



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

Testimony of
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Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, & Tourism
Governor's Message 831
April 11, 2022

Chair Wakai, and members of the Committee, mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association, the state's oldest and 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—strongly supports Ms. Kimberly Leimomi Agas' nomination to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority's Board of Directors. Ms. Agas is a leader in the local hospitality industry and a valued member of our association's board of directors, and we feel that she would make an outstanding addition to the HTA board.

Ms. Agas has decades of experience in the hospitality industry with stints at both locally based companies like Outrigger Hotels & Resorts as well as global entities such as Disney. In her current role as the general manager of Aulani, a Disney Resort & Spa, she oversees more than 1,000 rooms and more than 1,300 employees and has consistently shown a commitment to perpetuating the Hawaiian culture accurately and respectfully throughout the entire guest experience—an accomplishment that garnered Aulani HLTA's Pūlamahia Award which is awarded to organizations that have a proven track record of caring for and cherishing the Native Hawaiian Culture.

As a member of our association, Ms. Agas has been a strong and consistent supporter of many of our initiatives including our Generational Mentoring Program, through which she provides mentorship and training to students pursuing degrees in tourism industry management at the university level. Her continued participation in the program speaks to her commitment to not only the local tourism industry, but also to cultivating the next generation of Hawai'i's tourism industry leaders.

Ms. Agas' extensive hospitality experience, sensitivity to the Native Hawaiian culture, and geographic location on O'ahu's Leeward Coast would provide her with important insights that would be beneficial as a member of the HTA Board of Directors as the agency continues its efforts to strategically market and responsibly manage Hawai'i as a premier destination.

For these reasons, HLTA supports Governor's Message 831.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer this testimony.