



**HAWAII**

STATE FOUNDATION on  
CULTURE and the ARTS

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**TESTIMONY OF  
THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
February 22, 2023 Conference Room 222 & Videoconference at 9:30AM  
S.B. 1504  
RELATING TO A MODERN HAWAII HISTORY MUSEUM**

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Committee, the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), is pleased to offer testimony in **SUPPORT** of S.B.1504. S.B.1504 establishes a museum of modern Hawaii history. Establishes a task force to prepare the plans, specifications, and designs for the construction of the museum of modern Hawaii history.

The SFCA supports the concept to convene a Task Force to prepare the plans, specifications, and designs for the construction of the museum of modern Hawaii history. The SFCA supports the recommendation to form an Advisory Committee where members may include, but not be limited to, those identified in SB1504.

Museums in society have played an integral role in the preservation of history and place through exhibitions and collections care. However, as communities are increasingly engaged through evolving forms of media and are more reactive to globalization, the responsibilities of museums have the opportunity to expand.

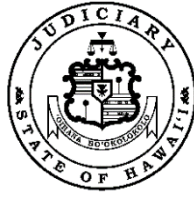
The SFCA views this opportunity for a museum of modern Hawaii history to be more than an institution with exhibits that explore the significant role Hawaii has played contributing to national and global events and progress. The museum can be developed as a gathering space, which would provide an active civic center of dialogue. The space can be an education center with debate and civil discourse, and idea-sharing and creative output to not only honor past accomplishments of the State of Hawaii, but to shape its future efforts for the people who reside there.

The National Constitution Center and the National Center for Civil and Human Rights provide good examples of how institutions can work to activate its community in social interaction and civic engagement:

<https://constitutioncenter.org/>

<https://www.civilandhumanrights.org/>

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



*The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i*

**Testimony to the Thirty-Second Legislature, 2023 Regular Session**

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 22, 2023, 9:30 a.m.  
State Capitol  
Conference Room 211 and Videoconference

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY**

by

by: Matt Mattice, Executive Director  
King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center

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**Bill No. and Title:** Senate No. 1504, S.D. 1, Relating to A Modern Hawai'i History Museum.

**Purpose:** Establishes a museum of modern Hawai'i history. Establishes a task force to prepare the plans, specifications, and designs for the construction of the museum of modern Hawai'i history. Appropriates funds.

**Judiciary's Position:**

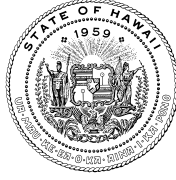
The King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center (JHC) supports this bill. Not only do we agree with the legislature's findings that the state has made national and global impact with ground breaking political public policy, we also support the inclusion of the Judiciary on the measure's proposed task force to create a Modern Hawai'i History Museum. We look forward to working with the other members of the Museum of Modern Hawai'i History task force to heighten awareness of Hawai'i's pioneering contributions in public policy.

JHC was established by the Hawai'i State Legislature in 1990 through Act 211 and HRS §6F-5, and is an administrative program of the courts. Our mission is to educate the public about

the judicial process and Hawai‘i’s legal history from ke au ‘ōiwi wale (the indigenous period) through kēia manawa (present day). The museum is 3 years into an exhibition renovation and redesign project which will celebrate the role of Native Hawaiians, and the islands’ historic immigrant groups, in affecting notable public policy and legal precedent in Hawai‘i, the United States, and international jurisdictions. We applaud efforts to celebrate Hawai‘i’s robust contributions to advocacy and policy creation on significant issues facing Hawai‘i, the United States and the world.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



KEITH A. REGAN  
COMPTROLLER  
KA LUNA HO'OMALU HANA LAULĀ

MEOH-LENG SILLIMAN  
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OMALU HANA LAULĀ

**STATE OF HAWAII'Ī | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII'Ī**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES | KA 'OIHANA LOIHELU A LAWELAWE LAULĀ**  
P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
OF  
KEITH A. REGAN, COMPTROLLER  
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES  
TO THE

**COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

S. B. 1504 SD1

FEBRUARY 22, 2023, 9:30AM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 211 AND VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, STATE CAPITOL

RELATING TO A MODERN HAWAIIAN HISTORY MUSEUM.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on S.B. 1504 SD1.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) strongly **supports** this bill and offers the following comments:

1. The State Archives, in its role as the Keepers of Public Memory, protects and preserves the documentary heritage of Hawaii from 1790 to current and is well versed in the history of Hawaii.
2. Since the formation of the Archives in 1905, thousands of artifacts were transferred by the Territory to the Archives for safe keeping. In effect, the Archives has served as a museum of Hawaiian History without display space necessary to share these artifacts with the public. Even with the over 260 objects on loan to Iolani Place and 80 objects on

loan to Washington Place, the Archives preserves a number of historically significant pieces worth of display and capable of education the public regarding the history of Hawaii.

3. Given the vested interest DAGS continues to have in seeing a Hawaiian History Museum established within the Capitol District, the State Archivist is appreciative of the generous appointment to the working group and looks forward to contributing to the establishment of just such a museum.
4. DAGS respectfully requests that the committee considers establishing the Modern Hawaiian History Museum and Museum Task Force proposed under this bill to within the State Archives. They have an existing staff of professional historians, have been collecting Hawaii's History since 1905, and are already in the process of conducting an Archives Master Plan through a CIP approved last year by the Legislature. As this Master Plan includes requested display space for the existing Archives' historic holdings, expanding the scope of the Master Plan to include a Modern Hawaiian History Museum with input from this Bill's working group is a natural evolution of the function that the Archives has served for the past hundred years.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter

**LATE**

**SB-1504-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 10:14:35 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Michael Voss        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

My name is Michael Voss, and I live in Kailua. Coming from a family of educators, I strongly support SB1504 to establish a Modern Hawaiian History Museum. Hawaii is in desperate need of a proper state history museum that covers the 20th and 21st centuries. Hawaii is one of only 4 states (the others being Georgia, Rhode Island, and Utah) that does not have some kind of museum dedicated to the history of the state. We do not even have historical exhibits in our state capitol. While the Bishop Museum boasts a very expansive collection of items from Hawaii and Polynesia, the museum's story stops at the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, leaving visitors adrift in interpreting the next 130 years of Hawaiian history. The Bishop Museum is also woefully outdated when compared to other state history museums. As such, a new, purpose-built museum covering Hawaiian history from the overthrow onwards would be one of the best ways for visitors and residents to be able to fully appreciate the culture of the islands and the impact it had on world history.

A Modern Hawaiian History Museum would greatly benefit students in Hawaii. As a graduate of Moanalua High School, I was required to take the class Modern History of Hawaii in the 9th grade in order to graduate. However, there were not many outlets outside of class where I was able to explore Hawaiian history in one place. The Bishop Museum does not cover the relevant information, and historical sites such as the Plantation Village are sparsely located. Having a Modern Hawaiian History Museum would give students a place to be able to visit and learn things about Hawaii that are not covered in class. This would be especially helpful for military students, who are often thrust into taking Modern History of Hawaii classes during their junior or senior years of high school without having any prior knowledge of Hawaiian history like that which is usually taught in the 7th grade here in the state. Being able to visit a museum with artifacts and interactives would help those students better understand the complicated modern history of the state, and allow them to succeed in their academics.

Prior to this bill being introduced, I had actually been working on my senior thesis for university on the potential establishment of a Hawaii State History Museum. As such, I am very happy to see that it may become a reality. In the course of my research, I visited two state history museums: the History Colorado Center in Denver, Colorado, and the Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin, Texas. Both museums were built within the last 25 years, and they were soaring testaments to the history of both states. Although they differed stylistically and operationally, they both were able to effectively serve visitors in presenting an interesting and palatable interpretation of their states' ancient and modern history. Both museums gave a voice to historically disadvantaged populations within the state and worked closely with their local

communities to develop exhibits that shed light on forgotten historical events. Their integration of 21st century museum techniques made them highly engaging in the creative ways they were able to audibly or visually bring visitors into the past. I believe museums such as these could be a model for a future Modern Hawaiian History Museum.

Frankly, it is surprising that Hawaii does not yet have a dedicated state history museum where local voices can share their stories. This bill is a step in the right direction to right this wrong. I support SB1504 not just as a student of history, but as a resident of Hawaii who loves their state. If a Modern Hawaiian History Museum were to be created, it would greatly increase visitor and resident understandings of how the modern State of Hawaii came to be. The knowledge gained from such an establishment would hopefully inspire a greater respect and appreciation for the place we call home.