



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
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Thursday, February 25, 2021
11:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room #308
via videoconference

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

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the House Committee on Finance: 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. It prohibits the suspension of this Act except by legislative approval via a concurrent resolution.

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 has 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 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

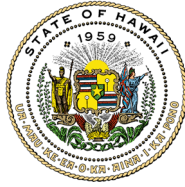
February 25, 2021

Page 2

own. This bill would also create standardized quarantine exemption requirements across the state and counties.

The statistics show 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. The Safe Travels program is helping our visitor industry to recover, and we feel that this bill would help speed up the recovery efforts by making the rules easier to understand. A standardized 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.



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 House Committee on
FINANCE

By

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

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

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)

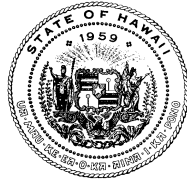
The Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA) **offers comments on** House Bill 1286 HD2.

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

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



ELIZABETH A. CHAR, M.D.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

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**

REP. SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing Date: 2/25/2021

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

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

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

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

25

26



/AIKIKI NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 9

/o NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION • 925 DILLINGHAM BLVD. SUITE 160 • HONOLULU, HAWAII, 96817
PHONE (808) 768-3710 • FAX (808) 768-3711 • INTERNET: <http://www.honolulu.gov>

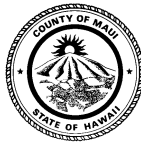
The Waikiki Neighborhood Board supports the concept of the following bill: HB1286

At the February 9, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Waikiki Neighborhood Board the Board voted in favor of the concept of this bill.

Currently the Waikiki Visitor Industry is in terrible shape. Many of our Landmark businesses have closed forever and thousands of our Industry Associates are living on Unemployment Insurance or help from Family. This bill creates a path to recovery for our industry and the economy of the State of Hawaii.

Robert J. Finley
Robert J. Finley
Chair

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee



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

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

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

LATE

February 25, 2021

TO: Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

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 Hawaii, especially the tourism industry and small businesses, the current system is working and allows counties to react to the needs of their relative communities.

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

February 25, 2021
Page 2



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 11:00 A.M.
Via Videoconference**

RE: HB 1286, HD 2, RELATING TO TRAVEL

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

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.

In a new Pulse of Business survey¹ conducted in partnership with Omnitrak and with the support of Central Pacific Bank Foundation, the Hawaii Chamber of Commerce Foundation 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.

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/>



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

- 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.

Without tourists returning to the state, it is extremely clear that our economy will continue to wane with no relief in sight. Given our reliance on tourism, we must find a way to bring people back to our state and breathe life back to our local businesses.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.



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

February 25, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 1286, HD2
RELATING TO TRAVEL

Conference Room 308
11:00 AM

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

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.



February 25, 2021

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: HB 1286 HD2 – Relating to Travel

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, 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



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 Finance
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 25, 2021
TIME: 11am
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. This is a common-sense 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.

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.



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI, PRESIDENT
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII
February 25, 2021
Re: HB 1286 HD2 Relating to Travel**

Good morning Chair Luke and members of the House Committee on Finance. 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. Repeals on 12/31/2021; and is effective 7/1/2050.

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. Furthermore, with more people around the world being vaccinated, it will make Hawaii an even safer place.

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.

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.

Mahalo again for this opportunity to testify.

 3610 Waiālae Ave • Honolulu, HI 96816  (808) 592-4200  tyamaki@rmhawaii.org

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 steady 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 transpacific 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 (Seattle), with new case rates ranging between 15 – 25 fold greater than Kauai. The economic and social benefits of enabling local businesses and residents to remain in the least restrictive Tier 4 while Oahu has been subjected to Tier 2 restrictions since October should not be completely overlooked either as Kauai starts to make plans to restart in-person teaching at elementary and secondary schools.

New cases/14 days/100,000 population from February 1-14, 2021:

Seattle-King County	156
Maui	130
Oahu	74
Hawai`i	105
Kaua`i	5

Risk Posed by Variants

- At least three 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.

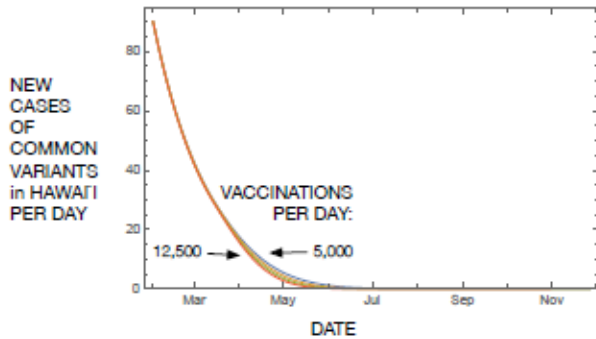
²https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/961042/S1095_NERVTAG_update_note_on_B.1.1.7_severity_20210211.pdf

<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>

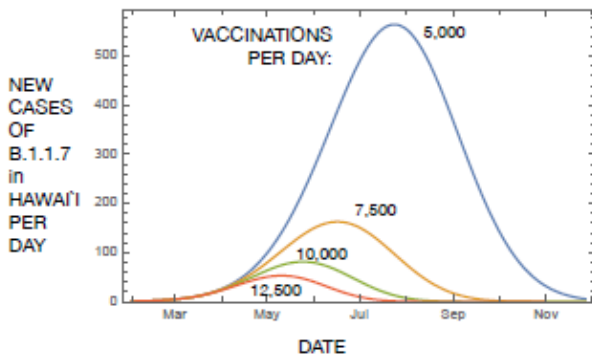
³ <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/diseases-maladies/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/epidemiological-economic-research-data/update-covid-19-canada-epidemiology-modelling-20210219-en.pdf>

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



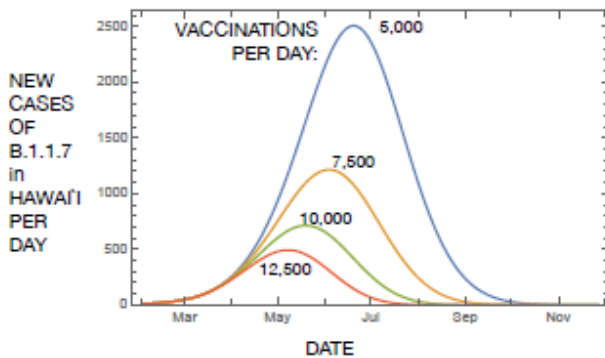
Daily cases approach zero by July 2021 if current trends continue without significant influence from the B1.1.7 variant regardless of the vaccination rate

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 3 known cases of the B1.1.7 variant in February, an estimate of a total of 10 cases 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.1.3.5.1 South Africa variant recently forced the country to halt a planned rollout of 1 million doses of the Astra-Zeneca vaccine⁵.
- California has identified an additional variant with evidence it may be more transmissible, more deadly, and has some potential for vaccine escape⁶.
- 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 in mid-May presuming the recently hopeful pandemic trends are not altered by the known B.1.1.7 variant cases on Oahu and the vaccination rollout continues to progress towards herd immunity levels. 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,

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

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

⁶ <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2021/02/coronavirus-strain-first-identified-california-may-be-more-infectious-and-cause-more>

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



Testimony of
Roberts Hawaii, Inc.

on

H.B. NO. 1286

Relating to Travel

House Committee on Finance

Thursday, February 25, 2021, 11:00am, Room #308

phone 808.523.7750

fax 808.522.7866

Roberts Hawaii, Inc.

444 Niu Street, Suite 300

Honolulu, HI 96815

www.robertshawaii.com

Aloha Honorable Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Roy Pfund, President and CEO of Roberts Hawaii, Inc. and I am testifying to *strongly* support House Bill 1286, 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 a company that directly engages with the visitors and the travel industry in Hawaii, we believe a uniform and consistent visitor arrival quarantine program needs to be adopted and applied across the State.

Hawaii's tourism industry has endured much hardship since mid-March 2020 when the entire industry was effectively completely shut down. Since then, the frequent state and county rule changes have created confusion for both visitors and residents. This bill seeks to establish a consistent approach to only the visitor arrival portion of Hawaii's total COVID 19 safety protocols. Each island mayor still regulates on island activities outside of this proposed consistent statewide visitor arrival quarantine program.

Passage of this bill will provide a ray of hope for the tens of thousands of residents impacted by the visitor industry shutdown. We have all learned to be adaptable and adjust to the changing environment. We should recognize the progress that we have made in dealing with the coronavirus, including the increasing vaccinations and the adoption of statewide COVID 19 safety protocols and now, we must look toward enhancing this progress by taking the next step to revive the visitor industry. Please support this next step by allowing a consistent statewide quarantine arrival experience.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 10:16:40 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ariel Fernandez	Barrel and BBQ LLC	Support	No

Comments:

I am the assistant manager of a BBQ restaurant on Kauai. We have lost around 80% of revenue since tourism was stopped through covid quarantines. As a result there were layoffs and employees have suffered for many months. In spite of testing before travel, and negative tests, Kauai government has continued its unreasonable quarantines and they ignore science that contradicts it. We ask that you please pass HB1286. Our company can not survive much longer without this bill being passed. We are all scrapping by and tourism at our location is what gets the bills paid for all of our employees. We plead and ask to pass this bill to save all of the small businesses on our precious island.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 10:16:10 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James Cherry	Ala Muku Vacation Rentals	Support	No

Comments:

PLEASE SUPPORT HB 1286

I believe it is imperative to present a cohesive Covid-19 policy across all counties in the state of Hawaii. I live in Kauai and manage vacation rentals. For a year we have had almost no business and this affects many others in the service and tourism industries. Our economy here is seriously damaged and will take years to recover. **How can the state of Hawaii move forward without the revenue needed? Our state cannot keep going into debt!**

Please make it easier for Covid-free visitors to come and help our economic recovery.

Jim Cherry

Koloa HI 96756



SanHi

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

DATE: February 24, 2021

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke
Chair, Committee on Finance
Submitted Via Capitol Website

FROM: Matt Tsujimura

RE: **H.B. 1286, H.D. 2 – Relating to Travel**
Hearing Date: Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

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.



LATE

February 24, 2021

RE: HB1286 HD2 RELATING TO TRAVEL

Dear Chair Luke and the House Committee on Finance,

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce supports HB1286 HD12 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. This bill also allows the incident commander to establish conditions for exemption and requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine. In addition, any person who does not obtain a negative test result for COVID-19 pre-arrival is 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. Initially, Governor Ige's stay-at-home order for non-essential workers and the mandatory 14-day quarantine for travelers made it so many businesses in our region were unable to operate. As reopening was allowed in the summer months, some of our businesses were able to open with limited capacity. For others, their customers – the visitors – were deterred by the restrictions in place and this meant these businesses continued to stay closed.

Based on the Hawai'i Tourism Authority's Monthly Reports, Hawai'i Island received 130,364 visitors in April 2019, but only 705 in April 2020. In August 2020, the visitor count was up to 3,729, but this was 87% down from the previous year and certainly not the volume that sustains our local economy.

In October 2020, the Safe Travels Hawai'i program was launched that allowed travelers to bypass the quarantine with a negative COVID-19 test result. This definitely helped our local businesses with visitor arrivals up to 48,134 in December 2020, however this was still 72% less than the prior year. For all of 2020, visitor arrivals fell 72.1% to 492,325. Based on the University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization's Annual Hawai'i Forecast, Hawai'i Island's 2021 visitor count forecast is 766,100 – approximately one million less visitors than 2019.

Based on the state's continued low COVID-19 case counts, most agree that the Safe Travels Hawai'i program is successful in providing the needed safety precautions while allowing our customers to return. Moreover, as COVID-19 vaccinations are distributed in 2021, we anticipate this additional safety measure will prompt more people to travel once again.

As we navigate through this leg of our COVID-19 journey, we believe the Safe Travels Hawai'i program needs modifications to help streamline the process and improve the traveler experience. This includes standardizing the program statewide and stop the county-by-county mandates in regards to travel. This creates confusion for all travelers whether visitors from



outside of Hawai'i or residents traveling inter-island. In addition, 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 these issues.

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce exists to provide leadership and advocacy for a successful business environment in West Hawai'i. 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.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Wendy J. Laros". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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



HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM
ASSOCIATION

LATE

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

Committee on Finance
House Bill 1286, House Draft 2: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19;
Quarantine

Chair Luke and members of the Committee, 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 long advocated for the adoption of statewide travel rules as they pertain to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Safe Travels program. While we recognize the importance of “home rule” and allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai'i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn. **As such, HLTA strongly supports House Bill 1286 House Draft 2.**

A recent special study issued by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority indicated that the single most prevalent reason that stopped travelers from visiting Hawai'i was that testing requirements were unreasonable. Moreover, the same study indicated that 21% of respondents had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner and 46% felt that the 72-hour window was troublesome. What was once perception has now become reality. The Washington Post recently ran an article titled “Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated,” which highlighted that our convoluted rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. HLTA has been a strong proponent of a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai'i. We have 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, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this.

Further, we understand that the State just announced it is open to working towards a policy that would allow a quarantine exemption for certain vaccinated visitors. Our one recommendation for HB1286 HD2 is that it include a provision that would not pre-empt vaccinated visitors from a quarantine exemption should such a program or rule be implemented.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 12:04:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

As the General Manager of the Sheraton Kauai Resort, I have seen firsthand the devastating effects that the Kauai County travel restrictions have had on our island's economy.

The lack of tourism on Kauai has so severely impacted small businesses and the thousands of Kauai residents who rely on the tourism industry for some or all of their household income and employer-provided medical coverage. Through a survey of small businesses and lodging accommodations conducted by the Kauai Chapter of HLTA and the Kauai Chamber of Commerce, the Kauai hospitality industry is experiencing a 90% unemployment rate and over 60% of furloughed hospitality employees no longer have employer-subsidized health insurance. The number of employees losing employer subsidized health insurance continues to climb on a monthly basis. The Sheraton Resort Kauai has been unable to continue to provide health insurance for our furloughed employees and I have personally had conversations with several of these employees who have had to make the heartbreaking decision to forgo necessary medical treatment in order to put food on their tables for their children.

The County of Kauai references that these extensive restrictions are to ensure the safety and health of our community. I, and many other employers on the island, have employees or family member of employees, who are either suffering from untreated medical conditions, depression, anxiety and even suicide as a result of the pandemic. We cannot continue to measure the safety of our community solely through COVID case numbers when so many have lost everything because of our collapsing island economy.

The hospitality industry has taken extensive efforts to put safety measures in place to protect their employees, guests and our local community. The relatively low percentage of COVID transmission from visitor to resident during the six (6) weeks that Kauai participated in the Safe Travels program is a testament to the level of care that our hospitality industry took to ensure everyone's safety. The other Counties have been able to prove that the Safe Travels program works and I urge you to support HB1286 so Kauai's economy and the overall health of our residents can start to recover.



Airlines for America®

We Connect the World

LATE

House Bill 1286
Testimony in SUPPORT

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and members of the Committee on Finance:

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 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.

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.

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 'Sean Williams', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

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

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 2:04:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke and Finance Committee Members,

Please accept this written testimony as support for HB 1286 HD2. Myself and all 160 of our staff members feel it is very important for tourism and the economy of Hawaii that this bill is passed as soon as possible. We are a 60 year old resort on the westside Maui and we, like so many others, have struggled over the past 11 months to survive. We opened our resort for the Hotels for Heroes program early last summer and Kamaaina business a month later when we were permitted to do so by our mayor. In October we were delighted to begin welcoming back mainland travelers. So far, business has been very slow to recover and it will likely take another year or so before we are back to anything close to pre-virus occupancies. In the meanwhile we are following all of the mandated protocols for sanitation and keeping our guests and staff members safe. We do a great job and I am proud of our staff.

Unfortunately, despite all our hard work towards recovery, we are hearing from many potential visitors that the travel mandates leave them confused and hesitant to travel to Hawaii. Researching this further, we have found that the issue stems from the numerous variations on travel mandates that mayors have placed in effect for each County. It is very clear to us as a result of these first hand accounts from many people who have cancelled their reservations due to the confusion over rules, that a standardization of travel mandates, covering the entire State, will be received well by mainland travelers to Hawaii and provide a much needed boost to our efforts to restore a healthy level of tourism.

Not passing this bill and thereby allowing mayors to continue to impose conflicting and confusing mandates from one County to the next, is a vote against tourism, our economy and the recovery of our State. Your consideration in support of this bill is greatly appreciated by all of the 160 hard working staff members of Napili Kai Beach Resort.

Mahalo

Gregg Nelson and Staff

Napili Kai Beach Resort

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 2:13:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lynette Eastman	The Surfjack Hotel & Swim Club	Support	No

Comments:

As a general manager of a hotel in Waikiki, I have witnessed the inconsistent policy of our safe travel program requirements causing much confusion in the marketplace for potential travelers to the islands to the point of losing business to other destinations with a clearer policy. It is imperative that Hawaii has a clear, statewide approach that visitors feel welcome and the requirements are easy to understand. Many travelers want to come to Hawaii; are willing to figure out where to take the and pay the cost of a pretest. We want to keep Hawaii safe but we also need to show ALOHA to those that want to visit us. Until it is clear, we will continue to hinder tourism our #1 industry and our families and businesses will continue to suffer economically. The urgency is now.



LATE

Testimony of
Simeon Miranda
General Manager
Embassy Suites by Hilton Waikiki Beach Walk

Committee on Finance
House Bill 1286, House Draft 2: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19;
Quarantine

Chair Luke and members of the Committee, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Embassy Suites by Hilton Waikiki Beach Walk.

As General Manager of Embassy Suites by Hilton Waikiki Beach Walk and Oahu Chapter Chair, I strongly believe ease of testing requirements and consistency across all islands will allow travelers peace of mind and increase travel demand to the Hawaiian Islands. While we recognize the importance of “home rule” and allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai‘i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn. As such, HLTA strongly supports House Bill 1286.

A recent special study issued by the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority indicated that the single most prevalent reason that stopped travelers from visiting Hawai‘i was that testing requirements were unreasonable. Moreover, the same study indicated that 21% of respondents had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner and 46% felt that the 72-hour window was troublesome. What was once perception has now become reality. The Washington Post recently ran an article titled “Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated,” which highlighted that our convoluted rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. HLTA has been a strong proponent of a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai‘i. We have 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, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this.

For these reasons, Embassy Suites by Hilton Waikiki Beach Walk strongly supports House Bill 1286.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.



Imanaka Asato
A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW COMPANY

February 23, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice-Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance

RE: HB 1286 – RELATING TO TRAVEL
Hearing Date: February 25, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen and members of the committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT** of House Bill 1286 – Relating to Travel. Currently, there is significant confusion on the rules for travelers to Hawaii, including returning local residents. This bill establishes statewide standard travel rules as they relate to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consistent, statewide rules are critical to help healthy travelers return to Hawaii and help restart our economy. For these reasons I strongly urge you to pass House Bill 1286.

Very truly yours,

IMANAKA ASATO

Michael L. Iosua

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 3:25:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Thomas Foti	HLTA	Support	No

Comments:

Committee on Finance House Bill 1286, House Draft 2: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine

Chair Luke and members of the Committee, 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 long advocated for the adoption of statewide travel rules as they pertain to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Safe Travels program. While we recognize the importance of “home rule” and allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai'i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn. As such, HLTA strongly supports House Bill 1286 House Draft 2. A recent special study issued by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority indicated that the single most prevalent reason that stopped travelers from visiting Hawai'i was that testing requirements were unreasonable. Moreover, the same study indicated that 21% of respondents had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner and 46% felt that the 72-hour window was troublesome. What was once perception has now become reality. The Washington Post recently ran an article titled “Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated,” which highlighted that our convoluted rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. HLTA has been a strong proponent of a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai'i. We have 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, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this. Further, we understand that the State just announced it is open to working towards a policy that would allow a quarantine exemption for certain vaccinated visitors. Our one recommendation for HB1286 HD2 is that it include a provision that would not pre-empt vaccinated visitors

from a quarantine exemption should such a program or rule be implemented. Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

Mahalo

Thomas Foti



LATE

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

Thursday, February 25, 2021

HB1286 HD2 Relating to Travel
Testifying in 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.

There are 3 key elements to this proposal:

- 1) It is based on the premise that a universal COVID travel policy is best for the travel industry.
- 2) The policy that is proposed in **HB1286 HD2** requires each incoming traveler to 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 to establish conditions in which a person can be automatically exempt from the pre-travel testimony and mandatory quarantine.
- 3) 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."

All 3 of these elements are of course debatable. Most will likely agree that yes, a uniform travel policy is preferred. However, which policy is best and whether it should prevent a County from having stronger provisions are the key questions.

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,

Gary Hooser
Executive Director
Pono Hawai'i Initiative



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

Aloha Chair Luke and members of the committee,

My name is Josh Hargrove and I'm the General Manager of the Prince Waikiki Hotel and the Hawaii Prince Golf Club. I will be testifying today in support of House Bill 1286.

This bill provides much needed clarity and simplification to our state's varied and confusing rules that differ county by county. In addition to clarity, this bill eliminates the unnecessary and punitive nature of the current policy that requires arriving guests to quarantine for the full 10 days despite being tested by a trusted partner, being tested within the 72 hour timeframe, but not receiving their test results in time due to no fault of their own.

Providing clarity and options to these "ideal travelers" who have followed all of our rules and made every effort to travel to our state the right way, is a good direction. 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.

I 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



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

LATE

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 308
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2021 AT 11:00 A.M.**

To The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair;
The Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair; and
Members of the Committee on Finance,

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.

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.



WAIKĪKĪ IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

**Testimony of Rick Egged
Waikīkī Improvement Association**

Before the

Committee on Finance

Thursday, February 25, 2021. 8:30am

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

Aloha Chair Luke and member of the Committee,

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. While we recognize the importance of “home rule” and allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai‘i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn.

A recent special study issued by the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority indicated that the single most prevalent reason that stopped travelers from visiting Hawai‘i was that testing requirements were unreasonable. Moreover, the same study indicated that 21% of respondents had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner and 46% felt that the 72-hour window was troublesome. What was once perception has now become reality. The Washington Post recently ran an article titled “Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated,” which highlighted that our convoluted rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. WIA is a strong proponent of a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai‘i. We have 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, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this. For these reasons, WIA strongly supports House Bill 1286.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Rick Egged
President of Waikiki Improvement Association

Testimony of
Rob Robinson
Vice President
Springboard Hospitality

LATE

Committee on Finance

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

Chair Luke and members of the Committee,

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 House Draft 2** and the need for consistent, statewide guidelines to allow for tourism to restart safely and effectively. While we recognize the importance of allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai'i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn. While we believe that the individual Mayors acted with the best interest of their constituents in mind, the efforts to re-boot tourism and safely allow inbound travel have failed to create even the beginnings of a meaningful recovery.

A recent special study issued by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority indicated that the single most prevalent reason that stopped travelers from visiting Hawai'i was that testing requirements were unreasonable. Moreover, the same study indicated that 21% of respondents had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner and 46% felt that the 72-hour window was troublesome. What was once perception has now become reality. The Washington Post recently ran an article titled "Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated," which highlighted that our convoluted rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. Springboard is a strong proponent of a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai'i. We have 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, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this. **For these reasons, Springboard Hospitality strongly supports House Bill 1286 House Draft 2.**

Further, we understand that the State just announced it is open to working towards a policy that would allow a quarantine exemption for certain vaccinated visitors. Our one recommendation for HB1286 HD2 is that it include a provision that would not pre-empt vaccinated visitors from a quarantine exemption should such a program or rule be implemented.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

Sincerely,
Rob Robinson
Springboard Hospitality

**Testimony of
HIGHGATE Hotels in Hawaii**

LATE

House Committee on Finance

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

Chair Luke and members of the Committee, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of HIGHGATE. Our company manages seven (7) hotels in Waikiki which represents 3,172 rooms or 13% of the inventory in the Waikiki market. During normal business (pre-COVID) we typically maintain a staff of 1000+ employees/workers.

We have long advocated for the adoption of statewide travel rules as they pertain to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Safe Travels program. While we recognize the importance of “home rule” and allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai‘i has led to significant confusion and difficulty for our visitors booking future stays, especially multi-island trips. This is further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn. HIGHGATE **strongly supports House Bill 1286 House Draft 2** because we are strong proponents of a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai‘i.

As you know, many returning residents, tourists, and business travelers have had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner or are not getting their test results back within the 72-hour window. This issue has served problematic for our visitors and has slowed the re-building of the tourism industry since opening the state to transpacific travel on October 15th. Hotels had started to re-open, airlines had restored flights, and travel partners have begun opening up sales to Hawai‘i. Our industry spent millions in adapting to the new norm by implementing Health & Safety Standards that met CDC guidelines only to be hit by new and confusing rules that varied from county to county.


The Washington Post recently ran an article titled “Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated,” which highlighted that our convoluted protocols are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. HIGHGATE travel partners have confirmed as much, state unequivocally that Hawai‘i is the most confusing destination to navigate given the different rules on each island. These travel partners sell packages to Hawaii, usually months in advance and have struggled to keep prospective travelers abreast of the various rule changes. Due to this, and to encourage future bookings, HIGHGATE had no choice but to launch our Pre-Travel COVID testing coordination and Safe Travels Hawai‘i concierge service in partnership with V2 Solutions to assist guests of our HIGHGATE properties to navigate the requirements needed to travel to Hawai‘i.

We understand that the State has just announced it is open to working towards a policy that would allow a quarantine exemption for certain vaccinated visitors. Our one recommendation for HB1286, HD2 is that it include a provision that would not preempt vaccinated visitors from a quarantine exemption should such a program or rule be implemented.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.



Kelly Sanders
Senior Vice President, Operations –Hawaii
HIGHGATE



Cheryl Williams
Regional Vice President, Sales & Marketing-Hawaii
HIGHGATE



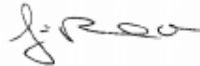
Matthew Grauso
General Manager
Alohilani Resort Waikiki Beach



Randy Diamond
General Manager
Aston Waikiki Beach Hotel



Stephen Hinck
General Manager
Hilton Garden Inn Waikiki Beach



Jim Paulon
General Manager
Courtyard by Marriott Waikiki



Brandon Kaya
General Manager
Pearl Hotel Waikiki
Ambassador Hotel Waikiki



Michael Troy
General Manager
Park Shore Waikiki

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 5:12:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert C Friedl	The Laylow	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke and members of the Committee,

based on speaking with our guests and clients and many of my friends and family, a recent study issued by the HTA, as well as an article published by the Washington post, it appears that most travelers are deterred from travelling to Hawai'i due to the unreasonable and confusing testing requirements and rules.

We need a clear, statewide policy to simplify and clarify healthy travels to Hawai'i as well as providing an option to travelers to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival in case they have not received their pre-arrival test results in time.

We also suggest for HB1286, HD2 to include a provision that would not pre-empt vaccinated visitors from a quarantine exemption.

All these measures will be important steps to make travel to the Islands less confusing and more attractive and will assist in bringing travelers back to Hawai'i in a safe and controlled manner. Our economy in general, and our industry in particular, are hurting and now is the time to take action to enable us to bring our associates back to work.

We therefor strongly support House Bill 1286.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Robert C. Friedl

General Manager

The Laylow



Knights of Aloha
P.O. Box 701424
Kapolei, HI 96709
www.knightsofaloha.com

LATE

February 24, 2021

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1286 HD2 Relating to Travel with proposed Amendments

Aloha Chairman Sylvia Luke, Vice Chair Ty Cullen and members of the *House Finance Committee*,

My name is Rich Tuason and I am the president of *Knights of Aloha (KOA)*. We stand for the people of Hawai'i and for **Faith, Family & Freedom**. KOA has about 300 members throughout the State of Hawai'i and the mainland. I am writing in support of **HB1286 HD2**.

I agree with the **Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i** who stated in their online testimony to the *House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs*, **"Without tourists returning to the state, it is extremely clear that our economy will continue to wane with no relief in sight. Given our reliance on tourism, we must find a way to bring people back to our state and breathe life back to our local businesses."**

I am in support of HB1286 HD2 Relating to Travel. I am in support of the people of Hawaii, the tourism industry and the small businesses in Hawaii who are the backbone of our economy. I support this bill with the following Amendments:

Amendments

1) In the event the governor issues a Declaration of an Emergency, the emergency and each executive order issued pursuant thereto shall expire in 30 days, and no previously-issued declaration of emergency or executive order shall renew, unless the House and Senate via a 2/3 majority, vote to extend the Declaration of Emergency and each executive order issued pursuant to the declaration of emergency.

*2) Travel-related quarantine will be regulated by each traveler, who will receive quarantine paperwork at the airports in Hawai'i. This quarantine paperwork that each adult traveler will sign will order the traveler to agree to a 14-day quarantine upon arrival at their hotel/housing accommodations in Hawaii or until their negative Covid-19 Test results are received.

3) This bill should go into effect immediately.

*Reasons for the 2nd Amendment above:

Hawaii cannot afford to hire the *National Guard* to enforce quarantines at \$2 million per month or \$24 million per year, as they are presently doing on Kauai (The other millions of dollars comes from the federal government each month). This money (\$24 million per year) can be better spent revitalizing our economy and/or getting the people in Hawaii their unemployment benefits. No one can truly appreciate nor acknowledge the



Knights of Aloha
P.O. Box 701424
Kapolei, HI 96709
www.knightsofaloha.com

hardships the pandemic has caused the people of Hawaii (especially the tourism industry), when they are currently receiving a paycheck and/or benefits. This is not a matter of convenience but a matter of survival for those who are and have been suffering financially through the pandemic.

Mandatory quarantines should **not** be implemented and enforced by the *Safe Travels Program* because they are already violating individuals' liberty as outlined in the *Declaration of Independence*. Each traveler has the right to "...life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

With much Aloha for the people of Hawai'i,

Richard Tuason
Knights of Aloha Founder and CEO
rich@knightsofaloha.com



LATE

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF GAYLE MIYASHIRO
WAIKIKI RESORT HOTEL
Bill 1286 HD2 – Relating to Statewide Safe Travels
Program Exemption; COVID-10 Quarantine**

Chair Luke and members of the Finance Committee, my name is Gayle Miyashiro and I am the Human Resources Manager of the Waikiki Resort Hotel.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been extremely detrimental to the hospitality industry and to all those who are employed at Hotels statewide. As we reopen, the hotels will need to weather the slow rebuilding of our once thriving businesses. Hotels will need to attract visitors to thrive and to provide ample work opportunity to our furloughed employees.

The difficulties of understanding the current safe travels procedures for each island is causing confusion to travelers looking to enjoy a vacation in Hawaii. With the myriad of rules, it has had a detrimental affect on potential visitors and has severely curtailed the ability of our tourism industry to recover from the continued affects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This has also deleterious affect on the jobs and work opportunity for our hard-working hotel and restaurant workers in Waikiki. So many people are still furloughed and/or have reduced work schedules because of the lack of visitors. Anything you can do to ease the process and make it less complicated will positively affect the finances and quality of life for your constituents.

On behalf of the Waikiki Resort Hotel, I respectfully submit this written testimony **supporting** Bill 1268 HD2 (2021) Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19 Quarantine.

Thank you for your consideration.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 9:07:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gianluca Fogaroli	Cleaning company	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

In my opinion, it is necessary for the State of Hawaii to have ONE and ONLY ONE policy.

I have owned a cleaning company for vacation rentals on Kauai since 2009.

It is absolute nonsense to have tourists cancel their vacation on Kauai just to rebook it either on Maui or on Oahu.

It is also nonsense to have A GOVERNOR whose decisions can be overruled by mayors, it is just wrong!

Certain decisions, especially important ones like the ones related to Covid, should be made by the State for everybody and the Governor should take the responsibility for those decisions either for the bad or for the good.

Best regards.



LATE

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

Committee on Finance

**RE: House Bill 1286, House Draft 2: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption;
COVID-19 Quarantine**

Chair Luke and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Waikiki Resort Hotel.

We strongly SUPPORT House Bill 1286 House Draft 2.

Waikiki Resort Hotel employs 130 employees, 77% of whom are still furloughed as we struggle to survive with occupancy levels meandering in the 20 to 40% range. While health coverages for our furloughed members have expired since the end of last year, many struggle to meet their day-to-day essential needs.

We are finding that since we reopened in December, many of those who were originally planning to visit our state are choosing instead 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” because of stringent and convoluted travel rules that are in place.

We are a strong proponent of a clear, uniform, statewide travel policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers who desire to visit Hawai’i and returning residents. We also support the idea of providing 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, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this.

For these reasons, Waikiki Resort Hotel strongly supports House Bill 1286 HD2

Testimony of
Dylan Ching
Vice President of Operations
T S Restaurants Oahu and Kauai

LATE

Committee on Finance

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

Chair Luke and members of the Committee, Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the T S Restaurants.

T S Restaurants owns and operates 8 restaurants in Oahu, Maui, and Kauai. Pre-COVID-19 we employed over 1,200 employees and have been in business for 44 years in Hawaii dating back to 1977. We are strong Community minded company that logged over 2,400 hrs. of volunteer work and \$129,000 in food donation in 2019. Currently we are only back to half of our 1,200 employees and under 50% of our total annual sales. We have done everything that has been asked of us and more to ensure our employees are safe, community supported, and our business survives. It is no surprise that even a successful and healthy company like ours finds ourselves backed up against the wall. I have been in our buildings on the ground from March until today and have seen every kind of business imaginable. This has given me the ability to observe how the restrictions, closures, and travel bands have affected how people's moods and habits react to these issues. In addition, I was able to see how they affect the individual islands through a specific industry by comparing sales and guest counts in each of our three markets. **As such, T S Restaurants strongly supports House Bill 1286 House Draft 2.**

T S Restaurants understands the difficult job that our county leaders have and the decisions they must make. We appreciate the commitment to public safety and our communities have been cared for with respect and Aloha unmatched in our nation. I can and will only comment on my perspective and experience. Our businesses are struggling to survive and the single most important thing our government can do for us it to have a clear, consistent, and safe travels program. Our visitor industry can get us back on our feet so the dependence on government can switch to supporting our government. I understand that each island has its own challenges and strengths and are fighting to ensure their people are safe. As we operate in three of those counties we feel for each as they figure out how to survive. The stricter we are the less cases we have, but it is also true there is a balance of reopening that if allowed to open safely, our people can return to work and our economy can repair itself. Nothing that I have seen indicates that the Lt. Governor program is not working, in fact it seems to be performing great. We have endured almost one full year of restrictions that have crippled our businesses and yet we still stand ready to fight another day. I say this humbly and with no disrespect to anyone who does not share our view, we need a consistent travel program.

In closing I want to thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony and to give my perspective.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Dylan Ching



**THE RITZ - CARLTON
RESIDENCES**

WAIKIKI BEACH

LATE

Testimony of Douglas Chang

General Manager, The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Waikiki Beach

Committee on Finance

House Bill 1286, House Draft 2: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption: Covid-19 Quarantine

Chair Luke and members of the Committee, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Waikiki Beach a residential condominium resort of 552 residences with a rental pool of 306 units. We employed nearly 300 Ladies and Gentlemen as this pandemic started a nearly a year ago. Today, we only have a third of that number actively working.

Every day I personally deal with guests and prospective guests who have a very strong desire to visit our islands in a safe and responsible way. The feedback from these guests is that the current travel restrictions and rules that differ by island are very confusing and negatively impacting their travel decisions.

This measure will provide a clear and consistent process that will make it easier and less risky for transpacific travel to all islands. Once enacted, this will have an immediate and significant positive impact on our occupancy and allow us to return more employees from layoff to active status.

As such I strongly **SUPPORT** House Bill 1286, House Draft 2

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 10:51:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Finance Committee Chair, Vice-Chair and Members:

Testifying in opposition to HB1286

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 Committee, but my testimony addresses more fundamental problems with HB1286.

HB1286 removes the power of the Governor under ch. 127A Emergency Management, to allow counties to opt out of the State’s unSafe Travels program. This program has already been found to cause significant problems for Kauai. Since Kauai has opted out of unSafe Travels, it is now safe enough to re-open to normal activity, but incoming travelers are monitored more closely than unSafe Travels allows for – this working well for Kauai -- why in the world would you want to spoil the only safe harbor in Hawaii?

HB1286 guts the primary purpose of ch. 127A, Emergency Management and removes the authority of the Governor to act quickly during this pandemic – this is especially worrisome when the impact of multiple variants is not well understood and has triggered serious alarms from the scientific community.

(see written testimony of Prof. Lee Altenberg and Civil Beat article from Prof. Victoria Fan and Prof. Monique Chyba (principals of HiPAM): How COVID-19 Could Be Much Worse In 2021, <https://www.civilbeat.org/2021/01/how-covid-19-could-be-much-worse-in-2021/>)

This bill would also remove the option, provided by the Governor, for any other Mayor to opt out of the unSafe Travels program.

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 like Kauai to opt out of the State's unSafe Travels or adopt other, creative solutions to re-open Hawaii to tourists.

2. HB1286 would eliminate the Governor's power to 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 Hawaii.

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."

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>
updated 2/16/21)

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 unSafe Travels program did materially degrade Kauai's CVOVID-19 case counts.

5. The undeniable fact that Hawaii 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,”

[\(https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/05/breaking-news/watch-live-paul-brewbaker-economist-at-tz-economics-joins-honolulu-star-advertisers-spotlight-hawaii/ \)](https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/08/05/breaking-news/watch-live-paul-brewbaker-economist-at-tz-economics-joins-honolulu-star-advertisers-spotlight-hawaii/)

The bill 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

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 11:20:25 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kylie Wilson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a resident of Kaua'i, I am appalled at this bill and write to express my strong opposition. Kaua'i has had the best response of any county in the state by far, and this bill will strip our county of the ability to keep ourselves safe. We are SO close to having vaccines available to those who want them, why would you want to nullify all the sacrifices we've made to get this far?

From my understanding, this bill is also flawed in it's wording. The bill would require an act of the legislature to tighten any restrictions. The Governor would be able to loosen restrictions, but tightening them would be impossible without a full legislative session. With this virus mutating and changing and surging sometimes without warning, that seems like a very bad idea. Please consider the ramifications of what you're proposing.

Our island is safe right now. Every case lately has been travel-related and has been caught in our resort bubble program.

The state should look to us as a model, not as an outlier to be punished and made to submit to the tourism industry.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 11:38:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ken Takeya	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Aloha,

1. tried submitting a testimony for HB-1286 concerning the Safe Travel proposal but the web site tells me it is not accepting any testimony at this time. My concern is the requirement for a traveler to obtain a negative test 72 hours prior to traveling and with a negative test they are free to go once they land in Hawaii. Anything could happen during this 72 hour period and unless they are re-tested once they land in Hawaii there is no way of knowing if they contracted the virus within the 72 hour period. There is a test that will become available very soon that will provide the same testing as the nasal swab with results known in 2 ½ hours. It is not the fast test that takes 15 minutes. The test uses saliva rather than the nasal swab so it is less uncomfortable. I feel to further protect the people of Hawaii this test should be considered.

Mahalo,

Ken Takeya

1447 Akeke Pl.

Kailua, HI 96734

(808) 262-1067

takeyak001@hawaii.rr.com

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 12:51:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Douglas Shannon	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a resident of Kauai County, I am opposed to HB1286 because each island is different and therefore has different needs when it comes to fighting the Covid 19 virus. Under Mayor Kawakami's leadership, Kaua'i has the lowest COVID incidence in Hawai'i. As soon as we opened up under the so called "Safe Travels" policy our cases skyrocketed to a doubling of Covid cases in one month's time. After shutting down again in December, our numbers went back down. Compare this to Maui, which stuck with the Safe Travels plan, and has currently ballooned from 1% of the state's total cases to 18% today. The lieutenant governor's own Safe Travels Surveillance Study showed that the pre-departure test missed at least seven of 1,000 travelers — seven times the prediction of the state's travel plan. We need Mayor Kawakami's original plan of a second test to keep our island safe. One pre-travel negative test does not mean a traveler is safe. A significant number of travelers test positive AFTER arrival, causing spread in Hawai'i. I do not want to see Covid spreading like wildfire over a small island of 72,000 inhabitants with only 9 ICU beds. One reason for this bill is the misconception that the different rules for different islands is confusing, yet a poll by the Hawaiian Tourism Authority found that nearly 90% of visitors surveyed reported their visits were "excellent." This means that those travelers did not find anything about their trip to be "confusing". In addition, vaccine rollout is very slow here. I am 66 years old and will not receive my first vaccine shot until mid March! When will I receive my second, April or May? Sorry, I do not want to get sick and die in the name of tourism! 90% of the tourists I run into outside do not wear masks even though they are within 6 feet of you and think that since they tested they are Covid free and cannot be carriers. A better bill would be to require the HTA to place a brochure at every check in desk and TVR that explains our rules so that they are followed. Until this is done we are all at risk of becoming infected. I ask that you please vote "no" on this bill for those reasons. Mahalo for reading this testimony.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 1:07:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robin Shannon	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Oahu shouldn't be making decisions for Kauai or the other islands. Oahu and Kauai are very different. Traditionally the islands make their own decisions and to take that away on something so important sounds like Oahu just wants to control everyone. We have this problem so you should to??? We have kept safe and would like to keep it that way. We are a small population with limited hospital resources. People are having no issues figuring out what they should do to visit us. That is proved by the occupancy rate being similar to everyone else. So obviously they are still coming here if they want to. How can you take away a reasonable 2nd test to keep us all safe. And one of the appeals for people to visit us is we are so safe.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 2:30:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stephanie Austin	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please kill this Oahu-centric bill which serves the visitor industry at the expense of the health of Hawaii residents, as well as setting another precedent for centralized decision-making and disempowering neighbor islands!

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 4:21:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lynn Murakami-Akatsuka	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB 1286, HD 2 if it impacts the "home rule" of county mayors to decide the best course of action for their respective community. In this particular case, the County of Kauai. Kauai is not Oahu. Kauai has one major hospital on the island with only 7-8 ICU beds, few ventilators, and staffing.

If Kauai was failing in its COVID response, I would welcome the opportunity for the state to come in and help set the standards as noted in HB 1286, HD 2 version. As the state's residents gets fully vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine by year's end; that would be an appropriate time to review this bill for the next legislative session.

This is not the time to interfere with the system working on Kauai or to override Mayor Kawakami's decisions and plans for his Kauai community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong opposition of HB 1286, HD 2.

Re: Testimony regarding HB 1286 (Against)

Statewide Safe Travels Program

Aloha Honorable Representatives:

I am writing from the island of Maui against this proposed bill.

This bill would strip mayors of their ability to protect their counties. Here are the reasons why I am against it:

1. All of the Hawaiian Islands are not in the same situation and therefore should not be treated the same. We have different resources—some islands do not have hospitals, while Maui has one. The one hospital that we do have has been of major concern to residents, as it has been the cause of several clusters here and has been completely full at times.
2. Maui has suffered terribly since mid-October, with cases rising steadily. Our dramatically rising numbers were ignored because the overall state numbers did not increase and news is very much Honolulu-centric. Our Mayor made a promise when he agreed not to opt out of the Safe Travels Plan that he would reinstate quarantine once cases rose to 4.99 per 100,000 (so 7.5 for Maui island). Once the numbers increased past that, he said that he had decided not to use the tier system (in other words, he reneged on his promise to his constituents). The target for re-instating quarantine kept moving as we reached higher numbers, and now he says that he won't do much unless the one hospital we have is overrun. At least we have that option. In this plan, even if the hospital is overrun, there would be no option of opting out of the Safe Travels Plan. Note that KITV reported on 2/1/21 that the hospital was indeed full, although I think that is no longer the case.
3. Mayor Kawakami has been the best leader by far in the way he has handled this situation. He is the best advocate who cares about the residents of his island. He is my hero, and the majority of Maui residents wish that he was our mayor. This bill would strip him of his ability to protect Maui, and is probably targeted specifically at him.
4. The bill calls to allow people to arrive here first and then test. This strategy was tried on all islands and failed. Maui had trailers to care for these people and contracted with a resort hotel here to take these people in. The bill calls for people to be responsible for their own quarantine costs, but that's not the way it works. When the visitor has a reservation at an Air B&B, they cannot go there if they test positive, so we become responsible to handle their lodging. Hotels will often not accept people they know are positive, and we become responsible for their lodging. The point of bringing visitors in for the profit is completely dashed, as now we are responsible to pay for their expenses.
5. A fifth reason that I oppose this measure is that not all the islands are being treated the same as far as vaccines. State leadership apparently decided on an 11% allotment for Maui, which did not cover our needs in any way, probably due to the high number of part-time residents, or snowbirds, we have. There were other issues such as the use of VAMS where tourists could and did sign up for the vaccine here. The online request system was very difficult and many seniors

were not able to manage it, however for others it was very easy to lie and many who got the vaccine should not have been eligible. The state is planning to finish tier 1b by the end of February, and we have no idea whether we will be back open for vaccines by then. What we do know is that we will be nowhere close to finishing up 1b along with the rest of the state. In other words, Maui will be even less protected than the rest of the state.

6. LG Green is proposing to waive tests for travelers who are vaccinated, believing that the vaccine causes sterilization immunity. The research is still being done on this, and opening up based on unproven research is not a good idea and endangers us unnecessarily.
7. Lastly, Maui's tourism numbers are much higher per capita. We have about 11% of the population but at least 36% of the tourists. Making decisions about travelers affects Maui much more than O'ahu, which we have seen with the Safe Travel Plan since mid-October.

Please vote against this bill. Think about the impact on the neighbor islands, which are part of the state. One size does not fit all!

TRUTH, NOT LIES

“It's easier to fool people than to convince them that they have been fooled.” Mark Twain

Please take the time to read this newsletter in its entirety.

The newsletter is based on facts and tells the truth. Expect several issues of the newsletter - each issue covers a small portion of the main topic. Sources are provided and are factual.

There is a list of resources and references at the end of each newsletter.

If you listen to or watch ANY mass media, you are grossly misinformed on important topics today and you are lied to on a daily basis. If you are lied to long enough with the same narrative, you will start to believe the lie. If someone comes along, like me, and tells you that everything you have been hearing about a subject is 100% untrue, you will typically react and call me a nut and defend the lie that has been literally been pumped and programmed into your mind. If you do not do your own research, which is the only solution to uncovering lies, you will fall prey to media sources that repeat the narrative that you are accustomed to hearing; you will then perpetuate and spread the lie. Traditionally, the media served as a check on the government, calling out

extreme or pointless actions by politicians. No current mass-media outlet provides that service today, no matter what your political affiliation is. None.

Our aim is to shock you and disturb you to the extent that you wake up and pay attention and check the details. The newsletter's goal is that you read and understand the truth and the magnitude of the lies that have been foisted upon you and, you moving on with your life, **free of fear - for fear is the real killer. If you can make a person afraid, you can very easily control that person.**

The purpose of this newsletter is to educate you with real, true science and illustrate what has been going on **and the legal actions taking place to stop it.** Please note that the term mass media now includes all the "social media networks" as they are now censoring views that they do not agree with. Some of our reliable sources have been censored already and are looking for other communication pathways. I am sure you will agree that the fact that people are being censored in the United States, the home of free and protected speech, is absolutely ridiculous, shocking, and is repeating a pattern of history seen in the former USSR in 1917 and Germany in 1937-38; not to mention present-day China. These are not positive developments or patterns. If you think the person you disagree with should be squelched, silenced, banned or censored, think again because the result of such actions and positions are never positive; people end up suffering and getting hurt or killed.

As this issue goes to press, the presidents of Mexico and Poland are enacting laws to prohibit censorship, **arguably because they know what is at stake** - Poland has lived through extreme examples of what happens when you squelch dissenting voices. Evil stuff. Furthermore, in the last two days, courts in Poland are destroying all Covid related nonsense “laws” and the country is rapidly opening up.

We are telling you the truth; many, many people today are telling you lies - blatant lies. They are either extremely ignorant, misinformed or have a hidden agenda. Our first topic of discussion is:

COVID

Kary Mullis, the inventor of the PCR amplification process, passed away in 2019. He won a Nobel Prize for his work. He made it clear that the PCR was not to be used as a “test” to see if anyone is infected with anything. He also stated that Anthony Fauci, the head of the CDC, “knows nothing about nothing”. The data that I present to you will show clearly that Anthony Fauci has betrayed the public trust, along with other “scientists” and politicians. Fauci is clearly guilty of fraud and putting his personal interests before the public interest. Anthony Fauci should be charged with crimes against humanity. (please note that there are prominent teams preparing covid fraud and negligence lawsuits; the teams are

in Germany and the USA.) There have been clear violations of The Nuremberg Code, created to protect the public from illegal science experiments. The code was created after WWII; the Nuremberg trials resulted in the public executions of German “doctors”.

Ivor Cummins, a biochemical engineer and root-cause specialist in Ireland states: “Pharma thugs like Fauci are making absolute idiots out of the public, aided by widespread censorship.” This is true. We will illustrate the madness of the response to Covid. You may feel uncomfortable because you have taken part in the madness. We will step through the Covid details in the following list, to put things in perspective:

- Is there a reference example or a control, a country or state, for Covid that allows us to compare the responses dictated by different countries and states?
- PCR tests - do they really detect Covid-19? Are there false positives? Do scientists agree on PCR? Who created the PCR testing standard for Covid-19?
- Do masks work? Did our control use masks? Can masks hurt my health? Has the WHO or the CDC recommended mask use before 2020?
- What does the science say about viruses? Are there known references that cover all this stuff? Is this new? Has the science changed?
- Where did the response that the United States prescribed come from? Why did we follow that response?

- Has all the important information about Covid been provided to the American public? Are there things that I can do to improve my immunity to Covid and viruses in general?
- Why is there no outpatient treatment for Covid prescribed in the USA? Is this the case in other countries? Do any outpatient treatments work? If these treatments work, why has the CDC and WHO not informed me about them?

The Control

Months ago, this writer signed a document named **The Great Barrington Declaration**. (See references) As this issue goes to press, the following numbers of people have signed the declaration:

Concerned Citizens:	729,842
Medical & Public Health Scientists:	13,329
Medical Practitioners:	40,333

By signing the declaration, you agree with the following statement:

As infectious disease epidemiologists and public health scientists we have grave concerns about the damaging physical and mental health impacts of the prevailing COVID-19 policies, and recommend an approach we call Focused Protection.

Are there any examples of countries that followed the focussed protection protocol suggested? Yes. **Sweden.** **Sweden is our control country.** Why does that matter? It matters because we have 9 months of data. Real data. Data does not lie. Scientists and Analysts (real professionals - not a person with a hidden agenda) can take that data and **show you what actually happened.** No theory, no speculation, just the facts. Liars have a very hard time with data. **Data makes lies blatantly obvious.**

What guidelines did Sweden follow? Sweden followed the 2019 WHO guidelines. No masks. No lockdowns. Limited social distancing. Protect the vulnerable, just like the Great Barrington Declaration calls for. Here is the WHO guideline from 2019:



Non-pharmaceutical public health measures for mitigating the risk and impact of epidemic and pandemic influenza

ISBN 978-92-4-151683-9

© World Health Organization 2019

6. SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES

6.1. Contact tracing

RECOMMENDATION:

Active contact tracing is not recommended in general because there is no obvious rationale for it in most Member States. This intervention could be considered in some locations and circumstances to collect information on the characteristics of the disease and to identify cases, or to delay widespread transmission in the very early stages of a pandemic in isolated communities.

Population: Individuals who have come into contact with an infected person

When to apply: N/A

Overall strength of recommendation

Not Recommended

There is no obvious rationale in most Member States.

6.3. Quarantine of exposed individuals

RECOMMENDATION:

Home quarantine of exposed individuals to reduce transmission is not recommended because there is no obvious rationale for this measure, and there would be considerable difficulties in implementing it.

Population: People who have had contact with infected cases

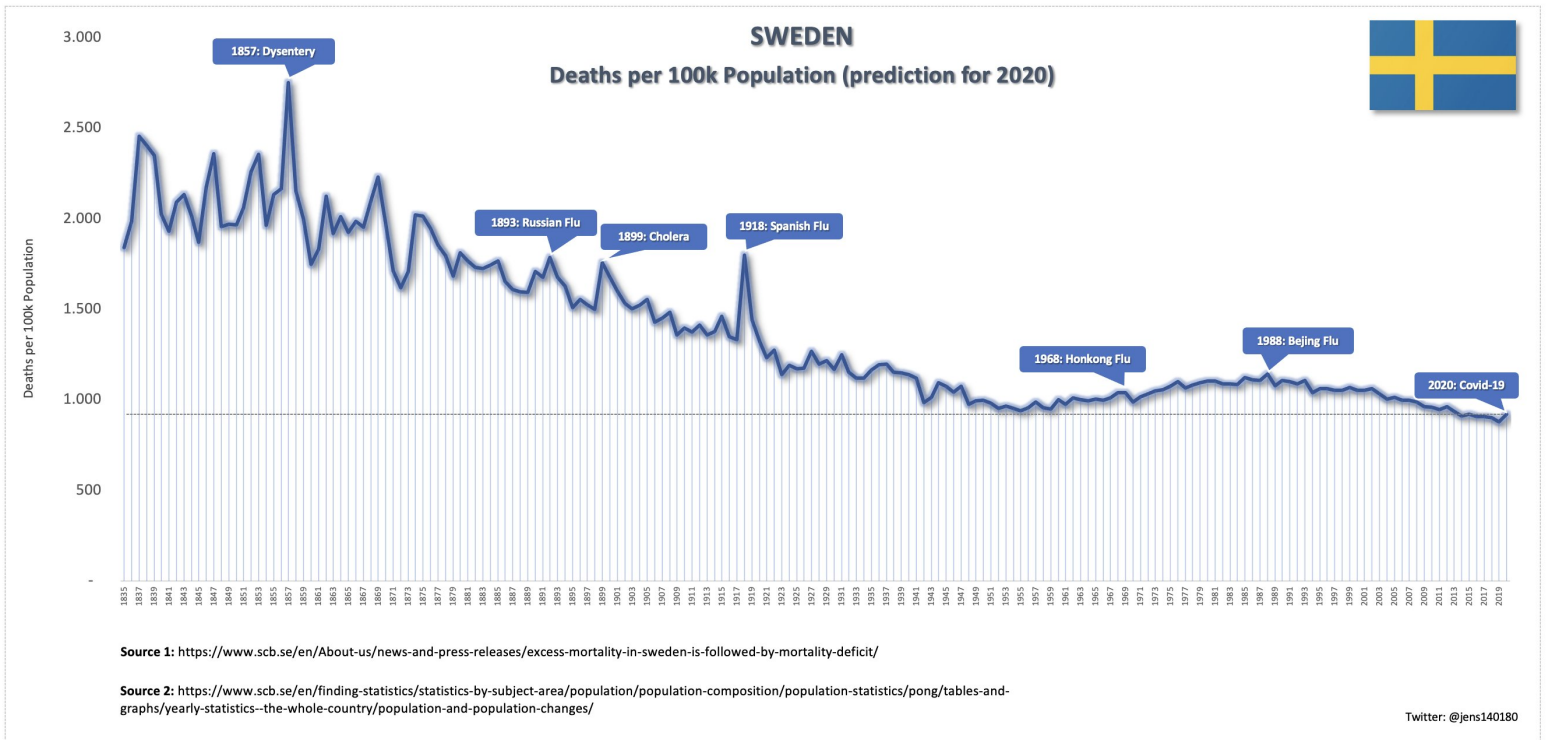
When to apply: N/A

Overall strength of recommendation

Not Recommended

Not recommended due to feasibility concerns with very low quality of evidence.

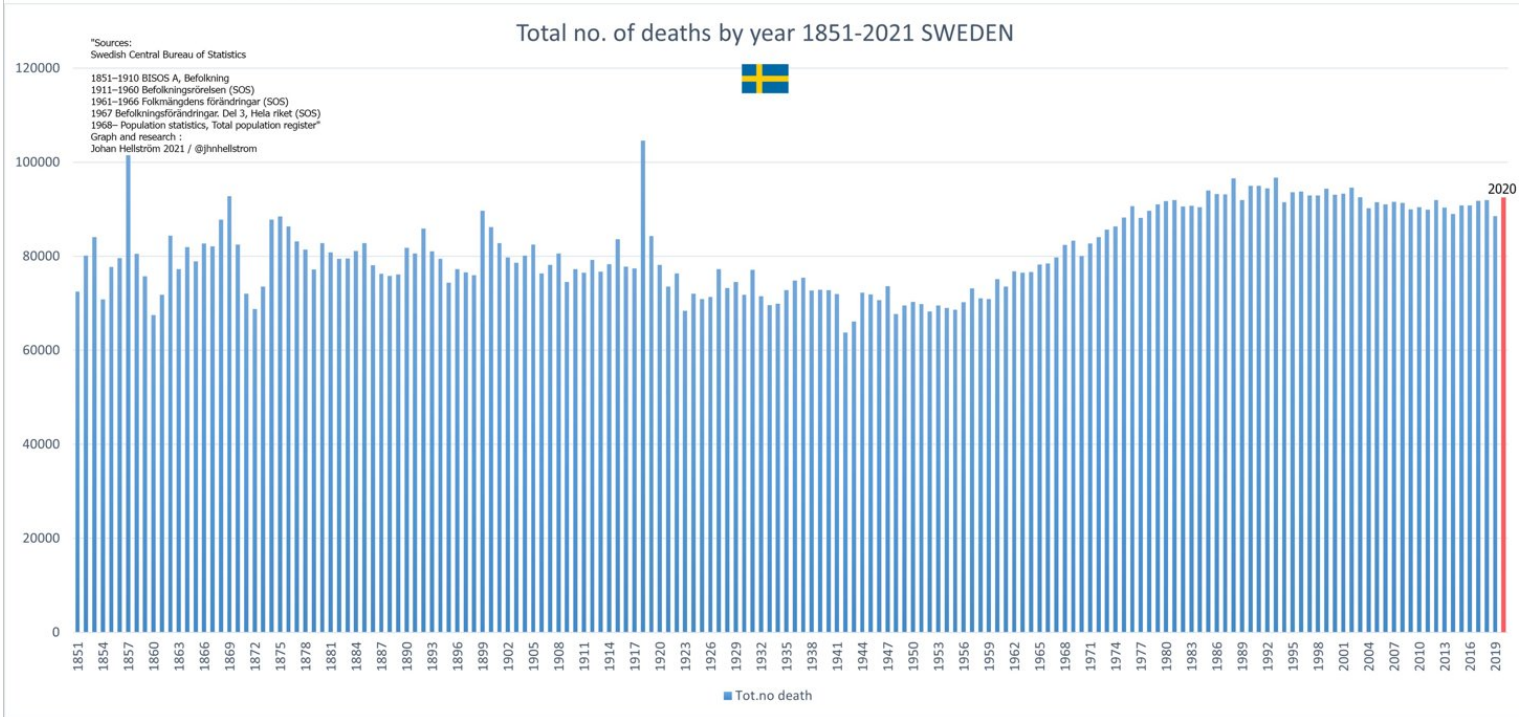
Now that we know what guideline Sweden followed, let's look at some data specific to Sweden. Let's look at a graph of the deaths per 100,000 people in Sweden from 1835 to 2020:



Take a look at the graph at 2020. Notice anything strange? The graph shows an estimate for 2020 because it was created before the year ended. The final chart would look exactly the same with very few additional deaths. Look at the black line that runs across the graph - that line shows you the level of deaths in 2020. Does it shock you that prior years had greater death counts than 2020? What is going on?? Isn't Covid just wiping out populations everywhere? Lets take

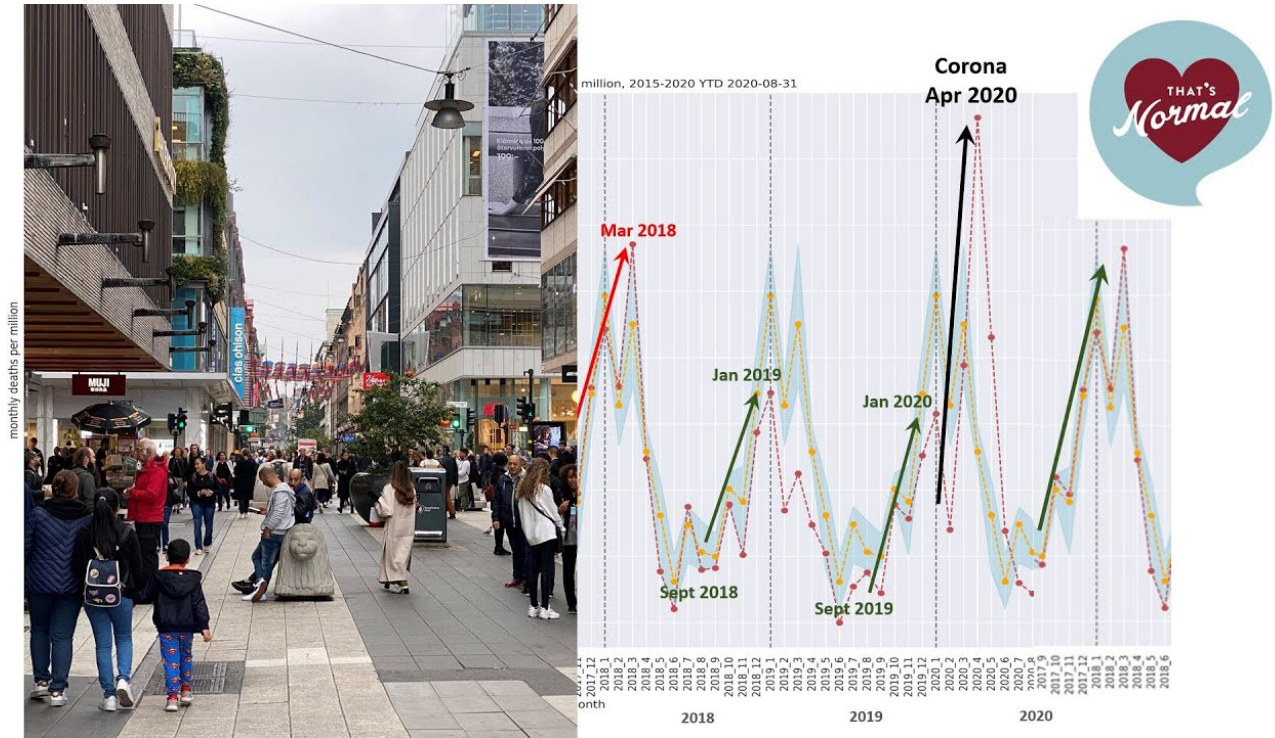
another look at the total deaths in Sweden over time on another graph:

<https://twitter.com/jhnhellstrom/status/1348644859998035971?s=20>



The preceding two graphs tell us that the year 2020, as far as mortality goes, was not extreme in Sweden. The total number of deaths in Sweden in 2020 were very similar to the previous few years. In fact, Sweden had very mild winter flu seasons in 2018 and 2019; any excess deaths in 2020 were due to the fact that the previous two flu seasons were weak. For a great short analysis of this fact, watch this video:

Ivor Cummins Sweden Analysis 1



Therefore, we have established that Sweden is our control country. Sweden followed the 2019 WHO guidelines, did not lock down, did not use masks and protected the vulnerable. **Sweden has been wide open, all the way through the Covid “pandemic”.** The GDP of Sweden expanded 4.9% in the third quarter of 2020 - meaning, Sweden’s leaders did not destroy their economy and prevented all the associated damage that occurs because of lockdowns and quarantines. In addition, Sweden’s leaders were intelligent enough to recognize that the science behind the transmission of a virus

and the response to that virus, did not suddenly change in March 2020. **In short, Sweden followed real science.** With our control now established by using real data, we can move on to the next topic: PCR - we investigate tests in Issue 2.

References:

The Great Barrington Declaration

<https://gbdeclaration.org/>

The Great Barrington Declaration Signature Page

<https://gbdeclaration.org/view-signatures/>

Kary Mullis Video 1

<https://twitter.com/robinmonotti/status/1336923426259349504>

Ivor Cummins, Technical Manager / Team Leader, Biochemical Engineer, Complex Problem Solving Specialist, Technologist. Ireland. Ivor's YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPn4FsiQP15nudug9FDhluA>

Ivor's Twitter Feed:

<https://mobile.twitter.com/FatEmperor>

I am writing to strongly oppose HB1286. 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) **ASSUMPTION:** Visitor numbers and revenue would be higher if potential travelers were not “confused” by different county travel protocols.

REBUTTAL:

- a. The primary reason that visitor numbers are down is that people who care about public health are heeding the advice of the CDC and refraining from nonessential travel at this time. Another reason for the drop in visitor numbers is that many people do not have the money to travel due to loss of income during the pandemic. Per-visitor revenue is down because many of the visitors who are choosing to travel here despite the pandemic are doing only because they can take advantage of bargain airfare and hotel rates. International visitor levels are down because many countries are restricting travel by their residents. Nothing in this bill would do anything to address any of these issues, which are entirely outside the State’s control. **The proponents of this bill have provided NO data-based evidence indicating that enacting it would actually result in a significant rise in tourism revenue.**
 - b. Kauai’s current hotel occupancy rates are roughly comparable to Maui’s, so there is no evidence that stricter County rules, or confusion about different rules, is affecting visitor numbers. **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.**
 - c. Even if “confusion” is contributing to some extent to lower visitor numbers, this bill is the wrong remedy. **Permanently reducing Hawai’i’s ability to protect itself during the pandemic is not the right remedy for “visitor confusion.”** The right remedy would be to create and consistently, timely update a single, central website clearly detailing all state and county travel rules; to link all other official state and county websites to this central website; and to strongly encourage all travel booking sites, airlines, hotels, and Hawai’i-related social media sites to link to the official site, rather than repeating information that may become outdated before it is viewed.
- (2) **ASSUMPTION:** The current pandemic situation will not change rapidly or significantly, so it makes sense to codify our current “Safe Travels” program, as there will never be a need to adjust it quickly.

REBUTTAL:

- a. The COVID-19 virus situation changes constantly and rapidly. New variants arise and are dispersed to new locations; the availability and accuracy of tests changes over time; vaccine availability and vaccination rates are rapidly rising; levels of infection in a given community may rise and fall quickly and unexpectedly. In addition, there are many unknowns: Do the vaccines work as effectively against the new variants? What is the likelihood that vaccinated people can still transmit the virus? **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.

- b. Our current “Safe Travels” program has proven to be inadequate to protect against introduction of the virus by visitors. The difference in the rate of new infections experienced by Maui and Kauai since the start of “Safe Travels” on October 15 establishes that. **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. Conversely, 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.

- (3) **ASSUMPTION:** All counties in Hawai’i have the same population demographics, the same per capita level of tourism, and the same per capita level of health care resources, so there is no reason to allow different counties to adopt different travel rules.

REBUTTAL:

- a. This is obviously untrue. The neighbor islands have only one or two hospitals each. Maui County includes three separate islands, two of which have only minimal health care facilities. Maui County and Hawai’i County both have pockets of very isolated rural populations, including many Native Hawaiians, that have limited access to health care. Maui island’s level of tourism, relative to full-time resident population, is higher than that of any other island. **Every island is different; we are not a one-size-fits-all state!**
- b. Allowing Hawai’i County to require visitors to test upon arrival, and allowing Kauai to adopt more restrictive rules, has enabled the State to essentially conduct field experiments regarding the effectiveness of different travel rules. **This bill would preclude both the State and the Counties from conducting pilot programs to enable the Department of Health to gather data on the effectiveness of different methods of making pandemic-era travel safer for both visitors and residents.**

- (4) **ASSUMPTION:** Uniform statewide travel rules are needed to ensure the State has adequate revenue to perform its functions, and to revive the State’s economy.

REBUTTAL:

- a. Tourism is not the only economic activity in the State. Given the possibility of further disruption in global travel patterns, due to future pandemics, climate change, or other unanticipated issues, the time has come for Hawai’i to reduce its economic dependence on tourism and diversify its economy. **In the long run, diversification will do more for the State’s economy than any measure that purports to facilitate increased tourism as this bill does.**
- b. Federal aid to state and local governments will be forthcoming within months. We do not yet know whether it will be adequate to meet all of the State’s fiscal needs, but we do know it is coming, and it is premature to enact potentially harmful legislation based on the assumption that it will not be. In any event, **the proponents of this bill have provided NO evidence that enacting it would significantly increase the State’s 2021 tax revenue** (see Rebuttal to Assumption (1)).

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 7:59:56 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ana Kahoopii	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a nurse with a degree in public health, I oppose this bill. This bill does not adhere to CDC guidelines.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 9:11:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I oppose Bill HB1286. This is an extremely bad Bill that would take away the outer islands autonomy. To call this a Bill that would unify the islands is misleading, like putting lipstick on a pig and making it sound like something positive, so very deceitful! A Bill to unify the islands when we all know each island is so very different with its own unique personality. This Bill is not about unifying our islands, but rather a way to make it easier and less confusing for people to travel in a Pandemic none the less, when the CDC is recommending no non essential travel. You are pushing this Bill when new variants are emerging while other countries are currently restricting and closing their borders to protect their citizens from new strains of Covid. This Bill is not following the science but instead is backed by the Hotel and Airline industries, of course! Since when do these industries get to dictate what's best for the health of the citizens of our state? I prefer to listen to our Hawaii State epidemiologist whose recommendation was that two tests would be better in order to keep Hawaii safe, but because of our countries pathetic handling of this virus Hawaii apparently doesn't have the ability to enact what would be the safest practice.

Mayor Kawakami has kept Kauai's numbers way down. What our Mayor is doing is working. Maui meanwhile has had 200 cases in the last 14 days- this is where we were heading in November when we instituted the alleged Safe Travel program. Thank God our Mayor was smart and took quick action to protect Kauai's residents. Covid is a very fluid situation with many moving parts. To enforce a one size fits all Travel rule could prove a disaster if major spikes and surges occurred & we were unable to overturn the ruling because of lack of authority as a result of the unified rule. This Bill usurps our Mayors authority! Our Mayors hands would be tied, and there would be no recourse allowed. This Bill is not in the best interest of our health. Given this Pandemic is such a fluid situation with constant changes, a Bill that would lock in rules is not that smart. Maybe it would be smarter for the islands to follow Kauai's example which is working and not Vice Verca.

February 23, 2021

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

Honorable Chair Luke and members of the Committee:

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 latest 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.

One consequence of section 2(a) is that 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 has 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 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, such as Kauai's resort bubbles. If this bill is passed, such innovative efforts will be quashed.

Further, the bill makes it difficult for even state leaders to quickly address a changing landscape. Other than the ability to create exemptions to pretesting and quarantine 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 likely 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.**

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 poor 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: 2/24/2021 7:27:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

State law should be a floor, not a ceiling, and County's should not be prohibited by law from protecting the health of their citizens. A Concurrent Resolution requesting the Mayors and the Governor to reach a consensus on a uniform policy is a better alternative. Mahalo

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 7:57:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Thank you for having the courage to do your duty as lawmakers and override executives who are making laws.

Hawaii tourism is suffering - only 27% occupancy in December and January. Kauai's mayor has devastated tourism on that island and for no logical or factual reason.

We own property on Kauai as a vacation rental. We have lost many tens of thousands of dollars. Cases are very low on Hawaii and not caused by tourists. The Safe Travels Program is working. Kauai's mayor refuses to listen to the people whose lives are being impacted by the continued refusal to join the program.

He cannot be allowed to arbitrarily and without cause or reason cut off this vital industry. The people of Kauai deserve better.

You make laws, the executive executes on them. It's time to return the job of making laws to the lawmakers.

Thanks!

Tom and Margaret Fuller

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 9:00:27 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jayne Bush	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Representatives

I am writing from the island of Maui against HB 1286 for the following reasons.

1. The Safe Travel Program is not viable and doesn't work as a one-size-fits-all. The current program has failed to protect us from the more dangerous variant b. 1. 1. 6 and the South African and Brazilian strains.

2. This bill allows people to fly here and then take a covid test. It is imperative that we initiate a second covid-19 test. This bill does not match current CDC guidelines. Mayor Victorino said that he would reinstate quarantine once cases rose to 4.99 per 100,000. We are at 7.5 for Maui. This is a danger zone and is permanently reducing Hawaii's ability to protect itself during the pandemic.

3. LG Green has proposed to waive tests for travelers who are vaccinated because he believes that the vaccine causes sterilization immunity. There is much research still to be done and opening up the islands based on unproven research endangers us all.

4. When State leadership decided on only a 11% allotment for vaccines for Maui, this did not cover our needs in any way because of higher numbers of part-time residents and visitors who used the VAMS system and got their vaccines while on vacation here. The online system was difficult to maneuver for many seniors. Others who shouldn't have been eligible lied and further compromised Maui's safety.

5. This bill removes the governor's ability to immediately switch direction and make spot decisions based on the dangerous Coronavirus mutations.

Please vote against this bill. The impact on Maui and the neighbor Islands which are all part of the state can be potentially catastrophic and devastatingly irreversible. Thank you

Date: Tue, Feb 23, 2021 at 10:48 AM

Subject: HB-1286

Aloha,

I tried submitting a testimony for HB-1286 concerning the Safe Travel proposal but the web site tells me it is not accepting any testimony at this time. My concern is the requirement for a traveler to obtain a negative test 72 hours prior to traveling and with a negative test they are free to go once they land in Hawaii. Anything could happen during this 72 hour period and unless they are re-tested once they land in Hawaii there is no way of knowing if they contracted the virus within the 72 hour period. There is a test that will become available very soon that will provide the same testing as the nasal swab with results known in 2 ½ hours. It is not the fast test that takes 15 minutes. The test uses saliva rather than the nasal swab so it is less uncomfortable. I feel to further protect the people of Hawaii this test should be considered.

Mahalo,

Ken Takeya

1447 Akeke Pl.

Kailua, HI 96734

(808) 262-1067

takeyak001@hawaii.rr.com

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 10:00:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Samantha Ewing	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am the assistant manager of a shave ice store on Kauai. I am unable to receive unemployment because it's limited. In order to keep my job the island needs to open back up. Please, pass the bill so Kauai can be accessible to everyone.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 10:06:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara Barry	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Our State is too diverse to have Honolulu be the determiner of what is a safe Covid travel exemption. The law should be that basis of what the Counties decide what is best for their county. The one size fits all mindset is dangerous and inappropriate.

The Counties should be the final decider based on their needs and current situation.

Mahalo for not supporting this severe and not well thought out Bill regarding travel requirements for Hawaiian visitors and traveling residents.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 10:09:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

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.

All of us in Kauai that rely on the travel industry for our income, need to have the opportunity to receive visitors. I manage short term vacation rentals, and due to the current travel restrictions and the total uncertainty of when the mayor will open the island for travel, we have very few future bookings, and now people are cancelling summer reservations. Our business is interconnected with MANY services and businesses on the island.

We need to get back to work! The state needs the tax revenue.

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.**

Juliana Cherry

Koloa HI 96756

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 10:16:54 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chad Taniguchi	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please do NOT pass HB1286. It is the wrong solution to a hastily defined problem. Instead of using this crisis opportunity to revision tourism, it depends on the failed old model that resulted in way-over tourism.

Kaua'i has the healthiest covid population in the state, and one of the best in the world. Listening to scientists, Mayor Kawakami looked to his roots and chose to prioritize health. The Council and citizens support this.

Similarly, the Phuket Tourist Association announced plans to reopen their island after 70% of their population is vaccinated - in October 2021. "The safety of the people gets priority because tourists come and go but locals live here."

Could the legislature research how places like Phuket are trying to support their residents' economic survival until tourism reopens?

And how to use State/County budget/resources and State/County staff to accellerate a shift from tourism overdependence to a balanced economy, including local agriculture?

How can a significant number of hotel workers be supported in agriculture? Our future economy WILL involve less movement of people and things by airplane to Hawai'i.

We are awaiting the leadership of visionaries in the Legislature and administration who can see the future clearly. And can enact legislation to make it happen.

Support Kaua'i county for its leadership supported by its citizens.

Testimony Re HB 1286, Draft 2
by JoAnn A. Yukimura
Before the Committee on Finance
State House of Representatives
February 25, 2021

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

My name is JoAnn Yukimura. I am a former Kauaʻi mayor and councilmember, but today I testify as a concerned citizen from Kauaʻi, my lifelong home.

You all know the saying, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” That’s the situation on Kauaʻi today with respect to the coronavirus.

In the last 7 days we have had no new COVID cases on Kauaʻi. In the past 30 days, we have had only 5 cases. All were incoming visitors, demonstrating that a major cause of COVID infection is travel related and that in-coming visitors are a substantial part of the problem.

Over the last month, our non-tourism economy has been operating without significant COVID-induced restraint because residents are feeling relatively safe. Restaurants that prior to the pandemic wisely catered to both locals and visitors are open and busy with business from residents. Plans are being made for face-to-face school, and sports are starting again. Residents re getting their hair cut, their nails done. They are scheduling dental check-ups and elective surgeries.

If Kauaʻi County can establish herd immunity by vaccinating most of the adults on Kauaʻii and keep the coronavirus--and its variants--at bay with a safe way for screening incoming travelers, sustained economic recovery can truly begin.

As Hawai‘i economist Paul Brewbaker has said, “You don’t [solve](#) the economic problem until the epidemiological problem is solved.”

Kaua‘i is getting there. With one of the best vaccination rates in the country (partly because our medical capacity is not being diverted by COVID treatment and tracing), and because we opted out of the State’s one-test plan, Kaua‘i is on the verge of solving our epidemiological problem.

If you impose an unsafe travel plan on Kaua‘i now by approving HB 1286, Draft 2, you will make Kaua‘i go backwards by increasing the risk to our health and safety.

The State’s one-test plan has been shown to be unsafe in three ways.

1. Kaua‘i experienced a big spike when it complied with the state’s one-test plan last October. The number of COVID cases on Kaua‘i incurred in the first 7 months of the pandemic doubled in one month of implementing the State’s plan, leading Mayor Kawakami to opt out of the State’s travel plan.
2. The one-test plan is not supported by [science](#). Though a person may be infected, the viral load is not usually large enough to be detected by a valid PCR test until Day 4 or 5 after initial infection, which is why a second test is necessary.
3. The one-test plan contradicts comparable travel recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control.¹

Even the State Department of Health in its testimony on HB 1286 has confirmed that a second test is safer.

¹ For U.S. citizens returning to America (a category of travelers akin to returning residents or visitors to Hawai‘i), the CDC [states](#): “**Testing before and after travel is a critical layer to slow the introduction and spread of COVID-19.**” It [recommends](#) a pre-departure test, a second test between 3-5 days after arrival, and post arrival quarantine for 7 days.

What justification is there to force Kaua‘i to follow a less safe procedure? “We need consistent travel rules” is the cry. “Prospective visitors are confused by differing rules.” That. . .is a communication problem, not a policy problem!

Moreover, to trade off the health and safety of a county for the convenience of the visitor and the visitor industry is unfathomable. It would only reinforce the widely held perception identified in a recent [Omnitrak poll](#) that Hawai‘i “is being run for tourists at the expense of local people.” If your goal is to support the visitor industry, voting for HB 1286, Draft 2 is no way to cultivate the aloha necessary for the visitor industry to succeed.

Some people on Kaua‘i and the visitor industry statewide are clamoring for imposition of the one-test plan on Kaua‘i County, reasoning that more lenient rules will bring the visitors and the economy back. But according to a recent [Star Advertiser article](#), *“Despite efforts to reboot tourism under Safe Travels, monthly hotel occupancy stayed between 19.7% and 21.7% from July to October, and is up only a bit more since then. The levels are far from a rough industry standard of 55% to 60% occupancy that most hotels need to be profitable.”*

We on Kaua‘i have always known that the key to economic recovery in these COVID times is finding a truly safe way to welcome visitors back. Early last summer, a group of doctors, scientists and community leaders on Kaua‘i presented Mayor Kawakami, Governor Ige, and Lt. Governor Green a science-based [report](#), “A Plan for Safely Reopening Hawai‘i: Kaua‘i as a Model.” Its basic proposal of a pre-departure test, a quarantine on arrival and release on Day 5-7 based on a negative second test, has been validated many times since it was issued.²

²[“CDC travel recommendations for Americans returning from foreign travel | Shorter quarantine could prevent coronavirus outbreaks,”](#) [“German requires 2 COVID tests and quarantine”](#)

Now, as was announced recently by Representative Tokioka, Kaua‘i is exploring an alternative way to screen visitors using frequent accurate and affordable rapid COVID tests in lieu of a quarantine.

Please do not force us to “fix” something that is “not broke.” Kaua‘i has achieved the best health and safety results in the state. Ironically, Kaua‘i’s COVID statistics have helped the State to look better by moderating the state’s statistics.

I humbly request--I sincerely urge--that you hold HB 1286, Draft 2 in committee.

Mahalo nui loa.

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 10:53:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Steve O'Neal	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Testimony for Feb 25th

Honorable Representatives,

As we've seen nationwide throughout this pandemic, many leaders (though of course not all) will be influenced by lobbying or ideology or political considerations, and take an inflexible position. Then they will at best ignore science and fact based evidence that doesn't support their position, and at worst obfuscate and distract from any evidence that gets presented.

Let's be sure we don't do this in this great state. In the last two hearings citizens and experts have brought up multiple serious concerns:

1) On February 2nd, after this bill was conceived and prompted by the risk of spreading variants, the CDC updated their guidelines. They are telling US citizens not to travel, but if they must, to quarantine for a few days after travel and test out to exit quarantine.

2) A week ago, the new variant risk prompted Britain to deny entry to non citizens from 33 red-listed countries and there are rumors Spain and the US will be added to the list. British citizens returning from those countries must at their expense quarantine for 10 days with no chance of testing out early.

3) The "Safe Travels Program" clearly allowed the B.1.1.7 variant in and with the South African variant now in the US, including Washington state where many of our visitors come from, it will enter Hawaii soon,

4) South Africa just halted and warehoused their 1 million vaccine shots because studies have shown their vaccine is not effective against their variant, and equally concerning, that even if one has gotten an earlier version of covid, their antibodies will not protect them from the South African variant.

5) In addition to these serious concerns, the premise of HB 1286 is that people are not traveling to Hawaii because one island with 5% of the population has different rules requiring a short quarantine or 2nd test requirement. That is an absurd premise. It takes 30 seconds on google and figure out how to come to 95% of Hawaii with a single

preflight test, as close to a million people have done in the last 4 months. Pushing through this shortsighted bill to force Kaua'i to open itself to risk that their leadership has chosen not to take will not suddenly and meaningfully increase travel to the entire state.

Please don't follow up my testimony and that of experts much more qualified than I with stories of how a relative or staffer couldn't figure out the rules.

On Tuesday Lt Governor Green said, quote:

"This is an overreach by Speaker Saiki - and it is not nice." For islands like Maui, shouldering more than their fair share of the virus, he added that "it adds insult to injury" and "the governor will veto it if it comes to it. I'll bet you a dollar."

Things have changed since this bill was introduced. Time to drop it.

Mahalo

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 11:30:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sandra Herndon	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Finance Chair Luke, Co-Chair Cullen and members of the Finance Committee,

I am strongly opposed to HB 1286, as written. Strongly, because I live on Kaua`i, where we have had minimal impact of the Covid-19 tragedies that have affected our neighbor islands. We have had a strong protocol established by Mayor Kawakami, and citizens here, for the most part, have followed the rules. We have certainly had financial repercussions, but the over-riding concern, AS IT SHOULD BE, is the health and well-being of the people.

I believe that a better solution to this issue, would be a consensus between the Governor and the Mayors of the individual counties, as to the best way for us to proceed. Each county is different, from the number of population to the areas of density. Each is Akamai to their own special needs for health and prosperity. An agreement to honor these specificities is paramount.

It goes without saying that Kaua`i holds much Aloha for our neighbor Islands and visitors, holds Kokua to be our Kuleana and has always been strong on Ku`oka`a.

Mahalo for hearing this testimony of someone who loves all of Hawaii,

Sandra Herndon

Kaua`i

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 1:36:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
luke hacker	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha i am writing this letter because I strongly oppose Bill

HB1286. Are mayor on Kauai Has done a tremendous job in keeping are island safe

and the number of cases are the on our island the lowest in the state of Hawaii

maui ,Oahu ,and the big island continue to have COVID 19 case numbers rise ,so why

would we stop all the progress that our mayor has done ? It makes no sense.isn't the safety of our island and the local people who are actually from here be a priority? If the they open Kauai back up our COVID case numbers will rise just like they are doing on the other islands. It's people like the airline companies and the hotels who only care about money otherwise this wouldn't even be a question. Please do the right thing and do not let this bill pass. Our island is too small and is going to get ravaged by this deadly disease and people we know and love will be at risk . I hope you will do what's right and not pass this bill . Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony

sincerely Luke Hacker

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 2:21:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Kim	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony of

Lisa A. Kim

Owner of L.A.K. Enterprises (Marketing Firm) and Restaurateur

House Finance Committee

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

TO: Chair Sylvia Luke and members of the Committee

I would like to express my support for House Bill 1286 to bring a unified, cohesive Safe Travels Program.

We have all seen the confusion that has arisen with various safe travel plans from each of the Hawaiian Islands. It has even reached the national news stating that Hawaii wants the visitors to return but we cannot seem to work together to have ONE plan. This is quite an embarrassment.

The confusion and strict requirements have severely deterred Kama'aina from traveling to the neighbor islands and visitors from out-of-state to come to Hawaii. A nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT) is only accepted by the state but not a rapid test that was distributed during surge testing. With a rapid test, results can be received quickly and there is a minimum or no cost. Paying \$150.00 for the NAAT test is deterring residents from traveling to the neighbor islands and visitors from entering the state.

There is much confusion on several issues regarding the pre-test and quarantine. Who should or should not have to quarantine? Where do you receive the tests if you are not in Hawaii? What is the difference between a NAAT and rapid test? What are the total costs for testing? Is proof of a negative test in writing accepted? These are just some of

the questions that are being raised and if there was one plan, this would eliminate such a gray area.

As a restaurant who lost her business completely due to COVID-19, I know firsthand what the negative affects are from the virus. We are all looking at our elected officials to ease the burden on the residents and businesses and create a unified Safe Travels Program.

Thank you.

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 11:28:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

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 pre-travel 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!

What is wrong with these CDC guidelines:

If You Must Travel

If you must travel, take these steps to [protect yourself and others](#) from COVID-19:

- If you are eligible, get fully [vaccinated for COVID-19](#). Wait 2 weeks after getting your second vaccine dose to travel—it takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination.

- Get tested with a [viral test](#) 1-3 days before you travel. Keep a copy of your test results with you during travel in case you are asked for them. Do NOT travel if you test positive.
- Check [travel restrictions](#) before you go.
- [Wear a mask](#) over your nose and mouth when in public settings. [Masks are required](#) on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.
- Avoid crowds and [stay at least 6 feet/2 meters](#) (about 2 arm lengths) from anyone who did not travel with you. It's important to do this everywhere — both indoors and outdoors.
- [Wash your hands](#) often or use hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol).
- Bring extra supplies, such as masks and hand sanitizer.
- Avoid contact with anyone who is sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

Do NOT travel if you were [exposed to COVID-19](#), [you are sick](#) or [you test positive for COVID-19](#). Learn when it is [safe for you to travel](#). Don't travel with someone who is sick.

Get Tested Before and After Travel

- If you are traveling, get tested with a [viral test](#) 1-3 days before your trip. Make sure you have the results of your negative test before you travel. Keep a copy of your results with you during travel; you might be asked for them.
- Do not travel if you test positive. Immediately [isolate](#) yourself, and follow [public health recommendations](#).
- 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, even if your test is negative. If you don't get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel.
- You may have been exposed to COVID-19 on your travels. Regardless of where you traveled or what you did during your trip, take these actions to protect others from getting COVID-19 after travel:
 - Avoid crowds and [stay at least 6 feet/2 meters](#) (about 2 arm lengths) from anyone who did not travel with you. It's important to do this everywhere — both indoors and outdoors. [Wear a mask](#) over your nose and mouth when in public settings. [Masks are required](#) on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.
 - If there are people in the household who did not travel with you, [wear a mask](#) and ask everyone in the household to wear masks in shared spaces inside your home for 14 days after travel.
 - [Wash your hands](#) often or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
 - Avoid being around people who are at [increased risk for severe illness](#).
 - Watch your health: Look for [symptoms](#) of COVID-19.

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/25/2021 5:03:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elen Stoops	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Without clarity and consistency in covid policies, travelers, both tourists and inter-island traveling locals alike are unable to plan.

Multiple false starts for reopening travel and confusing requirements for compliance depending upon county/island, have lead to many tourists giving up on Hawaii altogether. They are finding alternative destinations.

Businesses are unable to plan and to provide much needed employment. The stress on Airlines and Hotels and Restaurants and other small businesses has been staggering. Some have lost the battle and permanently shut down. Revenue impact for Hawaii will last many years.

Pre-arrival testing has been proven a success. Please pass this measure.

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/25/2021 7:37:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alicia Humiston	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am supporty of unifying policies for the entire state! Having visitors fly home due to test errors that were not their fault is harsh.

LATE

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/25/2021 8:22:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carmen Lyman	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

County Council and Mayor,

It's time to stop ONLY counting lives "supposedly saved" by the restrictions (lockdowns/quarantines) and start counting the dead your "safety measures" are actually generating.

Every action has a reaction. But you are choosing to only focus on covid, steadfastly ignoring the broad wake of death and destruction your measures are causing. Today's USA Today article (<https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/health-wellness/2021/02/25/children-covid-and-mental-health-wave/4572686001/>) explores the tsunami of mental health ramifications and attempted/actual suicides in TEENS. You have taken away all hope by taking away all clarity and self-determination. You are "saving" the elderly by sacrificing TEENS and their parents, causing generations of dashed hopes. What about the teens who were counting on scholarships for athletics? Dashed. What about the family business they were going to inherit? Dashed. Your supposed "solution" will bring far worse destruction than that which it purports to protect. You have caused a pandemic of suicide and mental illness.

You have sacrificed the young and the middle-aged to protect the covid-fragile. Look around guys! Time to update your failed so-called leadership.

Sincerely,

Carmen Lyman

HB-1286-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/25/2021 10:03:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2021 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

HB1286 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.