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Neil Abercrombie
Governor

Mike McCartney
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**Testimony of
Mike McCartney
President and Chief Executive Officer
Hawai'i Tourism Authority
on
H.R. 70
Requesting the Hawaii tourism authority with Cooperation from the
Department of Health and the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau
to improve Marketing and Visitor Information Strategies to
Attract Disabled Travelers to Hawaii
House Committee on Tourism
Monday, March 25, 2013
10:00am
Conference Room 312**

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) supports the intent of H.R. 7, which requests the HTA to cooperate with the Department of Health and the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau to attract disabled travelers to Hawaii.

Based on the Hawaiian practice of ho'okipa, of greeting and welcoming strangers, the marketing and promotional programs of the HTA and it's marketing partners do not focus on any particular segment of the travel market, but welcome all travelers. Based on the Tourism Strategic Plan's strategic initiative of developing marketing programs that contribute to sustainable economic growth, one of HTA's two key marketing points is to target visitors who spend a significant share of their disposable income on indulgent or active travel. To the extent that the disabled traveler fits into this category, the marketing program reaches out to that traveler.

If HTA's allocation of transient accommodations tax revenues into the Tourism Special Fund is increased, as we have proposed, we could expand our marketing efforts to include other markets such as the disabled travelers market. To the extent that our current resources will allow, we will work with the parties involved to connect with the appropriate industry partners.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer these comments.



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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March 25, 2013

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

House Resolution 70 – Requesting the Hawaii Tourism Authority with Cooperation from the Department of Health and the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau to Improve Marketing and Visitor Information Strategies to Attract Disabled Travelers to Hawaii

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports House Resolution 70 – Requesting the Hawaii Tourism Authority with Cooperation from the Department of Health and the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau to Improve Marketing and Visitor Information Strategies to Attract Disabled Travelers to Hawaii. We commend the Hawaii Tourism Authority and the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau for understanding and acknowledging travelers with disabilities as a viable pool of people who will enhance business in Hawaii.

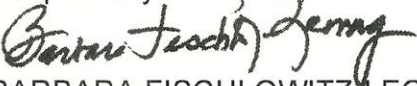
Since the mid-1980s, DCAB noted that the number of travelers with disabilities to Hawaii was increasing and published an “Aloha Guide for Travelers with Disabilities.” This publication provided information about various hotels and accessibility features of the hotel. Since that time, the document and information has evolved into a “Travelers Tips for Persons with Disabilities” and is posted online on the DCAB website at <http://hawaii.gov/health/dcab/travel/>.


DCAB is willing to share our resources toward improving information made available to travelers with disabilities and have the following suggestions for amending the resolution:

- Out of respect for the individual, we suggest using “people-first” language, as it acknowledges the person first and not the disability. Anywhere in the text of the bill that indicates “disabled traveler” or “disabled travelers” should be amended to “traveler with a disability;”
- Page 2, line 3 amend the wording to read “to address the person’s changing physical needs;”
- Page 2, line 6 amend the wording to read “accommodating travelers with disabilities, including [~~disabled~~] accessible...”;
- Page 2, line 40, please add the Director of the Department of Health and Executive Director of the Disability and Communication Access Board to receive a certified copy of this resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,


BARBARA FISCHLOWITZ-LEONG
Chairperson


FRANCINE WAI
Executive Director