

**Board of Directors of the Hawaii
Tourism Authority**

GOV.MSG.NO.697

Denise Yamaguchi

George R. Ariyoshi
999 Bishop Street, 23rd Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

April 7, 2014

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GMR967 - SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2018.

Dear Chairman Gilbert Kahele and Members of the Committee,

I strongly support the intent of this message to nominate DENISE YAMAGUCHI for membership on the Board of Directors for the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

The perpetual friendship that my wife and I have shared with Denise goes back to her parents and grandparents. We have watched Denise mature and become a productive citizen and member of society and can first hand attest to her honesty, integrity, and overall concern and love for Hawaii. Values instilled in her by previous generations.

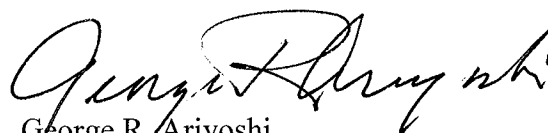
My wife, Jean, and I have known Denise on a personal level since her childhood and have had her join us at our home on many occasions.

As Development Officer at Bishop Museum, she proved herself to be a visionary as well, and helped to bring Bishop Museum to where it is today.

As such, I would urge your confirmation of Mrs. Yamaguchi to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, and would be happy to address any questions you may have concerning this recommendation. I may be reached by e-mail at kyahiku@wik.com, by phone at (808) 544-6765, or by fax at (808) 544-8398.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha,


George R. Ariyoshi

GRA:khy



SENATE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

Monday, April 7, 2014

2:00 PM

Conference Room 229

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Honolulu, HI 96813

TESTIMONY OF AVI MANNIS ON BEHALF OF HAWAIIAN AIRLINES

RE: GM 697 NOMINATION OF DENISE YAMAGUCHI TO HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY

Aloha Chair Kahele, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of Denise Yamaguchi's candidacy for director of the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA). Hawaiian Airlines has worked closely with Denise since the creation of the Hawaii Food and Wine Festival. She has impressed me with the passion and skill with which she has built that festival to become a major destination event. Denise has demonstrated strategic insight, a deep understanding of Hawaii's visitor industry, and a strong ability to bring together stakeholders from multiple sectors in support of a common cause.

Denise shares Hawaiian's vision of bringing more of the best of Hawaii to both visitors and locals. She has worked tirelessly to put Hawaii on the map as a world-class culinary destination and to highlight the richness of our agricultural industries. We believe she would contribute substantially to the long-term, sustainable development of our visitor industry as a director of the HTA.

Aloha,

Avi Mannis
Vice President, Marketing
Hawaiian Airlines, Inc.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

**THE HONORABLE GILBERT KAHELE, CHAIR
THE HONORABLE GILBERT S.C. KEITH-AGARAN, VICE CHAIR**

**GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 697: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to
the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority,
Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2018.**

Testimony in Support

**By Glenn K. Y. Hong
President, Young Brothers, Limited
and
P. Roy Catalani
Vice President, Young Brothers, Limited**

April 7, 2014, 2:00 pm, Conference Room 229

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Governor's Message 697 submitting Governor Abercrombie's nomination of **Denise Yamaguchi to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA or HTA Board)**. **We submit this testimony in support of Ms. Yamaguchi's nomination.**

As Hawai'i's state tourism agency, the HTA is charged with using its research, industry, and marketing expertise to develop and implement the state's strategic tourism marketing plan. The Legislature, in section 201B-2 of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes, states the importance of Board members having knowledge, experience, and expertise in such areas as visitor industry management, marketing, promotion, and transportation. We have worked with Ms. Yamaguchi in the transportation (and agricultural) sectors, but her experience also includes many years of service in professional positions relating to the visitor industry, promotion, planning and governmental affairs. She currently serves as Executive Director for the Hawai'i Agricultural Foundation and also serves as the Principal of Denise Hayashi Consulting (DHC), LLC, a fundraising and governmental affairs consulting practice. Prior to founding DHC, Ms. Yamaguchi was the Director of Community Relations for NCL America where she oversaw government and community relations, particularly on the neighbor islands. From 1998 to 2005, Yamaguchi held the position of Vice President of Corporate and Public Affairs for Bishop Museum where she provided strategic direction for revenue generating operations.

Ms. Yamaguchi's strong professional background in the private sector makes her an excellent choice for the HTA Board. We believe this background will make her a valued and productive member of the Board and respectfully request that you recommend approval of her nomination to the Board.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on and support Governor's Message 697.



HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM
A S S O C I A T I O N

Testimony of George Szigeti
President & CEO
HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM ASSOCIATION
Committee on Tourism
Hearing on April 7, 2014, 2:00 p.m.
GM697

Dear Chair Kahele, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee. My name is George Szigeti and I am the President and CEO of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association.

The Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association (HLTA) is a statewide association of hotels, condominiums, timeshare companies, management firms, suppliers, and other related firms that benefit from and strengthen Hawai'i's visitor industry. Our membership includes over 150 lodging properties, representing over 48,000 rooms, and approximately 470 other Allied members. The lodging industry alone employs over 38,000 workers across the state of Hawai'i. As part of the broader visitor industry – which employs 1/6 of all workers and 1/5 of those in the private sector, and generated \$14.5 billion in visitor spending in 2013 – we represent one of Hawai'i's largest industries and a critical sector of the economy.

On behalf of HLTA, permit me to offer testimony regarding GM697, which offers for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2018.

HLTA **supports** Mrs. Denise Yamaguchi in her nomination to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. Mrs. Yamaguchi is a proven business leader and is well respected in the community. She has shown to conduct herself with integrity and in a professional manner, which has earned her the respect of her peers, friends, and the community.

Given her focus and strong initiative, we believe Mrs. Yamaguchi will be a strong asset to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

The Honorable Gilbert Kahele
Chairman
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Regarding: Testimony in support of GMR967, submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, gubernatorial nominee, Denise Hayashi Yamaguchi, for a term to expire June 30, 2018.

Dear Chairman Kahele and members of the Committee:

I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to offer my wholehearted support of the confirmation of Denise Hayashi Yamaguchi to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. My name is Gerald Glennon and I am the Managing Director of The Modern Honolulu.

I have known and worked with Denise on hospitality related initiatives for over a decade. As Director of Operations and General Manager of Halekulani for a period of twelve years, we frequently collaborated on fundraising and promotional efforts to support everything from the Farm Bureau Foundation to ongoing development of the culinary programs in our community college system, particularly the soon to be built Culinary Institute of the Pacific. Most recently, as Managing Director of The Modern Honolulu, she and I have worked together on two of the last three Hawaii Food & Wine Festivals as our property is one of the few principle sponsors and venues for this event. Under Denise's leadership, this event has in short order been counted among the most important events of its kind nationally. The exposure it has provided our state both nationally and internationally has been tremendous.

Denise is a consummate professional, passionate and committed to the success of Hawaii's tourism image not only through culinary channels but as an ambassador of aloha for our destination. You would be fortunate to have Denise as a member of the Tourism Authority Board of Directors. She has my utmost respect and support. I am grateful to be able to offer my support of her nomination.

With respect,

Gerald Glennon
Managing Director
The Modern Honolulu
1775 Ala Moana Boulevard
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815
808-943-5800



PACIFIC GUARDIAN LIFE

DOUGLAS M. GOTO
Executive Vice President

April 5, 2014

The Honorable Senator Gilbert Kahele, Chair
Committee on Tourism
State Senate
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 229
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Via email: TSMtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

Re: Testimony in Support of GMR697, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-18

Dear Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee:

My name is Douglas Goto. I am the Executive Vice President of Pacific Guardian Life Insurance Company, and am a director of the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association. I am honored to have the opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of Denise Yamaguchi to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Denise has long been a tireless and passionate supporter of many worthy activities benefiting our local community. In recent years, I have observed Denise's skillful and successful efforts as Executive Director of the Hawaii Food and Wine Festival, which over a short period of three years, has blossomed to become an event with a rapidly growing following of visitors to Hawaii. With her leadership and vision, the Festival has successfully grown to include the neighbor islands, which this year will include Maui and Hawaii Island. In addition to the promotional and economic benefits of the Festival, net proceeds from the Festival have been directed to many worthy local community organizations.

I have known Denise for many years and have admired her innovative skills, her ability to collaborate with diverse constituents, her integrity, and high level of ethical standards. She is a superlative representative of Hawaii wherever her travels take her.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Denise Yamaguchi's nomination to the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas M. Goto

The Honorable Gilbert Kahele
Chairman
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Testimony in Support of GMR967, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2018.

Dear Chairman Kahele and members of the committee:

Please allow me the opportunity to testify in support of Denise Hayashi Yamaguchi for a position on the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. My name is Sean M. Morris, and I am president of Advertising Associates International, LLC and S. Morris and Associates, LLC, two companies representing the marketing, advertising, and media/celebrity relations interests of hotels, shopping centers, retailers, restaurateurs, and events operated in the State of Hawaii.

I continue to have the pleasure of working with Denise Yamaguchi on the Hawaii Food & Wine Festival as an Asian public relations executive. Over the past four years assisting the festival in its outreach to Asia, I have seen the Hawaii Food & Wine Festival flourish to become a premier international event for Hawaii, one that benefits several industries simultaneously—travel and tourism, agriculture, food and beverage, and education, to name a few. Through her resolve as the Executive Director, Denise cultivated a three-island, destination-driven event that lured over six dozen celebrity chefs, a few dozen media and about 5,000 attendees, attracting visitors internationally from Japan, Taiwan, Korea, China, Oceania, Canada and Germany, as well as domestically from California, New York and Texas during a shoulder period for tourism.

Through the years, I have become friends with Denise, and even consider her family. Her diligent, honest, thoughtful, and win-win approaches have endeared me to her cause, and I know whole-heartedly that she will continue to benefit The State of Hawaii in whatever capacity she assumes.

I sincerely ask you to consider Denise Yamaguchi's nomination to the Hawaii Tourism Authority. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to express my testimony.

Sincerely,

Sean M. Morris



Humboldt Bay Energy

Russo Farms Trust

Purveyors of Organic Food and Sustainable Agricultural Villages

Website: www.HumboldtBayEnergy.com Email: Gari@HumboldtBayEnergy.com

6 April 2014

The 27th Hawaii Legislature
Committee of Tourism
Honorable Gilbert Kahele, Chairman
Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chairman
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii

RE: Letter of Recommendation and Endorsement for the consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2018.

Gentlemen,

I am pleased to recommend and endorse Denise Yamaguchi to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. In my efforts to expand my business operations including organic food, energy and water from the US mainland to the State of Hawaii, Denise has been instrumental in her capacity as a valued advisor in helping us lay foundations and starting the process of building relationships with applicable business and political leaders on Oahu.

Because tourism is such a huge economic engine in Hawaii and will a major part of the success of my business operations there, understanding the tourism industry in Hawaii is the most important key to our success of our business that ultimately may create thousands of sustainable jobs and help Hawaii become food and energy self-sufficient. Denise has provided executive level advice and guidance as we begin to build traction on Oahu.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Garrison Russo

6 April 2014

Garrison Russo, Founder and CEO Date
Humboldt Bay Energy LLC / Russo Farms Trust

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [TSMTestimony](#)
Cc: nalofarms@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM697 on Apr 7, 2014 14:00PM
Date: Monday, April 07, 2014 10:48:15 AM

GM697

Submitted on: 4/7/2014

Testimony for TSM on Apr 7, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dean J. Okimoto	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: my name is Dean J. Okimoto, and I am President of Nalo Farms, board member of the Hawaii Agricultural Foundation, and participant of the annual, Hawaii Food and Wine Festival. I strongly support the nomination of Denise Hayashi-Yamaguchi to the Hawaii Tourism Authority. Denise has always been a great collaborator in bringing different industries together, to promote Hawaii and the tourism industry. she has been one of the driving forces in bringing the tourism, culinary, agricultural, and retail industries together for the Hawaii Food and Wine Festival. She has ben very innovative and entrepreneurial in thinking up ideas on how to meld the different industries together in promoting Hawaii to all our tourists and making events that feature all the best features of the different sectors. I believe she could serve the Hawaii Tourism Authority well, by bringing her boundless energy, wealth of knowledge of different industries, in creating a lot of synergy for the tourism industry. I wholeheartedly support her nomination to the Hawaii Tourism Authority board.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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Senate Committee on Tourism
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Chair
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

**Hearing on GM 697: Denise Yamaguchi – Board of Directors of the Hawaii
Tourism Authority
April 7, 2014 at 2:00 pm**

Aloha Senator Kahele, Senator Keith-Agaran and members of the Senate Tourism Committee, I am Brooks Takenaka, Assistant General Manager of the United Fishing Agency, Ltd.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts for your consideration to support the confirmation of DENISE YAMAGUCHI for the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA). Rather going through Denise Yamaguchi's many accomplishments, I would like to share my experience in working with her over the past few years.

Denise is instrumental in the Hawaii Food & Wine Festival that began in 2011. It's a week long extravaganza of culinary stars from Hawaii and across the globe featuring the best of Hawaii's food products. Denise's multi-faceted talents are exemplified working on this annual event. The undertaking is tremendous and showcases Hawaii and its bountiful harvests. Each year the Hawaii Food & Wine Festival through the Hawaii Ag and Culinary Alliance gives back to the community by recognizing non-profits, culinary schools, and many more for their works contributing to our sustainability and to respect and care for the *aina* in feeding Hawaii's citizens and visitors to Hawaii who are vital to our economy.

I had the pleasure of working with Denise and the staff of the Food & Wine Festival from the onset and confident that she will be an asset to the Hawaii Tourism Authority. She is experienced in community relations, government affairs on the local, state and federal levels, marketing, and has exhibited her passion and aloha in her support of farmers, ranchers and Hawaii's fisheries. I have worked with her on several issues at the Hawaii State Legislature, discussed many community issues over the years and know that Denise will be a valuable contributor in setting the direction and policies for the HTA.

I humbly ask for your support of Denise Yamaguchi's confirmation to HTA.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooks Takenaka



April 7, 2014

Before

Senate Committee on Tourism

Conference Room 229

2:00 pm

TESTIMONY

GM 697 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2018.

Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee:

Maui County Farm Bureau on behalf of our commercial farm and ranch families on Maui strongly supports the nomination of Denise Yamaguchi to the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

MCFB has a long standing collaborative partnership with Denise Yamaguchi, beginning with Roy's Dinner, Ag in the Classroom, and most recently the Hawaii Food and Wine Festival. Ms. Yamaguchi has proactively sought opportunities to partner with tourism to help farmers and ranchers. The evolution of Roy's Dinner to the Hawaii Food and Wine Festival and its' myriad of activities will elevate Hawaii as a major food destination for visitors while highlighting the products by our farmers and ranchers. Her knowledge of our industry will bring value to the Authority to leverage resources with our industry meeting the appetite for tourists for new experiences.

We respectfully request your strong support of Ms. Yamaguchi to the Hawaii Tourism Authority. Thank you.

April 5, 2014

The Honorable Gilbert Kahele
Chairman
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Testimony in Support of GMR967, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2018.

Dear Chairman Kahele and members of the Committee:

I would like to take this opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of Denise Yamaguchi to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. My name is Liane Sunn and I am the Managing Director for Sunn Media LLC, which represents American Express Publishing (*Food & Wine*, *Travel + Leisure*, and *Departures* magazines), a division of Time Inc. Affluent Media Group.

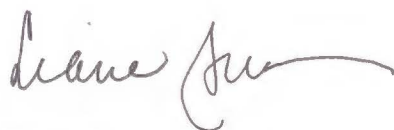
I have worked with Denise Yamaguchi, executive director of Hawaii Food & Wine Festival, since 2011. She and her team have elevated the festival to become Hawaii's premier epicurean event, now attended by over 5,000 visitors and residents. Not only does the festival feature renowned chefs from all over the world, but participation from Hawaii's own chefs, farmers and culinary students is prolific as well. This year, the festival is also expanding its efforts to include Maui and Hawaii Island.

It is because of this event that over \$228,000 was raised last year to support nine (9) non-profit organizations in the state, including Hawaii Agricultural Foundation, the Culinary Institute of the Pacific, and Leeward Community College Culinary Arts Program.

Denise's commitment to Hawaii's visitor industry is strong, and she is passionate about serving the community. Given her dedication, perseverance, and boundless energy, she will no doubt serve Hawaii Tourism Authority well.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in support of Denise Yamaguchi's nomination to the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Sincerely,



Liane Sunn

Ann M. Wharton
46-144 Hilinama Street
Kaneohe, HI 96744
808-375-6489

**Testimony submitted to the Senate Committee on Tourism
April 5, 2014**

RE: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2018.

Chair Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee on Tourism

My name is Ann Wharton and I respectfully ask the Committee to accept my testimony in support of Denise Yamaguchi's nomination to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

I have worked with Ms. Yamaguchi for more than 15 years; at Bishop Museum from 1999-2005, and more recently with the Hawaii Food & Wine Festival. I am confident her knowledge of and experience in the travel industry and her regard for the people and culture of the islands will bring a well-balanced perspective to the HTA Board. Through these organizations she has demonstrated many successes positively impacting the local community through activities, campaigns and programs targeting not just East-bound and West-bound markets, but the local community as well.

She has a sound understanding of local businesses and the economy and a long-standing commitment to economic, social and cultural sustainability.

For these reasons, I support Ms. Yamaguchi's nomination to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [TSMTestimony](#)
Cc: brian@hfbf.org
Subject: *Submitted testimony for GM697 on Apr 7, 2014 14:00PM*
Date: Monday, April 07, 2014 7:20:52 AM

GM697

Submitted on: 4/7/2014

Testimony for TSM on Apr 7, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brian Miyamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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The Honorable Gilbert Kahele
Chairman
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Testimony in Support of GMR967, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2018.

Dear Chairman Kahele and members of the Committee:

Thank you very for giving me the opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of Denise Yamaguchi to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Over the last four years, I have closely worked with Denise Yamaguchi and her team to create the State's premier epicurean event, Hawaii Food & Wine Festival. Ko Olina Resort, in partnership with Aulani, a Disney Resort & Spa and JW Marriott Ihilani Resort and Spa host the finale event of the Festival. In her capacity as the Executive Director of the Festival, Denise has grown the event to become one of the industry's most visible events for our state, bringing 80+ notable chefs from all over the world to Hawaii. In three short years, the Festival has also achieved growth to the neighbor islands and will include Maui and Hawaii Island this year. Denise has also been able to successfully operate the Festival so net proceeds can go back to our local community.

I have also known Denise on a personal level and have known her to be an honest, approachable, sincere, and cooperative.

Once again, I appreciate your time in allowing me to testify in support of Denise Yamaguchi's nomination to the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Sincerely,

Elliot Mills

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [TSMTestimony](#)
Cc: lho@hawaiipublicpolicy.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for GM697 on Apr 7, 2014 14:00PM*
Date: Monday, April 07, 2014 8:55:14 AM

GM697

Submitted on: 4/7/2014

Testimony for TSM on Apr 7, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
MELISSA PAVLICEK	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Monica N. Shigenaga
P.O. Box 26034
Honolulu, Hawaii 96825
Phone: 808-394-2162, Fax: 808-394-2930, Cellular: 808-330-2634
E-mail: monica@cocojor.com

6 April 2014

The 27th Hawaii Legislature
Committee of Tourism
Honorable Gilbert Kahele, Chairman
Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chairman

State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street Honolulu, Hawaii

**RE: Letter of Recommendation and Endorsement for the
consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the
Hawaii Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE
YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2018.**

Gentlemen,

I am pleased to recommend and endorse Denise Yamaguchi to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. Denise excellent written and verbal communication skills, extremely organized, can work independently as well as a great team leader she able to effectly multi-task to ensure that all projects are completed in a timely manner.

Denise's past and present employment is very much intertwine with tourism economic engine in Hawaii. Denise knowledge is a major part of her success that she can work in many vast capacity that is given to her.

Regards,

Monica Shigenaga

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [TSMTestimony](#)
Cc: lho@hawaiipublicpolicy.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for GM697 on Apr 7, 2014 14:00PM*
Date: Monday, April 07, 2014 8:57:38 AM

GM697

Submitted on: 4/7/2014

Testimony for TSM on Apr 7, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Steve Teves	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Testimony before the Senate Tourism Committee

On Governor's Message No. 697

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2018.

Monday, April 7, 2014

2:00 pm

Conference Room 229

By Susan Char

Chair Kahele, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

It is with great pleasure that I present testimony in strong support of Denise Yamaguchi to be appointed to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority for a term to expire June 30, 2018.

I have known Denise for over 20 years and first met her while we were both working in Washington DC. At the time, Denise was working for U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye and I was working for a non-profit organization. Mutual friends and Hawaii ties brought us together back then; mutual respect, admiration, and a hefty dose of good times and laughter have kept us friends ever since.

Denise brings a diverse portfolio of experience with her, which will greatly benefit the Hawaii Tourism Authority and the State of Hawaii. Her experience in the non-profit sector, at organizations such as the Hawaii Food Bank and Bishop Museum, has given her a wealth of knowledge and expertise on how to look for and develop beneficial fiscal and marketing opportunities. Her experience in the public sector has given her a great understanding and appreciation of the important role that government plays with non-profit organizations and private companies. She always ensures that everyone wins when she develops partnerships with entities that are in pursuit of a common goal. Finally, her longtime participation in Ka Pā Hula O Kauanoē O Wa'ahila halau has provided her a deep understanding and respect for the Hawaiian culture, something that I believe is critical to possess as a member of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

I am confident that Denise will be an active, engaged, and thoughtful member of the Hawaii Tourism Authority and will always make decisions with only the best interests of the State of Hawaii in mind. I respectfully ask that you move her nomination forward.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

From: [Vikram Garg](#)
To: [TSMTestimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in Support of GMR967, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI
Date: Sunday, April 06, 2014 12:05:25 PM

The Honorable Gilbert Kahele
Chairman
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Testimony in Support of GMR967, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2018.

Dear Chairman Kahele and members of the Committee:

It is an honor for I, Vikram Garg, Executive Chef, Halekulani , to be given this opportunity to testify in support of Denise Yamaguchi's confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Not only have I known her on a personal level to be an honest, sincere, approachable & cooperative person but over the last five years that I have closely worked with Denise Yamaguchi and her team ; she has managed to take the Hawaii Food & Wine Festival to scale great heights & today it is the State's Premier Epicurean event.

In three short years, the Festival has achieved growth to the neighbor islands and will include Maui and Hawaii Island this year. In her capacity as the Executive Director of the Festival ; Denise has achieved making it the industry's most visible event ,bringing 80+ highly talented celebrity chefs & Winemakers from all over the world to Hawaii & proceeds go back to our local community.

I sincerely recommend Denise Yamaguchi's nomination to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Thanking you,

Vikram Garg
Executive Chef
Halekulani
2199 kalia road
Honolulu, HI 96815

Sent from my iPad

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From: [Yukio Kitagawa](#)
To: [TSMTestimony](#)
Subject: Denise Yamaguchi confirmation
Date: Friday, April 04, 2014 8:32:04 PM

Sen Gilbert Kahele

I am writing this testimony in support for the confirmation to the Hawaii Tourism Authority Bd of Directors of Denise Yamaguchi. I have been on the Hawaii Agriculture Foundation for several years and am currently serving as the president of the board. Denise has been serving as Executive Director of the foundation during the years I have been on the board so I have had to opportunity to closely work with her. I believe she has the qualification to be on the tourism board and she would serve the board well as a member. She brings the years of experience in planning, financing and follow through on the projects she has worked on not only with our board and other projects she has been involved in. I think our board will agree with my assessment of her, for the success our foundation has had in the development of farm subdivision, educational programs with the Dept of Education and the Food and Wine Festival was largely to the hard work of Denise. She will be an asset to the tourism board.

Sincerely,
Yukio Kitagawa

Testimony of
Denise Yamaguchi to the
Senate Committee on Tourism
April 3, 2014

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, DENISE YAMAGUCHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2018.

Chairman Kahele and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I want to thank Governor Neil Abercrombie for nominating me to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. I would also like to thank everyone who is here today on my behalf and also those who have submitted testimony in support of my nomination.

I would be honored to serve as a member of this important organization that supports Hawai'i's tourism industry and promotes Hawai'i as a premiere destination for travelers around the world. I am enthusiastic about becoming a member of HTA to help develop policies that will continue to ensure that we maintain a strong and vibrant visitor industry that will benefit both the visitors to our islands and our people.

Throughout my career, I have had the great fortune to work as a tourism executive for both for-profit and non-profit visitor industry-related companies. As the Director of Community Relations at NCL America, I helped the company navigate through controversy on the neighbor islands through innovative initiatives that created partnerships that not only benefitted NCL, but also the Hawaiian, environmental and educational communities. As the Vice President for Corporate and

Public Affairs for Bishop Museum, I was responsible for the revenue generating operations of the business. In that capacity, I spearheaded initiatives with other industry partners such as a program that brought Halekulani guests to the Museum and a program with NCL that took educators onboard the ships for stargazing. Both programs created unique opportunities for an enhanced the overall visitor experience.

Over the last four years, I have been fortunate to work with HTA and major visitor industry partners on O‘ahu, Maui and Hawai‘i Island to create and develop the State’s premiere destination-driven epicurean event, the Hawai‘i Food & Wine Festival. The event was purposefully created to during the fall shoulder season to drive traffic our islands. After three short years, the event attracted 5,000 people last year with about 15 percent specifically traveling from domestic and international markets and more than \$6 million in media value. It has also gained national and international sponsors including Food & Wine Magazine, Wall Street Journal, Kikkoman, American Express, Southern Wine & Spirits, Anheuser Busch and Hawaiian Kings Sweetbread to name a few. Hawai‘i Food & Wine Festival targets a growing population who are interested culinary and dining experiences while also offering visitors our white sand beaches, exotic hikes, as well as the culture and natural beauty of our islands.

I believe that there will be challenges ahead for Hawai‘i’s tourism industry and I believe that my experience working in the visitor industry, as well as in government and with many nonprofits as a private consultant, provides me with the depth and expertise to aid the industry from a broad perspective. Furthermore, my background in community relations will help HTA in its efforts to bridge relationships between the visitor industry and local community.

I would like to disclose that I am the Executive Director of the Hawai‘i Ag & Culinary Alliance which is the parent organization of the Hawai‘i Food & Wine Festival. Since 2011, Hawai‘i Food & Wine Festival has received funding and has been designated a signature event of HTA. Last month, HTA and Hawai‘i Ag & Culinary Alliance signed a new three-year agreement to continue building the Festival to become a statewide initiative. This is the only possible conflict of interest that I can foresee arising during my service on the HTA. I had disclosed this to the Boards and Commissions prior to my submission for consideration and they had assured me that the Attorney General’s office did not see a conflict with my nomination as long as I recused myself of any subject matter discussion and decisions related to that funding.

I am honored to be considered for the HTA Board. Once again, thank you again for giving me the opportunity to be here today and for considering my nomination.

At this time I would be happy to answer any questions that the Committee may have.