

 **SAWAYAKA HAWAII, INC.**

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April 13, 2012

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim
Chair, Senate Committee on Tourism & Government Operations
Hawai'i State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 210
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

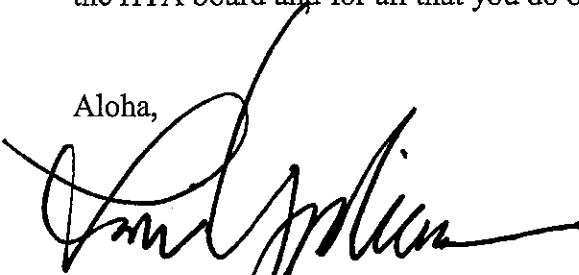
Dear Senator Kim:

This letter is to recommend Mr. Aaron J. Sala's nomination to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

The HTA board is comprised of members from diverse professional backgrounds, all who wear Hawai'i's hat for the common good of Hawai'i. In the short time that I have come to know Mr. Sala as I sit next to him at all our board meetings, I have found him to be a true gentleman and scholar. I sincerely believe that Mr. Sala has been a valuable member of the board because of his compassion for and expertise of the Hawaiian culture and should continue to serve on the board.

Senator, thank you for considering my endorsement of Mr. Sala to continue serving on the HTA board and for all that you do on behalf of the tourism industry.

Aloha,



LEON YOSHIDA
President & CEO

kim3 - Nancy

From: Heather Diamond [curator@iolanipalace.org]
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2012 10:35 AM
To: TSM Testimony
Subject: Testimony for Aaron Sala

Dear committee members,

I am writing to express my unreserved and enthusiastic support for Aaron Sala as a member of the HTA board. As a performer, scholar, and teacher with excellent communication skills and exceptional ability to work with communities and see the big picture objectively, Aaron will bring vision, commitment, intelligence, objectivity, and diplomacy to the HTA boards. He understands deeply the importance of infusing a Hawaiian ethos into tourism. He also understands and has proven his ability to successfully navigate the complexity of Hawaii's various local communities. His performance work in Japan and the Pacific and his consulting work with Disney's Auani Resort have equipped him to appreciate Hawaii's tourism in larger and multiple contexts. His new position at the University of Hawaii at Manoa music department will further develop his contributions to the larger community and to students who will be entering the work force. On a personal level, Aaron is kind, generous, culturally sensitive, and genuine. He is well-respected and loved in every community in which he has worked. I endorse him wholeheartedly, and am certain that HTA will be very fortunate to have him as a board member.

Sincerely,

Heather Diamond

Curator, Iolani Palace

--

Heather Diamond

Curator
FRIENDS OF 'IOLANI PALACE
808-522-0834
curator@iolanipalace.org

PO Box 2259
Honolulu, Hawaii 96804

TESTIMONY in support of confirmation: Aaron Sala
Hawaii Tourism Authority

April 15, 2012

TO: Senate Tourism Committee

During the short time that Aaron Sala has been a member of the Board of the Hawaii Tourism Authority he has demonstrated positive energy and commitment, and provided thoughtful insight into the ever-evolving visitor industry, the business community at-large, and importantly, the needs and desires of the of the people of Hawaii. The observations, points and questions he brings forth in discussion are original, fresh, and without the standard rhetoric one might expect in a visitor industry forum.

Although I have only become acquainted with Aaron as a result of his participation on the Board, I can attest that he is intelligent, respectful of others, able to articulate complex ideas, and grasps the complicated balance of serving the visitor while still being mindful to the culture of Hawaii. His background as an academic, his expertise in Hawaiian music and culture, and his work in the visitor industry combine to bring a balanced perspective to the mission of the HTA. His integrity and ability to evaluate all aspects of an issue is an inspirational standard and will be asset to the HTA.

I urge you to support the appointment of Aaron Sala to the Board of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Sincerely,

Patricia Ewing
Board Member
Hawaii Tourism Authority



The Hawai'i Academy of Recording Arts Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards

April 13, 2012

Hawai'i State Legislature
Twenty-Sixth Legislature
Regular Session of 2012

Greetings and Aloha,

This letter is in support of Aaron Sala in confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

There are a number of reasons why the Academy feels Aaron Sala is very well suited for Board of Directors with HTA. Aaron has established himself as an educator, a leader and award winning Hawaiian music composer/musician-as well as being very well known within Hawai'i's Hula community. Aaron is very well respected in each of these fields.

Hawaiian Culture, Arts & Culture and Community are named as some of the identifying 'Brand Experience' goals from the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. These are key factors that separate Hawai'i from any other travel destination. In each of these areas, Aaron has brought much to the advancement and perpetuation of Hawai'i's culture and community through his role as an educator and as a very well respected cultural practitioner and advisor.

The Hawai'i Academy of Recording Arts is very proud to endorse and recommend Aaron Sala for the Board of Directors position, and feel that he is-and will continue to be-an asset for the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

Mahalo and All the best,

Pali Ka'aihue
Vice-President
Hawai'i Academy of Recording Arts

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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WILLIAM MEYER

MARLENE SAI

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kim3 - Nancy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, April 14, 2012 8:44 PM
To: TSM Testimony
Cc: cha@tihat.com
Subject: Testimony for GM914 on 4/16/2012 2:00:00 PM

Testimony for TSM 4/16/2012 2:00:00 PM GM914

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: cha Thompson
Organization: Individual
E-mail: cha@tihat.com
Submitted on: 4/14/2012

Comments:

I wholeheartedly support the nomination of Aaron Sala. Having worked side by side with him over a period of 5 years I submit that he would be an asset to the Hawaii Tourism Authority. His knowledge and love for Hawaii is most evident. As a PhD student of ethnomusicology he is able to teach future generations the depth of Hawaiian music. As a musician he continues to share this w/ visitors and kamaaina alike with love and aloha.

kim3 - Nancy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2012 11:56 AM
To: TSM Testimony
Cc: keola@nahenahe.net
Subject: Testimony for GM914 on 4/16/2012 2:00:00 PM

Testimony for TSM 4/16/2012 2:00:00 PM GM914

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Joseph Donaghy
Organization: Individual
E-mail: keola@nahenahe.net
Submitted on: 4/12/2012

Comments:

Aloha kakou. I am writing to support the nomination of Aaron J. Sala to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, for a term to expire 6-30-2016.

I have known Aaron for nearly 10 years, in my capacity as a faculty member at UH-Hilo, as a member of the Hawai'i music industry, and as a governor of the Hawai'i Academy of Recording Arts. Aaron is quite simply one of the most passionate, intelligent, and responsible individuals I have encountered in the past ten years, and is exactly the kind of voice that the Hawai'i Tourism Authority needs. He possesses a far-reaching vision, the skill, and the education to help HTA plan and achieve its far-ranging goals for this critical sector of Hawai'i's economy.

If I can be of any further service in support of this nomination, please feel free to contact me directly.

kim3 - Nancy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2012 11:07 AM
To: TSM Testimony
Cc: rtrimil@hawaii.edu
Subject: Testimony for GM914 on 4/16/2012 2:00:00 PM
Attachments: Salā_confirmation_HTA.docx

Testimony for TSM 4/16/2012 2:00:00 PM GM914

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: Support *Aaron Sala*
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Rciardo D Trimillos PhD
Organization: Individual
E-mail: rtrimil@hawaii.edu
Submitted on: 4/12/2012

**testimony attached*

Comments:

I support the nomination of Mr. Aaron Salā, MA to the Board of Directors for the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. He is uniquely qualified for this position. He is an internationally-known and award-winning practitioner of nā mele o Hawai'i, both as a recording artist and as one active in the music industry. In addition he is an established academic and scholar for the music of Hawai'i who has been recently hired by the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to steward its program in Hawaiian music. He had a major role in developing the music component of the new Aulani Hotel, which belies his expertise in combining the knowledge of Hawaiian practice, knowledge of the tourist industry, and knowledge of academe into a meaningful, operating project.

He has a vision for Hawaiian music and its place in our community. He has credibility within various communities, notably the Hawaiian community, the arts community, and the service industry. He is thoughtful and articulate and will bring an important perspective to the HTA.

I have known him for some ten years in the academic and arts communities. He completed his MA in ethnomusicology under my supervision. I enthusiastically urge confirmation of his appointment to the Board.

kim3 - Nancy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, April 15, 2012 1:16 PM
To: TSM Testimony
Cc: richards@hawaii.edu
Subject: Testimony for GM914 on 4/16/2012 2:00:00 PM

Testimony for TSM 4/16/2012 2:00:00 PM GM914

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Brian Richardson
Organization: Individual
E-mail: richards@hawaii.edu
Submitted on: 4/15/2012

Comments:

I strongly support Aaron Sala's nomination to become a member of the Board of Directors for the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. I have worked with him at Windward Community College and have found him to be a great teacher and highly capable colleague. His knowledge of Hawaiian culture and music will be a great asset to the HTA.

Sincerely,

Brian Richardson
Dean of Academic Affairs, Division II
Windward Community College

kim3 - Nancy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, April 15, 2012 9:19 PM
To: TSM Testimony
Cc: lihansen@ksbe.edu
Subject: Testimony for GM914 on 4/16/2012 2:00:00 PM

Testimony for TSM 4/16/2012 2:00:00 PM GM914

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Elizabeth L. Hansen
Organization: Individual
E-mail: lihansen@ksbe.edu
Submitted on: 4/15/2012

Comments:

Because of his background as an academic at Windward Community College and his work experience in the Tourist Industry as well as the Hawaiian Community Industry, I would like to submit for your consideration and confirmation, the following nomination to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority: Aaron J. Sala for a term to expire 6/30/2016.

Hawai'i State Legislature
Senate Committee on Tourism
Monday, April 16, 2012
2:00 p.m., Conference Room 224
State Capitol

Re: GM 914 Aaron Sala for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority Board of Directors

Aloha Honorable Vice President and Chair Donna Mercado Kim and members of the Tourism Committee:

I write in strong support of the favorable consideration and confirmation of gubernatorial nominee, Mr. Aaron Sala, to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) Board of Directors.

Aaron Sala is an extremely talented, intelligent and well respected leader in music and Hawaiian language and cultural practices. He is a true renaissance man, having traveled to study opera in New York and now enthralling his students as a music instructor at the Windward Community College and Hawaii's Youth Opera Chorus. You will not find a better role model and inspiration for our Hawaiian youth than this kanaka maoli that was raised and greatly influenced by his tutu in the old Hawaiian way.

I had the honor and privilege of traveling with Mr. Sala in 2011 as part of a Hawaiian delegation invited to attend the wonderful occasion of the opening of Mātaatua Wharenui in Whakatane, Aotearoa attended by thousands of other Polynesian peoples. In true chicken skin style, Mr. Sala led the musical and cultural protocol for our group consisting of native speakers from Ni'ihau and others, conducting the oratory as well as the musical performance with extreme humility, dignity and aloha.

As a Native Hawaiian cultural consultant that has worked in Waikīkī for many years, I know that this is a critical time for tourism in Hawaii. Mr. Sala will be an exemplary addition to the HTA Board as he will provide valuable input and guidance on important tourism related issues from an enlightened Hawaiian and Polynesian perspective. He is committed to the respectful and accurate portrayal of the host culture and the Hawaiian language and he will honor this responsibility or kuleana, and do what is right in the important deliberations that come before the HTA.

I strongly urge your favorable consideration of Mr. Aaron Sala to the HTA Board.
Mahalo nui loa a me a hui hou.

Lani Ma'a Lapilio
Principal/Owner, Aukahi