

SB 679

Testimony

Measure Title: RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND ARTS.

Report Title: Appropriation; State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (\$)

Description: Appropriations funds to DAGS for the state foundation on culture and the arts.

Companion:

Package: None

Current Referral: TEC, WAM

Introducer(s): ESPERO, Gabbard, Wakai

**TESTIMONY OF
THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS
TO
THE COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY AND THE ARTS
ON
JANUARY 31, 2013**

S. B. 679

Chair Wakai and members of the Committee, I am Eva Laird Smith, executive director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, and I am pleased to support S. B. 679 provided its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, like other state agencies, has contributed its share of General funds to meet the demands of a balanced budget during these years of economic recession. In 2010, we lost 11 positions – more than a third of our staff – and all of our salary support in General funds. This year we stand to lose an additional 8% in Federal funds, bringing that decrease to \$100,000 in two years.

We respectfully appeal to you to help us sustain our support for the arts and cultural life of our communities by restoring a modest amount in General funds for the following purposes:

1. Enabling seventeen (17) Title I schools to participate in the Artists in the Schools Program, which brings a professional artist into the classroom to support subjects upheld by curriculum standards;

2. Completing educational outreach of a cultural project to preserve the art of kapamaking by continuing a partnership between the SFCA, the Edith Kanaka'ole Foundation, and the University of Hawai'i; and
3. Support of community funding for arts and cultural programming statewide through the Biennium Grants Program, which has lost 67% of its funding. The Biennium Grants Program provides support for community projects and grass roots organizations throughout our islands through its heritage and preservation grants, presentation awards, and arts education grants.

All of these projects are at the core of SFCA programming and support to our communities. Hardest hit are the neighbor islands and small, grassroots nonprofits. Our cultural resources must share their knowledge and skill before Hawaiian culture is lost.

We are compelled to restructure our grants programs to enable our funds to reach organizations in rural and urban areas; diverse communities; and small and established arts organizations. Our nonprofits, cultural, and community leaders look to government to demonstrate its support of their efforts, especially in view of the hardships they have weathered in the lean years.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you.