



HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM
ASSOCIATION



Testimony of

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Senate Committees on
Ways and Means
Judiciary and Labor

Senate Bill 994, Relating to the Stadium Authority

Chair Tokuda, Chair Keith-Agaran, and committee members:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. On behalf of the more than 700 members of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association, we support Senate Bill 994, which would expand the powers and duties of the Stadium Authority in order to develop the stadium property and establish a stadium complex.

The Aloha Stadium has been our largest sports facility since its opening in 1975. Now approaching its 42nd anniversary, the facility has been the home of University of Hawai'i Rainbow Warriors football, host for the National Football League Pro Bowl and prep football, and the site of major concerts and large gatherings, but has not fully realized its potential as a major sports and entertainment venue.

The Aloha Stadium and its environs soon will be a major stop on O'ahu's rail line. As the former mayor of the City and County of Honolulu, I was and continue to be a staunch advocate of transit-oriented development, or the development of the property at and surrounding the rail stations. Very early in the planning process, we identified the Aloha Stadium area as a prime location for a transit stop and future development, given the expanse of public land and prime location. This proposal presents an excellent opportunity to construct a new multi-purpose stadium, which appears to be more economical than repairing and maintaining the existing facility. As envisioned, this stadium could attract more sports and entertainment events to our islands and benefit not only our residents but diversify our tourism attractions.

We also applaud the bill's emphasis on a public-private partnership for development. In addition, we believe that community involvement and input at every step of the process are essential. The stadium property could be revitalized with a blend of affordable housing, commercial and retail space, recreation, and entertainment that will balance the community's needs with the developer's need for a return on investment. Senate Bill 994 represents a bold, decisive, and very timely step in this direction, and the HLTA urges its approval.

Mahalo