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**TESTIMONY OF
THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, CULTURE AND THE ARTS
February 4, 2022, Conference Room 225 & Videoconference at 3:00PM
S.B. 3290**

RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Chair Taniguchi and members of the Committee, I am Jonathan Johnson, Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), and we are grateful for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of S.B. 3290.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, established in Chapter 9, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), includes responsibility for recognizing individual artists for artistic excellence through an individual artist fellowships program.

As a community, it is important that we recognize and celebrate how the artistic endeavors of individuals contribute to Hawaii's rich cultural landscape and economic health of the State. Public recognition through programs such as the Individual Artist Fellowship are a reminder of the need to seek out creative solutions to our society's most complex issues.

Background on SFCA Fellowships:

From 1995 to 2008, SFCA provided fellowships in the areas of visual and performing arts. These fellowships provided for recognition and financial support for individual artists, celebrating Hawaii's creativity.

In 2010, the Individual Artist Fellowship Coordinator position was abolished and the general fund budget of SFCA was reduced, eliminating the budget to recognize individual artists of Hawai'i.

In 2019 the State Legislature appropriated general funds to SFCA for artist fellowships and SFCA recognized twelve teaching artists for artistic excellence and excellence in their teaching artistry.

SFCA was the recipient of American Rescue Plan Act funds through the National Endowment for the Arts in Fiscal Year 2022. A portion of the recovery funds was awarded to individual artists and cultural practitioners statewide. Awarded grantees will carry out a project with community impact in FY2022.

When we invest in our cultural economy, we invest in the economic stability of Hawai'i. Consistent appropriation of general funds from the legislature such as S.B. 3290 proposes in support of the creative arts community will benefit the State's overall economy.

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