



**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. 2642, S.D. 1**  
**Making an Appropriation for the Hawai'i Tourism Authority**

House Committee on Tourism  
Monday, March 12, 2012  
9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 312

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) strongly supports S.B. 2642, S.D. 1, which makes an appropriation to the HTA to take advantage of federal initiatives to increase international travel and tourism in the United States.

The Travel Promotion Act of 2009, was enacted to encourage public-private partnerships to promote international travel to the United States. The recent announcement by President Obama and the initiatives of the federal government to make it easier for international travelers to Hawai'i through improved visa processing and visa waivers will be highly beneficial to Hawai'i's tourism economy and advance efforts to help provide up to an estimated 154,000 jobs.

S.B. 2642, makes an appropriation to the HTA for the development and implementation of programs to take advantage of the expanded visa programs and international travel opportunities as a result of initiatives of the federal government.

We appreciate the committee's consideration in helping us to improve Hawai'i's opportunity in Asia.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.



**HAWAII LODGING & TOURISM**

**ASSOCIATION**

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**TESTIMONY OF MUFI HANNEMANN  
PRESIDENT & CEO  
HAWAII LODGING & TOURISM ASSOCIATION**

**March 12, 2012**

**RE: SB 2642 SD1 Making an Appropriation to the Hawaii Tourism Authority**

Good morning Chairperson Brower and members of the House Committee on Tourism. I am Mufi Hannemann, President & CEO of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association (fka The Hawaii Hotel & Lodging Association).

The Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association is a statewide association of hotels, condominiums, timeshare companies, management firms, suppliers, and other related firms and individuals. Our membership includes over 150 lodging properties representing over 48,000 rooms. Our lodging members range from the 2,680 rooms of the Hilton Hawaiian Village to the 4 rooms of the Bougainvillea Bed & Breakfast on the Big Island.

The Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association supports Senate Bill 2642 SD1, which will appropriate \$2 million to the Hawaii Tourism Authority to promote international travel to the Hawaiian Islands.

The Obama administration's focus on international tourism, through the streamlining of visa waivers, marketing support, and key administrative changes, combined with the ongoing work of the Hawaii Tourism Authority and its public and private sector partners, should result in an increase in visitors to our shores. Other destinations will be competing in this same market, to be sure, and providing this financial support to build on Hawaii's early momentum would be welcome and necessary.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.



Representative Tom Brower, Chair  
Representative James Kunane Tokioka, Vice Chair  
Committee on Tourism

Representative Karen Awana, Chair  
Representative Mark Hashem, Vice Chair  
Committee on International Affairs

HEARING      Monday, March 12, 2012  
                  9:30 am  
                  Conference Room 312  
                  State Capitol, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE:      **SB2642, SD1 Making an Appropriation for the Hawaii Tourism Authority**

Chairs Brower and Awana, Vice Chairs Tokioka and Hashem, and Members of the Committees:

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

**RMH strongly supports SB2646, SD1**, which appropriates an unspecified amount for the Hawaii Tourism Authority for fiscal year 2012-2013 for initiatives to take advantage of expanded visa programs and increased travel opportunities for international visitors to Hawaii.

For over three years now, the retail industry has been developing and implementing training programs to address a projected arrival of visitors from China and other Asian nations. The announcement that the 2011 APEC Summit was to be held in Honolulu created great excitement and expectation.

The reality is that the anticipated level of retail activity from APEC did not materialize. However, a survey of the RMH retail members revealed the unanimous consensus that APEC was a very positive investment in our future, a showcase for business travel as well holiday destinations for the attendees who might not have considered either.

We are encouraged that the recent signing by President Barack Obama of the Executive Order establishing "Visa and Foreign Visitor Processing Goals and the Task Force on Travel and Competitiveness" and initiatives in Congress will help increase travel and tourism to Hawaii. Greater investment by the Hawaii Tourism Authority clearly will be money well-spent.

We respectfully request that you pass SB2642, SD1 with the amendment to insert an amount of at least **\$2,000,000 per year through fiscal year 2015**. Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Carol Pregill, President



**Testimony to the House Committee on Tourism and International Affairs  
Conference Room 312, State Capitol  
Monday, March 12, 2012; 9:30 a.m.**

**RE: SENATE BILL NO. 2642 SD1 RELATING TO HAWAII TOURISM  
AUTHORITY**

Chairs Brower and Awana, Vice Chairs Tokioka and Hashem, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii supports SB 2642 SD1, relating to the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing more than 1,000 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. The organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

This measure increases the allocation of the transient accommodations tax revenue for the Hawaii Tourism Authority to be expended for development and implementation of initiatives to take advantage of expanded visa programs and increased travel opportunities for international visitors to Hawaii.

The Chamber understands the value and significance of the tourism industry to Hawaii's economy. Any decline in this sector harms all businesses, including small businesses that rely on tourism. The priorities are to increase visitors, create jobs and put our people back to work.

As a result, this bill will provide a mechanism for HTA to explore options to attract visitors to Hawaii as a destination for training, meetings, major product purchases, business development, as well as leisure purposes. The pursuit of these opportunities will lead to increased jobs and economic growth in Hawaii, especially with the advantage of our strategic location within the Asia-Pacific region and the growth and attraction of our emerging industries.

The Chamber of Commerce supports SB 2642 SD1 and urges the committee's passage of this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments.

-----Original Message-----

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
[mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]  
Sent: Sunday, March 11, 2012 7:56 AM  
To: TOUtestimony  
Cc: toni@a3h.org  
Subject: Testimony for SB2642 on 3/12/2012 9:30:00 AM

Testimony for TOU/INT 3/12/2012 9:30:00 AM SB2642

Conference room: 312  
Testifier position: Support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Antoinette M. Davis  
Organization: A3H  
E-mail: toni@a3h.org  
Submitted on: 3/11/2012

Comments: