



TESTIMONY OF DANIEL NĀHO'OPI'I  
INTERIM PRESIDENT & CEO, HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY  
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM  
Tuesday, March 12, 2024 10:30 a.m.  
In consideration of  
**SB 2659 SD 1**  
**RELATING TO REGENERATIVE TOURISM**

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

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) supports SB2659 SD1, to incorporate a regenerative tourism framework into the State Planning Act by expanding objectives and policies for the visitor industry. The ethic of mālama – care and stewardship – is the core of our visitor education and destination management efforts.

We support the intent of SB2659 SD1 and stand ready to work with our colleagues at the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to update the state Tourism Functional Plan to reflect the principles embraced in HTA's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, the Aloha+ Challenge and Sustainable Development Goals committed to in that plan, our board's adoption of the 'Āina Aloha Economic Futures Declaration, as well as the hard work of our communities in generating the Destination Management Action Plans, a grassroots articulation of regenerative principles.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support SB2659 SD1.



**SB2659 SD1**  
RELATING TO REGENERATIVE TOURISM  
House Committee on Tourism

March 12, 2024

10:30 a.m.

Conference Room 423

---

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS SB2659 SD1**, which would incorporate a regenerative framework into the State Planning Act by expanding objectives and policies for the visitor industry and requires an update to the State Tourism Functional Plan. This measure champions regenerative tourism and seeks to revolutionize Hawai‘i’s visitor industry by taking a significant step towards creating a more sustainable, culturally sensitive, and equitable tourism sector that benefits both Hawai‘i’s people and visitors alike. Moreover, this legislation holds immense potential to not only transform our tourism sector but also to uplift and empower the Native Hawaiian community.

At its core, regenerative tourism embodies principles of sustainability, cultural sensitivity, and community engagement. By committing to building capacity and offering career opportunities within the visitor industry, we have the opportunity to increase the representation of Hawai‘i’s people, particularly those from the Native Hawaiian community, in management and leadership positions. This not only fosters economic empowerment but also ensures that decisions are made with a deep understanding of and respect for local culture and values. The concept of regenerative tourism goes beyond mere sustainability; it seeks to actively restore and enhance the natural and cultural resources of a destination while fostering meaningful connections between visitors and local communities. By incorporating regenerative tourism principles into Hawai‘i’s visitor industry, we have an opportunity to transform tourism into a force for positive change, promoting environmental stewardship, cultural integrity, and economic prosperity.

The formation of community partnerships proposed in this measure to protect cultural and natural resources is vital for preserving Native Hawaiian cultural integrity and strengthening the relationship between the people and the land. By engaging in collaborative efforts that prioritize the care of the land and respect kapu (culturally grounded prohibitions of practices or actions) and environmentally sensitive contexts, we can ensure that Hawai‘i’s unique cultural heritage and ecological treasures are safeguarded for generations to come. Policies that acknowledge and protect Native Hawaiian cultural intellectual property, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions that contribute to Hawai‘i’s economy help to preserve Hawai‘i’s unique cultural and ecological heritage. While it is imperative that we respect and honor the



**SB2659 SD1**  
RELATING TO REGENERATIVE TOURISM  
House Committee on Tourism

---

indigenous heritage of our islands this measure recognizes that we must also support innovative financial policies and data collection and analysis to incentivize and facilitate a shift towards a regenerative visitor industry. Strengthening the relationships between the place and its people is essential for creating authentic and meaningful experiences for both residents and visitors and provides an economic benefit as well.<sup>1</sup>

Implementing innovative financial policies and data collection and analysis to incentivize a shift towards a regenerative visitor industry is crucial for reducing the ecological footprint of tourism. Policies aimed at decreasing impacts on beaches, reefs, and ocean life, as well as minimizing the negative effects of vacation accommodation rentals, bed and breakfast operations, and rental cars, are essential for sustaining and improving the quality of life for Hawaii's people.

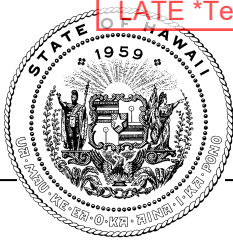
Moreover, this legislation benefits the Native Hawaiian community by prioritizing cultural integrity, community engagement, and environmental stewardship. This bill not only supports the economic prosperity of Hawai'i but also ensures that the Native Hawaiian community is respected, honored, and included in the tourism industry's decision-making processes.

OHA urges this committee to **PASS SB2659 SD1** thereby incorporating a regenerative framework into the State Planning Act by expanding objectives and policies for the visitor industry and updating the State Tourism Functional Plan. By embracing regenerative principles, we can create a tourism industry that uplifts our communities, benefits our economy, and preserves our natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

Mahalo nui for your attention to this critical matter and for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

---

<sup>1</sup> US Department of Interior, Tourism and Economic Growth <https://www.doi.gov/itap/tourism-and-economic-growth> (last accessed 021124)



LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**OFFICE OF PLANNING**  
**& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR

**MARY ALICE EVANS**  
INTERIM DIRECTOR

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

Telephone: (808) 587-2846  
Fax: (808) 587-2824  
Web: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/>

Statement of  
**MARY ALICE EVANS, Interim Director**

before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM**

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

10:30 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 423

in consideration of  
**SENATE BILL 2659, SD 1**  
**RELATING TO REGENERATIVE TOURISM**

Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Members of the Committee on Tourism:

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **supports** S.B. 2659, SD 1 which amends Chapter 226, HRS, the Hawai'i State Planning Act, by adding to Section 226-8, Objectives and Policies for the Economy – Visitor Industry, subsection (b)(5) and new subsections (b) (9) – (18) to incorporate a regenerative framework for the visitor industry.

SB 2659, SD 1 requires an update to the State Tourism Functional Plan in coordination with the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development be submitted to the 2025 Regular Session of the Legislature.

OPSD supports this measure and offers its cooperation to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), pursuant to §§ 226-55 and -56, HRS. The OPSD notes that the recent Destination Management Action Plan (DMAP) process and on-going implementation actions being supported by the HTA staff and community investments are consistent with this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**SB-2659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2024 10:07:40 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/12/2024 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
MELYNDA DANT	Fair Wind Cruises	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill. It is important for the state and industry to be on the same page as we move towards becoming increasingly environmentally sensitive.



# MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 423  
Tuesday, March 12, 2024 AT 10:30 A.M.

To The Honorable Sean Quinlan, Chair  
The Honorable Natalia Hussey-Burdick, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Tourism

## SUPPORT SB2659 SD1 RELATING TO REGENERATIVE TOURISM

The Maui Chamber of Commerce would like to offer testimony in **SUPPORT of SB2659 SD1**.

The Maui Chamber of Commerce agrees with incorporating a regenerative framework into the State Planning Act by expanding objectives and policies for the visitor industry. These objectives will allow the State Tourism Functional Plan to define the ways to move the visitor industry forward in incorporating regenerative tourism.

I participated in the Destination Management Action Plan for Maui and appreciate that this bill incorporates many elements from those discussions on regenerative tourism into the State Planning Act.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT SB2659 SD1**.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap  
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.