



No. 1 Capitol District Building  
250 South Hotel Street  
Second Floor  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Governor  
Josh Green, M.D.

Comptroller  
Keith A. Regan

Chairperson  
Konrad Ng

Commissioners  
Susan Browne  
Nalani Brun  
Sean Connelly  
Randall Fujiki  
Jill Kuramoto  
Michael Marshall  
Ronald Michioka  
Janet Sato

Ex-Officio  
Chris Lee  
Adrian Tam

Executive Director  
Karen A. Ewald

Telephone  
808.586.0300

Fax  
808.586.0308

Website  
sfca.hawaii.gov

**TESTIMONY OF  
THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM  
February 1, 2024 Conference Room 423 & Videoconference at 10:30AM  
H.B. 2735  
RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY**

Chair Quinlan and members of the Committee, I am Karen Ewald, Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), and we are grateful for the opportunity to testify with **COMMENTS** on H.B.2735.

HB2735 transfers all appropriations, records, equipment, machines, files, supplies, contracts, books, papers, documents, maps, and other personal property heretofore made, used, acquired, or held by the Hawaii tourism authority relating to awarding and administering cultural grants that perpetuate the uniqueness of the native Hawaiian culture and community to the state foundation on culture and the arts.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts has a [strategic objective](#) to honor and support Native Hawaiian culture, arts, artists, and cultural practitioners. We value the shared responsibility to perpetuate the Native Hawaiian culture and the arts. One way the SFCA accomplishes this objective is through administering grants. SFCA granting includes culture grants to organizations and individuals, administering Federal relief grants, legislative grants in aid and legislative line items. The SFCA's granting process is outlined in our establishing legislation under [Chapter 9 Part II. Foundation Grant Program sections 9-11 to 9-18](#).

Grant contracts funded by General, Federal and Special funds are currently administered and monitored by two positions. Should additional granting responsibilities and funding be transferred to SFCA, additional staff would be necessary to administer and monitor the grants.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.



TESTIMONY OF DANIEL NĀHO'OPI'I  
INTERIM PRESIDENT & CEO, HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY  
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM  
Thursday, February 1, 2024 10:30 a.m.  
In consideration of  
**HB 2735**  
**RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY**

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) offers the following comments on HB2735 for your consideration. HTA understands the intent of this measure to change the structure of HTA to be lead by a Chief Tourism Officer reporting to the Governor, replacing the HTA board with a nine-member steering committee, and transfer certain community programs to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA).

A study is in progress to examine various models of tourism governance so that HTA may return to the Legislature with recommendations for the future of Hawai'i's tourism governance, including recommendations on funding mechanisms and organizational structure. A report is expected this summer. We have also incorporated feedback received from the Legislature in previous sessions into our operations and organization.

HTA's community funding programs – Community Enrichment, Kahu 'Āina, Kūkulu Ola, the Resort Area Hawaiian Culture Initiative, and Signature Events – are partnerships with organizations to execute programs with a tourism nexus, a form of community-based tourism product development with careful oversight by HTA staff and Kilohana on HTA's behalf. Should the responsibility for one or more of these programs be transferred to SFCA, we recommend continued HTA involvement to assist SFCA through the transition of the program and continue to advise on visitor industry matters.

On behalf of our dedicated volunteer board members and our hard-working staff, HTA appreciates the opportunity to offer these comments on this measure.

**HB-2735**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 12:39:21 PM

Testimony for TOU on 2/1/2024 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lu Ann Mahiki Lankford-Faborito	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**STRONG** opposition. The current group has worked hard to get where we are and changing and renaming does not help in the efforts already created and secured with staff, programs, review processes as we know now and have become familiar.

**HB-2735**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 12:45:16 PM

Testimony for TOU on 2/1/2024 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kenneth Faborito	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose as the current group has worked hard to keep grantees informed and trained to the award process. Keep this group as is.