



HAWAII TOURISM
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Neil Abercrombie
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Mike McCartney
President and Chief Executive Officer

Testimony of
Mike McCartney
President and Chief Executive Officer
Hawaii Tourism Authority
on
H.R. 130/H.C.R 170
**Urging the Congress of the United States to Enact the Visa Improvements
to Stimulate International Tourism to the United States of America Act**

House Committee on International Affairs
House Committee on Tourism
Monday, April 2, 2012
10:30 a.m.
Conference Room 312

The Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) strongly supports H.R. 130 and H.C.R. 170, urging the Congress to enact Visa Improvements to Stimulate International Tourism to the United States of America Act (VISIT-USA Act).

Since the passage of the Travel Promotion Act of 2007, the federal government has established the goal of increasing international travel to the United States, and establishing a nationally coordinated promotion program that involves changes to security policies and create public-private partnerships to conduct a nationally coordinated campaign to attract foreign visitors. The VISIT-USA Act reduces barriers for international visitors by speeding up visa filings for applicants, issuing a 3-year visa for certain foreign investors, and offering a 3-year renewal term.

International visitors are an important part of Hawaii's visitor industry, making up about 30 percent of visitor arrivals and contributing about \$3.7 billion in expenditures to the industry. An important component in the expansion of this market is creating a more efficient visa processing system.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer these comments.