

200 Akamainui Street
Mililani, Hawaii 96789-3999
Tel: 808-625-2100
Fax: 808-625-5888



Senator David Ige, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
State Capitol, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: SB2642, Making an Appropriation for the Hawaii Tourism Authority - **SUPPORT**
Friday, February 24, 2012, 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 211

Aloha Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Oceanic Time Warner Cable ("Oceanic"), which provides a diverse selection of entertainment, information, and communication services to over 425,000 Hawaii households, schools and businesses and currently employs more than 1,000 highly-trained individuals, we appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of SB2642.

APEC 2011 helped cast Hawaii's visitor industry in a different light to demonstrate that world-class businesses, projects and innovations can be launched in our state.

As a member of the APEC 2011 Host Committee, Oceanic supports this appropriation providing \$2 million for the Hawaii Tourism Authority to leverage expanded visa programs and increase travel opportunities for international visitors to Hawaii.

With President Barrack Obama's recent Executive Order 13597, Establishing Visa and Foreign Visitor Processing Goals and the Task Force on Travel and Competitiveness, Oceanic is confident that this bill which appropriates additional funds to HTA is an investment toward Hawaii's economic success.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this matter.

Sincerely,

Bob Barlow
President of Oceanic Time Warner Cable



Senator David Ige, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways & Means
State Capitol, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

HEARING Friday, February 24, 2012
 9:00 am
 Conference Room 224

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

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

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, which appropriates \$2,000,000 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. Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Carol Pregill, President

The Twenty-Sixth Legislature
Regular Session of 2012

THE SENATE
Committee on Ways and Means
Senator David Y. Ige, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
State Capitol, Conference Room 211
Friday, February 24, 2012; 9:00 a.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON
S.B. 490, SD2, RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY
AND
S.B. 2642, MAKING AN APPROPRIATE FOR THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY**

The ILWU supports S.B. 490, SD2, which increases the allocation of the transient accommodations tax revenue for the Hawaii Tourism Authority from \$69 million to \$71 million until June 30, 2015 and requires \$2 million 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, and S.B. 2642, which appropriates \$2 million to HTA for the expanded visa program.

It appears that both bills are calling for \$ 2 million to be used to take advantage of the recently signed executive order to increase travel to the U.S. We fully support providing funds to HTA for this program, whichever bill becomes the vehicle.

The ILWU represents roughly 10,000 members working in the tourism industry in Hawaii. We are well aware of the impact that more visitors will have on the industry, our members, and Hawaii's economy overall. While most international visitors currently vacation on Oahu and in Waikiki, most of our members work on the neighbor islands. However, we believe that visitors will be encouraged to visit all of the islands, not just Oahu, to take advantage of the natural beauty and hospitality available throughout Hawaii.

The ILWU urges passage of either S.B. 490, SD2 or S.B. 2642. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these important measures.