



**HAWAII TOURISM**  
AUTHORITY

Hawai'i Convention Center  
1801 Kalanikaʻa Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815  
kelepona | tel. 808 973 2255  
kelepona | fax 808 973 2253  
kahua pa'a | web hawaii-tourism-authority.org

**Neil Abercrombie**  
*Governor*

**Mike McCartney**  
*President and Chief Executive Officer*

**Testimony of  
Mike McCartney  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
On  
S.B. 879  
Relating to Witnesses  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Wednesday, January 30, 2013  
9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 018**

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) supports S.B. 879, which proposes to increase the per diem payments for out-of-state witnesses in criminal cases.

One of the nine strategic initiatives of HTA's Tourism Strategic Plan is Safety and Security, with the goal of achieving a safe Hawaii visitor experience and providing assistance to visitors who are victims of crimes, accidents, and other adversities. Key to achieving this goal is supporting and strengthening criminal deterrence and law enforcement. This includes allocating more resources for law enforcement personnel and resources for those involved in the legal system. The current per diem of \$110 per day discourages many out-of-state witnesses, many of whom are tourists from returning to testify in state court. The per diem amount and the witness fee of \$20 are supposed to cover the witness' lodging, meals, ground transportation, and other expenses.

Providing adequate resources for law enforcement agencies and tougher sentencing law to keep repeat offenders off the streets are not effective if key witnesses do not return to testify.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer these comments.