

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

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State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

FEBRUARY 2, 2023
10:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 423

HOUSE BILL NO. 592
RELATING TO AQUACULTURE

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 592. The bill modifies the existing plant and animal declaration form to also require in-bound travelers to the State to acknowledge state laws, federal laws, and individual responsibility to protect the environment and agriculture of the State. Requires all other documents travelers are required to complete to enter the State, except documents only relating to a dangerous communicable disease, to include an environmental and agricultural affirmation. The Department supports this bill.

The Department understands that the declaration form is often the first opportunity to impress upon visitors what it takes to protect Hawaii's unique environments, resources, agricultural industries, and overall way of life. Adding additional language to the already mandatory declaration form will bolster this. The Department suggests that additional language be added for consistency. Currently, HRS 150A-5(2)(A) allows for one adult member of a family to complete the declaration for the entire family. The Department suggests that similar language allowing one adult



member of a family to attest for their entire family be included in the proposed changes to HRS 150A-5(3) to cover all travelers entering the State.

The Department supports this measure, provided it does not impact the Department's priorities identified in the Executive Budget request. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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Kūlāhine
Governor

John De Fries
President and Chief Executive Officer

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

Statement of
JOHN DE FRIES
Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

February 2, 2023
10:00 a.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 423 & Videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL NO. 592
RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL AND AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and members of the Committee on Tourism,

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) appreciates the opportunity to offer comments on HB592, which would modify the existing declaration form for inbound travelers to ensure travelers acknowledge state laws, federal laws, and individual responsibility to protect the environment and agriculture of the State.

Hawai'i's environment is a treasure, and it is our collective kuleana to protect it for the generations to come. The intent of HB592 is in alignment with HTA's work to educate visitors about appropriate and inappropriate behaviors while in Hawai'i, including compliance with laws and local customs. The ethic of mālama – care and stewardship – is the core of those efforts.

Current avenues used to communicate these educational messages include targeted digital advertisements, videos on in-flight entertainment systems, physical signage at Hawai'i airports, and partnerships with the visitor industry to further the reach of these messages.

The existing mandatory plant and animal declaration form is an important tool used by the Department of Agriculture in their efforts to protect Hawai'i's biosecurity and defend against threats posed by invasive species. As such, we defer to DOA's position on this matter.

Should this measure be adopted, HTA stands ready to assist with implementation, including the development of language, utilizing our digital platforms like GoHawaii.com, and assisting with outreach to airlines and other visitor industry partners.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide these comments on HB592.



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

Testimony of
Mufi Hannemann
President & CEO
Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association

House Committee on Tourism
House Bill 592
February 2, 2023

Chair Quinlan, 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—supports House Bill 592 as it would reinforce our efforts to bring mindful, respectful travelers to our state.

HLTA has long advocated for quality tourism rather than quantity tourism. We believe that this approach brings high-quality visitors to our state who will not only stay in our hotels, eat at local restaurants, and support local businesses, but who will also be respectful of our home, our people, and our culture.

HLTA supports this measure as it will further educate visitors to Hawai'i, require them to acknowledge what they have learned, and put the onus of responsibility on each individual. In essence, travelers will be made aware of our laws, policies, and practices and be asked to commit to adhering to them before they even exit the aircraft.

HLTA supports House Bill 592.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer these comments.