



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Thursday, February 20, 2014 at 9:05 A.M.  
Conference Room 211, State Capitol**

**RE: SENATE BILL 3081 RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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

The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** SB 3081, which establishes a business interaction program in the HTA to develop synergy between an event organizer and innovative businesses to improve the economic opportunities in Hawaii.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing over 1,000 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

The concept proposed in SB 3081 is similar to the program which established South by Southwest, which grew from a film festival into a collection of events that include an interactive conference for innovative businesses, entrepreneurs, and investors. By establishing the authority to implement a similar program, SB 3081 allows HTA to utilize Hawaii's unique geographic location to expand the scope of one of its events to provide an environment for innovative businesses and investors to come together and create new opportunities.

For these reasons we support SB 3081.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.