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**David Y. Ige**  
*Governor*

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*President and Chief Executive Officer*

Statement of  
**JOHN DE FRIES**

Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM**

Monday, March 29, 2021  
3:10 PM  
State Capitol  
via videoconference

In consideration of  
**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 259**  
**SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 218**

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Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Misalucha, and members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism: the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) **supports** SCR259/SR218, which urges the state to explore and implement a visitor pledge of aloha to educate and explain the importance of Hawai'i's environment and culture and encourage increased respect and appreciation of the Hawaiian Islands.

Protecting Hawai'i's natural resources is one of HTA's strategic pillars, as outlined in [HTA's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan](#). What SCR259/SR218 proposes is in line with one of our guiding principles, which is to engage and encourage active education and management strategies of natural resources in areas frequented by visitors. Having a unified pledge of aloha, similar to the Palau Pledge, could be a vehicle that helps to get the message across to visitors, asking them to promise to act in an environmentally responsible way while in Hawai'i. We suggest this could be expanded further to include residents as well, and perhaps an enforcement and penalty component may be needed to ensure that those signing the pledge keep their promise. Having a pledge of aloha is a step in the right direction.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify in **support** of SCR259/SR218. I will be available to answer any questions.

**SCR-259**

Submitted on: 3/25/2021 4:44:05 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/29/2021 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
cheryl B.	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Comments

This is one of those put a bandage on a huge issue and smile because "look" we're doing something. Like the signs hanging on polls in Waikiki, these things don't matter to many of the visitors who come to our islands. For too many years, it has been the motto "come to Hawai'i where you can interpret aloha as the people do whatever you ask to make "your" experience the way you want it to be. THIS has to change. We can see it now with the current influx of visitors. Most just want things the way they envisioned them without any care about our islands and this pandemic. IF the legislature is truly interested in this resolution, then let's start with educating long before folks get here. Let people see by our laws and how we treat each other the expectations of how they should act. Though Singapore is a strong example, it would be a good place to strive.