports SB 271 SD2, Relating to Tourism Emergency.

The purpose of this bill is to ensure that tourism-related industries are able to appropriately respond to a national or global economic crisis that adversely impacts the tourism industry.

The Airlines Committee of Hawaii supports this legislation because it provides clarity and flexibility for the State to respond to national or global significant economic crisis, similar to the one we are experiencing today.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 271 SD2. We respectfully urge the committee to support this bill by moving it forward for further consideration.

**ACH members are Air Canada, Air New Zealand, Air Pacific, Alaska Airlines, All Nippon Airways, American Airlines, China Airlines, Continental Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Federal Express, go!, Hawaiian Airlines, Japan Airlines, Korean Air, Northwest Airlines, Philippine Airlines, Qantas Airways, United Airlines, United Parcel Service, US Airways, and Westjet.*

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**HAWAI'I HOTEL & LODGING
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31st Anniversary
Are You Walking???
May 16, 2009
(Always the 3rd Saturday in May)
www.charitywalkhawaii.org

**TESTIMONY OF MURRAY TOWILL
PRESIDENT
HAWAI'I HOTEL & LODGING ASSOCIATION
March 16, 2009
RE: SB 271 SD2 Relating to Tourism Emergency**

Good morning Chairman Manahan and members of the House Committee on Tourism, Culture and International Affairs. I am Murray Towill, President of the Hawai'i Hotel & Lodging Association.

The Hawai'i Hotel & Lodging Association is a statewide association of hotels, condominiums, timeshare companies, management firms, suppliers, and other related firms and individuals. Our membership includes over 170 hotels representing over 47,300 rooms. Our hotel members range from the 2,523 rooms of the Hilton Hawaiian Village to the 4 rooms of the Bougainvillea Bed & Breakfast on the Big Island.

The Hawai'i Hotel & Lodging Association supports SB 271 SD2 Relating to Tourism Emergency. This bill would clarify that the Tourism Emergency Trust Fund could be utilized for an economic disaster as well as a natural or terrorist created disaster as indicated in the current statute. Our experiences over the last year clearly indicate the value of this step.

The US and Hawaii are currently facing the most severe economic times since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Unfortunately, the current law does not appear to allow the HTA to access the \$5 million in this Fund. Some of the funds could greatly aid Hawaii's effort to attract visitors and keep our people working right now.

Mahalo again for this opportunity to testify.

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Representative Joey Manahan, Chair
Representative James Kunane Tokioka, Vice Chair
Committee on Tourism, Culture and International Affairs

HEARING Monday, March 16, 2009
 8:30 am
 Conference Room 312
 State Capitol, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: SB 271, SD2, Relating to Tourism Emergency

Chair Manahan, Vice Chair Tokioka, and Members of the Committee:

Retail Merchants of Hawaii (RMH) is a not-for-profit trade organization representing 200 members and over 2,000 storefronts, and is committed to support the retail industry and business in general in Hawaii.

RMH supports SB271, SD2, which adds a national or global economic crisis to situations considered a tourism emergency.

While the existing statute defines a number of occurrences and disasters as tourism emergencies, there is no specific reference to the current economic crisis in which we find our state, as well as our nation.

Our tourism retailers are experiencing double-digit decreases in sales. Most that had expansion plans in the works have canceled them; some have just shut their doors. Layoffs and declines in job growth are an unfortunate consequence.

We respectfully request your support for SB271, SD2. Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Carol Pregill, President