



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

David Y. Ige
Governor

John De Fries
President and Chief Executive Officer

Statement of
JOHN DE FRIES

Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Monday, March 22, 2021
3:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room #224
via videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL NO. 1286 HD2
RELATING TO TRAVEL

Chairs Wakai, Nishihara, and Keohokālōle; Vice Chairs Misalucha, English, and Baker; and members of the Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism; Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs; and Senate Committee on Health: the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is **providing comments** on House Bill 1286 HD2, which exempts any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival. It allows the governor to establish statewide conditions for an exemption. It requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine. It also requires any person who does not obtain a negative test result for COVID-19 pre-arrival to be responsible for all costs associated with that person's mandatory self-quarantine.

This bill would standardize the protocols across the state for all travelers to Hawai'i and between the counties, which would help to make it less confusing for everyone. There are different protocols for trans-Pacific travelers and interisland travelers, which have been a challenge to navigate and understand. A consistent statewide policy for trans-Pacific and interisland travel that is based on protecting the people and communities of Hawai'i is a prudent approach.

Currently, trans-Pacific travelers must have their negative test results before they depart to Hawai'i. This bill would instead require the results upon arrival, giving travelers several extra hours to

March 22, 2021

Page 2

receive their test results. This bill would also allow those who don't get their negative test result by the time they arrive to then take another test upon arrival in Hawai'i. Currently, there is no post-arrival testing option, and sometimes, the travelers have delayed results through no fault of their own. This bill would also create standardized quarantine exemption requirements across the state and counties.

Hawai'i's low COVID-19 case count, since October 2020, shows that the Safe Travels pre-travel testing program works as an extra layer of safety while also allowing travelers to fly to Hawai'i without having to quarantine. Standardized protocols for the Safe Travels program would create uniformity and consistency in messaging. In addition, the program has proven to serve as an effective tool in keeping our community safe and re-opening our visitor industry.

We appreciate this opportunity to provide comments on HB1286, HD2.

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
Gabe Johnson
Kelly Takaya King
Michael J. Molina
Tamara Paltin
Shane M. Sinenci
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura



Director of Council Services
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

March 19, 2021

TO: Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senate Committee on Health

FROM: Councilmember Kelly Takaya King

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION TO HB1286 HD2, RELATING TO TRAVEL

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **opposition** to this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to exempt any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival.

The Maui County Council voted Friday, February 19, 2021, to adopt **Resolution 21-21 Opposing State House Bill 1286 (2021), Relating to Travel**. Furthermore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I oppose this measure for the following reasons:

1. State policy should set the minimum health standards while allowing the counties the flexibility to set the appropriate, stronger safety thresholds above that to reflect the unique capacity and needs of the individual islands even within a county.
2. This measure deprives the counties of self-rule and fails to appreciate the different challenges facing the different counties. It also fails protect rural communities, such as Hana, and their limited capacity to deal with surge cases.
3. While I appreciate and acknowledge the hardships the pandemic has caused everyone in Hawai'i, especially the tourism industry and small businesses, the current system is working and allows counties to react to the needs of their relative communities.

March 19, 2021
Page 2

For the foregoing reasons, **I OPPOSE** this measure.



The Waikiki Neighborhood Board supports the concept of the following bill: HB1286 HD2

During the long year of COVID-19 restrictions the Waikiki Neighborhood Board has supported the Administration attempts to protect our residents and the few visitors.

While the Governor has utilized Chapter 127a to impose quarantine and other restrictions to protect our State this bill may be required to continue to that protection following the lifting of Chapter 127a Emergency Orders.

This bill may complicate authority relationships between the Governor and the County Mayors over who is responsible for this type of restriction during times of non-emergency but the intent is good.

Robert J. Finley
Robert J. Finley
Chair



Monday 23, 2021

The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
The Honorable Bennette E. Misalucha, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
The Honorable J. Kalani English, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Health

Re: HB 1286 HD2 – Relating to Travel

Dear Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Baker, Vice Chair Misalucha, Vice Chair English,
Vice Chair Baker, and Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify on HB 1286, HD2, which exempts any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival. Allows the governor to establish statewide conditions for exemption. Requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine. Requires any person who does not obtain a negative test result for COVID-19 pre-arrival to be responsible for all costs associated with that person's mandatory self-quarantine. Prohibits the suspension of this Act except by legislative approval via a concurrent resolution. Repeals on 12/31/2021. Effective 7/1/2050.

HMSA appreciates the intent of this measure and we are supportive of efforts to safely allow for the reopening of Hawaii's economy. The efforts of this bill will contribute to the collaborative efforts within our State to continue the recovery of public health.

Thank you for allowing us to testify on HB 1286 HD2. Your consideration of our comments is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Matthew W. Sasaki
Director, Government Relations

We, the undersigned members of the Hawai`i Doctors Pandemic Advisory Committee, submit the following testimony in opposition to HB1286. While we are encouraged by the overall decline in new COVID-19 cases in Hawai`i and the US after the January surge, we believe that mandating a rigid “one size fits all” statewide travel procedure is unacceptably risky to the State’s residents and to our economy. We believe this because it eliminates the ability of the Governor and mayors to respond in locally appropriate ways to pandemic emergencies. Such emergencies are entirely possible and even likely given the major flaws in pre-travel testing and the emergence of COVID-19 variants that are markedly more transmissible and/ or cause more severe disease. These and other issues may well impact our islands differently. Additional considerations follow:

Efficacy of Post-arrival Testing and Safe Travels Opt Out

- The Centers for Disease Control official recommendation is to **not** travel at this time.
- The CDC recommends testing on day 3-5 after travel with a 7-day quarantine.
- The science is very clear that a Safe Travels program, relying on a single pretest, will miss 30-40% of those infected with SARS-CoV-2 because the test cannot detect infected people in the early days of the infection¹.
- All air passengers coming to the United States, including U.S. citizens, are now **required** to have a negative COVID-19 test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 **before boarding** a flight to the United States. Hawai`i is not afforded the same protection for trans-Pacific travel from the continental US regardless of the current level of disease activity in the state of origin. Therefore, the efficacy of the single pretravel test to prevent infectious travelers from arriving in Hawai`i relies on the honesty of the traveler and their desire to obtain a quarantine exemption upon arrival here.
- HB1286 proposes a vaguely defined new option for certain travelers to obtain a quarantine exemption after arrival by offering retesting or accepting test results well after arrival, which would further undermine the limited efficacy of the single pretravel test by encouraging more potentially infectious travelers to board flights to Hawai`i. The State of Hawai`i currently has no standardized process for identifying which travelers have results pending from a trusted testing partner or exactly when they were made aware of the results, though we understand a pilot project involving a new app is seeking to solve these issues by eliminating the reliance upon the travelers to upload their test results.
- Each time an infectious traveler is allowed travel represents a potential to infect a cluster of other travelers bound for Hawai`i with the COVID-19 virus, or a dangerous variant, not to mention forcing other travelers seated nearby into quarantine as close contacts of positive cases.
- Though the frustration some travelers have had in obtaining a pretravel test results from a trusted testing partner prior to travel is understandable, this difficulty is often a reflection of disease activity exceeding the testing capacity near the location of departure. Difficulty in

¹https://www.burnet.edu.au/system/asset/file/4349/Final_Report_9November2020_Final.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0qEtm4A2r60tD43qQtWrSc0KVXQuKgZ9aMj2Zsy56h51pj-YUe_fESIAs

obtaining a test result within 72 hours of travel may therefore be beneficial in discouraging travel from locations experiencing a surge.

- Since leaving the Safe Travels Program, Kaua`i returned to virtually no cases, while Maui, which stayed in the program, increased from ~1% of the state's cases to having 18% of the state's cases, most recently exceeding the daily case count of Oahu.
- Kauai's choice to opt out of Safe Travels and implement the Enhanced Movement Quarantine (Bubble Resort) protocol with a mandatory second test on day 3 post arrival has yielded striking differences in COVID-19 disease burden compared to islands participating in the State-wide Safe Travels plan; indeed, the latter more closely resemble a major urban area on the mainland, with new case rates on Maui more than double Seattle and over 60 times greater than Kaua`i. As a result Kauai has enjoyed the economic and social benefits of remaining in the least restrictive tier 4 since and is now restarting in person school for the 4th quarter at all public elementary schools and one high school.

New cases/14 days/100,000 population from March 5-19, 2021:

Seattle-King County	91 (based on population of 2,301,620)
Maui	201 (based on population of 144,444)
Oahu	44 (based on population of 953,207)
Hawai`i	56 (based on population of 186,738)
Kaua`i	3 (based on population of 66,921)

Risk Posed by Variants

- At least nine cases of the B.1.1.7 (UK) variant are now known to have entered Hawai`i, and each case of this variant is known to cause 35-55% more infections than previous COVID-19 viral strains. This variant has also been estimated to cause 40-60% more hospitalizations, 30%-70% more deaths, and recently forced London into lockdown again².
Mathematical models (below) of the potential impact of this variant in Hawaii also accounting for variable vaccination rates demonstrate the potential for this variant to completely alter the course that the pandemic would follow under current trends, which is comparable to recent variant models made by Canadian experts³.

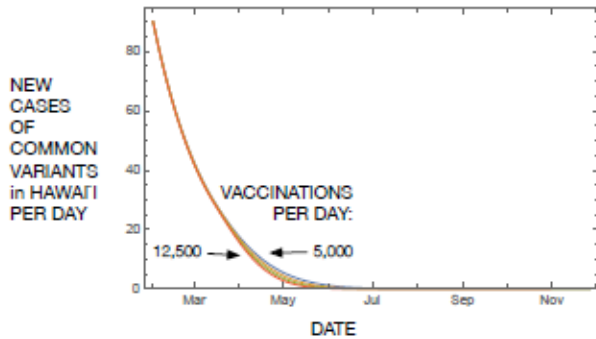
²https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/961042/S10_95_NERVTAG_update_note_on_B.1.1.7_severity_20210211.pdf

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/robertglatter/2021/02/15/uk-variant-likely-30-70-deadlier-new-research-finds/>

<https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2021-02-15/uk-covid-variant-may-be-more-lethal-and-could-become-dominant-us-strain-by-march>

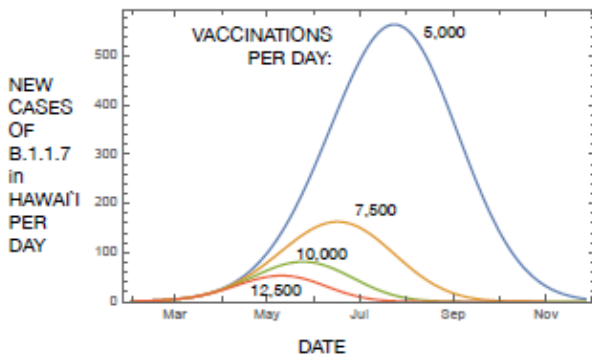
³ <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/diseases-maladies/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/epidemiological-economic-research-data/update-covid-19-canada-epidemiology-modelling-20210219-en.pdf>

Cases on Feb. 1=90
 $R_t = 0.91$
 Vaccine Efficacy=95%



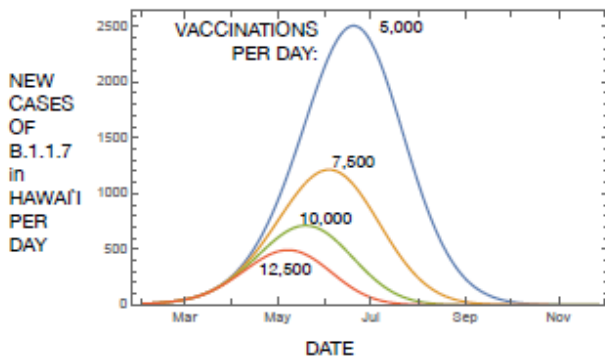
Daily cases approach zero by July 2021 if current trends continue without significant influence from the B1.1.7 variant regardless of the vaccination rate

Cases on Feb. 1=1
 $R_t = 1.55 \times$
 Vaccine Efficacy=95%



Daily cases could increase to 25-550 in July 2021 with just one February case of the B1.1.7 variant spreading at its maximum estimated reproduction rate ($R_t=1.55$), returning Hawaii back to a similar situation it faced during the August 2020 surge when daily cases peaked above 300. Of note, this increase does not become apparent until April

Cases on Feb. 1=10
 $R_t = 1.55 \times$
 Vaccine Efficacy=95%



Acknowledging at least 9 known cases of the B1.1.7 variant now, an estimate of a total of 10 cases on February 1 in the community could dramatically alter the daily case count in July 2021 to 100-2500 under worst case scenario circumstances. Once again, this rise does not become obvious until April

- Aggressive local intervention, including city-wide lockdowns, have recently been triggered in Italy and New Zealand in response to the emergence of the B 1.1.7 variant in these locations. HB1286 would prevent counties from taking similar action, and effectively nullify the benefit of having the Pacific Ocean separating the counties, which otherwise constitutes a formidable obstacle to virus spread, while allowing the economy of unaffected counties to continue functioning unhindered.

- Despite evidence that 76% of the population of Manaus, Brazil had already been infected with the COVID-19 virus by October 2020, the emergence of the P1 variant in January 2021 was followed by a subsequent surge that exceeded the severity of the original surge, leading to a second lockdown. At least one case of reinfection with the P1 variant in a person who was known to have been previously infected by the COVID-19 virus has been confirmed⁴.
- The emergence of the vaccine resistant B.1.351 South Africa variant recently forced the country to shift a planned rollout of 1 million doses of the Astra-Zeneca vaccine⁵ to the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.
- The B.1.429 (California) variant has been shown to be 20% more contagious and moderately resistant to antibodies generated from both vaccinations and previous infections⁶. Dr. Lorrin Pang recently shared that within 5 weeks of detection of the first case on Maui, the B.1.429 variant ballooned to cause 54% of the island's latest resurgence of cases.
- The CDC just released a new variant classification scheme due to the concerns above, with three classes of increasing severity: Variants of Interest, Variants of Concern, and Variants of High Consequence. 3 of the 5 Variants of Concern were detected in Hawaii recently (B.1.1.7 UK variant, B.1.351 South Africa, and B.1.429 California). Though no variant has been classified as a Variant of High Consequence yet, the CDC notes the potential for a variant in this class to cause a PHEIC (Public Health Emergency of International Concern).
- The more cases we detect by required post arrival testing beyond the requirements of the Safe Travels program, the more opportunities we have to perform genomic testing and identify dangerous variants before they lead to community spread and greater risk.

In conclusion, the effects of this bill to

1. force all counties to follow the lowest standard of the Safe Travels program while diminishing the efficacy of the program's pretravel test result requirement

and

2. prevent the Governor and Mayors from taking swift, county specific action in the future if pandemic trends worsen due to the introduction of a dangerous variant

are anticipated to potentially do more harm than good. The pressure for counties to promote economic recovery as soon as possible will continue to be influential without the risks of this bill as evidenced by Mayor Kawakami's recent announcement of his tentative plan to rejoin Safe Travels April 5th presuming the recently hopeful pandemic trends are not altered by the emerging variant cases and the vaccination

⁴ <https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736%2821%2900183-5/fulltext>

⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-55975052>

⁶ Deng X, Garcia-Knight MA, Khalid MM, et al. Transmission, infectivity, and antibody neutralization of an emerging SARS-CoV-2 variant in California carrying a L452R spike protein mutation. MedRxiv 2021. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2021.03.07.21252647>external icon

rollout continues to progress towards herd immunity levels without significant variant resistance. Rather than forcing conformity to a statewide travel policy to be implemented several months into the uncertain future, consideration of science-based thresholds known to effectively reduce the risk of variant spread, such as the completion of vaccinations for 70% of eligible Hawai'i residents and the completion of vaccinations for workers involved in the travel/tourism industry would be a more prudent way to evaluate travel policy decisions in the face of this dynamic pandemic.

Sincerely,

Damien Kapono Chong-Hanssen, MD Family Practice, Medical Director - Ho'ōla Lāhui Hawai'i/Kaua'i Community Health Center

Lee Evslin, MD Pediatrics, Former CEO of Wilcox Memorial Hospital

Robert Weiner, MD General Surgery, Former Kauai Hospice Medical Director

Darragh O'Carroll, MD Emergency Medicine, CNN on-air contributor, and consultant to the NETFLIX Docuseries '[Pandemic: How to Prevent an Outbreak](#)'

Jonathan Dworkin MD Internal Medicine and Infectious Disease, North Hawaii Community Hospital

Paul Pottinger MD, Professor of Medicine, Division of Allergy & Infectious Diseases, University of Washington

Lee Altenberg PhD — Adj Full Professor of Information, Computer Sciences and Mathematics, Graduate Faculty of Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation of Biology University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Member of [HiPAM](#) (Hawai'i Applied Pandemic Modeling Work Group), Models of Infectious Disease Agent Study (MIDAS Network) Member

Michael W. Schwartz M.D. — Robert H. Williams Endowed Chair, Professor of Medicine, Division of Metabolism, Endocrinology and Nutrition, University of Washington

Karl Kaiyala PhD — Research associate professor (emeritus), Department of Oral Health Sciences, School of Dentistry, University of Washington



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

Testimony of
Mufi Hannemann
President & CEO
Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association

Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, & Tourism
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, & Military Affairs
Senate Committee on Health

House Bill 1286, HD2: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine

Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Keohokalole, and members of the Committees, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association, the state's largest private sector visitor industry organization.

The Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association—nearly 700 members strong, representing more than 50,000 hotel rooms and nearly 40,000 lodging workers—has been an ardent and vocal proponent of this measure which would codify statewide travel rules as they pertain to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Safe Travels program.

In addition to the provisions set forth in HB1286, HD2, HLTA would also support the inclusion of further language that would establish a “vaccine passport” that would allow fully vaccinated travelers to be exempted from the mandatory quarantine requirements. We feel strongly that this program should begin solely at the interisland level before growing to include Trans-Pacific and international travelers. Beginning with inter-county travel would have the added benefit of easy and convenient options for local residents to visit their ‘ohana and loved ones on each of the islands sooner rather than later. Their being able to do so would represent more than just tourism’s recovery. More than anything, it would signal a return to the routine lives that we’ve always known.

To date, more than 100 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in the United States with more than 500,000 doses having been given out in our state alone. Setting forth a clear, statewide policy that would exempt vaccinated travelers would not only allow these healthy, vaccinated individuals to travel to Hawai'i with ease, but would also encourage more potential visitors to seek out vaccination, bringing us closer to herd immunity and a return to normalcy.

In the time that it has taken for this measure to make its way through the legislative process, much has changed. We continue to see relatively low instances of new COVID-19 infections. The distribution of the vaccine has ramped up significantly. It is time that we look forward, and this requires that we develop clear policies that would allow for vaccinated people to easily travel in and around our state.

All these things being said, we understand that there will still be individuals who will opt not to get vaccinated. For this reason, our support for the pre-arrival testing program remains steadfast. We likewise support the proposed alteration listed in this measure that would provide a rapid test upon

arrival for incoming travelers who took a test but did not receive their results prior to departure. These protocols in tandem with a vaccine passport would provide the layers of safety necessary to keep our community safe.

For these reasons, HLTA supports House Bill 1286 House Draft 2 and encourages the Legislature to consider the establishment of a vaccine passport.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.



HB1286, HD2

Testimony of Bambi Lau

Aloha Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Keohokalole and Committee Members,

Mahalo for allowing the opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT** of HB1286, HD2.

I represent the Hawaii Chapter of the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association but am also providing testimony with perspectives from my role as an employee of a hotel in the Waikoloa resort area.

It's been almost 6 months since we've allowed the option of traveling to Hawaii with the presentation of a negative covid test. This option has been successful in the reopening of many hotels and businesses. The number of travelers coming into the islands aren't as high as years past, but the smaller numbers have allowed for a smooth transition of the new protocols and policies that employers and employees have to adhere to.

After five months, I feel that it is a good time to look at perfecting policies so that we can encourage more travelers to the islands and bring the unemployed back to work.

In my role at the hotel I wear two hats. Half of my day is in the Human Resources Department and half of my day is in Guest Activities. Currently at the hotel, half of our employees are still furloughed. Many of our employees are dealing with the inconsistency of the unemployment system and are paying hundreds of dollars for Cobra because they have lost their health insurance and need to use most of their unemployment dollars to pay for health insurance just in case a health issue arises. I could on and on with scenarios, but I'm sure you get the idea. I feel for them and this is one of the reasons why I am testifying today. I'm testifying for our people.

While wearing my Guest Activities hat, I'm able to sit and chat with the guests and many share their experiences and their thoughts. There are many different opinions but the two things that they voice are their gratitude for the pre-travel "negative" test results and the other thing that they voice is the inconsistency of requirements amongst the islands. You'd be surprised to hear how many guests of mine have cancelled their reservations/flights to Kauai and have extended their stay at my hotel. This because of the over complicated policies that have been put in place. To them, it's an inconvenience. Its great for my property but its a loss for the other property as well as the businesses of Kauai that lose out on that revenue. Providing consistency amongst the islands could allow for more travellers to ALL islands.

With that said, I support this bill because I feel that we need to streamline the process for travellers and have consistency throughout the state. This will help to ease the travel planning process for travellers of all ages. (Can you imagine how complicated it is for those travellers who are not computer savvy?).

With a simpler process, we could get back to proudly marketing our destination as the most beautiful and safe place to travel which will in turn get revenues into our island allowing for our State to heal economically.

I would like to also recommend and support the inclusion of traveling to the State of Hawaii with a Vaccination Passport. We could first start it with interisland travellers and then open it up to the out of state travellers. I understand that Finland is going to put this into practice and Denmark and Sweden will follow suit. Something to consider.

Again, thank you for allowing the opportunity to share our thoughts, we know that you will make the right decision for our People and our State.

Malama Pono,
Bambi Lau
Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association - Hawaii Chapter
P.O.Box 2898
Kamuela, Hawaii 96743
hichapter@hawaiilodging.org



House Bill 1286, HD2: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine

Aloha Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Keohokalole, and members of the Committees, mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Prince Waikiki Hotel.

Prince Waikiki stands in support of House Bill 1286, HD2. In addition, Prince Waikiki supports the written testimony submitted by the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association with regards to the proposed establishment of a vaccine passport.

The state's current rules are too confusing & restrictive which is unnecessarily impacting & reducing travel to Hawaii. We have prospective travelers who are willing to pre-travel test and desire to travel to Hawaii, and we have numerous unemployed hotel workers who desire to get back to work, but the current rules and restrictions have to be modified in order more effectively achieve the safe return of tourism to our islands.

This bill provides clarity to prospective travelers while also providing reasonable options in the event that the third party testing partners are unable to provide test results within the required 72 hour period. We need policies that allow our economy to recover, and to recover without sacrificing safety. This bill accomplishes both of these criteria instead of choosing one or the other.

We strongly support this bill and believe the result will be more travelers to Hawaii with negative test results, more jobs for our staff, and more revenues to the many businesses that rely on tourism to survive.

Mahalo,

Josh Hargrove
General Manager
Prince Waikiki Hotel & Hawaii Prince Golf Club



Senator Glenn Wakai
Chair, Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism, and;

Senator Clarence Nishihara
Chair, Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs, and;

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole
Chair, Committee on Health

Regarding: **Support for HB1286 HD2, Relating to Travel**

Aloha Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, and Chair Keohokalole,

Please accept this testimony as Outrigger Hospitality Group's strong support for HB1286 HD2, Relating to Travel. This bill will facilitate the safe return of visitors to our islands without compromising the integrity of the health and welfare of the men and women who work in the visitor industry and those who live in and around the communities that we serve.

During this pandemic, Outrigger's investment in safety has been second to none. Across our network, we have implemented "Outrigger's Clean Commitment" - a comprehensive program of safety protocols and standards designed in partnership with Ecolab and local healthcare leaders, to keep our hotel employees, guests and the neighborhoods around our properties safe. Outrigger's Clean Commitment enabled our company to make the strategic decision to keep a few of our properties open throughout the pandemic in order to support the needs of our National Guardsmen, first responders, government employees and kama'aina in need of transient accommodations - despite the fact that the cost of keeping those properties open was substantially more than shutting down during the Statewide closure. As of the date of this testimony, not a single case of COVID-19 was attributed to our hotel operations. It is in this context of Outrigger's laser focus on safety and sanitation that we offer our endorsement of HB1286 HD2 and encourage your support for this measure.

In codifying Statewide exemptions from quarantine for persons who meet the screening and testing criteria found in this bill, HB1286 HD2 establishes the market certainty requisite for a 'safe surge' in visitors to our islands.

If successful, this measure will result in an increase to visitor arrivals and will allow many more locals who work in the visitor industry to get back to work sooner, and safely.

Thank you for your continued leadership and for your consideration in support of HB1286 HD2.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SD", written over a white background.

Sean Dee
Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 2:16:54 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chip Bahouth	Testifying for Sheraton Kauai Resort	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Wakai, Nishihara, Keohokalole, and members of the Committees- thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

I am the general manager of the Sheraton Kauai Resort, and I have seen firsthand both the disastrous effects of opting out of the Safe Travels program, and the growing optimism now that our community has signaled a return to the program.

The recent surge in bookings that my property has experienced since Mayor Kawakami announced that we would resume our participation in Safe Travels has highlighted that ease of travel is a major factor when potential visitors are deciding where to travel. Being presented with the option to visit Hawaii, with its rules that vary from county to county, versus other destinations with more lax or easier to understand rules, the vast majority of travelers will choose the latter. We must make it simple and hassle-free for tested, healthy tourists to come to our state.

This applies not only to pre-arrival testing, but also to the COVID-19 vaccine. As locals around the state become vaccinated, we should make it easier for these people to travel between counties without facing the mandatory quarantine period. This will not only allow for easy interisland travel, but also serve as a proving ground for a vaccine exemption that should eventually be offered to trans-Pacific and international travelers.

For these reasons, I strongly support HB1286, HD2 and ask that the Committees also consider the addition of language that would establish a vaccine exemption.

Mahalo.

Testimony of
Rob Robinson
Vice President
Springboard Hospitality

Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs
Senate Committee on Health

House Bill 1286: HD 2; Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID 19; Quarantine

Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Keahokolole, and members of the Committees,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Springboard Hospitality. Springboard Hospitality is a locally-owned company that operates 10 hotels across the Hawaiian Islands.

Springboard Hospitality **strongly supports House Bill 1286 HD 2** and the need for consistent, statewide guidelines to allow for tourism to rebound safely and effectively. In addition, Springboard supports the inclusion of language that would establish a “vaccine passport” to allow fully vaccinated travelers to be exempted from the current testing and quarantine requirements. We also feel strongly that the low rate of new COVID cases coupled with the broader availability of vaccines should allow for the easing of restrictions for interisland travel, and we urge the committees to act now to bolster the momentum of tourism that we are just now beginning to see recover.

I have offered both written and oral testimony on behalf of Springboard Hospitality and our 10 Hawaii Hotels several times since Bill 1286 was introduced. Much has changed along the way, and now that Kauai is rejoining the Safe Travels program on April 5th, we should give consideration to current circumstances and facilitate the next phase of our re-opening with more flexible interisland travel and allow for vaccinated Trans-Pacific travelers to visit our great state with fewer restrictions.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

Sincerely,

Rob Robinson
Vice President
Springboard Hospitality



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII
The Voice of Business

**Testimony to the
Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs
Senate Committee on Health
Monday, March 22, 2021 at 3:00 P.M.
Via Videoconference**

RE: HB 1286, HD 2, RELATING TO TRAVEL

Chairs Wakai, Nishihara, and Keohokalole and Members of the Committees:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** HB 1286, HD 2 which establishes a statewide approach to the safe travels program.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing 2,000+ 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.

Given Hawaii's reliance on tourism, we must find a way to bring people back to our state and breathe life back to our local businesses. As Hawaii continues to stay on track to administer 900,000 vaccines by May 1 and nationally reaching millions more, we appreciate the opportunity to ease travel restrictions for not only arrivals with negative tests but also ask for your consideration for travelers that have completed their vaccination.

We understand that travel relief is short term and that HB 1286, HD 2 will sunset on December 31, 2021. The near-term benefit on tourism would be from mainland travelers who typically make up one-third of Hawaii tourism arrivals.

Given the optimistic progress of vaccination deployment, we respectfully ask that the Committees consider the ability to ease domestic and interisland travelers that have completed their COVID-19 vaccine. This could be accomplished through an exemption from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine requirement for travelers who have completed the COVID-19 vaccination. This would help to streamline the process for interisland and domestic travelers when they arrive in Hawaii whether they are traveling for leisure or for work.



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

Finally, as a high-level overview of the small business economy, we conducted a Pulse of Business survey¹ in partnership with Omnitrak and with the support of Central Pacific Bank Foundation, and the Hawaii Chamber of Commerce Foundation. We found the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have dramatic consequences for local businesses. The Pulse of Business results are not surprising and that one primary issue facing businesses is the cost of paying higher unemployment taxes in 2020 while they continue to suffer from the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Pulse of Business survey found that:

- Many local businesses attributed a drastic drop in revenue to waning tourism, even if they were not directly involved in the visitor industry. A drop in visitor arrivals was the single most important factor impacting employee cutbacks.
- Island companies face a long road to recovery that they expect will extend into April 2022.
- Eighty percent of the businesses that participated in the survey are small businesses with 20 or fewer employees.
- Revenues fell an average of 45% from 2019 to 2020, with no significant differences between Oahu and neighbor isles.
- Almost half (45%) reduced their workforce. The percentage would have been higher (63%) if businesses had not received federal Paycheck Protection Program funds.
- Businesses that had to cut jobs laid off a median of one in three workers in 2020. On neighbor isles, cuts were even greater, with five in nine employees laid off due to the pandemic.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

¹ Survey finds Hawaii businesses reeling from lost revenue, cutting jobs, and expecting a long road to recovery
<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2021/02/02/breaking-news/survey-finds-hawaii-businesses-reeling-from-lost-revenue-cutting-jobs-and-expecting-a-long-road-to-recovery/>



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM, THE COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS AND
THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 224
MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2021 AT 3:00 P.M.**

To The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair;
The Honorable Bennette E. Misalucha, Vice Chair; and
Members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism,

To The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair;
The Honorable J. Kalani English, Vice Chair; and
Members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs,

To The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair;
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair; and
Members of the Committee on Health,

OPPOSE HB1286 HD2 RELATING TO TRAVEL

Aloha, my name is Pamela Tumpap. I am the President of the Maui Chamber of Commerce, in the county most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of our dependence on the visitor industry and corresponding rate of unemployment. I am writing share our opposition to HB1286 HD2.

We understand the benefits of this bill and believe there is value in a statewide system. We have the utmost respect for Speaker Saiki and his intents and efforts on this issue. It is hard for us to be in a different position as we support our sister island chambers, but feel there must be a way where we can come together without making this law.



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HB1286 HD2 Testimony
March 22, 2021
Page 2.

Flexibility has been critical for Maui County and Mayor Victorino has worked with the Chamber and business community to be as flexible as possible, while still balancing health and economic concerns. This flexibility has been especially important to Maui County as a tri-island county. Therefore, to best meet our mission on advocating for our members and our community, we must oppose this bill.

We hope to see continued dialogue between the Governor and Mayors to find workable solutions and unify where possible.

Mahalo for your consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

March 21, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND
MILITARY AFFAIRS
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1286, HD2
RELATING TO TRAVEL**

Conference Room 224
3:00 PM

Aloha Chairs Wakai, Nishihara, and Keohokalole, Vice-Chairs Misalucha, English, and Baker, and Members of the Committees:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports HB 1286, HD2, which exempts any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival. It also allows the governor to establish conditions for exemption, requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine, requires any person who does not obtain a negative test result for COVID-19 pre-arrival to be responsible for all costs associated with that person's mandatory self-quarantine.

HFB supports efforts to safely allow for the reopening of Hawaii's economy. We believe this bill is a reasonable way to safely allow visitors and returning Hawaii residents to avoid unnecessary self-quarantine. Allowing travelers who receive a negative COVID-19 test to be exempt from self-quarantine will ease travel confusion and make the process smoother and more efficient for everyone. Having clear manageable rules for testing and quarantine is an important step in safely opening up our economy.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important subject.



SanHi

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

DATE: March 21, 2021

TO: Senator Glenn Wakai
Chair, Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism

Senator Clarence Nishihara
Chair, Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole
Chair, Committee on Health

Submitted Via Capitol Website

FROM: Mihoko Ito

RE: **H.B. 1286, H.D. 2 – Relating to Travel**
Hearing Date: Monday, March 22, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

Dear Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Keohokalole, and members of the joint committees:

We submit this testimony on behalf of Enterprise Holdings (“Enterprise”), which includes Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Alamo Rent-A-Car, National Car Rental, and Enterprise Commute (Van Pool).

Enterprise **supports** H.B. 1286, H.D. 2, which creates a statewide safe travels program exemption.

Enterprise favors uniformity through a single state policy, and believes H.B. 1286, H.D. 2, will help to accomplish that goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Activities & Attractions Association of Hawaii, Inc.

PO Box 598, Makwao, Hawaii 96768
(808)871-7947 Phone (808)877-3104 Fax

March 21, 2021

Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, & Tourism
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, & Military Affairs
Senate Committee on Health

RE: House Bill 1286, HD2 Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine

Aloha Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Keohokalole, and members of the Committees,

Mahalo for this opportunity to Testify. As the executive director of the Activities & Attractions Association of Hawaii, Inc. (A3H), representing Hawaii's in-destination experiences, we appreciate your efforts to unify the Travel Safes process for visitors. We would like to see even more done.

Hawaii's economy has suffered more than any other state in our Country. Mostly due to issues outside our control. Hawaii's travel restrictions are a massive issue within your control. With the vaccine distribution, it's imperative government quickly update these restrictions.

The small portion of the U.S. population that is willing to travel, are not choosing Hawaii due to our disjointed, confusing, and, in some cases, impossible to adhere to travel restrictions. Our state & counties have lost thousands of jobs, and many businesses have permanently closed.

In-destination experiences are not national chains like hotels, airlines, or restaurants. Our voice is not as loud; we are so valuable as one of the only travel sectors where most profits remain in the state. We host visitors' experience and create vacation memories. We are residents, owners of these businesses, stakeholders, and proud involved voting members of our community. We are committed to safely reopening. Visitors are less likely to visit without in-destination experiences available. It is a catch 22. We need the government to make the first move.

We urge you to adopt a Safe Travels Program **consistent** across all islands and also consider these changes:

- *Allow travel without testing if the visitor has confirmed proof of vaccination*
- *Increase the window during which travelers could take their pre-arrival test from **three days to five days**.*
- *Make available testing upon arrival at the airport(s) for passengers whose pre-arrival test results have not yet been uploaded to the "Safe Travels" website.*
- *Those passengers who choose to take the arrival test with negative results should be allowed a 48-hour window to quarantine while awaiting their "Safe Travels" confirmation.*

As the hardest-hit Hawaii travel sector businesses, we urge you to support these changes as they will help all of us safely open as quickly as possible.

With great respect and sincerity,

Toni Marie Davis/A3H Executive Director

Some of Hawaii's Activities and Attractions:

Action Sports Maui	Hawaii Forest & Trail (Oahu, Hawaii)
Aina Anuhea Tropical Garden	Hang Gliding Maui
Air Kauai, Inc	Hawaii Maritime Center
Air Maui	Hawaii Ocean Rafting
Alii Kayak	Hawaiian Paddle Sports
Aqua Adventures	Hawaiian Sailboarding Techniques, Inc.
Aqua Sports LTD	Hawaii Tasting Tours
Atlantis Adventures (Oahu, Maui, Hawaii)	Hawaiian Charters
Atlantis Cruises	Hawaii Production Special Events
Hawaiian Slack Key	Hawaiian Waters Adventure Park
Bike Hawaii	Hawaii Ocean Project
Blue Dolphin Charters	Hawaii Oceanic
Blue Hawaiian Helicopters (All Islands)	Hike Maui
Blue Note Hawaii	Hinatea Sportfishing
Blue Water Rafting	HoloHolo Charters Inc.
Bluewater Sailing Kauai	Hula Girl Sailing
Body Glove	Hula Kai Cruises
Boss Frog's Dive & Surf	Ironwood Ranch
Captain Andy's Sailing, Inc.	Isana Ocean Sports
Captain Steve's Rafting	Island Adventures
Captain Sundown Ent.	Island Breeze Productions
Captain Zodiac	Island Helicopters Kauai, Inc.
Catamaran Kahanu	Island Marine Activities
Chief's Luau	Island Scuba
Cruiser Phil's	Island Star Excursions
Da Life	Jack Harter Helicopters
Eco-Adventure, Inc.	Jungle Zipline Tours
Ed Robinson's Diving Adventures	Kaanapali Kai Charters, Inc.
Expeditions	Kai Kanani Charters
Fair Wind Cruises, Inc.	Kamanu Charters, Inc.
Fathom Five Scuba Diving Services	Kauai ATV
Flumin Kohala	Kauai Sea Tours
Friendly Charters	Kayak Adventures, Inc.
Frogman Charters	Kayak Wailua
Gemini Charters	Keahou Boating
Haleakala Bike Co., Inc.	Kelii's Kayak Tours
Haleakala Eco Tours	Kiteboarding School of Maui, Inc.

Kona Honu Divers, Inc.
Kualoa Ranch
Lahaina Divers
Lahela Ocean Adventures
Lanai Jeep Safari
Liko Kauai Cruises
Luckey Strike Charters
Magnum Helicopter
Makani Kai Airlines
Makena Coast Charters
Mana Divers Kauai
Marine Charters, Inc.
Maui Cave Adventures
Maui Classic Charters
Maui Craft Tours
Maui Dive Shop
Maui Dreams Dive Co
Maui Eco Adventures
Maui Eco-Tours
Maui Island Tours
Maui Kayaks
Maui Molokai Sea Cruises
Maui Mountain Cruisers
Maui Ocean Center Aquarium
Maui Paintball
Maui Pineapple Tours
Maui Sailing Charters
Maui Snorkel Charters
Maui Snorkel Tours
Maui Sun Divers
Maui Sunriders Bike Co.
Maui Surf Clinics
Maui Tropical Plantation
Maui Wave Riders
Mendes Ranch
Molokai Outdoors
Mountain Riders
My Splash LLC
Mystery Maui
Na Pali Explorer
National Tropical Botanical Gardens
Oahu Nature Tours
Ocean Activities Center

Ocean Odyssey Dive Tours
Ocean Sports
Octopus Garden Divers, Inc
O'he'o Stables
Olapa Ko'a
Old Lahaina Luau
Outfitter's Kauai
Pacific Coast Kayak
Pacific Jet Sports Inc.
Pacific Whale Foundation
Paradise Cove
Parasail Kaanapali
Piiholo Ranch
Pineapple Express
Polynesian Adventure Tours (All Islands)
Polynesian Cultural Center
Princeville Ranch Adventures
Prodiver Maui
Proflyght Paragliding, Inc.
Rascal Charters
Redline Rafting
Reef Dancer
Roberts Hawaii (All Islands)
Safari Helicopters (Kauai, Hawaii)
Scuba Mike
Scuba Shack
Scotch Mist Sailing Charters
Sea Life Park
Sea Monkey Private Charters
Sea Quest, Ltd.
Seabird Cruises
Seasport Divers
Segway Hawaii (Oahu, Hawaii)
Shaka Divers
Shoreline Snuba
Skyline Eco-Adventures(Kauai, Maui, Hawaii)
Smith's Motor Boat, Inc.
Snuba Big Island
Soul Surfing Maui
South Pacific Kayaks & Outfitters
Southshore Charters, Inc.
SpeediShuttle, LLC
Star Gazers Maui

Stardust Segway Tours
Start Me Up Sportfishing
Strike Zone
Sunlight on Water
Sunshine Helicopters (Maui, Kauai, Hawaii)
Temptation Tours
Teralani Sailing Charters
Trilogy Excursions (Maui, Lanai)
True Blue Charters
UFO Chuting of Hawaii (Maui, Hawaii)
Upcountry Cycles Ltd
USS Arizona Memorial

USS Battleship Missouri Memorial
USS Bowfin Submarine Museum
Waikiki Aquarium
Waikiki Trolley Tours
Wailua Kayak Adventures
Wailea Boating Company
Waimea Falls Park
Wake Maui
Warren & Annabelle's
West Maui Parasail
Wet n Wild Water Park
Wings Over Pearl



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI, PRESIDENT
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII
March 22, 2021
Re: HB 1286 HD2 Relating to Travel**

Good afternoon Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Keohokalole and members of the Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism, Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs, and the Committee on Health. I am Tina Yamaki, President of the Retail Merchants of Hawaii and I appreciate this opportunity to testify.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii was founded in 1901, RMH is a statewide, not for profit trade organization committed to the growth and development of the retail industry in Hawaii. Our membership represents small mom & pop stores, large box stores, resellers, luxury retail, department stores, shopping malls, local, national, and international retailers, chains, and everyone in between.

We are **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** to HB 1286 HD2 Relating to Travel. This measure exempts any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival; allows the governor to establish statewide conditions for exemption; requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine; requires any person who does not obtain a negative test result for COVID-19 pre-arrival to be responsible for all costs associated with that person's mandatory self-quarantine; prohibits the suspension of this Act except by legislative approval via a concurrent resolution; and repeals on 12/31/2021. Effective 7/1/2050.

Hawaii's economy depends on tourism. It is the story of the \$20 bill – Visitor comes to Hawaii and pays for their hotel stay with at \$20. The hotel uses that \$20 to pay the hotel employee. The hotel employee purchases a plate lunch with that \$20. The plate lunch wagon owner purchases vegetables from the local farmer with that \$20. The local farmer pays the truck driver to deliver his vegetables to the grocery stores. The truck driver by shoes for his children with that \$20. If there is a break in the link of the \$20, Hawaii's economy will take an excruciating time to recover – and each week we see more and more retailers shutting their doors for good because they can no longer afford to do business in Hawaii without their customer base.

Retailers continue to be concerned about health and safety of not only our community and our employees, but our visitors coming to our islands as well. We have seen the devastation this pandemic has had on not only the community but on business as well. Hawaii's businesses and the community has been instrumental in ensuring that the health and safety by wearing masks, social distancing, constantly cleaning high touch areas and more since March 2020. We continue to support keeping Hawaii safe and we believe that programs like Hawaii Safe Travels, testing before coming to our islands or mandatory quarantine if there is no testing done is working.

Having a statewide rule will alleviate much of the confusion surrounding travel to Hawaii. We have seen that every time a county changes its travel orders to stricter rules, the entire state suffers. Visitors view these county changes as being statewide or will be implemented shortly on all islands and therefore often cancel or postpone their travel plans. Some are unsure exactly what the rules are to come to Hawaii. And while Hawaii has seen large clusters due to COVID-19, it is our understanding that the clusters were NOT due to visitors, but by social gatherings for family gatherings and funerals, in care home and in our prison system.

Furthermore, we are seeing more countries ramping up and more people around the world being vaccinated. The increase in people coming to Hawaii who are fully vaccinated will make Hawaii an even safer place. **We would like to request for consideration language in the bill that would include if travelers have completed their COVID-19 vaccinations and can show proof when they arrive to our state, that they will be allowed to arrive without the self-quarantine.**

Mahalo again for this opportunity to testify.

March 20, 2021

The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Committee on Health

Dear Senators Wakai, Nishihara and Keohokalole,

RE: TESTIMONY FOR HB1286, HD 2 RELATING TO TRAVEL

Mālama Iā Hawai'i LLC (MIH) was founded in August 2020 for the sole purpose of helping to make Hawai'i Island a safe place during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, MIH has been actively involved in COVID-19 mitigation efforts, working with local businesses, nonprofits and government agencies to facilitate mask distribution, education, prevention and testing islandwide.

Through the cooperation and collaboration of community partners and support at every level of government, the County of Hawaii (COH) (through two administrations) has worked tirelessly to remain vigilant in reducing the spread of COVID-19 and protect the residents and visitors within the County, and take measures to re-open safely. These comprehensive efforts have included post arrival testing of arriving transpacific passengers, and widespread testing through the far reaches of Hawaii Island. The measures taken have been reflected by the COH consistently having amongst the lowest positivity rates, cases per 100K, and hospitalization rates of the counties within the State of Hawaii who are participating in the Safe Travels Program. As a direct benefit of these efforts, the local economy is slowly yet steadily emerging from the devastating economic effects of the pandemic.

The comprehensive strategy implemented by the COH, supported by the State of Hawaii and community partners, must continue if we are to preserve the safety these efforts have brought the islands residents and visitors, from Keiki to Kupuna. Creating a rule that limits each County's ability to protect its residents and visitors would be detrimental to the island and the State of Hawaii as a whole. A change to this policy may prove detrimental to our island home, at a time when we continue to see positive results in the comprehensive COVID-19 mitigation strategies implemented within the County of Hawaii.

We, therefore, respectfully oppose HB1286 HD2 and ask that the Safe Travels Program be continued to allow each County to manage COVID-19 response and restrictions independently.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

MĀLAMA IĀ HAWAI'I LLC
Marshall Kanehailua
Jesse Ebersole
Lance Uchida
Karen Teshima
Laurie Kaneta

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 12:35:27 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Moran	Testifying for Kihei Community Assoc	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair and members

Using a broad brush may be quicker & easier , but not often the best. Allow islands and counties to decide for ourselves, Mahalo

Mike Moran, President KCA



March 18, 2021

Senate's Committees on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism; Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military; & Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: House Bill 1286 - RELATING TO TRAVEL

Aloha Chairs Wakai, Nishihara, & Keohokalole and Committees' Members,

I am writing in OPPOSITION for House Bill 1286 on behalf of the LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, Hawaii's oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization. HB 1286 HD 2 would exempt any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival. Allows the governor to establish statewide conditions for exemption. Requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine. Requires any person who does not obtain a negative test result for COVID-19 pre-arrival to be responsible for all costs associated with that person's mandatory self-quarantine. Prohibits the suspension of this Act except by legislative approval via a concurrent resolution.

While the LGBT Caucus realizes we are living in unique times while dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, we feel strongly that each county should be able to take the lead to take care of their own communities. Each county is different and has different needs. During this pandemic each mayor has acted differently in order to protect and respond accordingly to their respective community's needs.

Setting one standard across the state of Hawai'i is not prudent. Instead the LGBT Caucus supports each county's Mayor to work with their staff; the Director of the State of Hawaii's Department of Health; the Governor, and other appropriate State and Federal agencies to make decisions that fit their county's needs in face of this pandemic.

The LGBT Caucus believes this bill appears to be an O'ahu-centric power grab from the neighbor islands. If certain counties want to put in place stronger rules to protect their communities, they should be able to do so. For these reasons the LGBT Caucus opposes this legislation.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.
Chair
LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 12:10:19 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Meera Kohler	Testifying for RBOAA	Support	No

Comments:

RBOAA supports HB1286 HD2 and would like to offer the offer the following:

There has been significant confusion about travel requirements across the state and this bill will offer continuity and a clear framework for travel to the State of Hawaii.

We suggest that language be added to include protocols for those who have received the COVID-19 vaccine, allowing travelers to avoid certain restrictions and offering clearance to travel to and between islands without being tested for COVID-19 first.

This Bill could launch Hawaii on the pathway to economic recovery and the return of tourism employment.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 1:04:23 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cara Flores	Testifying for HALE Hawai'i	Oppose	No

Comments:

This bill while well intentioned can have huge unintended consequences.

1) We have new more contagious variants now in our state. One of which is now responsible for almost all cases on Maui. If these variants continue to spread and increase like they have elsewhere we may need to quickly pivot and change our travel protocol because our communities and hospitals are overwhelmed. This will hinder our ability to act quickly if our communities get inundated with a new more dangerous variant.

2) This bill treats all islands as if they are equal. This is unfair to the neighbor islands. All the neighbor islands have different levels of available medical infrastructure, different amounts of tourism, different budgets, and different school situations. I am on the island of Maui and very concerned.

a) Maui families have been very much harmed by the "Safe Travels" program. Our schools were in the green on DOH school metrics (in person school) for all of October now we have been in purple for over a month (learning from home).

b) Maui's cases per population is now equal to Portland, OR so the Safe Travels program is NOT working for Maui.

c) Maui hospital is strained and full regularly. It can quickly be completely overwhelmed which will cause people to unnecessarily die. This program can completely devastate our island if our hospital gets overwhelmed because there is no way to put on the breaks.

3) There are other plans that could allow tourism and keep residents safer. I would be happy to send some to you. If the whole state is going to adopt a plan it should be one that all the counties would be glad to adopt. The neighbor counties have all rejected the current program which is why there are different requirements. The Safe Travel program is not considered safe enough for counties with limited resources. It is not right to force a less safe plan onto counties without their consent. It is very Oahu-centric and very oppressive towards "neighbor" islands. This plan does not have aloha and is not very neighborly.

a) One plan that is widely supported as a better protocol by many renowned experts in Hawaii is the "Safer Travel" plan. It can be found here:

<https://halehawaii.cc/safertravels> (I would be more than happy to explain it.)

b) Maybe this or a similar Safer program would be more acceptable to neighbor counties and would be voluntarily adopted.

c) Please consider the message this bill sends to neighbor counties. It sends a loud and clear message that residents in neighbor counties and our voices do not matter. This bill's purpose is to take apart plans and protocols that were painstakingly put together by counties despite opposition on all sides of the COVID-19 debate. The Safe Travels plan was considered and rejected by neighbor counties. To force more cases of COVID19 onto the neighbor counties with no ability to locally put on the brakes is very authoritarian and unethical. It will cause division and non-reversible resentment towards visitors and Oahu. Forcing counties to follow a plan that is already failing in Maui and widely rejected in Kauai and Hawai'i is not pono.

d) Our county Mayors and local DOH representatives can see what is happening on the ground here in real time and need to be able to respond to it quickly.

e) As a state we should only adopt and pursue a statewide plan that all county mayors would voluntarily gladly adopt. Otherwise we should let each county have a plan that fits their comfort level based on the local infrastructure and needs.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2021 2:46:38 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James E Raymond	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha: Chair Nishihara, Vice-Chair English, and members of the Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs Committee

and;

Aloha: Chair Keohokalole, Vice-Chair Baker and members of the Health Committee

My name is James Raymond – until January of last year, I served as a Deputy Attorney General for the State of Hawai`i, but I am now retired and speak only as a concerned citizen in strong opposition to H.B. No. 1286, H.D. 2, entitled: "A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO TRAVEL."

As a retired Deputy Attorney General, I can tell you this bill has significant technical flaws, primarily in the form of ambiguities and unanticipated consequences – I'm available to review those with the Committees, but this testimony addresses more fundamental problems with HB1286. It is clear from my experience with HB1286 hearings in the House, that this bill is widely misunderstood by most legislators.

HB1286 guts the primary purpose of Chapter 127A, Emergency Management, and removes the authority of the Governor to act quickly on travel related issues during this pandemic – this is especially worrisome when the impact of multiple COVID-19 variants is not well understood and has triggered serious alarms from the scientific community. (See References below.)

A secondary impact of HB1286 that is not well understood is that it does not implement the Safe Travels program as it currently is deployed. The problem of travelers arriving before their test results were available caused problems in the early days of Safe Travels. To address this, the executive branch implemented a change that was intended to deter travelers from boarding planes to Hawaii before their test results were available – the Safe Travels program was modified to require the traveler to undergo full quarantine under those conditions even if a negative test result became available before the quarantine period elapsed. This change was made quickly, and it had a beneficial impact in reducing the number of infected travelers arriving in Hawai`i. HB1286, H.D. 2, section 2(b)(1) guts that fix and encourages travelers to rely on test availability at the

Hawai'i airport. By this provision alone, HB1286 makes the Safe Travels program less safe – and it cannot be fixed without a special session of the legislature.

Another terrible, but not obvious consequence of HB1286 is that it eliminates a county's ability to REQUIRE a second test in order to avoid the quarantine. This is a provision that currently exists in the Governor's proclamations and is relied on by Hawaii Island -- under HB1286, counties would be restricted to offering second tests on a VOLUNTARY basis which data scientists will tell you, reduces the efficacy of the test in keeping the virus at bay, and destroys the ability to draw accurate conclusions regarding efficacy of travel protocols.

The bill's drafters disingenuously suggest that the State's ability to act quickly is preserved under the bill. The 'Purpose' section added in H.D. 1 Section 1, states in part:

". . . the purpose of this Act is to create a statewide approach to the safe travels program while still allowing the department of health to take necessary action to protect public health . . ."

The only provision in HB1286 that could possibly be construed to support that false claim is Section 2(c) of H.D. 2, which states in part (emphasis added):

"(c) **In addition to the exemptions** provided for under subsection (b), the governor shall establish statewide conditions under which persons may be deemed automatically exempt from the pre-travel testing requirements and mandatory self-quarantine . . ."

However, this provision only allows the Governor to make the rules *more lax* by allowing for **additional exemptions**, **but it does not allow for tightening the travel restrictions for the state or an island should conditions change suddenly**. The only way that will happen is for the legislature to meet in regular or special session and amend the law.

This bill would also remove the option, currently provided by the Governor under Chapter 127A, for any other Mayor to opt out of, or opt into, the Safe Travels program. We have seen recently how important this option is for the timely and county specific management of the pandemic – why would we want to forgo that ability when we are so close to closing the door on COVID-19.

In summary:

These five points should be carefully addressed and answered by anyone considering going on the record in support of HB1286;

1. HB1286 would eliminate the Governor's power to allow counties to opt out of, or opt into the State's Safe Travels or adopt other, creative solutions to re-open Hawai'i to tourists.

2. HB1286 would eliminate the Governor's power to quickly approve other travel protocols in response to changes in pandemic conditions; for example: outbreaks of COVID-19 variants which currently pose an unknown threat to Hawai'i.

3. HB1286 reinforces Hawaii's encouragement for travelers to ignore current CDC guidance (updated Feb. 16, 2021) which states in part:

"CDC recommends that you do not travel at this time . . . If you must travel . . . get tested with a viral test 1-3 days before your trip . . . Get tested again with a viral test 3-5 days after your trip and stay home and self-quarantine for a full 7 days after travel."

4. HB1286 has not been shown to offer a significant improvement to our economic crisis. The only relevant economic data we have indicates that Kauai was not materially worse off for opting out of Safe Travels. But, available data does indicate that the Safe Travels program did materially degrade Kauai's CVOVID-19 case counts.

5. The undeniable fact that Hawai'i is in economic ruins does not 'prove' that HB1286, by forcing relaxed safety protocols on all counties, will materially improve our circumstances -- in fact, as Hawaii's economist, Paul Brewbaker said in an August 5, 2020 Star Advertiser interview:

"It's pretty basic, everybody. The epidemiological problem is the economic problem. You don't solve the economic problem until the epidemiological problem is solved, until we mitigate and contain spread of the novel coronavirus,"

<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/05/breaking-news/watch-live-paul-brewbaker-economist-at-tz-economics-joins-honolulu-star-advertisers-spotlight-hawaii/>

HB1286 represents the worst kind of **special interest** micro-managing by the legislature and ruins the ability of the Governor to react quickly and decisively to the pandemic - please kill this bill.

Respectfully,

/s/ James Raymond

(retired) Deputy Attorney General

References:

(in chronological order)

1. Economist Paul Brewbaker discusses Hawaii's outlook on the Star-Advertiser's Spotlight Hawaii, interview by Ryan Kalei Tsuji and Yunji de Nies, Special to the Star-Advertiser, Aug. 5, 2020:

"It's pretty basic, everybody. The epidemiological problem is the economic problem. You don't solve the economic problem until the epidemiological problem is solved, until we mitigate and contain spread of the novel coronavirus."

<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/05/breaking-news/watch-live-paul-brewbaker-economist-at-tz-economics-joins-honolulu-star-advertisers-spotlight-hawaii/>

2. Dr. Darragh O'Carroll, Nov. 23, 2020 Medium article: How Hawaii Can Get Coronavirus Right In Twelve Steps:

<https://link.medium.com/Xi2aoseVLbb>

3. Dr. Janet Berreman, the Kauai District Health Officer, Nov. 24, 2020 Star Advertiser letter to the Editor: To be safe, reimpose travel quarantine through December:

https://staradvertiser-hi.newsmemory.com/?publink=1a05f93fb_13438c8

4. Prof. Monique Chyba and Prof. Victoria Fan, HiPAM (Hawaii Pandemic Applied Modeling workgroup), Jan. 15, 2021 Civil Beat article: How COVID-19 Could Be Much Worse In 2021:

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2021/01/how-covid-19-could-be-much-worse-in-2021/>

5. Monique Chyba et al. COVID-19 Heterogeneity in Islands Chain Environment, preprint, Cornell Univ., Feb. 12, 2021, *from abstract*: ". . . In this paper, we examine the data and compare the COVID-19 spread statistics between the counties of Hawai'i as well as examine several locations with similar properties to Hawai'i."

<https://arxiv.org/abs/2102.07646>

6. Prof. Lee Altenberg, written opposition testimony submitted to the Hawaii House of Representatives, Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Feb. 17, 2021 Hearing for HB1286 (Spkr. Saiki's Travel bill), (page 499 of pdf file):

https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/Session2021/Testimony/HB1286_HD1_TESTIMONY_JH_A_02-17-21_.PDF

7. Hawai'i Doctors Pandemic Advisory Committee, written opposition testimony submitted to the Hawaii House of Representatives, Finance Committee's Hearing for HB1286 (Spkr. Saiki's Travel bill), Feb. 25, 2021 – signed by nine medical/science experts (page 16 of pdf file):

https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/Session2021/Testimony/HB1286_HD2_TESTIMONY_FI_N_02-25-21_.PDF

end of testimony

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2021 8:15:51 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

We do not live in a Dictatorship. Under the 1st Amendment we the people are protected from haveing to wear any Mask our take Vaccines that will only Kill you. There is no proof that any of this even works. Under the Nurenberg Act You people will be held responsible for deaths and the Time that people have lost becuse of this Bull shit. Your time is comeing. We will be calling for the Maxamum penalty against all those who are responsible!!

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2021 8:41:38 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Will Caron	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha committee members,

Please allow HB1286 to die. This bill is simply bad policy. State regulation should be a "floor and not a ceiling." Each individual county has unique circumstances and should be allowed to implement stricter public health and safety standards if they believe that is in the best interest of their community. Instead of desperately trying to claw our way back toward an exploitive and unsustainable economic model dependent on tourism, we should take this opportunity to focus our energy on every other economic opportunity outside of the visitor industry so we can break our addiction to tourism.

Mahalo.

March 19, 2021

Testimony in opposition to HB 1286 HD 2, Relating to Travel

Honorable Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Keohokalole and members of the Committees:

I am writing in opposition to HB 1286 HD2, Relating to Travel, for the following reasons.

First, this bill would codify practices, which even now, do not reflect the best guidance for safe travel. Please see for example, the CDC guidance at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/testing-air-travel.html>.

Moreover, the sweeping provisions of section 2(a) of the bill provide that the travel protocols in this bill precede and preempt all other laws, ordinances, rules, orders, or proclamations. This limits our state's ability to address COVID-19 infections through the Safe Travels program in the future.

The bill limits emergency powers and makes it difficult for state leaders to quickly address a changing landscape. When people look to their government, one of the roles that is most important is the ability of that government to act in ways to protect and support its people in times of emergency. This bill will curtail the State's ability to fulfill this role. Other than the ability to create exemptions to requirements, the bill preempts the governor's powers, including emergency powers, to adjust the travel protocols. A concurrent resolution by each house is required to suspend the terms of this bill, which means a delayed response to an emergency.

It is critical to maintain the ability to respond quickly to address the transmission of COVID-19 and to be able to adjust the travel protocols as needed. Our understanding of COVID-19 and how to protect against its transmission has been evolving over time. The virus itself is changing and new variants, including the highly contagious UK variant, have come into the state **through travel**. With this virus, we have found that we cannot predict the future and it would be unwise to limit our ability to respond.

In addition, as a consequence of section 2(a), counties will no longer have the flexibility to adjust their travel protocols to better protect their communities. At present, the statewide requirements have provided for a floor, setting a level of

protection across the state, but allowing a county, such as Kauai, to provide more protection with the governor's approval. This had allowed Kauai to stay at relatively low rates of infection and limit community spread. In contrast, Maui has gone from relatively few cases prior to October 15, to consistently higher numbers and infection rates since then.

This bill also takes away the ability to develop and implement more creative and finely tuned approaches to creating a balance between travel and public health. While Kauai's approach has since been changed, programs such as Kauai's resort bubbles demonstrate the kinds of innovative efforts that will be quashed by this bill.

As the bill states, economic and public health are tied together. However, in the middle of a pandemic, we must consider whether the economy, including the travel industry, can recover if the health effects of COVID-19 are not addressed. If this bill leaves our state in a place where COVID-19 becomes more imbedded within our communities and our rates of infection rise, not only will we be in a place of poorer public health, but we also will no longer be a desirable place to visit, making the economic benefits sought by this bill difficult to achieve. For these reasons, please vote no on this bill.

Sincerely,
Lynn Otaguro
Oahu, Hawaii

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2021 2:38:21 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elroy Osorio	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Our elected officials appear to have interests other than the physical health and well-being of their communities in mind.

I don't see why travel restrictions should be lifted or diminished so long as Covid remains an active threat.

Those of us who have ancestral roots in these islands remember that all forms of infectious disease were initially introduced here by travelers. If we'd had a system of travel restrictions in place before the whalers were allowed to anchor, there'd be a lot more Native Hawaiians walking the Earth.

And now, in the 21st Century, what have we learned?

How did Covid get to our shores in the first place? How did it spread to the outer islands?

Air travel.

And consider this, what was air travel like before 9/11? And what has it been like since?

Have we had another instance of an airliner being compromised and crashed into a building? No. Does that mean we should lower or remove the restrictions that were enacted following 9/11?

Of course not, the threat is still out there.

Covid is still out there, it is ever changing, and relentless.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 7:15:00 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tom Fuller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chairs and honored members of the committees,

For the record, my name is Tom Fuller and I own property at 1901 Poipu Road, Koloa HI.

I write today in support of HB1286. Hawaii's COVID-19 cases have dropped since peaking in January - despite the presence of tens of thousands of visitors. This is due to the Save Travels Program.

Kauai's decision to opt out of the program in December has hurt all of Hawaii's tourism. It has cost us tens of thousands of dollars in lost short term vacation rent. We are holding on by the skin of our teeth. Many Kauai businesses have gone under and many properties are for sale. This despite a proven working travel program on other islands.

The inconsistency between islands has caused great confusion and hampers the recovery of the economy.

Given the fact that Kaua's mayor has joined and opted out of the Safe Travels Program before - we need you to put it into law that all of Hawaii will be under one program - based on science and public health and economic best practices.

Mahalo for your time.

Tom Fuller

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 11:19:47 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
J Tyler	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please oppose to give Neighbor island mayors the right to safeguard their citizens.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 11:31:10 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patricia Blair	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Lacks common sense!

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 12:13:49 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Harriet Burkholder	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Each county in Hawaii should continue to have the opportunity to create its own travel restrictions because each county has unique needs and challenges in meeting COVID-19.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 12:42:10 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara L. George	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

OPPOSE! State rules/restrictions should be the floor only; counties should have the leeway to impose more stringent requirements based on local conditions.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 12:57:09 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Margaret. Guiler	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am writing in opposition of HB1286 as it would hamstring individual counties as they battle COVID-19. Our Mayor Kawakami by his forward thinking action was integral to the fact that Kauai remained such a virus free island, Had he not acted Kauai could well have the same high numbers as Maui. All counties are not the same in their needs. Each should have autonomy when it comes to protecting their ohana.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 1:05:05 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary Whispering Wind	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

I OPPOSE HB1286 HD2.

Each Island is different, one program does not fit all.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 1:14:55 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Hawaii has the advantage that each island and county is separate and isolated from the others and they are each different. One size does not always fit all, especially when it comes to living in a pandemic. Please oppose this measure and show respect for the county governments. Oahu's situation in a pandemic is very different from that in the neighbor islands and they are different from each other. For the health and welfare of our residents we need to realize that and acknowledge that these differences should be recognized and allow policies to be different, tailored to the needs of each county.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 2:43:01 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Raphiell Nolin	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Our County should be able to make its own rules, not be forced to comply with Oahu mandates.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 3:16:11 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
glenn oshiro	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Counties have enough input and can handle issue as things stand. Please oppose

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 3:25:08 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Pcola_Davis	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose the bill for several reasons.

1. The bill doesn't match the current CDC guidelines. We need that 2nd test.
2. I also don't understand why this is being introduced, except for not allowing any variance between islands. That is why they have mayors. There are always going to be circumstances when what's good for one, IS NOT good for all. This bill takes away their autonomy.

It's nice to have tourists, but do it safely.

3. Another part of the bill that should be removed has to do with the Governor establishing statewide exemptions.

In addition to the exemptions provided for under subsection (b), the governor shall establish statewide conditions under which persons may be deemed automatically exempt from the pretravel testing requirements and mandatory self-quarantine, taking into consideration recommendations provided by the department of health. WHY?

4. Another issue is this clause regarding prohibiting the suspension of this act. Leaving a repeal date to 12/2021. Requiring a concurrent resolution may mean the Legislature goes into a Special Session.

Prohibits the suspension of this Act except by legislative approval via a concurrent resolution. Repeals on 12/31/2021. WHAT IS THE REASON FOR THIS CLAUSE?

Additional thoughts:

This bill is based on a number of implicit, unstated assumptions, none of which are supported by any data, and many of which are provably false.

(1) NO SUPPORTING DATA: Visitor numbers and revenue would be higher if potential travelers were not "confused" by different county travel protocols. It would be impossible to find data to support this. The committee who worked on the Safe Travels Program caused the confusion. Making random changes creates confusion.

OTHER POSSIBLE REASONS

- People are heeding the advice of the CDC and refraining from nonessential travel at this time.
- Many people do not have the money to travel due to loss of income during the pandemic.
- They are taking advantage of bargain airfare and hotel rates.
- Many countries are restricting travel by their residents.
- Pre-travel testing and mask-wearing requirements may be deterring some visitors,

but those rules are already in effect statewide, and this bill would not change that. SOLUTION:

CENTRAL WEBSITE!!

1. Consistent and timely updates
 2. Detailing all state and county travel rules
 3. Link all other official state and county websites to this central website;
 4. Encourage all travel booking sites, airlines, hotels, and Hawai'i-related social media sites to link to the official site,
- !!!ONE STOP SHOP!!!

LACK OF ABILITY TO PIVOT QUICKLY!

*The State's COVID RESPONSE is not static. We know that it changes constantly and rapidly.

* Levels of infection in a given community may rise and fall quickly and unexpectedly. *There are many unknowns.

*Codifying Hawaii's current "Safe Travels" protocol into a statute would make it impossible for the State to further strengthen its travel policies in order to respond to a significantly more virulent and more infectious variant, or to loosen them if it appears safe to do so based on resident and visitor vaccination status, or the discovery of new, highly effective treatment modalities.

*The addition of the new Section 3 in the HD2 version of the proposed bill has made this even worse, by entirely removing the Governor's ability to adopt emergency rules in response to a sudden change in the situation, such as a rapid rise in infections with a more contagious variant..

*If future events convince our Governor that further protections, such as those currently in place on Kauai, must be adopted statewide in order to protect residents' lives and health, this bill would prevent him from doing so without the delay and expense of a special session of the Legislature.

*If future developments suggest that residents and visitors would be equally or better protected by measures less burdensome than pre-travel testing, this bill would prevent the Governor from responding to that change.

(2) IT'S JUST A HYPOTHESIS WITHOUT DATA: Uniform statewide travel rules are needed to ensure the State has adequate revenue to perform its functions, and to revive the State's economy.

RABBIT HOLE:

Hawaii's reliance on tourism is outdated and troublesome. It is not a new problem! It has been a problem for a very long time. Ten years ago Hawaii knew this. We trudged through it, didn't change anything/ diversify, and we struggled out of the slump. It was a pre-warning.

We learned nothing from the past and now we are repeating history.

GO LEARN SOMETHING!

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 4:21:05 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christine Heath	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am testifyig in opposition to this bill. The Counties need to be able to set different rules and adjust to pandemic outbreaks on their particular island. You can see how one island might get an outbreak and we would want to quarantine that island and not shut down every island. We are lucky that we have the ability to do this, county to county, here in Hawaii. Also, the ability of the health care system is not the same on every island. The outer islands have more limitations in terms of hospital beds and medical professionals and each island needs to react based on their ability to respond.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 7:53:52 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Renee Riley	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Recently, Maui has had a few days when our numbers for positive COVID-19 tests have been higher than Oahu's! Each County should be able to set its own guidelines, restrictions, and exemptions depending on its most current data.

Please oppose HB1286.

Aloha,

Renée Riley, Kāʻāhi, Maui voter

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 10:08:39 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maria Maitino	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Dear Representatives,

I adamantly opposed HB 1286. I am from Kauai and have seen the consequences of the decision our mayor and health department made in opting out of the safe travels Hawaii program. At a time when our Covid case count rose quickly while in the safe travels program, once we opted out our numbers dropped. Our island has remained one of the safest places in the nation due to making a decision based on our counties unique needs. Each county should be able to make decisions regarding Covid travel and protection in the best interest of that county.

thank you,

Maria A. Maitino

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 11:34:18 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
marie janiszewski	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB1286, which prevents any County from implementing COVID travel rules/protections. I think every county needs the power to make decisions regarding the welfare of their constituents. Every county has specific needs and restrictions based on their population and location.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 8:58:52 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Noreen Dougherty	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Hawaii State Representatives,

Please oppose HB1286. Each Island has its own unique situation and It is important for each island to be able to make travel decisions, that can be extremely time sensitive, to protect the local communities and other people residing on the island at that time.

Mahalo,

Noreen Dougherty

Kapaa, Kauai.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 1:27:07 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joy Kaaz	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This bill while well intentioned can have huge unintended consequences.

1) We have new more contagious variants now in our state. At least one of these variants is the cause of almost all of Maui's cases. If these variants continue to spread and increase like they have elsewhere then we may need to quickly pivot and change our travel protocols if our communities and hospitals are overwhelmed. Codifying the safe travels plan into law will hinder our ability to act quickly if our communities get inundated with these new more dangerous variants.

2) This bill treats all islands as if they are equal, which is unfair to the neighbor islands. The neighbor islands have different levels of available medical infrastructure, different amounts of tourism, different budgets, and different school situations. I am on the island of Maui and am very concerned. We are currently experiencing a surge due in large part to the California variant, the same one the recently devastated California, overwhelming California's hospitals and causing high death rates. California was only able to mitigate this surge by locking down.

a) Maui families have been greatly harmed by the "Safe Travels" program. Our schools were in the green on DOH school metrics (in person school) for all of October now we have been in purple for over a month (learning from home).

b) Maui's cases per population is now equal to Portland, OR so the Safe Travels program is NOT working for Maui.

c) Maui hospital is strained and full regularly. It can quickly be completely overwhelmed which will cause people to unnecessarily die. This peoposed bill will completely devastate our island if our hospital gets overwhelmed because there will be no way to put on the breaks.

3) There are other plans that could allow tourism and keep residents safer, such as a mandatory pretest, modified quarantine and a post test. If the whole state is going to adopt a plan it should be one that all the counties would be glad to adopt. The neighbor counties have all rejected the current program which is

why there are different requirements. The Safe Travel program is not considered safe enough for counties with limited resources. It is not right to force a less safe plan onto counties without their consent. It is very Oahu-centric and very oppressive towards "neighbor" islands. This plan does not have aloha and is not very neighborly.

a) One plan that is widely supported as a better protocol by many renowned experts in Hawaii is the "Safer Travel" plan. It can be found here: <https://halehawaii.cc/safertravels> (I would be more than happy to explain it.)

b) Maybe this or a similar Safer program would be more acceptable to neighbor counties and would be voluntarily adopted.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 2:13:37 PM

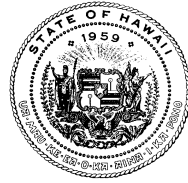
Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Katlyn Naea	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose.

Each county is different from the other throughout the state. What suits one county may not be best for another.



LATE

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

Testimony COMMENTING on H.B. 1286 H.D. 2
RELATING TO TRAVEL

SEN. GLENN WAKAI, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
SEN. CLARENCE K. NISHIHARA, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND
MILITARY AFFAIRS
SEN. JARRETT KEOHOKALO, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: 3/22/2021 Room Number: VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

1 **Fiscal Implications: The Department estimates an additional cost of at least \$500,000,**
2 **above current operating expenses, would be required to implement this measure.**

3 **Department Testimony:** Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on House Bill
4 1286 H.D. 2 which establishes COVID-19 testing requirements, exemptions to said
5 requirements, and coverage of associated costs of post-arrival mandatory self-quarantining for
6 travelers.

7 The Department of Health appreciates the amendments made to this bill which clarify that the
8 Incident Commander will establish conditions when a person is automatically exempt from the
9 mandatory self-quarantine, and that the State Safe Travels Program will be responsible for
10 approving acceptable COVID-19 tests for purposes of the program. The Department of Health
11 also appreciates the amendment to specify that any person who does not obtain a negative test
12 result prior to arrival shall be responsible for securing and paying all costs associated with
13 mandatory self-quarantine.

14 The question of how mandatory quarantine will be implemented and enforced and with what
15 resources long term remains unclear. The Department recommends the bill specify that the Safe

1 Travels program, administered by the incident commander, will manage implementation of
2 travel-related quarantine.

3 The Governor’s Eighteenth Emergency Proclamation provides exemption to “persons who, prior
4 to departure to the State, upload into the State’s Safe Travels program or otherwise provide
5 written hard copy confirmation from a DOH approved COVID-19 testing facility (“Trusted
6 Testing Partner”) of a negative test result, using a DOH-approved form, from an observed test
7 administered to the traveler within 72 hours from the final leg of departure,” and does not
8 provide for exceptions for travelers who did not receive a test result upon arrival from the final
9 leg of departure due to unforeseen circumstances through no fault of the person. This
10 modification was made because of the excessive resources that were being directed to
11 management of persons who arrived without a negative test already uploaded, and subsequently
12 received a positive result. DOH is concerned that reinstatement of this exception will provide a
13 “loophole” which will again drain resources of several state agencies, including DOH,
14 Department of Transportation, and the Attorney General’s office. Without closure of this
15 “loophole,” estimated cost to DOH above current operating expenses is at least \$500,000
16 annually.

17 Regarding the merits of a pre-travel test only versus the addition of a post-arrival test, the
18 Department of Health has always maintained that a post-travel test 3-5 days following arrival
19 increases detection of travelers who may have tested negative prior to travel while still
20 incubating COVID-19. Mandating self-quarantine until a post-travel test has been performed is
21 likely to reduce importation and dissemination of COVID-19, including new variant strains, to
22 Hawaii compared to only requiring a pre-travel test. DOH also acknowledges practical and
23 resource limitations to implementing a statewide post-arrival testing program. However,
24 allowing flexibility for implementation of more stringent quarantine mandates may be
25 appropriate to provide improved protection in localities where such limitations can be overcome.

26 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

27



LATE

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816-4495

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1286 HD2,
RELATING TO TRAVEL

Before the Senate Committee on
ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
AND
PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
AND
HEALTH

By

Luke P. Meyers
Administrator, Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA)

Aloha Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Keohokalole, Vice-Chair Misalucha, Vice-Chair English, Vice-Chair Baker, and Members of the Committees:

House Bill 1286 exempts any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival. Allows the incident commander to establish conditions for exemption. Requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine. Requires any person who does not obtain a negative test result for COVID-19 pre-arrival to be responsible for all costs associated with that person's mandatory self-quarantine. Repeals on 12/31/2021. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD2)

The Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA) **offers comments on** House Bill 1286 HD2.

While HI-EMA understands the challenges of the COVID-19 emergency, HI-EMA feels that this measure may not be necessary as the various counties already have a clear sense of how they wish to handle quarantines and testing requirements for travelers. This has also been addressed in the State emergency proclamations for this incident. As the incident evolves, similar discussions on vaccinations will be needed.

Thank you.

Luke P. Meyers: Luke.P.Meyers@hawaii.gov; 808-733-4300

LATE



Kona-Kohala
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

March 21, 2021

RE: HB1286 HD2 RELATING TO TRAVEL

Dear Chair Wakai and Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism, Chair Nishihara and the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs, and Chair Keohokalole and the Senate Committee on Public Health,

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce supports HB1286 HD2 RELATING TO TRAVEL that exempts any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival. Allows the governor to establish statewide conditions for exemption. Requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine. Requires any person who does not obtain a negative test result for COVID-19 pre-arrival to be responsible for all costs associated with that person's mandatory self-quarantine.

With nearly 500 members, our chamber represents the business community in the Kona and Kohala districts on the West side of Hawai'i Island where tourism drives the local economy. Our community was especially hard hit in 2020 due to COVID-19 impacts that resulted in severe loss of business and mass employee layoffs.

In October 2020, the Safe Travels Hawai'i program was launched that allowed travelers to bypass the mandatory 14-day quarantine (now 10 days) with a negative COVID-19 test result. This definitely helped our local businesses, however, the program changed the following month whereby travelers needed their negative test results 'in hand' prior to the last leg of their trip for the exemption. We've found little flexibility in trying to accommodate visitors and returning residents who have done everything 'right' but who run into problems with timely test results. This legislation addresses this issue and the importance of this particular issue must not be underestimated. After a year of COVID-19 economic impacts, our businesses need a successful summer season and people are making decisions now about summer travel. This is an urgent situation and must be addressed as soon as possible.

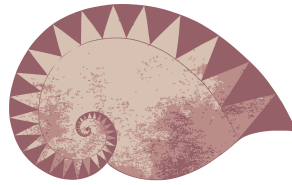
The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce exists to provide leadership and advocacy for a successful business environment in West Hawai'i. We believe the Safe Travels Hawai'i program needs modifications to help streamline the process and improve the traveler experience. We support initiatives that safely reopen our visitor industry and put our community back to work. We support the Safe Travels Hawai'i program and the modifications put forth in HB1286 HD2.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wendy J. Laros".

Wendy J. Laros, President and CEO
Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce

LATE



Pono Hawai'i Initiative

Patrick Shea - Treasurer • Lena Mochimaru - Secretary
Nelson Ho • Summer Starr

Monday March 22, 2021

HB1286 Relating to Travel
Testifying in STRONG OPPOSITION

Aloha Chair and members of the committee,

The Pono Hawai'i Initiative (PHI) strongly **opposes HB1286 HD2, Relating to Travel**. This measure sets a ceiling for Covid-19 travel restrictions and bans Counties from imposing further restrictions on travelers.

Preventing any County from putting into place strong rules protecting its community's health and safety from the risks of expanded COVID infections is simply wrong.

If passed into law HB1286 HD2 will prevent any County government from having stricter rules - "this Act shall take precedence over all conflicting statutes concerning this subject matter and shall preempt all contrary laws, ordinances, rules, orders, or proclamations adopted by the State, a county, or any department or agency thereof."

Establishing health rules during a pandemic by legislation is irresponsible and dangerous. The rules need to be flexible as the situation surrounding the spread and mutation of disease is unpredictable. A new and more dangerous variant could literally emerge tomorrow and warrant immediate changes to travel protocol and guidelines. The necessity of convening a special legislative session to change the rules, and the extended time period that involves, could literally kill people.

"Preempting" the right of a County to have stricter health protections is on its own, sufficient reason to oppose HB1286 HD2. **What's best for Honolulu is not necessarily what's best for every County.**

State laws should be a "floor not a ceiling." If any County wants to pass stronger laws, rules, or regulations that reflect its particular circumstances, it should be allowed to do so. If the residents do not agree they can direct their voices to the County Council and Mayor, and/or they can elect new County leaders. If visitors do not like it and/or they are "confused" then perhaps they would be better served by spending their vacation days elsewhere.

It is important also to note that: "The CDC recommends that you do not travel at this time."

For these reasons, I strongly encourage Committee members to **vote NO on HB1286 HD2**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Gary Hooser
Executive Director - Pono Hawai'i Initiative



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Roy Yamaguchi
Chair

Alan Wong
Vice-Chair

Sharon Brown
Secretary

Meredith Ching
Treasurer

Vikram Garg
Director

Val Iwashita
Director

Warren Shon
Director

Mark Teruya
Director

Shep Gordon
Director

March 21, 2021

Testimony of
Denise Hayashi Yamaguchi
CEO
Hawaii Food & Wine Festival

Committees on Energy & Environmental Protection,
Public Safety, Veterans, & Military Affairs and
Human Services and Homelessness

House Bill 1286 HD2: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption;
COVID-19; Quarantine

Dear Chairs Lowen, Takayama, Mizuno:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 1286 HD2.

The Hawai'i Food & Wine Festival (HFWF) is a nonprofit organization that has worked over the last eleven years to support the visitor industry by putting a spotlight on Hawai'i as a culinary destination. There are thousands who benefit from the important work of the HFWF including, chefs, farmers, ranchers, fisherman, students, airlines, hotels, etc. by participating in event that uplifts and supports Hawaii's number one industry – tourism.

Over the last year, Hawaii businesses have suffered tremendous losses because of the COVID-19 pandemic. With vaccinations on the rise and low positivity rates in our islands, now is the time to create statewide rules that will help our visitors, as well as our residents, navigate travel requirements when arriving in Hawaii and when traveling between islands. The Hawaii safe travel rules have not changed since last October and our businesses and our people continue to suffer because of inconsistent and confusing rules.

We strongly support a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai'i. HFWF, in partnership with Hawaii Tourism Lodging Association (HLTA) has also been urging our local government to provide travelers with the option to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival should they not receive their pre-arrival test result in time. The State has the tests and facilities needed to make this possible. For these reasons, we strongly support House Bill 1286 HD2.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

LATE



Airlines for America®

We Connect the World

House Bill 1286
Testimony in SUPPORT

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senator Bennette E. Misalucha, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY
AFFAIRS

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to provide industry testimony in support of House Bill 1286 with additional comments.

Airlines for America® (A4A) is the principal trade and service organization of the U.S. airline industry.¹ A4A members have gone to extensive lengths to protect the wellbeing and safety of our employees, customers and the communities in which we live, work and serve. U.S. airlines have relied on science throughout this crisis, and have undertaken hundreds of safety measures aimed at preventing virus transmission onboard aircraft. U.S. airlines began strictly enforcing face covering requirements in April 2020, long before the federal mandate. The layers of measures implemented by carriers also include pre-flight health acknowledgement forms, electrostatic and enhanced cleaning of aircraft and hospital-grade ventilation systems.

We are encouraged that rigorous scientific studies continue to confirm that the extensive layers of measures airlines have implemented effectively reduce the risk of transmission

¹ The members of the association are Alaska Airlines, Inc.; American Airlines Group, Inc.; Atlas Air, Inc.; Delta Air Lines, Inc.; Federal Express Corporation; Hawaiian Airlines; JetBlue; Southwest Airlines Co.; United Airlines Holdings, Inc.; and United Parcel Service Co. Air Canada is an associate member.

onboard aircraft. Studies by both the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health's Aviation Initiative (APHI) and US TRANSCOM found that the risk of onboard transmission of COVID is very low. In fact, the research from Harvard concluded that being on an airplane as safe – if not safer than – other routine activities, such as grocery shopping or going to a restaurant. Similarly, a recent study in Canada found that travel was the smallest contributor to new COVID-19 infections and has remained extremely low throughout the crisis.

Despite these efforts, U.S. airlines have endured a barrage of constantly changing restrictions and regulations regarding travel to and from destinations across the globe. In Hawaii, the challenge has not simply been the ever-evolving requirements for travel to and around the islands, but navigating changes that vary island-to-island. This has ultimately resulted in a patchwork of requirements that are difficult to navigate both for visitors and residents alike and as such is compounding the economic toll the pandemic has had on the State.

The industry remains committed to supporting risk-based, scientific approaches to contagion mitigation. A statewide policy, such as HB1286, that does not allow for differing local standards depending on what island you are on is welcomed, and allows those traveling to and within Hawai'i the opportunity to adhere to uniform policies. This will let the private market find solutions that work; it helps the airline and travel industry partners to communicate clearly to travelers about what to expect and how to arrive travel-ready; and it helps travelers plan future travel without having to worry about last-minute policy changes.

While we are optimistic the sunset date will be the actual repeal of this measure, we recognize that this pandemic remains hard to predict. We remain hopeful the state will find a mechanism for vaccinations as a method to forgo testing in the near term. We are confident that it will continue to allow us dialogue with this body in hopes of removing some of the impediments to air travel, while ensuring Hawai'i remains safe both for residents and for visitors, who are the lifeblood of our economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Williams', is positioned below the 'Sincerely,' text.

Sean Williams
VP, State & Local Government Affairs
swilliams@airlines.org

LATE



Testimony of
Dylan Ching
VP of Operations T S Restaurants

House Bill 1286, HD2: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine.

Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Keohokalole, and members of the Committee's, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of T S Restaurants one of the state's largest restaurant companies that operate 8 restaurants on Oahu, Kauai, and Maui for over 45 years.

T S Restaurant's strongly supports the safe travels program and the need to have a consistent system for the entire state and we believe HB1286, HD2 can make this happen. We also support a "vaccine passport" that would allow fully vaccinated travelers to be exempt from the mandatory quarantine, but also believe we should start with the interisland level before including the transpacific and international travelers.

As a frequent traveler to the outer islands to support our business but also a resident with a mother on Maui, it is very important not only for my livelihood but 'Ohana to make this step forward. We understand the hard work and sacrifice that we have put into getting to this point and we feel this is a safe way forward to allowing a fully vaccinated resident to move more freely within our state.

As this bill continues to move forward many more residents are being vaccinated and the number grows each day. We also know that things change quickly, and we feel if individual counties decide to change the rules, we all suffer by association. The safe travels program in our opinion has been success and should stay in place as a safeguard for those who chose not to be vaccinated.

Thank you again for your time and care put into keeping our residents and visitors safe while navigating returning much need positive economic impact to our state. I am happy to answer any questions or be available as a resource to the committee if any additional information is needed.

Mahalo Nui,

Dylan Ching

VP of Operations T S Restaurants



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 | Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e: info@hawaiiifood.com

Executive Officers

Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Chair*
Charlie Gustafson, Tamura Super Market, *Vice Chair*
Eddie Asato, The Pint Size Corp., *Secretary/Treas.*
Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *Executive Director*
John Schlif, Rainbow Sales and Marketing, *Advisor*
Stan Brown, Acosta Sales & Marketing, *Advisor*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Beau Oshiro, C&S Wholesale Grocers, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

TO:

Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism; Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs; and Committee on Health
Senator Glenn Wakai, Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, and Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chairs
Senator Bennette E. Misalucha, Senator J. Kalani English, and Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chairs

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director



DATE: March 22, 2021
TIME: 3pm
PLACE: Via Videoconference

RE: HB1286 HD2 Relating to Travel

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure and we encourage the committee to add an amendment to also allow for individuals that have proof of completed vaccination to be allowed to arrive without mandatory self-quarantine.

This is a common-sense way to safely allow visitors and returning Hawaii residents to avoid unnecessary self-quarantine. Allowing travelers who have been vaccinated or who receive a negative COVID-19 test to be exempt from self-quarantine will ease travel confusion and make the process smoother and more efficient for everyone. Having logical, clear manageable rules for testing, and quarantine is an important step in safely opening up our economy.

Our local businesses and Hawaii residents have worked hard to keep our economy running and find ways to build a more diverse and resilient economy for the future. Right now, the most important step on the road to recovery and rebuilding is to find ways to safely welcome more visitors to our state. This measure can help make that happen. We thank you for the opportunity to testify.

phone 808.523.7750
fax 808.522.7866

Roberts Hawaii, Inc.
444 Niu Street, Suite 300
Honolulu, HI 96815

March 22, 2021

Honorable Chairs Glenn Wakai, Clarence Nishihara, and Jarrett Keohokalole
Vice Chairs Bennette Misalucha, Kalani English, and Rosalyn Baker,
& Members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and
Tourism, Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs,
and Committee on Health

Re: Testimony in Support of HB1286 HD2

www.robertshawaii.com

Chairs Wakai, Nishihara, and Keohokalole, Vice-Chairs Misalucha, English, and
Baker, and Members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and
Tourism, Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs,
and Committee on Health:

Roberts Hawaii *strongly* supports House Bill 1286 HD2, which sets forth
requirements to be applied across the state and counties for pre-arrival and post-
arrival testing and mandatory quarantine, along with circumstances upon which
travelers may be exempt.

As an organization that directly engages with the visitors and the travel industry
in Hawaii, we believe a uniform and consistent approach needs to be applied
across the State. Such an approach would ensure that safeguards could be
effectively implemented, while at the same time helping our visitors and
residents to be able to understand and to comply with the requirements.

Due to the varying approaches that have been applied to date, we
believe a consistent standard seems appropriate, because COVID-19 is a
statewide concern and visitors will travel between islands. Although we are not
commenting on the specific requirements of the bill, we respectfully suggest the
final language of the bill should take into consideration input from the counties to
ensure the testing requirements are appropriate statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,

Roy Pfund
President & Chief Executive Officer
Roberts Hawaii

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 9:49:38 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Douglas Chang	Testifying for The Ritz-Carlton	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

Testimony Re HB1286, HD2
Before Committees on Energy, Economic Development & Tourism;
Public Safety, Intergovernmental Relations and Military; and
Health

By JoAnn A. Yukimura

March 22, 2021

Chairs Wakai, Nishihara and Keohokalole and Committee Members:

My name is JoAnn Yukimura. I am a former Kaua'i mayor and councilmember, but today I testify as a concerned citizen of Kaua'i -- and as a citizen of the State of Hawai'i.

I ask that you hold HB 1286, HD2 in committee for two reasons:

First, the one-test travel policy that HB 1286 HD2 would codify into law is not based in science and is not safe. If a county wants to further protect itself, as Kaua'i did in opting out of the State's one-test plan, it should be able to do so.

Because Kaua'i was able to opt out, we have the lowest incidence of COVID in the state. That level of safety has allowed us, with the outpouring of aloha from all levels of government and the private sector, to survive and now focus our well coordinated and committed island-wide medical resources on vaccinating our residents at a rate faster than any other county. This would not have been possible had HB 1286 been in effect back in October 2020, and Kaua'i would not have been allowed to opt out.

Without the proposed law in effect, Mayor Kawakami has decided to re-join the State's travel plan, and the Governor has approved. This shows that HB 1286 isn't necessary--that the current system can get to the same result if you allow those accountable to make their decisions.

Second. HB 1286, HD 2 would drastically change the emergency management framework for making decisions regarding the State's COVID travel program. By putting the one-test plan into a law that can only be changed by the Legislature, it would make the State's emergency response on it's COVID travel program non-functional. The one-test plan is presently authorized by proclamation of the Governor, which can be changed by another proclamation if realities of the pandemic suddenly change. This is inherently impossible from a 2-house, 76-member part-time legislature.

HB 1286, HD2 will not facilitate good emergency decisionmaking with respect to the State's COVID travel policy. With more contagious and virulent variants coming in through the State's one-test plan, and increasing numbers of visitors coming from places that have high infection rates, our COVID policies in the next few months will be critical.

Please do not handcuff emergency response in the state in a way that will diminish the State and counties' ability to protect their citizens. Please hold HB 1286, HD2 in committee.

Mahalo.

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 3:12:29 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bob Kinsey	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha and Mahalo for the opportunity to share my perspective on the importance of flexibility in setting travel restrictions. Using round numbers, by the most recent published census Maui has approximately 10.7% of the State's population. According to the Hawaii Tourism Authority, however, in December of 2020, we had 34% of the Visitor Days. On Sunday, March 21, 2021, the State Health Department reported 70 new COVID cases for the State. Maui had 34.3% of those new cases. Of the State's 340 intensive care hospital beds, Maui has only 29, or 8.5%. I grew up hearing "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". Flexibility in setting travel restrictions will allow for measures which prevent the spread of COVID. It is clear 8.5% of ICU beds is not a pound of cure for an Island having 34% of Visitor Days and 34% of new COVID cases.

On October 26, 2020, Maui had only 401 cases of COVID. On March 21, 2021, Maui had 2610 cases of COVID. That is a more than six fold increase in less than 5 months. Maui has the highest COVID positivity rate (3.1%) compared to the State's positivity rate of 1.4%

There must be some flexibility to allow a prompt, science based response to changing circumstances. HB1286 will create a one size shoe fits all approach. Please oppose this legislation.

Mahalo,

Bob Kinsey

Kihei, HI

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 3:13:53 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
janice guggino	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose this Bill is there are so many false positive tests and a lot of people can't afford to self quarantine some don't have help or money

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 4:32:42 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jeff Mcknight	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

The policy now being proposed in HB1286 HD2 is woefully inadequate if the goal is to minimize the spread of travel related coronavirus infections in Hawaii. The medical community is unanimous in agreement that a single test 72 hours prior to arrival is insufficient protection if the goal is to keep COVID infection and death rates as low as possible. A second test is important and especially so when taking into consideration the rise of new and more dangerous strains such as the "Kent coronavirus variant" that U.K. experts have said may be up to 70 percent more infectious and about 30 percent more lethal than other variants.

The third policy element, that of "preempting" the right of a County to have stricter health protections is on its own, sufficient reason to oppose HB1286 HD2. What is best for Honolulu is not necessarily what's best for every other County.

State laws should be a "floor not a ceiling." If any County wants to pass stronger laws, rules, or regulations that reflect its particular circumstances, it should be allowed to do so. If the residents do not agree they can direct their voices to the County Council and Mayor, and/or they can elect new County leaders. If visitors do not like it and/or they are "confused" then perhaps they would be better served by spending their vacation days elsewhere.

It is important also to note that: "The CDC recommends that you do not travel at this time."

Finally - Locking into law a statewide COVID travel policy based on a minimum level of protection will prevent the flexibility needed should the situation change for the worse and increased testing and/or additional quarantine measures be needed to protect public health in the months ahead. For these reasons, I strongly encourage Committee members to vote NO on HB1286 HD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 4:51:00 PM
Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tawn Keeney	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

The State travel requirements for Covid testing must be the 'floor' and not the 'ceiling' and the Counties must be allowed to determine their own testing requirements. There is no need that the requirement for all the counties to be the same. Travelers can be notified of any differences in requirements between the counties at the time of planning their visit. Please reject this bill in order to help minimise Covid's impact.

Tawn Keeney MD

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 5:23:44 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elizabeth Hansen	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha / Please oppose This Bill.

Counties should have the ability to impose stricter restrictions on travelers to maintain island Health.

Thank you for your consideration.

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 5:39:26 PM
Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rodger Hansen	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha / Please oppose This Bill.
Counties should have the ability to impose stricter restrictions on travelers to maintain island Health.
Thank you for your consideration.

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 6:35:09 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rebecca Eve Solomon	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB 1286 which prevents any County from making its own COVID travel rules. Kauai County has been successful in holding down COVID cases due to our stalwart Mayor Derek Kawakami keeping us as safe as possible by implementing strict quarantine for visitors and returning residents. I am a voter.

Rebecca Eve Solomon, 6514 Kalama Rd., Kapaa, HI 96746

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 6:57:57 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Silvina Rubinstein	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am writing to express my opposition to H1286. As you all well know, we have very limited medical infrastructure in case of a surge of COVID 19. Mayor Kawakami has provided leadership to all of us on Kauai during the pandemic. When cases were raising, he had to take necessary decisions to keep us safe. My family and I appreciate his care and leadership.

As happy as we are that the vaccination process is moving along, we are not done, nor we know for how long we will have immunity from the virus, even if we are fully vaccinated. As Kauai is joining the statewide travel program, we will risk being exposed to visitors who are not vaccinated and/ or who come from areas where the infections are increasing, particularly with the variations of the mutated virus.

Although, we wish for the best and the reactivation of the economy, we MUST remain vigilant and in that process, each island may need to take quick action. The proposed bill, H 1286 will get in the way of county mayors taking quick action.

Please, be sensitive to our island individual needs. I am asking all of you to vote NO on H 1286.

Respectfully

Silvina Rubinstein

Kalaheo, Kauai

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 7:22:14 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Juliana Cherry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I urge you to support HB 1286 which would welcome visitors to the state of Hawaii with a cohesive travel program. This will make the state of Hawaii a more attractive destination for travelers. Covid-19 pandemic procedures need to be consistent in all of the counties. I believe this protocol will keep our communities safe.

Although Kauai is rejoining the state program, we need to assure that all the islands retain a uniform program. I manage short term vacation rentals, and due to the Kauai travel restrictions and the total uncertainty of when the mayor would open the island for travel, we have very few future bookings. Our business is interconnected with MANY services and businesses on the island.

We need to get back to work and be assured that we will not be stopped again in a few weeks or months! Plus the state needs the tax revenue!!

Residents need to be able to have their family visit them from the mainland!

HB 1286 refines the Safe Travel Program and offers clarity in timing and the option for the DOH to add further measures. **Please support HB 1286.**

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 7:39:49 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Catherine Clement	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I oppose HB1286. Each County needs its independence to determine appropriate health safeguards.

Mahalo,

Catherine Clement, LMHC, SPHR-SCP

LATE

Patti Cook

P.O. Box 6960, Kamuela, HI 96743

Tel: (808) 937-2833

March 21, 2021

TO: HAWAI'I STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism
Chair – Senator Glenn Wakai & Committee Members**

**Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs
Chair – Senator Clarence K. Nishihara and Committee Members**

**Committee on Health
Chair – Senator Jarrett Keohokalole and Committee Members**

RE: HEARING: Monday, March 22, 2021 – 3 p.m.

HB1286 HD2 – RELATING TO TRAVEL - TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

Mahalo for this opportunity to convey personal opposition to HB1286 HD2 and I do apologize for it being submitted late. While I understand the intention of consistent statewide Safe Travel rules, circumstances related to Covid-19 vulnerability, preparedness and response vary drastically from County to County, Island to Island and in fact, community to community. Overall, the State of Hawai'i is to be commended for significantly lower levels of illness and death than most of the country, but Hawai'i County has done even better with keeping our virus load low. The number of deaths is also relatively modest but we share the grief of family and friends over every single one of them.

Holding down Covid infections and spread not only served residents well, but has helped hold down the pressure on our island's very modest healthcare system and limited emergency responder capacity. The island simply do not have much capacity to manage surges. Also, I believe low Covid counts have helped our visitor industry begin to re-open without severe community resistance.

I do understand the urgency of getting people back to work, but prefer to entrust day to day decisions re: travel conditions and requirements to rest in the hands of our County rather than with the State.

That said, I would urge every effort be made by the Counties and State to work as closely as possible with the visitor industry to do everything possible to communicate expectations both for interisland and overseas travel to minimize confusion, frustration and delays. I also support placing the cost burden of required testing on travelers though have appreciated and continue to welcome support of the National Guard whenever possible, especially if federal funding assistance is available.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Patti Cook

808-937-2833

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 11:22:38 PM
Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
heidi kreul	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I oppose HB1286. I believe that the mayors from their district should have the ability to manage the travel restrictions for their county. They know best the resources available.. The mayors were voted in by their residents and it is their responsibility to insure the safty of their communities.

Diring this pandemic the ease of travel should not take presidence over the safety of the Kamaaina.
Thank you

Julie (Juliana) M. Higa
187 Alohi Place, Pukalani, Maui, Hawaii 96768
Email: mauiplanner@gmail.com Mobile: 808-264-2765

March 22, 2021

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair Health Committee
Senator Roz Baker, Vice Chair Health Committee
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Member Health Committee
Senator Joy San Buenventura, Member Health Committee
Senator Kurt Fevella, Member Health Committee
Senator Kalani English
Senator Gil Keith-Agaran
Representative Troy Hashimoto
Representative Kyle Yamashita
Representative Lynne DeCoite
Representative Angus McKelvey
Representative Justin Woodson
Representative Tina Wildberger

LATE

I am submitting my name and so far nine (9) names of friends and family who gave me permission to add their names to urge our Representatives and Senators to oppose HB 1286/HB 1286, as amended. This bill takes away the emergency powers from the Executive Branch to act immediately on any changes or conditions, which may occur, regarding this Covid19 pandemic.

We are opposed to the bill because it prohibits the Governor from changing the Safe Travel Program without prior Legislature approval. This, in turn, will restrict the Governor from allowing the County Mayors from making any emergency changes to this Program without approval from the Legislature.

This is unthinkable, a bad precedent, and unwieldy that a body of 76 individuals would be able to gather together to make an immediate, emergency decision. It seems the proponents of this bill are not concerned about the health and safety of the people. A healthy economy is only achievable if the residents of this State are safe and healthy.

STOP HB1286/HB1286, AS AMENDED!

Respectively,
Juliana (aka Julie) Higa
Doris Kenui
Fay Platiro
Howard Platiro
Eileen Taketa
Barbara Nakagawa
Janet Miyahira
Mark Kunimitsu
Sam Small
Cara Flores

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:08:09 AM
Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kamuela Werner	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha:

I oppose HB1286 HD2.

Me ke aloha,

Kamuela Werner

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 9:49:50 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lorraine Newman	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I emphatically oppose this bill and ask you to do the same.

First, this bill effectively disempowers neighbor islands. It removing their autonomy.

As a resident of Kauai this bill is offensive and even arrogant in its goal to remove our autonomy. Recognizing the given, that each island is different, it should be our right to make our own best choices and rules regarding emergency management.

Second, this bill codifies a rule that may need tweaking at some future point. Putting this bill into law renders it inflexible. If it becomes apparent that it needs changing in some way, the process would be arduous and would require more time than would likely be prudent, such is the nature of emergencies. In this way this bill disempowers everyone and iis ultimately unsafe.

Last, the CDC has asked people not to travel unless necessary. The safe travels program was created to permit travel in the safest way possible. While having different safe travel programs for different islands might be a bit confusing at first glance, it really isn't that confusing. What has been confusing is changing the rules so often, and this could not be helped (due to the ever changing progression of the corona virus; it's regression, surges, vaccine availability, etc). If a neighbor island's safe travels rules are too confusing or too unappealing to navigate, then let that be the problem for that neighbor island to resolve. Residents will return one way or the other, and tourists can make other choices. Hawaii will be back to "normal" soon enough. In fact, if the vaccination rollout doesn't prove effective, it will be all the more reason to allow each island to design its own unique form of protection at such time. Again, passing this bill would make it very difficult to make such adjustments in a timely manner for any or all islands.

Just as our coconut trees survive and thrive because their flexibility allows them to weather our storms, each Hawaiian island needs to be flexible in order to survive and thrive.

Do not pass this bill. We need to recognize and support the wisdom and individual needs of each island.

Mahalo nui loa,

Lorraine Newman



WAIKĪKĪ IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

LATE

Testimony of Rick Egged
Waikīkī Improvement Association

Before the

**Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, & Tourism Senate Committee on
Public Safety, Intergovernmental, & Military Affairs Senate Committee on Health**

Monday, March 22, 2021

**In consideration, of HB 1286 HD2 Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption;
COVID-19; Quarantine**

Aloha Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Keohokalole, and members of the Committees,

My name is Rick Egged, President of the Waikīkī Improvement Association (WIA). The WIA is a membership organization consisting of landowners, hotels, retailers and restaurants in Waikīkī, the businesses that serve them and those interested in the future of this important part of our community and economy.

WIA strongly supports House Bill 1286 HD2. WIA supports the adoption of statewide travel rules as they pertain to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Safe Travels program.

In addition to the provisions set forth in HB1286, HD2, WIA would also support the inclusion of further language that would establish a “vaccine passport” that would allow fully vaccinated travelers to be exempted from the mandatory quarantine requirements. We feel strongly that this program should begin solely at the interisland level before growing to include Trans-Pacific and international travelers. Beginning with inter-county travel would have the added benefit of easy and convenient options for local residents to visit their ‘ohana and loved ones on each of the islands sooner rather than later. Their being able to do so would represent more than just tourism’s recovery. More than anything, it would signal a return to the routine lives that we’ve always known.

To date, more than 100 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in the United States with more than 500,000 doses having been given out in our state alone. Setting forth a clear, statewide policy that would exempt vaccinated travelers would not only allow these healthy, vaccinated individuals to travel to Hawai‘i with ease, but would also encourage more potential visitors to seek out vaccination. We likewise support the proposed alteration listed in this measure that would provide a rapid test upon arrival for incoming travelers who took a test but did not receive their results prior to departure. These protocols in tandem with a vaccine passport would provide the layers of safety necessary to keep our community safe. For these reasons,

WIA supports House Bill 1286 House Draft 2 and encourages the Legislature to consider the establishment of a vaccine passport.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Rick Egged

President of Waikiki Improvement Association

LATE



March 22, 2021

To: Senate Committee on Economic Development, and Tourism
Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senator Bennette E. Misalucha, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Economic Development, and Tourism

Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

Senate Committee on Health
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Health

Re: HB1286, HD2: RELATING TO TRAVEL

Hearing: Monday, March 21, 2021, 3:00 p.m. Room 224, via videoconference

Position: **OPPOSITION**

Aloha, Chairs Wakai, Nishihara, and Keohokalole; Vice Chairs Misalucha, English, and Baker; and Members of the Committees on Economic Development and Tourism; Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs; and Health:

The Health Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i opposes HB1286, HD2, which would exempt any person from post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if that person receives a negative test result prior to arrival and it would allow the governor to establish statewide



March 22, 2021

Page 2

conditions for exemption. This measure also requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine. This measure requires any person who does not obtain a negative test result for COVID-19 pre-arrival to be responsible for all costs associated with the that person's mandatory self-quarantine.

HB1286 HD2, sets a ceiling for Covid-19 travel restrictions and bans Counties from imposing stronger restrictions on travelers. Banning the jurisdiction and authority of the Counties from placing stronger or stricter rules to protect that community's health and safety needs from the risks of expanded COVID infections is inappropriate under certain circumstances.

There are several areas of concern associated with this measure:

- 1) It is based on the notion that a universal COVID travel policy would be the most beneficial for our travel industry.
- 2) The policy that is proposed in **HB1286 HD2** requires that each incoming traveler have "a negative test result upon arrival from a state approved-COVID-19 test administered within seventy-two hours before departing from the final leg of departure." It allows only the Governor, as opposed to county mayors and county councils, to establish conditions in which a person can be exempt from the pre-travel testing and mandatory quarantine.
- 3) If passed into law, HB1286 HD2 would prevent any County government from having stricter rules as the measure provides: "this Act shall take precedence over all conflicting statutes concerning this subject matter and shall preempt all contrary laws, ordinances, rules, orders, or proclamations adopted by the State, a county, or any department or agency thereof."

While a uniform travel policy may be preferred by the travel industry, there may be circumstances where the County government is in a much better position to determine whether stricter rules should be implemented to protect that community's health and safety.

In addition, the medical community has already unanimously agreed that a single test 72 hours prior to arrival is insufficient to protect against COVID infections, and subsequent serious illnesses and deaths. A second test is highly recommended especially in light of the 70 newly developed strains and variants of COVID-19, some of which can miss detection by the first test rendering it useless in keeping the spread of the virus to our State and Counties.



March 22, 2021

Page 3

In general, State laws should not a ceiling. As with Federal Rules under the Supremacy Clause, States are allowed to set stricter laws provided that they do not diminish the force and effect of Federal laws and are stricter than the Federal laws. In this matter, the Counties should be allowed to pass stricter laws, rules, or regulations that reflect its particular circumstances, so long as they do not fall below the standards set forth under State law. This measure would usurp the inherent rights of the Counties to provide stronger rules and regulations for the health and safety of its community members. Therefore, this measure should be amended to allow the Counties flexibility to set standards that are germane and necessary for their county-wide circumstances.

A statewide COVID travel policy passed into law with minimum levels of protection will dangerously prevent the flexibility needed should circumstances arise for the worse and increased testing and or additional quarantine measures will be required to protect public health and safety times of an emergency. As it stands, suspension of this Act can only be attained by legislative approval by a concurrent resolution. In emergency cases, the requirement for a suspension may cause unintended adverse consequences when the procedure to suspend becomes so time consuming that it causes an increase in the risk of harm to the health and safety of our community members.

The Health Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii stands in opposition to this measure and respectfully requests that HB1286, HD2 be deferred for the numerous reasons referenced herein.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify on this key measure.

Melodie Aduja
Chair, Health Committee
Democratic Party of Hawaii
Legislativepriorities@gmail.com
(808) 258-8889

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 11:56:00 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gregg Nelson	Testifying for Napili Kai Beach Resort	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chairpersons and Committee members,

Please accept my written testimony in support of this very important measure, HB 1286, HD2. I represent a resort on Maui with 160 staff members who have all recently returned to work and are anxious to welcome back guests and return to some level of normalcy soon.

This bill contains many provisions that are intended to make travel to our State less confusing and smoother to navigate restrictions for our visitors. Though all of us favour a diversified economy, for the foreseeable future a healthy and viberant tourism industry is what our economy desperately needs now and HB 1286 HD2 is designed to support that effort. We also strongly favour the addition of the language regarding the vaccine passport. This is an excellent idea which not only helps to restore tourism but serves as an incentive to all to vaccinate as soon as possible.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration and approval of HB 1286.

Mahalo

Gregg Nelson, General Manager, Napili Kai Beach Resort, Maui

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 12:07:16 PM
Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
George White	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Members -

I write in strong opposition to HB1286, HD2, relating to establishing a statewide mandate related to the State’s “SafeTravels” program.

This bill appears to have one express purpose, to preempt the existing authority of each county Mayor to opt-out of the existing “Safe Travels” program, while hamstringing the Governor from expeditiously exercising his existing emergency power in the future. State policy in this situation should set the minimum standards - the floor not the ceiling - as to what counties are able to do to protect and promote their communities.

Many experts have provided testimony to you regarding the pernicious imperfect nature of the existing “Safe Travels” program. The comparison between Kauai and other counties’ approach to regulation of arriving travelers is invaluable and indicative that it is premature to mandate loosening restrictions related to incoming travelers to our shores. Balancing the need to protect public health while pushing to jumpstart our state’s economy is a tenuous and unenviable task. It is important however, to not upend a system that has worked better than it hasn’t, and continue to take a measured rational approach based in science and data, and by the guidance of experts...not politicians.

CDC guidance currently discourages travel and explicitly recommends stricter protocols than our current “Safe Travels” program provides for. As this ever-evolving response to COVID-19 has shown, travel policies regulating the influx of virus vectors into Hawaii should not be legislatively ‘set in stone’ as proposed in this bill. Even HI-EMA, the State agency that has skillfully coordinated the entirety of our emergency response to COVID-19, has testified that this measure is not needed. Many have also opined that the current situation is a “fluid” one, necessitating for greater flexibility in response (not less), especially given the arrival and presence of more worrisome variants, as well as our evolving progress with vaccinations.

We are at a critical juncture in our response to this crisis, and it is a heavy burden for you as policymakers to help steer us towards a safe and revitalized Hawaii. This bill, however, is a distraction and deflection from your critical work and should be deferred.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully -
George White

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 12:33:42 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Deborah Ward	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly **oppose HB1286 HD2, Relating to Travel.**

The CDC recommends that you do not travel at this time.

This measure sets a ceiling for Covid-19 travel restrictions and bans Counties from imposing further restrictions on travelers. Preventing any County from putting into place strong rules protecting its community's health and safety from the risks of expanded COVID infections is simply wrong.

If passed into law HB1286 HD2 will prevent any County government from having stricter rules - "this Act shall take precedence over all conflicting statutes concerning this subject matter and shall preempt all contrary laws, ordinances, rules, orders, or proclamations adopted by the State, a county, or any department or agency thereof.

The policy now being proposed in HB1286 HD2 is woefully inadequate if the goal is to minimize the spread of travel related coronavirus infections in Hawaii. **The medical community is unanimous in agreement that a single test 72 hours prior to arrival is insufficient protection if the goal is to keep COVID infection and death rates as low as possible.** A second test is important and especially so when taking into consideration the rise of new and more dangerous strains such as the "Kent coronavirus variant" that U.K. experts have said may be up to 70 percent more infectious and about 30 percent more lethal than other variants.

State laws should be a "floor not a ceiling." If any County wants to pass stronger laws, rules, or regulations that reflect its particular circumstances, it should be allowed to do so. If the residents do not agree they can direct their voices to the County Council and Mayor, and/or they can elect new County leaders. If visitors do not like it and/or they are "confused" then perhaps they would be better served by spending their vacation days elsewhere.

Locking into law a statewide COVID travel policy based on a minimum level of protection will prevent the flexibility needed should the situation change for the worse and increased testing and/or additional quarantine measures be needed to protect public health in the months ahead. For these reasons, I strongly encourage Committee members to vote NO on HB1286 HD2.



LATE

Testimony of Glenn P. Vergara
Vice President & General Manager
Waikiki Resort Hotel

Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, & Tourism
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, & Military Affairs
Senate Committee on Health

RE: House Bill 1286, HD2: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine

Chair Wakai, Chair Nishihara, Chair Keohokalole, and members of the Committees, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Waikiki Resort Hotel and its associates.

I am writing to express our **SUPPORT** for House Bill 1286 House Draft 2.

Waikiki Resort Hotel employs 130 associates, roughly two-thirds who remain furloughed as we struggle to survive with occupancy levels in the 30-45% range.

Since we reopened in December, many of those who originally were planning to visit our state have opted to take their travel plans to other destinations because of confusion and lack of confidence in our travel policies. Based on feedback from travel partners and prospective customers, they perceive Hawaii as generally “unfriendly” and view the state’s testing requirements as “unreasonable,” and “confusing.” And as expected, our future bookings have languished.

We’d rather see a uniform, statewide travel policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai’i. We’d also urge our local government to provide travelers with the option to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival should they not receive their pre-arrival test result in time. The State has the facilities and test supplies to make this possible.

For these reasons, Waikiki Resort Hotel strongly supports House Bill 1286 H2.