

TESTIMONY ON GM 832  
Monday, April 11, 2022 at 3:00pm  
From  
Āina Aloha Economic Futures Initiative Hui  
In support of the nomination of  
Ms. Faylene Mahinapoepoe Paishon Duarte  
To the  
Hawai'i Tourism Authority

Aloha mai kākou e Chair Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair Bennette Misalucha and members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism:

Please accept this testimony in support of the nomination of Ms. Faylene Duarte to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, for a term to expire 06-30-2026.

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Āina Aloha Economic Futures Initiative Hui, a group of Native Hawaiian community members who gathered in Spring 2020 to envision a new economic future for Hawai'i based on guiding principles of:

- *Āina Aloha – We are of and from this 'āina that ultimately sustains us. We employ strategies for economic development that place our kuleana to steward precious, limited resources in a manner that ensures our long-term horizon as a viable island people and place.*
- *'Ōpū Ali'i: Our leaders understand that their privilege to lead is directly dependent on those they serve. From the most vulnerable to the most privileged, we seek to regenerate an abundance that provides for everyone. Decision makers understand and embrace their duty and accountability to Community. Our social, economic and government systems engage and respond to a collective voice in integrative ways to balance power and benefit.*
- *'Imi 'Oi Kelakela: We are driven by creativity and innovation, constantly challengin the status quo. We are mindful and observant of needs, trends and opportunities and seek new knowledge and development opportunities in ways that enhance our way of life without jeopardizing ou foundation of 'āina aloha, and*
- *Ho'okipa: We are inclusive and embrace the collective that will call Hawai'i home, grounded in the fundamental understanding that it is our kuleana to control and manage our resources in a way that allows us to fulfill our role as hosts here in our 'āina aloha.*

Ms. Faylene Duarte is a founding member and collaborative author of this hui and embraces these principles which were incorporated into the declaration, Huliau action agenda and decision-making rubric which were the product of this initiative. Specifically, the area of Ho'okipa, the initiative which envisioned a regenerative visitor economy, was supported and enhanced through the AAEF community-based process. The Hawai'i Tourism Authority and its board adopted and adapted these principles into their vision and strategic plan over the last few years. A commitment to adopting regenerative tourism processes which embrace Mālāma Hawai'i and responsible tourism for the State of Hawai'i is now a main focus of their effort.

The AAEF Hui is very honored to support the nomination of Ms. Faylene Mahinapoepoe Paishon Duarte to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. She is well informed and supportive of the direction that HTA has chosen to pursue and will add tremendous value and expertise to the Board to help the authority achieve their goal. Ms. Duarte will bring her skills, experience and knowledge as a small business owner, skilled facilitator and planner, community advocate, educator and Native Hawaiian practitioner to the board as well. She has served as founder and principal of Hawaiian language charter schools, co-founded a fishpond revitalization project in He'eia on O'ahu, currently owns three businesses which empower community on three islands, has facilitated community discussions on important topics like Pōhakuloa and Mauna Kea, supported Statewide resilient food systems planning, and is a member of a number of community and cultural organizations including Waimea Hawaiian Civic Club and a crew member of Na Kalai Wa'a Moku O Keawe's Hawaiian Traditional Voyaging Canoe, Makali'i. She is an important voice from the community and will be instrumental in assisting the Hawai'i Tourism Authority in achieving their vision and strategic goals.

We urge you to accept her nomination to serve on the Board of Directors for the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

Mahalo for allowing this opportunity to voice our support.

Me ka 'oia 'i'o,

Dr. Noe Noe Wong-Wilson  
On behalf of 'Āina Aloha Economic Futures Initiative Hui

April 8, 2022

Manu Boyd, Kumu Hula  
2101 Nu‘uanu Ave. #603  
Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96817  
808.551.0332

Hawai‘i State Senate  
Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism  
Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair

**Letter of Support for Faylene Mahinapoepoe Paishon Duarte**  
*Gubernatorial Nominee for the HTA Board of Directors*

Aloha mai –

I am honored to submit this letter of support for Faylene Paishon, Gubernatorial Nominee for the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority Board of Directors. Known widely by one of her inoa Hawai‘i (Hawaiian names) meaning full/round moon, Mahinapoepoe Duarte brings light, energy, wisdom, creativity and integrity to everything she does. Wahine mana means “woman with power and strength” (also known as “mana wahine”) and I’d wager that her name would be at the top of many community leaders’ and members’ lists of wahine mana who have deep respect for her. Her vitae/resume speaks for itself.

I have known Mahina for more than three decades, and for 25 of those years, she has been a haumāna (student) of mine in Hālau o ke ‘A‘ali‘i Kū Makani. I have watched her blossom and grow from her early years and am amazed at her remarkable blend of experiences as an educator, innovator, business owner, trouble shooter, performer and student of renown Master Navigator Pius “Mau” Piailug. Her Hawaiian demeanor, humility, talent and hospitable ways enable her to have deep conversations with anyone from anywhere. She embodies ho‘okipa (Hawaiian hospitality) and is also fluent in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) and is an expert in many aspects of Hawaiian culture and history.

Faylene Mahinapoepoe Paishon Duarte brings high-level integrity to all that she endeavors. The Hawai‘i Tourism Authority will be better, stronger, brighter and more effective with Mahina’s presence, leadership and aloha.

Mahalo nui loa,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Manu Boyd", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Manu Boyd, Kumu Hula

## **LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY**

Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

**GM832** – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, FAYLENE DUARTE, for a term to expire 06-30-2026.

Monday, April 11, 2022, 3:00 pm, Rm 224 & Videoconference

The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) offers testimony in **SUPPORT** of GM832, which nominates Faylene Mahina Duarte to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) for a four-year term.

Ms. Duarte's deep connection to the Native Hawaiian community, her cultural expertise, and her experience as a wāhine businessowner and administrator would add a critical voice to the HTA Board that can help guide the agency's shift to managing tourism's impacts on our community, local lifestyle, and natural and cultural resources.

Mahina is able to draw on her well-rounded cultural background: she is fluent in 'Ōlelo Hawai'i; trained in hula under Kumu Manu Boyd at Hālau O Ke 'A'ali'i Kū Makani; ran He'eia fishpond; and is an experienced voyager through Nā Kālai Wa'a. She is also a community leader who understands the economic challenges facing local and Native Hawaiian residents, and has demonstrated experience re-thinking how tourism can best serve Hawai'i through her work with the 'Āina Aloha Economic Futures initiative.

Accordingly, the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement urges the Committee to recommend that the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Faylene Mahina Duarte to the HTA Board. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

Respectfully,

J. Kūhiō Lewis, CEO  
Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement



April 10, 2022

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of Faylene Mahina Duarte to Serve on HTA Board of Directors

Aloha e Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Misalucha, and Members of the Hawaii State Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism,

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to support the nomination of Faylene Mahina Duarte to serve on the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. My name is Keoni Lee and I am Native Hawaiian lifelong resident of O'ahu.

I have had the privilege to work closely and partner with Mahina on a variety of efforts over many years. I have witnessed first-hand that Mahina is a proven solutions-oriented and collaborative leader that is strategic, community minded, resilient and values-driven. These skill sets will serve her well in her capacity to hold HTA accountable to its mission and charge to provide comprehensive management of tourism for the State of Hawai'i.

With the depth of expertise that she brings from education, community economic development, entrepreneurship and integrated ecosystems management, HTA will gain a strong and respected advocate that will assure accountability and transparency to the agency that will likely outlast her tenure. There is no question in my mind that Ms. Duarte has the competency to serve HTA and the people of Hawai'i well.

Thank you for your confirmation of Mahina to serve on the Board of Directors for the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

Me ka mahalo,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Keoni Lee", is written over the printed name.

Keoni Lee  
CEO, Hawai'i Investment Ready



10 April 2022

Hawaii State Senate  
Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

**SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR GM832**

**Confirmation of Faylene Mahina Duarte to the Hawaii Tourism Authority**

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Misalucha, and Members of the Hawaii State Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Oahu Economic Development Board, we strongly SUPPORT the nomination of Faylene Mahina Duarte as a member of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. As an OEDB Director, Mahina has helped to lead initiatives in blending culture, community, and commerce to achieve well-being and abundance outcomes for all the people of Hawai'i and beyond.

Mahina is a proven solutions-oriented and collaborative leader that is strategic, community minded, resilient, and values-driven. These skill sets will serve her well in her capacity to hold HTA accountable to its mission and charge to provide comprehensive management of tourism for the State of Hawai'i.

With the depth of expertise that Mahina brings from education, community economic development, entrepreneurship, and integrated ecosystems management, HTA will gain a strong and respected advocate that will assure accountability and transparency to the agency that will likely outlast her tenure. There is no question in my mind that Ms. Duarte has the competency to serve HTA and the people of Hawai'i well.

We strongly SUPPORT the appointment of Faylene Mahina Duarte as a member of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Me ke mahalo,

OAHU ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Jeffrey H. Overton, AICP, LEED-AP  
Chair, Board of Directors



**GM-832**

Submitted on: 4/10/2022 2:36:20 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2022 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lea Hong	Testifying for The Trust for Public Land	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Wakai and Committee Members:

The Trust for Public Land strongly supports the appointment of Faylene Mahina Paishon-Duarte to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority's Board of Directors.

Ms. Duarte has served on the Hawaiian Islands Advisory Board of the Trust for Public Land for several years. She has added tremendous value to the staff and to the board, providing insightful business approaches and strong Native Hawaiian cultural values and perspectives with aloha and grace. Mahina's commitment to Hawai'i and the future generationst come is without question. I give her my strongest and unaqualified support and believe she would contribute a much needed perspective to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Toursim Authority.

I apologize that I will not be able to attend the hearing in person or by zoom due to a scheduling conflict.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify -

Lea Hong, Hawaiian Islands State Director & Associate Vice President

The Trust for Public Land

10 April 2022

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

DATE: April 11, 2022

TIME: 3:00PM

PLACE: Conference Room 224

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Misalucha, and Members of the Hawaii State Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism,

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to support the nomination of Faylene Mahina Duarte to serve on the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. My name is Ka'iu Kimura, Executive Director of the 'Imiloa Astronomy Center in Hilo, Hawai'i.

I have had the privilege to work and partner with Mahina on a variety of efforts over the past 25 years. I know first hand that Mahina is a proven solutions-oriented and collaborative leader that is strategic, community minded, resilient and values-driven. These skill sets will serve her well in her capacity to hold HTA accountable to its mission and charge to provide comprehensive management of tourism for the State of Hawai'i.

With the depth of expertise that she brings from education, community economic development, entrepreneurship and integrated ecosystems management, HTA will gain a strong and respected advocate that will assure accountability and transparency to the agency that will likely outlast her tenure. There is no question in my mind that Ms. Duarte has the competency to serve HTA and the people of Hawai'i well.

I can think of no better person than Faylene Mahina Duarte to serve as director on the Hawai'i Tourism Authority board. I am confident that she will serve with effectiveness and with excellence that will be a vital asset to the board. Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity to provide a letter of support.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,

Ka'iu Kimura  
Hawai'i Island Community Member  
Executive Director, 'Imiloa Astronomy Center





Sunday, April 10, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in full support of the confirmation of Gubernatorial nominee Faylene Mahina Duarte to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, for a term to expire 06-30-2026.

By way of background, I am a resident of Kohala on Hawai'i Island. Professionally I am a broker at Hawai'i Life Real Estate and serve the brokerage statewide as Director of our Conservation and Legacy Lands initiative. Almost without exception, those who become new residents of Hawai'i begin as tourists. Hence the quality and nature of their experience as tourists directly impacts the extent to which newcomers become responsible members of our communities.

From this perspective, I applaud the current strategic direction of Hawai'i Tourism Authority and its adoption of the 'Āina Aloha Futures Declaration, which Ms. Duarte co-authored. Shifting tourism as an industry and economic driver of the economy to better balance the necessity we have as residents to embrace our kuleana and reciprocal relationship with place, with the tradition of ho'okipa which visitors have come to expect, will require sensitivity and leadership from the Board of HTA. Ms. Duarte has the knowledge, experience, and skills to make an important contribution as a member of the Board.

I first became aware of Ms. Duarte's extraordinary capabilities as an educator, administrator, facilitator, and strategic thinker when she took over as head of Kanu o ka 'Āina NCPCS in Waimea. I subsequently got to know her personally during her tenure on the Board of Directors of Kahilu Theatre, where I served on the development committee she chaired. Over the past two years of the pandemic we have worked together on a number of small projects connecting people and 'āina. I have watched her expertly facilitate some of the toughest conversations taking place in Hawai'i, giving and sharing leadership within a collective. She has been a tremendous teacher and resource for me personally on cultural practices and perspectives.

I honestly cannot think of a better choice for the Board of Directors of Hawai'i Tourism Authority at this important moment, and urge the members of this Committee to vote in favor of the appointment of Faylene Mahine Duarte.

Thank you for your consideration.

**Beth Thoma Robinson** Realtor (B)  
Director – Conservation and Legacy Lands  
808.443.4588 | Beth@HawaiiLife.com

Local Office: 69-201 Waikoloa Beach Drive 2F14, Waikoloa HI 96738  
FOUNDING MEMBER OF [FORBES GLOBAL PROPERTIES](#)





April 9, 2022

Dear HTA Board of Directors Selection Committee,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for Faylene Mahina Duarte as a member of the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. I had the pleasure of first meeting Faylene as a wahine entrepreneur and community leader over a decade ago. I am honored to now call her a mentor and collaborator.

As the co-founder of Waiwai Collective, Faylene is a visionary who is committed to the advancement of our community and culture in Hawai'i. Over the past five years I have worked with her more closely and witnessed the transformational change she has helped to navigate here in Hawai'i during a crucial time for our islands and world. Throughout the pandemic, Faylene has demonstrated tireless efforts and exhibited leadership within her organizations and in Hawai'i at large.

After serving on the O'ahu DMAP steering committee it has become more clear than ever what kind of individuals we need at the helm of our future. In order for us to successfully rebuild a more sustainable, inclusive and welcoming tourist industry, the HTA Board of Directors must have the trust and respect of our community at large. Through Faylene's work both in our education system and as an entrepreneur she has earned the trust and understanding of our people that is necessary.

Faylene's connection to and respect for our islands balanced by her mana'o (knowledge) and passion about how to welcome and educate visitors make her an ideal candidate to steer us into a future that can be enjoyed by all. During her time as an active co-founder and board member at Pae Pae O He'eia I witnessed her success in creating programming that focused on inclusion and collaboration between residents and visitors. This kind of leadership and innovation is exactly what we need as we rebuild tourism in Hawai'i.

In March 2020, Hawai'i struggled to navigate the onset of quarantines, job losses, and increased food insecurity. We were unsure how best to help the most vulnerable members of our communities, such as homebound kupuna, and children and adults experiencing poverty. At a time when people were concerned with their own health and safety, Faylene immediately concerned herself with how to use her experience, connections, industry skills, and business acumen to be of service to others. Faylene worked around the clock to help strategize how best to move forward as an island people and not allow anyone to fall through the cracks. Through her unique, integrated approach, she strengthened the fabric of our community and Hawai'i's small businesses and entrepreneurs. Faylene brought forth incredible organizational and big-picture problem-solving skills and applied them toward this crisis. Her ability to navigate



ever-changing circumstances with such positive influence rooted in Aloha 'Āina is admirable. She has skills, cultural knowledge, capacities and values that all executives should aspire to.

While I have a special admiration for Faylene's community-service contributions through Waiwai Collective and her work in Hawaiian language and education, in all of her endeavors, Faylene represents the best of what businesses in Hawai'i can aspire to be. Honesty, forward thinking and rooted in serving with aloha. While many businesses in Hawai'i focus on culture, events, campaigns, and communications for profit, few have Faylene's values-based and visionary sense of how to create space to bring people together, build on their collective strengths, celebrate and advance our host culture, elevate immigrants and Pacific Islanders, and make all people she interacts with feel valued.

Faylene's work with both Waiwai Collective and in our education system has created pathways to not only assist others in exceeding their goals, but also forge long lasting connections that support our community as a whole. Emerging leaders like Faylene are key to understanding, celebrating, and supporting the resiliency of Hawai'i and our visitor industry. It is essential to have dedicated leaders like her who can stay true to the philosophy of her work while creating a model for success that elevates others. I am inspired by Faylene's work to strengthen Hawai'i's economic vibrancy, community well-being, and cultural values for generations to come.

Faylene's experience as a small business owner, a non-profit executive, an educator, a cultural practitioner, a voyager, and a mother make her an ideal candidate on the Hawai'i Tourism Authority board. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at the information below.

Sincerely,

Amanda Corby Noguchi  
**Under My Umbrella Inc | Chef Hui**  
**808.783.1407**  
**[amanda@undermyumbrella.com](mailto:amanda@undermyumbrella.com)**

10 April 2022

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



DATE: April 11, 2022

TIME: 3:00PM

PLACE: Conference Room 224

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Misalucha, and Members of the Hawaii State Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism,

I am writing full support of the nomination of Faylene Mahina Duarte to serve on the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

I have had the privilege of working with Mahina for many years. Mahina cares deeply for Hawai'i and all her diverse initiatives have aloha 'āina in common. She has developed her skills for building community, advocacy and leadership across the fields of education, community economic development, entrepreneurship and integrated ecosystems management. She will bring important perspectives that complement the current board.

Mahina will contribute greatly to seeing HTA's vision realized and will hold herself accountable to the important responsibilities carried by each board of director. Her strong relationships across many communities along with her competencies and compassion will enable her to serve HTA, Hawai'i and the people of Hawai'i extraordinarily well.

Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity to provide a letter of support.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Ka'uhane Lupenui



UNIVERSITY  
of HAWAII®  
MĀNOA

College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management

**LATE**

Dr. Mehana Blaich Vaughan  
Assistant Professor of Sustainable Watershed and Coastal Management  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa  
Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Management,  
College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources,  
1910 East-West Road, Sherman 101  
Honolulu, HI 96822

April 7, 2022

Aloha mai kākou,

I am writing in strong support of Mahina Paishon-Duarte's application to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority Board. I have known Mahina for over 20 years through our careers in Hawaiian education and community development. I have had the good fortune to interact with Mahina in diverse settings from Paepae o He'eia fishpond, to Stanford University's First Nation's Futures Program, to workshops and gatherings of Hawaiian leaders, to meetings with dignitaries from other nations including visits to government offices of the Ngai Tahu tribe, to outdoor education experiences with preschool to high school students, to having her speak to graduate students in my university classes, to dancing together in hālau hula. Mahina would be an excellent addition to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority board for many reasons, three of which I highlight here.

First, Mahina is exceptionally intelligent and ever sourcing information from new places to help Hawai'i. At Paepae o He'eia, she implemented new technologies to monitor and restore fishpond health. She has studied business and education systems from around the globe, and embraces innovative ways to adapt and build sustainable systems in Hawai'i. Mahina never stops learning. Her primary interest has long been the economic sustainability of Hawai'i; whether building food systems, helping to guide visioning for Hawai'i's economic future post pandemic, creating gathering places and authentic cultural experiences, or incubating new Native Hawaiian businesses. Mahina not only studies - but brings people together to create – foundational elements of regenerative economies. Her expertise would be integral in helping HTA to make its growing emphasis on sustainable, culturally grounded and regenerative tourism, not just words but, reality.

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College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management

Second, Mahina is a clear communicator, capable of working with, understanding and teaching diverse audiences and colleagues. She is comfortable at both community and policy levels. Her work is rooted in strong values and a clear sense of kuleana. Still, she builds her opinions and decisions collaboratively, through sourcing solid information, and listening to others. She genuinely seeks to understand differing opinions. While others shy away from conflict, Mahina is uniquely able to ask tough questions in proactive ways and to work for solutions. Mahina is a problem solver at heart, and has instilled this same skill in her many students. Rather than accept the status quo, she pushes everyone she interacts with to interrogate and improve current realities with future generations in mind.

Finally, Mahina is truly a leader of our people. Her leadership gifts lie in her wisdom, easy laughter, hard work and listening. Mahina serves always; whether making food, caring for kūpuna, harmonizing with her powerful alto voice and exquisite guitar in times of need; facilitating workshops or serving as an M.C. for critical events from debates, to forums to lū'au. She is broadly respected throughout the Hawaiian community and has never been afraid to step up to convey controversial information, help everyone to be understood, or serve as a bridge. People listen to Mahina because she is humble, thoughtful, and chooses her words carefully. She has learned from the most amazing kumu: Papa Mau Pialug, Manu Boyd, Anakala Eddie Ka'anana, and Aunty Pua Kanaka'ole to name just a few. She embodies the teachings of all of her teachers and her kūpuna with grace, ever looking to the future.

Hawai'i Tourism Authority would be blessed to have Mahina among your leadership at this pivotal time in finding balance for tourism in Hawai'i. I could not recommend her more highly for this position. Please feel free to contact me you have further questions or I can assist in anyway.

'O au iho no me ka ha'aha'a,

Dr. Mehana Blaich Vaughan

Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management,

UH Sea Grant College Program & Hui 'Āina Momona

Phone: (808) 652-3608  
mehana@hawaii.edu

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TESTIMONY OF NICOLE A. VELASCO, PRIVATE CITIZEN  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM  
THE THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2022

Monday, April 11, 2022  
1:00 P.M., Room 224/Videoconference  
Hawai'i State Capitol



Testimony on GM 832, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, FAYLENE DUARTE

Dear Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Misalucha, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nicole A. Velasco, private citizen, writing in **STRONG SUPPORT** of GM 832 that offers Faylene Mahinapoepoe Paishon-Duarte as the gubernatorial nominee for the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA).

I have had the honor of being both a supporter and colleague working alongside Mahina on a handful of projects including recent facilitation support for her community discussions regarding Pōhakuloa, and systems change work with the Hawai'i Leadership Forum. My testimony is that of a friend, colleague, *and* student given the depth of knowledge and wisdom that Mahina has imparted upon me throughout the years. As a natural convener with futurist capabilities, Mahina co-creates the conditions required for inclusive, meaningful discussions that prioritize and weave together our past and present as we navigate uncharted waters towards a shared future.

Given its mission, HTA requires a board of directors capable of comprehensive, strategic management of Hawai'i tourism that considers cultural preservation, economic goals, preservation of natural resources, our community desires, and visitor industry needs. As one of the founding members and authors of 'Āina Aloha Economic Futures (AAEF), Mahina is aligned in mind, body, and spirit with this refreshed set of values and standards poised to ensure the longevity and health of our island home for kama'āina and malihini alike. As evidenced by her background in education, Mahina has already educated generations of students who understand that our indigenous wisdom is in fact the key to a truly prosperous future. We will do well to prepare our institutions like HTA for the community changes that are already here.

A quick look at Mahina's resume will illustrate her rich, depth of knowledge and many deserving accolades. What is left off the page are the names of countless individuals of whom Mahina has uplifted, inspired, and stewarded throughout our community—the very voices she will represent on the board of HTA. With that, I humbly ask you to please confirm this appointment of Faylene Mahinapoepoe Paishon-Duarte to the HTA board. Her seat will not be for one, but for the many.

Mahalo,  
Nicole A. Velasco

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 832  
NOMINATION OF FAYLENE MAHINA PAISHON DUARTE  
TO THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY

**LATE**

HAWAII STATE SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TECHNOLOGY  
MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2022  
3:00 PM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Misalucha, and Members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Technology.

My name is D. Noelani Kalipi. I am writing to express my strong support for the nomination of Faylene Mahinapoepoe Paishon Duarte to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA). She is an ideal candidate and will bring tremendous value to this Board. She is well-versed in the roles and responsibilities of Board Members and will be an incredible asset to the HTA board.

Ms. Duarte is a cultural practitioner and systems thinker who can see the big picture while also focusing on operational details needed for systems to function effectively, especially during transitions. Her broad experience in education, project development, strategic planning, community engagement, economic development, marketing, and communications, makes her an ideal resource for the Board of Directors. She can walk in many worlds and has a natural curiosity to learn from others. She is an authentic communicator whose presence, approach, questions, and statements transform mindsets, inspiring collaboration, and inclusivity among diverse stakeholders.

There is no question that Ms. Duarte will be an asset to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Mahalo, in advance, for your consideration of this testimony.

D. Noelani Kalipi



**LATE**

**GM-832**

Submitted on: 4/10/2022 10:25:56 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2022 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rachael Wong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Misalucha, and Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism members:

I am writing as an individual citizen and in **strong support** of the confirmation of Faylene Duarte to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) Board of Directors. I have been fortunate to work with Ms. Duarte (who goes by Mahina) over the last several years and in different capacities and to count her as a friend.

During this time of local and worldwide recalibration from the pandemic, it is vitally important that HTA's board is able to see pathways for generative tourism grounded in its four intertwined pillars of natural resources, Hawaiian culture, community, and brand marketing. Ms. Duarte brings experience and expertise in these four areas through her academic training, professional endeavors, and cultural practices. Ms. Duarte's presence and clarity in meetings, strategic planning, and communications are assets to the organizations and initiatives in which she is involved. Her willingness to serve in this capacity will enhance and amplify HTA, as well.

Thank you in advance for your serious consideration of Ms. Duarte for the HTA Board of Directors. Like many, I strongly support her confirmation.

Sincerely,  
Rachael Wong



**LATE**

**Board Members**

*President*  
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Managing Partner,  
Commercial & Business Lending

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Hawai'i Investment Ready

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Marcus Kawatachi  
Deputy Director,  
Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission

Trina Orimoto  
Clinical & Research Psychologist

Derrick Kiyabu  
Hawai'i Island Resident

Philip Garboden  
Assistant Professor,  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

**HACBED Staff**

Brent N. Kakesako  
*Executive Director*

Merri Keli'ikuli  
*Office Manager & Program Support*

Corin Thornberg  
*Community-Based Economic Development Project Associate*

Date: April 11, 2022  
To: Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair, Senator Bennette E. Misalucha, Vice-Chair, and members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism  
From: Brent Kakesako, Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED)  
Re: Support for GM 832

Aloha e Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Misalucha, and Members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism,

Mahalo for the opportunity to express my support for the nomination of Faylene Mahina Duarte to serve on the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA). My name is Brent Kakesako, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED).

I have had the privilege to work and partner with Ms. Duarte on a variety of efforts over the past 6 years and have felt how she is driven by her grounding in stewarding this place -- Hawai'i. Ms. Duarte works to connect with individuals from a variety of backgrounds and holds space for what can be difficult conversations to find opportunities to move forward together. She is rooted in her cultural practices, a deep listener, skilled facilitator, thoughtful advocate, and creative thinker -- all of which will be critical in her role as a Board Member for HTA and a huge asset for HTA and its partners.

The timing for HTA to evolve and adapt to needs in the community is now and Ms. Duarte will bring a depth of expertise, credibility, and a work ethic that will help HTA to make that needed transition towards a regenerative approach to tourism. I know Ms. Duarte will not shy away from asking the tough questions to hold HTA accountable in a way that is grounded in care for this place and the people who call it home. I subsequently express my support of GM 823 and Ms. Duarte to serve on the Board of Directors of the HTA.

Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity to provide a letter of support.

Brent N. Kakesako  
Executive Director  
Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development

**LATE**



‘Apelila 11, 2022

Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair

Senator Bennette E. Misalucha, Vice Chair

DATE: April 11, 2022

TIME: 3:00PM

PLACE: Conference Room 224

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Misalucha, and Members of the Hawai‘i State Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism,

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to support the nomination of Faylene Mahinapoeopoe Duarte to serve on the Board of Directors of the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority. My name is Hailama VKK Farden, Pelekikena (President) of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs.

I humbly and happily support her nomination to HTA’s Board of Directors. I have known Mahina for 30 years since she was a haumāna in my Hawaiian language class at Kamehameha. Even then, her drive for excellence and love for our language and culture was evident through her leadership in Kamehameha’s Committee on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the overthrow the Hawaiian Kingdom. Mahaina, a junior at the time was one of the student leaders planning the school-wide event. She later served her class as its women’s director for the annual song contest. Mahina has consistently held to her high standard of po‘okela through her work as a Po‘okula, co-owner of Waiwai Collective; and I strongly feel that her Hawaiian cultural leadership attributes will be an essential complimentary asset to the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority. She comes from a long line of way finders, musicians and composers; and her home and familial experiences will only compliment her own personal practices and knowledge that would definitely enhance the work and mission of HTA.

In her capacity as a member of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, Mahina has held dual memberships in the Prince Kūhiō Hawaiian Civic Club and the Waimea Hawaiian Civic Club. She served the Association as its Education Chair from 2019 – 2020 and as the Subcommittee chair on Tourism (a committee established following the 2020 ‘Āina Aloha Economic Futures declaration work in which Mahina played a significant leadership role). and charge to provide comprehensive management of tourism for the State of Hawai‘i.

Considering the depth of knowledge and experience in which Kumu Mahina Paishon Duarte is engaged; as the President of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, I whole-heartedly support

the nomination of Faylene Mahinapoepoe (Paishon) Duarte to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

Me Ke Aloha!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hailama V.K.K. Farden". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Hailama V.K.K. Farden, President  
The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs



**LATE**

April 8, 2022

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism  
Chair, Glenn Wakai  
Vice-Chair Bennette Misalucha  
Regarding GM 832**

Dear Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Misalucha and Committee members,

I write on behalf of my colleague and friend, Mahina Paishon Duarte. Mahina and I currently serve together on the Board of Directors of the [O`ahu Economic Development Board](#). She brings much knowledge and expertise to this setting, particularly helping to redefine what economic development in Hawai'i looks like when adhering to the values she upholds and lists on the HTA Questionnaire - those of 'Āina Aloha, 'Ōpū Ali'i and Ho'okipa. OEDB's work is uplifted by her contributions.

While I have known Mahina for nearly five years, I have known *of* her and admired her from afar for many more. In my observation, she is one of the most savvy, multi-talented, professional businesswomen I know, having worked in many different sectors during her diverse career and bringing so much knowledge and experience to the fore. She sits authentically in both deep, grassroots community, as well as in corporate board rooms, and acts as a translator, bridger and connector of sorts of these sometimes disparate worlds. There are few in our community who do this well, in my humble opinion. She is one of them.

Mahina currently finds herself working as an innovative and thoughtful space holder and place maker, as she creates healing co-working and co-convening spaces that also allow people to better understand and appreciate the host culture in accessible, inclusive ways. Her current spaces of the Wai Wai Collective completely mirror and embody the goals of HTA in creating a sustainable model for those wanting to experience Hawai'i that also honors the host culture.

In my work with Mahina in various community projects, I always find her to be tremendously thoughtful, respectful of all perspectives, and also facilitative and action and results oriented. This is such a refreshing approach – one of `olu`olu, practicing gentleness but with sturdiness and strength. When I think of the work ahead for the Hawaii Tourism Authority, which, as I understand it, seeks to redefine its purpose in the wake of the pandemic and in ensuring a sustainable future for Hawai'i, it makes perfect sense to me that community leaders like Mahina be involved.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this strong recommendation for Mahina Paishon Duarte for the Hawaii Tourism Authority Board. She would be a tremendous addition to any organization, but is perfectly matched to this endeavor. I urge your confirmation of her appointment.

Sincerely,  
Lisa Maruyama  
President and CEO