

SB 108



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Tourism and
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs
Thursday, Feb. 10, 2011, 1:15 pm, Conference Room 224
By Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor
and Juanita C. Liu, Interim Dean
School of Travel Industry Management (TIM)
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 108 RELATING TO NATIVE HAWAIIAN CULTURE

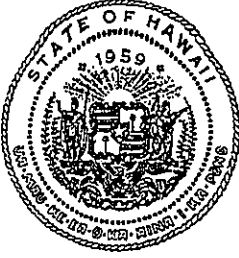
The University supports this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR approved budget. SB 108 proposes to establish a comprehensive Hawaiian cultural resources inventory accessible to visitor industry providers, employees, visitors, cultural practitioners and residents. As such, it represents a logical extension for TIM School's previous partnerships with Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association (NaHHA) on several worthwhile projects, including the development of the Ola Hawai'i curriculum and training of 21 Hawaiian cultural tourism experts funded by federal grants. Another joint TIM-NaHHA project on a Hawaiian cultural bridge training program for Korean and Chinese travel agents funded by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority was recently completed.

The TIM School has also incorporated Hawaiian cultural values into its curriculum. The original course on management by Hawaiian cultural values was taught by the late Dr. George Kanehele. The course has since been an integral part of TIM curriculum for the past decade in helping prepare TIM students to be sensitive and knowledgeable about host cultural values.

Dr. Kanehele called tourism "the keeper of the culture," but only if the authentic culture is nurtured in order to preserve a destination's "sense of place." Thus, this bill will help to ensure that the goal of cultural preservation is perpetuated by creating a much needed mechanism to steward our unique cultural resources for Hawai'i tourism. It would make it easier for marketers to promote cultural products, make quality cultural products more accessible to visitors, and promote authentic representations of Hawaiian culture by fostering pride and motivation among residents and youth.

Everyone in Hawai'i has benefitted from a half century of Hawai'i tourism, one of the best known tourism brands in the world because of its unique culture. But Hawai'i is now a mature tourism destination that is subject to many forces of cultural erosion. Our research has shown that Hawai'i residents value cultural tourism. Therefore, an investment in a cultural database will help perpetuate the essence of Hawai'i tourism into the future. Consolidating and disseminating usable information will go a long way to strengthening the knowledge base of Hawaiian cultural resources statewide.

Thus, the TIM School would be pleased to collaborate with the other named agencies and relevant parties, since it would also be a valuable resource for our own curriculum, training programs and projects for students, faculty and professionals.



NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor

MIKE MCCARTNEY
President and
Chief Executive Officer

Hawai'i Tourism Authority

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Testimony of
Mike McCartney
President and Chief Executive Officer
Hawai'i Tourism Authority
on
S.B. 108
Relating to Native Hawaiian Culture

Senate Committee on Tourism
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs
Thursday, February 10, 2011
1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 224

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) offers the following comments on S.B. 108, which directs the HTA to contract with a nonprofit organization for the development and maintenance of a comprehensive Hawaiian cultural resources inventory database.

In 2008, the HTA funded the Hawaiian Cultural Resources Directory, which was created by Hawaii Maoli, and is actively promoted by the Hawaiian civic clubs. It is an online resource that is available at <http://kumuike.org>, and is meant to provide quick access to Hawaiian cultural resources by listing the individuals, organizations, and business that are dedicated to perpetuating the traditions and culture of Hawaii.

The HTA policy making board is empowered to make and execute contracts to engage the services of consultants to carry-out its functions under the law, subject to the availability of funds. The board has adopted the Tourism Strategic Plan, which includes in its objectives strengthening the relationship between the visitor industry and the Hawaiian community, nurturing the Hawaiian culture, and supporting Hawaiian programs and cultural practitioners, craftsmen, musicians and artists. As such, any nonprofit organization who engages in promoting Hawaiian culture that proposes to develop and maintain a comprehensive cultural resources inventory database can now submit a proposal to the HTA for such a program.

We do not feel that S.B. 108 is necessary, because what it attempts to achieve is already possible under the existing law.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.



SB 108
RELATING TO NATIVE HAWAIIAN CULTURE
Senate Committee on Tourism
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

February 10, 2011

1:15 p.m.

Room 224

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers the following comments on SB108, which requires the Hawai'i Tourism Authority to contract a 501(c)(3) private nonprofit to develop and maintain a comprehensive Hawaiian cultural resources inventory database.

OHA understands the value of having a central database of cultural resources to help promote the unique Native Hawaiian heritage of Hawai'i to potential tourists around the world. Further, we acknowledge that this database would not only help tourists experience more authentic Hawaiian cultural activities, but it would also assist Native Hawaiian businesses expand their client-bases to include more visitors.

However, we have strong reservations about the bill's proposed funding mechanism for the database. SB108 would bar an unspecified general fund appropriation from being expended unless matched dollar-for-dollar by OHA. Please note that the OHA trustees are vested with exclusive authority to direct the expenditure of OHA's trust fund resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.



February 9, 2011

State of Hawaii
Twenty-Sixth Legislature, 2011
Senate Committee on Tourism
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs
Submitted Via E-Mail: TSMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony In Support of SB No. 108
SB 108 Hearing Thursday, February 10, 2011, 1:15 pm, Conf Room 224
Hawaiian Cultural Resources Database; Hawaii Tourism Authority, Appropriation

Aloha e Honorable Committee Chairpersons, Senator Donna Mercado Kim and Senator Brickwood Galuteria,

For reasons clearly articulated in the current draft language of Senate Bill No. 108, I submit this letter of support on behalf of the Staff and Board Members of the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association.

To the credit of various tourism business operators, tremendous strides have been made to integrate Hawaiian culture into their respective organizational platforms. Likewise, an increasing number of Hawaiian cultural organizations are partnering with tourism-related businesses to produce community-based visitor experiences that distinguish themselves through authenticity.

This renewed trend and symbiotic relationship between the Hawaii Visitor Industry and the Hawaiian community must continue to grow, and the proposed Hawaiian Cultural Resources Database will play an essential role in monitoring this growth and making this information available to a marketplace that is seeking more authentic experiences.

We ask all the distinguished members of this joint committee hearing to please vote in support of SB 108.

Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John De Fries".

John De Fries
Board President