

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 HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
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 COMMITTEES ON

**TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM**

FEBRUARY 8, 2024, 3:05 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 AND VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, STATE CAPITOL

S.B. 2764

RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
AND TOURISM.

Chairs Lee and DeCoite, Vice Chairs Inouye and Wakai, and Members of the Committees, thank you for the opportunity to **comment** on S.B. 2764 which transfers the State Foundation on the Culture and the Arts (SFCA) and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, repeals the SFCA Commission, and requires the Governor to select the Executive Director of the SFCA, with the advise and consent of the Senate.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) recommends that language repealing the SFCA commission be struck from this measure. According to the National Endowment for the Arts State Partnership agreement eligibility

requirements, the State of Hawai'i would not be eligible to receive funding from the National Endowment for the Arts without an independent board, council, or commission whose members serve in an advisory or policy making capacity. If the SFCA commission is repealed, the SFCA would lose annual federal funding of approximately \$900,000.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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
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**Testimony of KAREN EWALD, Executive Director
State Foundation on Culture and the Arts**

**Before the
SENATE COMMITTEES ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS and
ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2024 Conference Room 224 at 3:05PM**

**SENTATE BILL 2764
RELATING TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM**

Dear Chair Lee, Chair DeCoite and members of the Committees,

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), is dedicated to the promotion, perpetuation, and preservation of culture and the arts in Hawai'i.

SFCA respectfully **OPPOSES** S.B. 2764 which would repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts policy and oversight commission who's "membership is comprised of individuals by reason of education or extensive experience, are generally recognized as having demonstrated accomplishment or expertise in the fields of culture, the arts, history, and the humanities, and are familiar with the people and culture of Hawaii."

Transferring responsibility from a commission to the administration, defeats the SFCA's commitment to community-based decision making. Additionally, the elimination of the commission would remove Hawai'i's ability for various funding. According to National Endowment for the Arts State Partnership agreement eligibility requirements, the State of Hawai'i would not be eligible to receive funding from the National Endowment for the Arts without *an independent board, council, or commission whose members serve in an advisory or policy-making capacity*. Losing Federal support would eliminate the folk and traditional arts program, the arts education program and the biennium grants program, all which have greatly impacted the perpetuation of culture, arts and education in Hawai'i.

SB2764 also transfers placement of the SFCA from the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) to the Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT). The SFCA is administratively attached to the Department of Accounting and General Services (HRS Chapter 9) due to the relationship of "art in state buildings." The collaborative relationship can be seen in the Judiciary, Library and School facilities. The SFCA has concerns regarding such a transfer without assurance of decreased funding implications as [state arts agencies whose placement changes suffer significant budget decreases](#).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



COLLEGE of ARTS, LANGUAGES & LETTERS
DEPARTMENT of MUSIC

February 7, 2024

RE: Senate Bill 2764

Dear Legislators,

I write in strong opposition to SB2764 and the proposed repeal of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. As an individual artist who has received past support from the SFCA as well as an arts administrator who has seen SFCA support positively impact the lives of many, I can attest to the importance of the work the SFCA does, not only in terms of fostering the creation of art in our state, but also in the economic impact it has.

Unfortunately, I believe that the proposed restructuring, in which SFCA would be subsumed by the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, will significantly undermine both artistic creation and the substantial economic contributions that the arts make to Hawai'i.

The reason that the arts are a valuable economic driver is the same reason that the arts are valued in the first place — their authenticity is what makes them unique, meaningful and desirable. If that authenticity is lost, their value is also lost, again in terms of both aesthetics and dollars. People ultimately want pay for something that is real, not some watered-down version that is designed to appeal economically. In the long term, that is a losing strategy. Authenticity is the most important element of the formula.

Fostering that authenticity, however, requires an agency that is both knowledgeable about the arts and passionate about advocating for them. Placing the SFCA within the much larger DEBDT, whose mission is focused solely on economics and whose commissioners are not themselves experienced leaders in arts fields, is a recipe for letting wither an area of economic development that should be a rich contributor to our state.

It seems quite ironic that placing the SFCA within a department that is dedicated to expanding economic growth would result in the opposite effect. Yet that, I believe, is exactly what will happen.

I ask that you please reject this bill. While on the surface it may seem to make for a more efficient organization, I believe that in the long run it will prove otherwise.

Mahalo nui loa for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dr. Reid Womack".

Dr. Donald Reid Womack
Chair, Department of Music
Composer and Professor of Composition and Theory
Faculty Member, Center for Japanese Studies
Faculty Member, Center for Korean Studies

Public Testimony: SB2764 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.

Professor Michael D Marshall, UH Hilo Art Department
February 7, 2024

I strongly oppose the proposition to transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT).

Tourism wherever it is generally engaged, relies on the development of a fantasy world that taxes the natural environment and general population. The toll of this across the archipelago is not sustainable, as an economic development for the residents of Hawaii who encounter wave after wave of visitors who come “chasing waterfalls and rainbows”.

Throughout my tenure (since 1984) as a member of the UH-Hilo faculty, the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, and Hawaii Council for the Humanities have provided a lifeline of support for the campus, and Community venues engaged with the delivery of visual art, theater, visiting artist residency project programming.

The economic multiplier effect of these events over these decades is substantial, and should not be handed over to an agency with no expertise in the Arts and Performing Arts.

I believe this would create a negative spiral; a ratcheting down of economic potential, generated through the arts in K-12 public and private schools, in our university, community college campuses, and non-profit art / performance venues statewide.

Americans for the Arts¹, the national non-profit for advancing the arts across the United States since 1960, and Oregon’s Regional Arts and Culture Council, in their economic report of non-profit arts and cultural organizations in the greater Portland area², provide broad national context for the important work that has been diligently undertaken by the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

Work by the SFCA, including and not limited to: art acquisition and interpretive works, Artists in the Schools, the Art Bento museum education program serving O’ahu public and charter schools grades 2-6), and Hawaii State Art Museum public programming, serve to humanize our collective public space and experience through Music, Performance, and Art.

As a geographically isolated outer island, our students did not have reasonable access to original contemporary artworks in the collections, exhibitions, and events of the Honolulu

¹ <https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-iv/faq#t208n3576>

² <https://racc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Arts-Economic-Prosperity-5.pdf>

Academy of Art (recently reorganized and renamed) Honolulu Museum, and the Hawaii State Art Museum (HiSAM). Outer island outreach by the SFCA has made continuous improvements in this regard, over time.

Inception of the UHH Art Department regional PSBN project in 1982, with infusion of SFCA Biennium Grants until about 2006 were very instrumental in helping our modest program firmly establish the Pacific States Biennial Print (PSBN) exhibition series, which alternated with the UHH Pacific Rim International Biennial until 2009. Works from our exhibitions, approved for acquisition for the SFCA - Relocatable Art Collection program, completed a cycle of support for faculty, student, and community engagement.

The UH Hilo Art Department Baccalaureate studio, exhibition, or Artist in Residence series, would clearly not be what it is today, without early support from SFCA art project grants, and the continuing support of the Relocatable Art Fund.

If spending (as noted by UHH Economics Professor emeritus, David Hammes) assumes a multiplier of 1.5 for every project dollar expended, our program, through its combination of self funded project monies, grants, and endowment for Artist in Residence and exhibitions since 2012 has returned nearly \$220,000 back into the local economy.³ Our current capacity was grounded with early support from the SFCA.

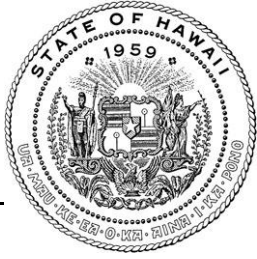
I have been personally, and directly engaged since 1984, and can testify to the extraordinary positive effect of the long partnership with SFCA for our modest Baccalaureate program. As a member of the UH Hilo faculty and as a volunteer in service at various points in time with the East Hawaii Cultural Center, Volcano Art Center, and as a Visual Art Consultant - that, SFCA support for the Arts in this community over the years has been profound.

Rather than cutting support, SFCA in partnership with Hawai'i Contemporary might embrace Hawaii island as a visiting Artist-In-Residence (A.I.R.) and retreat hub - in partnership with the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, UH Hilo and HawCC Art Department, UHH Performing Art Center, Volcano Art Center, Wailoa Center, Kahilu Theater, and the Donkey Mill Art Center.

As an A.I.R retreat destination for international Artist/ Research scholars (e.g. Fulbright International), whose first qualification hurdle would be certification of grant funded research support, would be a Blue Zone value added opportunity. The arts are a relatively clean and perpetually renewable industry that basically require an appropriate physical space and material, for artists to go about developing their work, and a place to reside for the duration of their residency project.

Sincerely,
Professor Michael D. Marshall, University of Hawaii at Hilo

³ UHH Art Department White Paper Powerpoint



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKĀ'I

LATE

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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Statement of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
and the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

Thursday, February 8, 2024
3:05 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
415 South Beretania Street

In consideration of
SB2764
**RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
AND TOURISM**

Chairs Chris Lee and Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chairs Lorraine R. Inouye and Glenn Wakai and members of the Committees. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) offers comments on SB2764, which moves the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) from the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) to DBEDT; repeals the SFCA Board of Commissioners; and requires the Governor to select a new Executive Director of the SFCA, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

This move is primarily for administrative purposes and is intended to increase efficiencies and effectiveness for both DBEDT, Creative Industries and SFCA in the fulfilling of their respective roles while increasing synergistic opportunities for collaboration, especially in the realm of increasing the positive economic impacts of growing the creative industries and the arts.

We understand there may be an adverse financial impact and potential loss of over \$900,000 of federal funds granted annually through the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) should the commissioners' functions and duties be repealed as proposed.

Consideration should be given to this impact, as it could both disrupt and impede the mutual goals of the Legislature and the agencies involved to broaden support for Hawai'i's arts, culture and creative industries as part of DBEDT strategic priorities.

The department and its Creative Industries Division will continue dialogue with lawmakers, SFCA and community to work through any notable challenges for the proposed move from DAGS to DBEDT.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

NALANI K. KAAUWAI BRUN, DIRECTOR



DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR
REIKO MATSUYAMA, MANAGING DIRECTOR

Testimony of

Nalani K Brun

Office of Economic Development Director, County of Kauai

Before the

Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 3:05PM

Conference Room 224 and Via Videoconference

In consideration of

SB2764

Relating to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism

Aloha Honorable Chair Lee, Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Wakai, and Committee Members:

I write in **opposition** to SB2764 which would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; repeals the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission; and requires the Governor to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Currently, I serve as the Kauai representative of the State Foundation of Culture and the Arts (SFCA) Commission and have served for nearly seven years. This has been a wonderful symbiotic relationship as we learn from each other's grant and education programs and are able to support each other's efforts. The State Foundation of Culture and the Arts Commission is one of the few commissions I have served on that has active neighbor island support that communicates regularly to an actively interested State Agency.

The SFCA believes in transparency and community-based decision making as a core value of the foundation. In eliminating the commission, you are essentially losing neighbor island community representation and losing transparency.

In addition, not all Hawaiian culture and arts should be focused on economics or tourism. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuations of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians without having to look at it through an economic development lens.

Finally, the National Endowment for the Arts, which funds \$900,000 of the SFCA, requires all state art agencies "to have an independent board, council, or commission whose members serve in an advisory or policy-making capacity."

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **opposition** of SB2674.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 10:17:50 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ARABELLA ARK	Testifying for ARABELLA ARK dba ARK CERAMICS	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a long-time studio artist --50 years--in Hawai'i, as an educator and past president of Hawai'i Craftsmen, I respectfully ask that the legislature continue to support the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts as is. It is vital that the organization be administered by arts personnel who understand the public's need for arts education and promotion. The SFCA should not be run by bureaucrats.

Arabella Ark, Kaunakakai, HI

Aloha Kakou,

I am submitting testimony as an individual and as president of Arts Kauai dba Kauai Songwriters. I am a retired school teacher who taught at Kauai High School for 24 years. During that time I received grants from the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to bring Hawaii's first state poet laureate Kealoha to Kauai High to work with students at the school. It was a tremendous program and helped motivate students in terms of writing poetry and performance. This program benefitted hundreds of students, many who were reluctant learners. All this was due to the Artists in the Schools program that the SFCA offered to the schools. I am afraid that programs like this would be dropped with a change that focuses more on business than the arts.

Arts Kauai is an outer island 501(c) (3) nonprofit that has been the recent recipient of the SFCA's Biennium Grant for 2024. I believe our nonprofit would be best served by an independent agency that is focused on culture and the arts. I don't see a need for a change to SFCA and strongly oppose SB2674. I share the SFCA concerns listed below. Please reject SB2674.

Mahalo Nui Loa,
Terry J Low
President of Arts Kauai, dba Kauai Songwriters

- Losing neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community-based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.
- This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.
- Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of culture and the arts.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:02:52 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sigourney Pastorfield-Li	Testifying for Collective HA LLC	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai,

As a local business owner, artist and individual citizen I write to strongly oppose SB2764. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts should not be moved to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism and we need to keep the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission.

Lets keep this critical support of the arts and artists where it's at - keep the transparency and community representation that makes SFCA effective and serving its mission to across Hawai'i.

Mahalo piha for your consideration.



February 6, 2024

Re: Testimony in Opposition to SB2764 and

Aloha e Chairpersons and members of the Transportation and Culture and the Arts Committee as well as Chairpersons and members of Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism Committee,

As a member of the West Hawai'i community and as the Program Director for the Donkey Mill Art Center, I strongly OPPOSE bill SB2764.

First, I address the opposition to moving SFCA to another department like DBEDT. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics show that state arts agencies facing such changes experienced an average budget decrease of 76%. Even a 25% budget cut for SFCA could jeopardize vital programs that the Foundation administers like Artist-in-the-Schools (AITS) and the Arts in Public Places Acquisition Program. How can we ensure the arts won't face funding cuts with this proposed transfer?

Secondly, I strongly oppose the second half of bill SB2764, which would eliminate the Commissioners of SFCA and allow the Governor to appoint the Executive Director of the Foundation with support of the Senate. This is alarming for outer island organizations, artists, educators and cultural practitioners as it removes neighbor island and community representation, undermining transparency and community-based decision-making, core values of the Foundation. Every voice in the arts and culture community matters, as representation is critical for those consistently repressed but needing amplification. The Commissioners, experts in our field, represent the entire arts and culture community. Giving sole authority to the Governor to appoint the Executive Director risks appointing someone lacking expertise in arts and culture, endangering vital programs. Additionally, according to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), Hawai'i may lose eligibility for National Endowment for the Arts funding without a community-represented board.

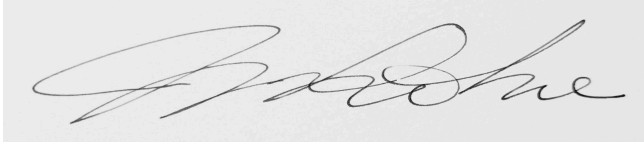
Finally, I emphasize why advocating for arts and culture matters. Arts and culture are the fabric of our communities, linking us to our heritage, our humanity and enabling story sharing. Art heals! The Mill, with the support of SFCA, is able to serve over 400 elementary school students each year with an arts integrated curriculum in collaboration with cultural experts to provide place based education. The pandemic has deeply impacted mental health, particularly among our youth and communities. As we all continue to heal from the Maui wildfires, arts and culture offer powerful support. Creative expression serves as a therapeutic outlet, allowing individuals to articulate emotions that words often cannot capture. Arts create a refuge where emotions can be woven into resilience. By embracing creativity, we heal wounds and equip future generations to face challenges. Supporting thriving arts and culture is an investment in community well-being, ensuring that future generations not only survive, but flourish.

- ***How can the public be assured that the voices of the arts and culture communities will be represented with the removal of the Commissioners and a Governor appointed Executive Director?***
- ***Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism?***

- ***How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of culture and the arts?***

I sincerely thank you for your consideration to oppose bill SB2764.

Me ka Mahalo Piha,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light gray background. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Miho Morinoue'.

*Miho Morinoue
Program Director for the Donkey Mill Art Center
From the ahupua'a of Holualoa on Moku o Keawe*

The Donkey Mill Art Center, home of the Holualoa Foundation for Arts and Culture, is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. The Donkey Mill Art Center is a place of convergence for the exploration of arts and culture to inform, inspire and strengthen individual and collective well-being.



February 6, 2024

Dear Chairpersons Lee, Inouye, and members of the Transportation and Culture and the Arts Committee Elefante, Kanuha and Awa, and Chairpersons DeCoite, Wakai, and members of the Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism Committee Fukunaga, Kim, and Fevella,

On behalf of the board of directors and staff of the Donkey Mill Art Center, our 450 members of the organization, and the thousands of Holualoa and West Hawai'i constituents who benefit from our programs, I respectfully present this testimony with gratitude for the legislature's steadfast support of the Donkey Mill Art Center and our programs.

We strongly OPPOSE bill SB2764. This bill impacts the culture and arts on every island, every large metropolitan community, and every small, rural community like ours. SB2764 Transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, and it repeals the SFCA Commission.

First, I address the opposition to moving SFCA to another department like DBEDT. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics show that state arts agencies facing such changes experienced an average budget decrease of 76%. Even a 25% budget cut for SFCA could jeopardize vital programs that the Foundation administers like Artist-in-the-Schools (AITS) and the Arts in Public Places Acquisition Program. SFCA's AITS program provided our organization with \$45,000 over the past two years, offering arts education to over 450 school-aged children in three Title 1 elementary schools. This is crucial for our rural communities where so many students lack access to such expansive and culturally relevant education outside of school.

Additionally, over the last two years, SFCA acquired more than \$85,000 worth of artwork from the Donkey Mill Art Center, with \$55,000 purchased from Native Hawaiian artists. These acquisitions put money directly into the hands of artists and cultural practitioners, and provide national recognition for these artists, further perpetuating their careers. These two programs alone are integral to our mission to serve as a place of convergence for the exploration of arts and culture to inform, inspire and strengthen individual and collective well-being. We never stop advocating and speaking up as our vision is to establish West Hawai'i as a model of a resilient, thriving community where art is considered a necessity, not a luxury; SFCA is a partner in this vision and mission.

How can we ensure the arts won't face funding cuts with this proposed transfer?

Secondly, I strongly oppose the second half of bill SB2764, which would eliminate the Commissioners of SFCA and allow the Governor to appoint the Executive Director of the Foundation with the support of the Senate. This is alarming for outer island organizations like the Donkey Mill Art Center as it removes neighbor island and community representation, undermining transparency and community-based decision-making, core values of the Foundation. As an outer island organization fighting for a seat at the table, this further diminishes our voice. Every voice in the arts and culture community matters, as we speak for those consistently repressed but needing amplification. The Commissioners, experts in our field, represent the entire arts and culture community. Giving

sole authority to the Governor to appoint the Executive Director risks appointing someone lacking expertise in arts and culture, endangering vital programs. Additionally, according to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), Hawai'i may lose eligibility for National Endowment for the Arts funding without a community-represented board.

How can the public be assured that the voices of the arts and culture communities will be represented with the removal of the Commissioners and a Governor appointed Executive Director?

Finally, I emphasize why advocating for arts and culture matters. Arts and culture are the fabric of our communities, linking us to our heritage and enabling story sharing. Art heals. The pandemic has deeply impacted mental health, particularly among our youth and communities. As we all continue to heal from the Maui wildfires, arts and culture offer powerful support. Creative expression serves as a therapeutic outlet, allowing individuals to articulate emotions that words often cannot capture. Whether through visual arts, music, or performance, engaging with cultural expressions provides a cathartic release, fostering connection and empowerment. Arts create a refuge where emotions can be woven into resilience. By embracing creativity, we heal wounds and equip future generations to face challenges. Supporting thriving arts and culture is an investment in community well-being, ensuring that future generations not only survive, but flourish.

I sincerely mahalo you for your consideration to oppose bill SB2764.

With gratitude and aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashley Raymond". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ashley Raymond
Executive Director
Donkey Mill Art Center, Holualoa, HI
donkeymillartcenter.org

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:55:13 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laurie Rich	Testifying for East Hawaii Cultural Center	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairpersons Lee, Inouye, and members of the Transportation and Culture and the Arts Committee Elefante, Kanuha and Awa,

On behalf of the East Hawaii Cultural Center and our community, we strongly **OPPOSE SB2764**. This bill impacts the culture and arts on every island, every large metropolitan community, and every small, rural community like ours. SB2764 Transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, and it repeals the SFCA Commission.

First, we oppose moving SFCA to another department like DBEDT. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics show that state arts agencies facing such changes experienced an average budget decrease of 76%. Even a 25% budget cut for SFCA could jeopardize vital programs that the Foundation administers like Artist-in-the-Schools (AITS) and the Arts in Public Places Acquisition Program. This is crucial for our rural communities where so many students lack access to such expansive and culturally relevant education outside of school.

Secondly, we strongly oppose the second half of bill SB2764, which would eliminate the Commissioners of SFCA and allow the Governor to appoint the Executive Director of the Foundation with the support of the Senate. This is alarming for outer island organizations like the East Hawaii Cultural Center as it removes neighbor island and community representation, undermining transparency and community-based decision-making, core values of the Foundation. As an outer island organization fighting for a seat at the table, this further diminishes our voice. Every voice in the arts and culture community matters, as we speak for those consistently repressed but needing amplification. The Commissioners, experts in our field, represent the entire arts and culture community. Giving sole authority to the Governor to appoint the Executive Director risks appointing someone lacking expertise in arts and culture, endangering vital programs. Additionally, according to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), Hawai'i may lose eligibility for National Endowment for the Arts funding without a community-represented board.

Advocating for arts and culture matters. Arts and culture are the fabric of our communities, linking us to our heritage and enabling story sharing. Art heals. The pandemic has deeply impacted mental health, particularly among our youth and communities. As we all continue to heal from the Maui wildfires, arts and culture offer powerful support. Creative expression serves as a therapeutic outlet, allowing individuals to articulate emotions that words

often cannot capture. Whether through visual arts, music, or performance, engaging with cultural expressions provides a cathartic release, fostering connection and empowerment. Arts create a refuge where emotions can be woven into resilience. By embracing creativity, we heal wounds and equip

future generations to face challenges. Supporting thriving arts and culture is an investment in community well-being, ensuring that future generations not only survive, but flourish.

I sincerely mahalo you for your consideration to oppose bill SB2764,

Laurie Rich

Executive Director

East Hawaii Cultural Center

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 11:52:39 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian S Linares	Testifying for Exhibition Grid	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition to Bill SB2764 - Impact on Art Concierge Services

Honorable Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Bill SB2764, which proposes the transfer of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, and the subsequent repeal of the SFCA Commission.

As the lead curator and founder of Exhibition Grid, an art concierge company specializing in art research and curatorial guide services, I have witnessed firsthand the invaluable role that the SFCA Commission plays in fostering a vibrant and inclusive arts community in Hawaii. The commission's oversight and community-based decision-making processes ensure that the voices of diverse communities, including those from the neighbor islands, are heard and represented in the cultural landscape of our state.

One notable example of the positive impact of the SFCA Commission is the successful implementation of our art research and curatorial guide services. These services provide curated experiences, guided tours, and educational resources that promote a deeper understanding and appreciation of Hawaii's rich artistic traditions. However, without the oversight and support of the commission, there is a real risk that these vital services could be compromised or even discontinued altogether.

Furthermore, the proposed transfer of the SFCA to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism raises concerns about the prioritization of cultural arts within the state government. While economic development is undoubtedly important, it should not come at

the expense of the arts, which are integral to Hawaii's identity and tourism industry. The proposed restructuring could divert attention and resources away from the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, potentially undermining the integrity and authenticity of our artistic endeavors.

As the owner of Exhibition Grid, dedicated to promoting Hawaii's cultural heritage through research and curated experiences, I urge you to reconsider the implications of Bill SB2764. I implore you to prioritize the preservation of the SFCA Commission and ensure that the voices of the arts community, including art concierge services like mine, are not silenced or marginalized.

I urge you to vote against Bill SB2764 and to advocate for amendments that would preserve the SFCA Commission and its vital role in supporting art concierge services and cultural initiatives in Hawaii.

Thank you for considering my testimony on this critical issue.

Mahalo,

Brian Linares

Lead Curatorial Guide/Founder

Exhibition Grid

SB2764

Carol Kouchi Yotsuda, Garden Island Arts Council Executive Director
My personal testimony:

I speak from my nearly six decades (59 YEARS TO BE EXACT) of involvement with the SFCA when it first came into existence under the foresight and leadership of architect Alfred Preis, its first Executive Director, a visionary whose dream of a State whose art and culture program could stand as a shining example of the BEST in the nation. Many states in this country have followed the lead of Hawai'i's progressive program that was second to none. Hawai'i today is that much richer for this significant action.

I speak from a Kaua'i island perspective. My personal involvement in the arts began through the friendship and mentorship of Alfred Preis who strongly advised me to start the Garden Island Arts Council so that the SFCA, as the leading arts agency in Hawai'i, could help to provide much needed and meaningful arts and culture programs for our island community. Through his mentorship and guidance, I was able to apply for and receive ongoing support all areas of art.

The Art-In-Public-Places program brought many commissioned artworks to Kaua'i by Hawai'i's leading and upcoming artists and the purchase and loan of relocatable artwork by our artists in all the State buildings. In 1977, I tapped into the Community Arts Program to provide the many Garden Island Arts Council programs that our community enjoy and value for the past 47 years.

Our E Kanikapila Kakou program, which just this week began its 41st season, was started back in 1983 with a \$1,200 check signed by Alfred Preis from the SFCA. He shared the vision that EKK would be a worthwhile program for Kaua'i. Today this music program, which is second to none in Hawai'i, brings together music lovers from all over the world to enjoy Hawaiian music and artists. Our Kaua'i Crafts Studio and Van Go programs received SFCA support for many years and continues to bring inspirational programs to the community. The Lihu'e Airport window displays, first supported by Hawaiian Tourism Authority and the County of Kaua'i, is now receiving support from the SFCA. The Art Kaua'i Exhibitions, the Kaua'i Mokihana Festival and the Kaua'i Academy of Creative Arts, all started under the auspices of GIAC, continue to provide invaluable programs for the public.

These unique programs started back in the late 1970's and early 1980's continue to this day because there is a Commission in this state with real people knowledgeable in the arts and accessible at a personal level to all the non-profit arts and culture groups to help us carry out our individual mandates. For the Garden Island Arts Council, it's been: "We bring Arts to the People and People to the Arts"

We have been able to do this with able leadership from Executive Directors, to name a few, Alfred Preis, Sarah Richards, Wendell Silva, Ron Yamakawa, Jon Johnson and now Karen Ewald -- along with their staff who work with us, who butt heads with us, who encourage us, and who we know as individuals who care about our programs.

If the SFCA Commission is dissolved and absorbed by another state entity with "no-face" online interactions with their constituents, we will not be able to provide these amazingly versatile and lively art and culture programs for our respective communities. Do NOT take away from the people the programs that enrich their lives. Do NOT take away from the non-profit leadership one of the vital avenues of support. Instead, please give the SFCA Commission the opportunity to continue being the conduit to funding support, give them ADDITIONAL resources to help them in their vital role of supporting the dedicated army of creative and passionate non-profit leaders with their selfless work. Let's put a STOP to this short-sighted move to consolidate statewide services where it would directly affect all that is good and deserving for the public. The silent majority may not know the means of speaking up for what they want and deserve, but those of us who care and who have been at it for six decades wish to vehemently speak up for one of our primary conduits who bring valuable support to our people.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:07:48 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Wry	Testifying for Gardeen Island Arts Council	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Impact of Transferring to another department:

- According to [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies \(NASAA\) statistics](#), state arts agencies who placement changed suffered significant (76%) budget decreases. How can the public be assured the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer?

Impact of repealing the SFCA Commission:

- Losing community and neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA’s community representation by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.
- This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.
- Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of **not for profit culture and the arts organizations**.
- To eliminate the commission would be to throw out the SFCA's 50+ year history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision making.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:39:02 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charles Aulii Mitchell	Testifying for Halau o Kahiwahiwa	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We feel these changes are unnecessary and detrimental to the Foundation. Do DBEDT's priorities align with the needs and priorities of arts and culture communities? Halau o Kahiwahiwa and so many other local non-profits are not economically driven or tourist oriented, so what does our future hold and where is the arts and culture leadership going to come from? We oppose this bill! Charles Aulii Mitchell, kumu hula of Halau `o Kahiwahiwa

**TESTIMONY OF THE HAWAII ARTS ALLIANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON
TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
AND
ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
February 8, 2024, Conference Room 224 and video conference at 3:05 PM
SB2764**

RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Aloha Chairs Lee, DeCoite and members of the committees,

I am Beth-Ann Kozlovich, Executive Director of the Hawaii Arts Alliance. We are grateful for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong **OPPOSITION** to this bill.

Hawaii's people deserve the dignity of a stand alone agency to continue to chronicle and reflect its history, its present and future through all the arts - visual, performance, dance, theater, music, literary and spoken word - to name a few. The arts tell the story of Hawaii, native Hawaiians, and all the peoples who immigrated to Hawaii adding their artistic expression to the richness of Hawaii's culture. The arts will continue to tell Hawaii's evolving story if left to the independent agency responsible for its singular focus on culture and the arts and humanities.

The mission of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) is to promote, perpetuate and preserve culture and the arts in Hawaii. Its funding is provided by the State of Hawaii and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

The SFCA's purpose is also to further the arts and humanities in support of the growth of future artists, many of whom are now children or are yet unborn. Arts education is crucial to reflect all of Hawaii and let current and future generations see themselves reflected in the ongoing state- collected art around them, the art they create, and the conduit opened by the arts and art education to their own humanity and the humanity of others. Additionally, continued federal funding through the NEA may also depend on Hawaii's ability to deliver arts education in the manner specified by the NEA.

The Duties section of the Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 9 (see below) details activities focusing on statewide arts preservation, perpetuation, education, accessibility, and sharing Hawaii's culture, its arts and humanities. This clearly demonstrates the importance the State places on cultural expression for the sake of Hawaii's people and their ongoing story.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism rightly focuses on economic expansion and monetizing activities in support of that goal. The SFCA focuses

solely on the importance of culture, and the arts and humanities for their own intrinsic value. Can DBEDT meet the needs of Hawaii's current and future statewide arts community - through all the arts and the arts education needed to perpetuate them? The SFCA and its diversified Commission from across the islands can, and should be allowed to continue to do so, unchanged.

§9-3 Duties. The foundation shall:

- (1) Assist in coordinating the plans, programs, and activities of individuals, associations, corporations, and agencies concerned with the preservation and furtherance of culture and the arts and history and the humanities;
- (2) Establish written standards and criteria by which grant contracts shall be evaluated;
- (3) Appraise the availability, adequacy, and accessibility of culture and the arts and history and the humanities to all persons throughout the State and devise programs whereby culture and the arts and history and the humanities can be brought to those who would otherwise not have the opportunity to participate;
- (4) Stimulate, guide, and promote culture and the arts and history and the humanities throughout the State;
- (5) Devise and recommend legislative and administrative action for the preservation and furtherance of culture and the arts and history and the humanities;
- (6) Study the availability of private and governmental grants for the promotion and furtherance of culture and the arts and history and the humanities;
- (7) Through its executive director:
 - (A) Administer funds allocated by grant, gift, or bequest to the foundation; accept, hold, disburse, and allocate funds that may become available from other governmental and private sources; provided that all those funds shall be disbursed or allocated in compliance with any specific designation

stated by the donor and in the absence of any designation, the funds shall be disbursed or allocated for the promotion and furtherance of culture and the arts and history and the humanities; and

(B) Accept, hold, disburse, and allocate public funds that are made available to the foundation by the legislature for disbursement or allocation, pursuant to the standards and procedures established in part II, for the promotion and furtherance of culture and the arts and history and the humanities;

(8) Submit an annual report with recommendations to the governor and legislature, prior to February 1, of each year. Annual reports shall include the total number and amount of gifts and other grants and income received, payroll disbursements, contracts entered into, and progress and accomplishments made during the year, including the efforts of the Hawaii arts education partners and its progress in implementing the Hawaii arts education strategic plan and the accomplishments of the art in public places and relocatable works of art programs and the state art museum;

(9) Convene the Hawaii arts education partners, which is composed of the department of education, the colleges of education and arts and humanities of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools, and the Hawaii Alliance for Art Education, to fully implement the terms of the Hawaii arts education strategic plan;

(10) Display student art works in public buildings, sponsor student art displays, promote arts education, and in other ways encourage the development of creative talent among the young people of Hawaii;

(11) In cooperation with qualified organizations, conduct research, studies, and investigations in the fields of ethnohistory and the humanities:

(A) Make, publish, and distribute works documenting the contributions of individual ethnic groups in their relationship to one another and to the whole population of Hawaii;

(B) Place ethnohistorical and cultural materials developed by the foundation or received by the foundation as gifts and donations in public archives, libraries, and other suitable institutions accessible to the public; and

(C) Maintain a register of the location of such materials;

(12) Cooperate with and assist the department of land and natural resources and other state agencies in developing and implementing programs relating to historic preservation, research, restoration, and presentation, as well as museum activities;

(13) Establish an individual artist fellowship program to encourage artists to remain and work in Hawaii and to reaffirm the importance of Hawaii's artists and their cultural and economic contributions to the State by:

(A) Recognizing and honoring Hawaii's exceptionally talented visual and performing artists for their outstanding work in and commitment to the arts; and

(B) Enabling these artists to further their artistic goals;

(14) In consultation with the comptroller and affected agencies and departments, administer the art in public places and relocatable works of art programs established pursuant to section 103-8.5; and

(15) Administer the operations of the state art museum established pursuant to section 9-22. [L 1965, c 269, §3;

am L 1977, c 112, §1; am L 1980, c 293, §3; am L 1992,
c 181, §4; am L 1993, c 133, §2; am L 1999, c 80, §4;
am L 2001, c 306, §2; am L 2004, c 125, §4]

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:31:07 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathryn Lathrop	Testifying for SCFA and Hawaii Arts Alliance	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill for several reasons. We will lose the transparency and community based decision making if we lose SCFA representation. This bill will limit the access to culture and arts education by making it about business and tourism versus creating strength and knowledge for our own kama aina, youth, and communities. The arts and culture can add to business and tourism but should not be replaced by it and don't seem to align on all the levels they would need to continue to promote Hawaii values and culture especially in the arts disciplines.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:29:49 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aiko Yamashiro	Testifying for Hawai'i Council for the Humanities	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a partner organization with State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, and sister organization as the statewide humanities council (SFCA is the statewide arts council), I am writing to express my concern about this bill.

SFCA carries out an important mission to support statewide arts for our local community. The arts are important for community strength, health, ability to vision futures, and ground ourselves in our history and identity. SFCA has been doing this important community work for many years, and is continuing to grow and evolve with our changing needs. The commission of diverse voices, the relationship with the public constituency, even the grantmaking process that involves community members, are all important to SFCA to carry out its mission and prioritization of public involvement for the public good.

DBEDT has a different mission and function in our community, and I am concerned with SFCA being able to carry out their important work if they are not given the authority, tools, and structure to do so.

If any changes are to be made to SFCA, there should be a longer community process heavily informed by the local arts community, current SFCA staff and commissioners, and the wider public.

Thank you for your consideration,

Aiko Yamashiro
Executive Director, Hawai'i Council for the Humanities

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:58:28 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Soto	Testifying for Hawai'i Council for the Humanities	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts does a tremendous amount of work supporting and nurturing arts, artists, and cultural practices of Hawai'i and in Hawai'i. The arts and culture in Hawai'i builds our society's capacity to imagine better—to thoughtfully reflect on our past and present—to forge resilient communities for the future. The work of culture and the arts thrives best when it is allowed to function beyond the limits of a consumable product.

Transferring the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism and repealing the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission would limit the foundations ability to do that crucial work of holding supportive spaces for culture and arts in Hawai'i for Hawai'i, because it would create narratives of support that are limited to that which is strictly economically advantageous, particularly in regards to the tourism industry.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Elizabeth Soto



Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

7192 Kalaniana'ole Hwy
Suite A-143A, #249
Honolulu, HI 96825
Phone: 808/933/9411
Email: hfia@hawaiiforest.org

Date: 02/07/24

TO: TCA Chair Lee, EET Chair DeCoite, TCA Vice Chair Inouye, EET Vice Chair Wakai and TCA/EET Committee Members

FROM: the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

SUBJECT: Testimony in Opposition to SB2764 Relating to the DBEDT

Dear Chair Lee, Chair DeCoite, and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Directors and members of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), please oppose SB2764 Relating to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism which includes transferring the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT).

For 31 years the Hawaii Forest Industry Association has proudly hosted the annual Hawaii's Woodshow. This event brings artisans, community members and visitors together in celebrating Hawaii's uniquely beautiful woods and Hawaii's skilled woodworkers.

In recent years, HFIA's sister organization, the Hawaii Forest Institute, has been receiving grant monies from the SFCA used to help fund the annual Hawaii's Woodshow. Because we are a very small organization, within a niche industry and artform, funds are difficult to accumulate and acquire for producing this show. The grant monies from the SFCA help us immensely in putting on a quality show, which is available to the public at no cost.

Transferring the SFCA to the DBEDT raises concerns. According to National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics, state arts agencies whose placement changed had an average budget decrease by 76%. Additionally, having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured if the SFCA becomes a branch of the DBEDT. Lastly, will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within the DBEDT?

We hope that you will consider these questions and factors and oppose SB2764 and the transfer of the State Foundation on Culture and Arts to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Guy Cellier

Guy Cellier, President
Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

HFIA's mission is to promote healthy and productive forests and a sustainable forest industry through management, education, planning, information exchange, and advocacy. HFIA has over 130 members including woodworkers, landowners, sawyers, foundations, foresters, growers, educators, environmentalists, architects, millers, ranchers, and others interested in HFIA's mission and goals.

HFIA Board of Directors

Officers: President Guy Cellier, Vice President Irene Sprecher, Secretary Taylor Coons, Treasurer Wade Lee
Directors: Jeremy Campbell, Aaron Hammer, Nicholas Koch, Michael Sowards, Aileen Yeh



**To: Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism**

Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, February 8, 2024

Re: Testimony in Opposition of SB 2764

From: Andrew Ogata, Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center

Dear Chair Lee, Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the committees:

The Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC) opposes SB 2764 which transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism and repeals the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission.

HHHRC's mission is to *reduce harm, promote health, create wellness and fight stigma in Hawaii and the Pacific*. We focus our efforts on those disproportionately affected by social determinants of health, including but not limited to: people living with and/or affected by HIV, hepatitis, substance use, and the transgender, LGBTQ and the Native Hawaiian communities.

During 2020 and 2021, HHHRC partnered with the Hawai'i State Art Museum to produce several events of importance to Hawaii's LGBTQIA+ communities, including a Rainbow Prom which provided a safe space for over 100 queer and questioning youth. We stand in opposition of these changes as According to National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics, state arts agencies who placement changed had an average budget decrease by 76%. There has been no assurance that the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer.

We are also concerned the priorities of education and access to the arts will remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism. It is unclear how the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism aligns with the needs and priorities and funding of culture and the arts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Andrew Ogata, Director of Development, Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:28:23 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rosina Potter	Testifying for Honolulu Biennial Foundation dba Hawai'i Contemporary	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Members of the Hawai'i State Senate Committee,

I am the Executive Director of Hawaii Contemporary, the organization that produces the Hawaii Triennial, a public exhibition of contemporary art in Hawaii. We oppose Senate Bill SB2764. We believe that the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) should continue operating with an independent commission to fulfill its vital mission of promoting, perpetuating, and preserving culture and the arts in Hawai'i.

The State of Hawai'i should take pride in the fact that it established one of the first state arts agencies in the country and should recognize the importance of maintaining its independence. Studies have shown that state arts agencies whose independence was compromised experienced an average budget decrease of 76%. Such a drastic reduction in funding would severely undermine the incredible impact SFCA has had throughout Hawai'i.

SFCA plays a crucial role in reaching children across the state through its education programs and nonprofit support, providing invaluable opportunities for students to pursue creative careers right here in Hawai'i.

Moreover, SFCA invigorates the creative ecosystem by supporting exhibitions on each island through its Art in Public Places program. These exhibitions not only showcase local talent but also contribute to the cultural enrichment of our communities.

SFCA's support extends to numerous arts organizations statewide, making its overall impact immeasurable yet unparalleled.

Hawai'i Contemporary is a direct beneficiary of SFCA's support. The Hawai'i Triennial, our flagship event, is the largest thematic exhibition of contemporary art in the state, featuring artists from Hawai'i, the Pacific, and beyond. Each of the prior three iterations has drawn over 100,000 visitors, generating significant economic activity both from local attendees and out-of-town visitors. According to data from AmericansfortheArts.org, the economic impact of the Hawai'i Triennial 2022 was substantial, with an estimated \$1.7 million from resident attendees and \$60.82 million from out-of-town visitors. Similar events in the past have demonstrated even greater economic benefits, further underscoring the importance of SFCA's continued support for such initiatives.

We urge the committee to recognize the value of an independent SFCA and its indispensable contributions to our state's cultural landscape. Thank you for considering our testimony.

Sincerely,

Rosina Potter

Executive Director

Hawai'i Contemporary

Formerly Honolulu Biennial Foundation

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:07:24 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Simone Fromen	Testifying for House of Bloom Artist Collective	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I, Simone Fromen, and the 12+ artists of the House of Bloom Artist Collective
STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2764!**

Aloha, my name is Simone Fromen, an artist and resident here in Hawai'i, and director of the House of Bloom Artist Collective (HoB). HoB is a collective of over 12 artists, all of whom live and work locally in Hawai'i, and are supported by the community and SFCA. This bill would dismantle the abilities of the SFCA, and it would be a great travesty if local artists and cultural practitioners were to lose the SFCA's support. Arts and culture are integral in our community, especially here in Hawai'i where culture has been striped down over and over. The support the SFCA provides does more than what is on the surface; it feeds the community, enriches our keiki, provides a platform for local musicians, artists, and practitioners. Passing the bill would continue a cycle of defunding and dismantling the people's art and culture. To hand this into the hands of the government and the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, is alligning with the idea that arts and culture are to be sold and comodified, **which should not be the case.**

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "Cultural Prostitution." Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Please make the right decision, and do not continue the narrative of taking away art and culture from the people. Hawai'i's community deserves better.

Mahalo,

Simone Fomen (and the House of Bloom Artist Collective)

Honolulu, 96816

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:10:50 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Reed Lover	Testifying for House of Bloom	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

As a member of arts community here in Honolulu, I oppose the defunding of our Arts Programming and disagree with the proposal to transfer departments. I have been a employee of the Honolulu Museum of art for about 6 years and am a member of House of Bloom, an artist collective. Many of my friends are artists, musicians, curators, producers, videographers, sound eningeers, and venue planners; myself and all my colleagues would be impacted by this bill, defunding the arts and transferring departments.

I believe art is the intersection and interpretation of all knowledge; that it is for everyone and than anyone can make art. What does it say of us, to snuff out our thriving arts community? To say that we see art as a marketable product to appeal to the lowest common denominator, rather than caring for an active ecosystem of ideas indicative of our unique culture.

There is a wide community of creatives and venues that have been funded in the past, which has appeals to and brought in locals and tourists alike. This transfer is senseless and comes across as a bandaid solution to save money. This bill would disrupt and could do away with a large part of our appeal to tourists, let alone uprooting an entire sector of activities and sightseeing in Honolulu. Be akamai, fund the arts.



February 6, 2024

Testimony from Hula Preservation Society
for the Senate Committees on Transportation and Culture and the Arts,
and Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

on measure SB 2764 relating to the transfer of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts
to the Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism,
and the Repeal of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission

CTA Chairs Lee and Inouye, and EET Chairs DeCoite and Wakai,

My name is Maile Loo-Ching, and I am the Executive Director of the non-profit Hula Preservation Society (HPS). I am submitting this testimony against SB2764.

Regarding the transfer of the Foundation to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, these thoughts come to mind:

- Do DBEDT's priorities align with those of the arts and culture communities in our islands?
- Specifically for a non-profit like HPS that is not economically-driven or tourist-oriented, how and where would we fit into the DBEDT worldview?

In SFCA's grant work and other programming, Native Hawaiian cultural heritage is acknowledged and supported. Would this focus and overarching arts and culture leadership continue under DBEDT regardless of DBEDT's focus as stated on their own homepage that it is "Hawaii's resource center for economic and statistical data, business development opportunities, energy and conservation information, and foreign trade advantages"?

In addition, abolishment of the 11-community member SFCA Commission and a strictly Governor-appointed Foundation head are of concern as neighbor island representation will be lost, a lack of transparency could become the norm, and community-based arts funding and decision making will be jeopardized.

HPS has worked with the SFCA nearly 20 years in many capacities – as a grantee, exhibit committee member, grant review committee member, invited lecturer and artist, and more. We value the independence of the SFCA and the leadership they have provided in the islands' arts and culture communities for over half a century.

In summary, we do not support the changes as outlined in SB6724. They are not necessary and in fact are detrimental to the arts and culture infrastructure and leadership here in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maile Loo-Ching". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maile Loo-Ching
Executive Director



Aloha Chairpersons Lee, Inouye, and members of the Transportation and Culture and the Arts Committee Elefante, Kanuha, and Awa,

I strongly OPPOSE bills [SB2764](#). This bill impacts the culture and arts on every island

As an artist and supporter of our culture in Hawai'i nei, this impacts many organizations I am connected to. The children benefit from these enriching programs that the State Foundation for Culture and Arts, SFCA, brings to many communities on neighboring islands. My family has been a proud supporter and represented artists of the State Foundation. We have observed the cultural programming bloom and develop over the past 20 years and see how the teachers and children grow up in these programs for generations, nourished by the SFCA.

[SB2764](#), would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.

Revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the ***Governor***, *a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate.* ALL NONEXPERTS in the field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous and reflects the darker history of humanity.

These bills would cut outer island representation and ***silence*** the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart [*integrity*]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds *the people of Hawai'i advocated for in the 80s*. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. It should never be touched by political



and economic gain; it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society.

With the State Foundation's fantastic efforts over the past ten years to nourish Native Hawaiian culture, they have had an upward trajectory of cultural impact on our Hawaiian community. The experts in this field have defended time and time again to ensure quality, integrity, and positive cultural representation of Native Hawaiian Culture and the Arts. SFCA has worked for decades to move away from our host culture being subjected to tourism for validity and survival and its primary funders as offshore economic beneficiaries. Or, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "[Cultural Prostitution](#)." Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and rather perpetuate the culture itself through education, spirituality, and skills.

Our State Representatives must value Hawaiian Culture by perpetuating alignment in bills to support the [Native Hawaiian Traditional Customary Rights](#) to enhance the well-being of ALL life. The budget should never be shared with annual events, commissions, or organizations like the Bishop Museum and Hulihe'e Palace, as legislative leaders have tried to do in previous years. ***The arts and culture must be of stand-alone importance!***

No other industry has a positive societal impact that enhances and uplifts life in many ways: in education, community, cultural preservation/relevance, mental/emotional well-being, trauma, increasing revenue, small businesses, circular economy, tourism, health, cultural landscape, culinary arts, performing arts, visual arts, decor, fashion, design, innovation, early childhood development, kupuna health programs, special needs activities, art in our healthcare buildings, art at the capitol and more. Arts and culture allow individuals to reflect and live more deeply and thoughtfully. The current traveling Vietnam memorial is a perfect example of how an artist designed a space for people to reflect on the most difficult memories and feelings.

The healing effects from the arts have data on the neuro-scientific impact and hormonal changes when experiencing a sense of calm, inspiration, or positive emotion. Because of the Lahaina fires, lava, lack of affordable housing, and other trauma and disparities across Hawai'i on our Native



Hawaiian and kama'aina population, we need arts and culture more than ever. Not an eradication of funding for arts and culture.

I encourage our representatives to write bills instead to increase the budget and recognize artists and cultural practitioners as ***great value to society***. To enhance programming for our people and communities on every island. We should instead create reassurance that arts and culture are declared vital to our very well-being and not threaten to be dismantled during every session.

Please kill this bill.

Mahalo

Maki Morinoue

Holualoa, HI

96725



February 6, 2024

Chris Lee, Chair

Lorraine Inouye, Vice-Chair

Brandon Elefante

Dru Mamo Kanuha

Brenton Awa

Transportation, Culture and Arts (TCA)

Hawaii State Senate

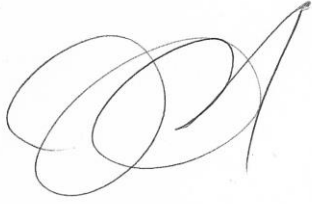
Dear Chairman Lee and TCA Board Members:

As a Member of the Executive Board of the US chapter of the International Association of Art (a UNESCO partner), I am joining with Hawaii IAA-USA ambassador Jared Wickware to strongly oppose SB 2764. Hawaii has only recently become a member of the International Association of Art/USA, joining California, New York and New Mexico as an IAA-USA chapter. Hawaii was invited to join the IAA-USA largely because of its vibrant cultural arts scene -- which sadly now seems threatened by this misguided legislation.

SB2764 threatens the cultural vitality and the arts of all Hawaii -- every city and town and every rural community. SB2764 Transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, and it repeals the SFCA Commission. We object to moving SFCA to another department like DBEDT. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics show that state arts agencies facing such changes experienced an average budget decrease of 76%. Even a 25% budget cut for SFCA could jeopardize vital programs that the Foundation administers like Artist-in-the-Schools (AITS) and the Arts in Public Places Acquisition Program. SFCA's AITS program provided Donkey Mill Arts Center with \$45,000 over the past two years, offering arts education to over 450 school-aged children in three Title 1 elementary schools. This is crucial for Hawaii's rural communities where so many students lack access to such expansive and culturally relevant education outside of school.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Jerald, Executive Board Member

International Association of Art/USA

Jonathan.jerald@gmail.com

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:36:50 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nate Gyotoku	Testifying for Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

On behalf of the JCCH, we encourage the reconsideration of the dissolution of the commission that oversees the State Foundation of Culture and Arts. As proposed, the measure will provide too much power to the Executive Director of the organization. A balanced commission allows the necessary checks and balances to the Executive Director, and between the Executive and Legislative branches in administering taxpayer funds for culture and arts.

As an outer island arts organization, our community is very concerned about losing representation and support for the arts if SB 2764 repeals the SFCA Commission:

Impact of Transferring to another department:

- According to [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies \(NASAA\) statistics](#), state arts agencies who placement changed had an average budget decrease by 76%. How can the public be assured the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer?

Impact of repealing the SFCA Commission:

- Losing neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community-based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.
- This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.
- Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of culture and the arts.



Jody Brotman

Kahilu Theatre

Executive Director

jody@kahilu.org

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:54:52 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Thompson	Testifying for Kahilu Theatre Foundation	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In my capacity as Board Treasurer of the Kahilu Theatre Foundation in Waimea on the Big Island, I oppose SB2764. I believe the Bill's effects will be detrimental to our efforts to coordinate with SFCA in continuing to bring a wide range of Hawaiian musicians and other cultural practitioners to our stage for live performances and the works of Hawaiian artists to our exhibition galleries. There is a real possibility that the Bill will dilute our focus within our community of promoting Hawaiian values and culture to the broadest audience available.

STATE OF HAWAII



KING KAMEHAMEHA CELEBRATION COMMISSION

355 NORTH KING STREET, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

February 6, 2024

TESTIMONY OF Amy Hammond, Executive Director, King Kamehameha Celebration Commission

**COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
Senator Chris Lee, Chair Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair**

**COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair**

DATE: Thursday, February 8, 2024

TIME: 3:05 PM

PLACE: Conference Room 224 & Video conference, State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street

Chairpersons Inouye and DeCoite and Members of the respective Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 2764 RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM which transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. It repeals the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the Governor to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. On behalf of the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission we strongly oppose this bill as written as it will effectively eliminate statewide representation through a State Commission reducing oversight and transparency in the arts and cultural community

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Mahalo,

**Amy Hammond
Executive Director
King Kamehameha Celebration Commission**

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:35:43 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
V. Lee Cabanilla	Testifying for Lanai Art center	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha from Lana'i City,

As a member of the Lana'i Community and the Lana'i Arts & Culture Center (LAC), I am wholeheartedly against the transfer of SFCA dollars to DBEDT.

LAC has been an entity on Lana'i for over 30 years, and was developed when the talents of our community members were discovered. The interest in the arts exploded and LAC has positioned ourselves to address the needs of visual art participation.

As the only visual arts entity on the island, the Lana'i Art Center has supplemented the arts in the schools. With the continued cuts in Education, the small community and lack of support from the State, LAC has filled the needs of art in both public and private schools here.

The funding from SFCA assists us in providing those programs for the public schools, and we are able to give classes to private schools in exchange for helping with ornaments, which are a fund raiser for LAC. We supply each with the necessary knowledge and supplies they require to create art for ages 18 months up to senior citizens. Should funding be disturbed in anyway, it would be detrimental for the arts and our community.

While DBEDT is an entity that deals with progress and developement, their needs and vision do not align with that of the arts. While art is an important part of tourism, it is the completed arts which are viewed. Lana'i Art Center has produced many artists who are selling in our gallery, and other galleries throughout Hawai'i, while sharing their mana'o with the community. The ability to learn from featured artists has been a thrill and blessing for many of our youths as they learn perspective, woodwork, textiles and other art forms which are the specific talent of each instructor.

I myself as Co-Executive director and workshop instructor had recently won the Merit Award for my representation of the goddess Laka right after the Maui fires for the Hawaii Craftsmen statewide exhibition. As the center piece of the show, my art much needed attention to our island and our arts program. I've also benefited by recently receiving a recognition award from SFCA having my art procured for the art in public places program which offers art placement for the Hawaii community enjoyment and enrichment.

The transfer of dollars would put non-profit organizations in competition with other entities which align more with the needs of DBEDT and not the arts.

None of our programs would be possible without the guidance of SFCA. It is their expertise which helped to guide us through our vision and mission. This one on one assistance is extremely valuable to our organization, as they keep us on course with our programs. I do not believe this would be a priority for DBEDT as their focus is in economic development.

Studies have shown that more than 75% of funding is lost to the art community when funding has been redirected to other entities to manage. Nonprofits would be in direct competition with for profits and state agencies whose mission aligns more clearly with DBEDT and put nonprofit art programs at risk.

Losing community and neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.

This bill also limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of not for profit culture and the arts organizations.

To eliminate the commission would be to throw out the SFCA's 50+ year history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision making.

Please reconsider this bill and DO NOT PASS IT.

Mahalo for you consideration,

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 2:18:02 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lanie KellerTwigg	Testifying for Lana`i Art Center	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

On behalf of the Lāna`i Art Center we oppose SB2764 because of the imense impact it will have for nonprofit organizations, like ours, that rely on funding to keep arts and cultures alive in our community. Everytime there is a transfer to a different department we lose about 76% of our funding. Additionally, we would not be able to compete with businesses to get the funding we need to keep our community programs and gallery running.

The Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism does not align with the needs and priorities that the arts and cultures need from our state legislature. Hawaiian Culture is based on the creativity of its native Hawaiians, this bill with limit our communities from making authentic art. If this bill goes through, the future of Lāna`i Art Center and our 33 years on our island will be at risk. Lāna`i Art Center is the only place on our island that creates a space for artists and our community to come together. We strongly oppose SB2764.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:47:41 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chant'e Sproat	Testifying for Lanai Art Center	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha from Lana'i,

As a member of the Lana'i Community and Lana'i Arts & Culture Center (LAC), I am against the transfer of SFCA dollars to DBEDT.

LAC has been an entity on Lana'i for over 30 years, and was developed when the talents of our community members were discovered. The interest in the arts exploded and LAC has positioned ourselves to address the needs of visual art participation.

As the only visual arts entity on the island, the Lana'i Art Center has supplemented the arts in the schools. With the continued cuts in Education, the small community and lack of support from the State, LAC has filled the needs of art in both public and private schools here.

The funding from SFCA assists us in providing those programs for the public schools, and we are able to give classes to private schools in exchange for helping with ornaments, which are a fund raiser for LAC. We supply each with the necessary knowledge and supplies they require to create art for ages 18 months up to senior citizens. Should funding be disturbed in anyway, it would be detrimental for the arts and our community.

While DBEDT is an entity that deals with progress and developement, their needs and vision do not align with that of the arts. While art is an important part of tourism, it is the completed arts which are viewed. Lana'i Art Center has produced many artists who are selling in our gallery, and other galleries throughout Hawai'i, while sharing their mana'o with the community. The ability to learn from featured artist has been a thrill for many of our youths as they learn perspective, woodwork, textiles and other art forms which are the specific talent of each instructor.

Lee Cabanilla, our Co-ED and workshop instructor has recently won the Merit Award for his representation of Laka right after the Maui fires. As the center piece of the show, it brought much attention to our island and our arts. The transfer of dollars would put non-profit organizations in competition with other entities which align more with the needs of DBEDT and not the arts.

None of our programs would be possible without the guidance of SFCA. It is their expertise which helped to guide us through our vision and mission. This one on one assistance

is extremely valuable to our organization, as they keep us on course with our programs. I do not believe this would be a priority for DBEDT as their focus is in economic development.

Studies have shown that more than 75% of funding is lost to the art community when funding has been redirected to other entities to manage. Nonprofits would be in direct competition with for profits and state agencies whose mission aligns more clearly with DBEDT and put nonprofit art programs at risk.

Losing community and neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.

This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of **not for profit culture and the arts organizations**.

To eliminate the commission would be to throw out the SFCA's 50+ year history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision making.

Please reconsider this bill and DO NOT PASS IT.

Mahao for you consideration,

Chant'e Sproat

President of the Lanai Art Center Board

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:51:05 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnny Macas	Testifying for manini GALLERY	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

Opposing SB2764 on behalf of Manini Gallery, we strongly advocate for the preservation of the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) as an independent entity. The unique identity and mission of SFCA within its own department have played a pivotal role in fostering a vibrant and diverse arts community in Hawaii. Consolidating SFCA into the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) through SB2764 raises concerns about the potential dilution of the SFCA’s distinct focus and the risk of diverting attention from cultural enrichment.

Transparency is vital in the arts, and the Visual Arts Consultants program exemplifies this principle within SFCA. By involving the public in the acquisition process, SFCA has successfully engaged the community, allowing for a more inclusive and democratic approach to the selection of artworks. Merging SFCA into DBEDT might jeopardize this transparency, potentially limiting public involvement and understanding in cultural acquisitions.

We propose increased collaboration between the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA), DBEDT, and SFCA, fostering a synergistic relationship rather than subsuming SFCA into another department. Such collaboration can enhance the promotion of Hawaiian arts and culture, contributing to the broader tourism and economic development goals. The implications of SB2764 are currently unclear, and prematurely merging SFCA into DBEDT may hinder the development of well-informed assumptions about the consequences of such a significant change. It is essential to carefully evaluate the potential impacts on Hawaii’s cultural landscape before endorsing a merger that could have lasting effects on the arts community and public engagement.



February 7, 2024

To the Hawai'i State Senate:

I am writing this letter to voice strong opposition to Senate Bill 2764 (SB2764), which proposes drastic changes to the fundamental structure of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA). I have witnessed firsthand the vital and significant impacts of SFCA's initiatives, both through my capacity as Director of Maui Arts & Cultural Center's Schaefer International Gallery and as a Maui resident and community member.

Maui Arts & Cultural Center has worked with SFCA on numerous occasions to coordinate Art Acquisition Selection Committee visits that nominate works of art for accession into the Art in Public Places Collection. This collection plays a vital role in integrating the arts into public spaces throughout the state, including the Capitol Modern Hawai'i State Art Museum, providing visibility and recognition for Hawai'i's dynamic artist community and ensuring that these works remain accessible into the future.

SFCA's commitment to community representation is a core value of the organization, which is reflected in the structure of the SFCA Board of Commissioners, comprised of arts professionals with profound knowledge of Hawai'i's arts community and deep passion for ensuring the stewardship of the arts for generations to come. The provision in SB2764 that eliminates the Board of Commissioners would resultingly eliminate community representation from the Neighbor Islands and place the reigns of decision-making in the hands of a group of individuals unfamiliar with Hawai'i's nuanced and diverse art scene.

To cultivate the arts is to strengthen and perpetuate a cultural sense of identity. Placing the SFCA under the purview of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) risks further commodifying Hawai'i's distinct art forms, especially at a time when Native Hawaiian forms of creative expression are gaining visibility after years of underrepresentation. The independence of SFCA is essential to fostering the continued development of the arts so that they may genuinely reflect the people of this place, not economic interests. The initiatives made possible by SFCA would be at severe risk should they fall subordinate to economic and business agendas. To lose these enriching offerings would be to lose sight of who we are.

I respectfully request that you prioritize the voices of our community and the importance of creative expression as an essential facet of our cultural vitality by rejecting SB2764.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Yukio Clark
Director, Schaefer International Gallery

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www.mauiarts.org

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:12:57 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alice Kaahanui	Testifying for Molokai Arts Center, Inc.	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Molokai Arts Center opposes the transfer of SFCA to DBEDT. By doing this, we foresee a decrease in funds for the arts as it would once again be buried in a larger department.

Furthermore, the repeal of the SFCA Commission will adversely affect smaller areas such as Molokai because the Commission assures neighbor island representation. Neighbor islands, especially the smaller communities, often get displaced by Oahu-centric or larger island interests. Artists are statewide and diverse, and the SFCA assures regular education, collaboration, and partnerships. The MAC has been a partner in SFCA's Arts First collaborative and it has truly allowed us a seat at the table.

Finally, repealing the SFCA Commission would also mean the loss of federal funds which require a commission. Please carefully reconsider this bill - it would not be in the best interest of the arts and arts education in the state of Hawaii.

Mahalo for your time and (re-)consideration!

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:25:47 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mericia Palma Elmore	Testifying for SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 8, 2024

Committee on Transportation Culture and the Arts	Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism	The Senate
Sen. Lee, Chair	Sen. DeCoite, Chair	The Thirtieth-Second Legislature
Sen. Inouye, Vice Chair	Sen. Wakai, Vice Chair	Regular Session of 2024

RE: SB 2764- RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

DATE: Thursday, February 8, 2024

TIME: 3:05 pm

PLACE: Conference Room 224

VIA Videoconference

State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu HI

Aloha Chairs Lee and De Coite, Vice Chairs Inouye and Wakai and the Members of the Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in OPPOSITION of Section 2 of SB 2764- RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM.

[SAG-AFTRA](#) represents over 1400 actors, recording artists, and media professionals in our state. We are the professional performers working in front of the camera and behind the microphone.

We support education and access to the arts. We support the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts and their decades long history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision-making. Please consider keeping this important organization intact.

Respectfully,

Mericia Palma Elmore, Executive Director SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:50:57 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
HENRY IAN CUSICK	Testifying for Sag-Afra	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Lee and De Coite, Vice Chairs Inouye and Wakai and the Members of the Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in OPPOSITION of Section 2 of SB 2764-RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM.

[SAG-AFTRA](#) represents over 1400 actors, recording artists, and media professionals in our state. We are the professional performers working in front of the camera and behind the microphone.

We support education and access to the arts. We support the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts and their decades long history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision-making. Please consider keeping this important organization intact.

Respectfully,

Henry ian Cusick

National Board member SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:57:27 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maria C. "Nina" Guerrero	Testifying for Sounding Joy Music Therapy, Inc.	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

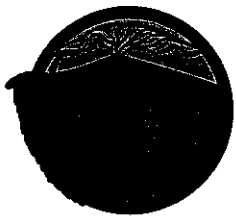
Comments:

I am the Clinical Director and Grants Manager at Sounding Joy Music Therapy, Inc., the only non-profit music therapy organization in the state of Hawai'i, established in 2002. Since 2005, our organization has received vital support from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to provide direct music therapy services to thousands of children, adults, and kupuna with a wide range of physical and psychosocial disabilities, chronic illnesses, and at-risk circumstances; community outreach and interdisciplinary collaboration to benefit underserved and historically marginalized communities throughout the state; music therapy research; and training and education for clients and their families, professionals and students in multiple disciplines, and the general public. The creative arts therapy modalities such as music therapy, which offer unique non-verbal pathways for communication and interaction, are especially significant in providing equitable access to therapy for clients with disabilities who have limited verbal communication. According to [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies \(NASAA\) statistics](#), state arts agencies which have been reassigned to a different department have suffered significant (76%) budget decreases. How can the public be assured the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer? Without the SFCA as an independent foundation dedicated to sustaining culture and the arts as a resource for community well-being and empowerment, non-profit arts organizations across the state would be hindered in their community service. In particular, Sounding Joy would lose invaluable sustenance for our work of transforming lives and strengthening communities through the power of music.

To eliminate the SFCA commission would be to throw out the SFCA's 50+ year history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision-making. The democratic engagement of stakeholders from diverse communities across the islands would be jeopardized by the loss of the transparency and community-based decision-making which are core values of the foundation. The priorities of public education and equitable access to the arts for well-being and quality of life cannot be assured if the SFCA is relegated to the arena of business, economic development, and tourism.

The majority of requests for our music therapy services come from underserved Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities where vocal and instrumental participation in group music-making or *kani ka pila* is highly valued as a source of social/cultural identity and strength. The bill under consideration limits support of Native Hawaiian culture and arts to the perspective of tourism and the economy. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by Native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured if the SFCA is to be subsumed as a branch of the DBEDT. The SFCA's role and perspective as an independent

agency must be maintained to ensure the integrity of cultural traditions in the arts, including music.



VOLCANO ART CENTER

WHERE PEOPLE, ART AND NATURE MEET

OUR MISSION

Volcano Art Center (VAC) is a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization founded in 1974 to develop, promote and perpetuate the artistic, cultural and environmental heritage of Hawai'i's people through the arts and education.

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EMILY CATEY-WEISS

Director, Development & Galleries

CONTACT VAC

Volcano Art Center
19-4074 Old Volcano Road
PO Box 129
Volcano, Hawai'i 96785
(808) 967-8222

info@volcanoartcenter.org
www.volcanoartcenter.org



To Whom It May Concern,

This testimony is submitted by me Emily Weiss on behalf of the Volcano Art Center in opposition of Bill SB 2764.

The proposal to transfer the State Foundation of Culture and The Arts to the department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism is preposterous. To take a functioning agency which focuses exclusively on Arts and Culture in Hawai'i further undermines its role in our communities and to the people of Hawai'i. The outcome of this manipulative maneuver would further tip the scales of Hawai'i's tourism based economy, which currently already places Hawai'i rich cultural customs, traditions and arts on auction to the lowest bidder. To allow this transfer of funding, would place money, power and authority in the hands of uniformed individuals who do not know, respect or understand the role of arts and culture in our local communities.

To anyone who is supporting this drastic measure against legislation that has been working for the past 50 years, I ask you to review not only the motives but also the outcomes of such a drastic political move. Now is a time when Hawai'i should be looking at the Arts and Culture that the State Foundation on Culture and The Arts has fostered over the last 50 years as an economic stimulant not as a life raft.

I ask you to oppose Bill SB2764 on behalf of the 175 artists the Volcano Art Center currently represents.

Emily C. Weiss
Director of Development and Galleries
(808) 967-8222



VOLCANO ART CENTER

WHERE PEOPLE, ART AND NATURE MEET

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Volcano Art Center (VAC) is a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization founded in 1974 to develop, promote and perpetuate the artistic, cultural and environmental heritage of Hawai'i's people through the arts and education.

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Testimony to the House Committee on Finance Wednesday February 7, 2024 SB 2764, Relating to transferring of SFCA to DBEDT

Aloha Committee Members, WAKAI, KIDANI, Hashimoto, Moriwaki

Testimony Submitted by: Michael A. Nelson, CEO, Volcano Art Center

On behalf of the over 200 artists our organization represents and supports throughout Hawaii representing the creativity and culture of Hawaii.

We are in **not in support** of SB 2764.

If this bill is passed, the resulting actions will create further distractions amongst organizations such as ourselves an inability ability to consistently and authentically advocate for artists across the islands while perpetuating our history and culture.

We remain concerned that the resulting repercussions will affect the Foundation's ability to consistently and authentically advocate for artists across the islands.

As a footnote:

In addition to our mission statement of the Volcano Art Center continues to provide opportunities to multi-generational patrons, low-income groups as well as Keiki for the Hawaii Island to experience variety aspects of art in our communities and families.

We strongly urge you not to pass this legislation. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony.

Mahalo,

Michael A. Nelson
CEO

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:17:31 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Virginia Holte	Testifying for West Hawaii DanceTheatre	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We fear that the potential transfers of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism will be detrimental to us small 501 c 3 non-profit organizations on the outer islands. We are working hard to serve our community on the rural Big Island of Hawaii to fulfil our mission. Without funding from the SFCA, many of our important programs that touch all ages - keiki to kupuna- will be in jepordy of extinction.

Please reconsider this move. It is not good for the Arts.

Thank you for your time.

Virginia Holte

On Behalf of West Hawaii Dance Theatre Kailua-Kona, HI

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:32:15 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Howard Markowitz	Testifying for Downtown Arts Center, Honolulu	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB2764 because it commodifies art and the ways in which our community participates and contributes to the arts. It also places unnecessary organizational structures between artists, the community, and the audiences and citizens of the State of Hawaii.

KAHILU

February 7, 2024

Dear Chairpersons Lee, Inouye, and members of the Transportation and Culture and the Arts Committee Elefante, Kanuha and Awa,

On behalf of the board of directors and staff of the Kahilu Theatre Foundation, and thousands of North Hawai'i constituents who benefit from our programs, I respectfully present this testimony.

We strongly OPPOSE bill SB2764 and HB2565. SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. ALL NONEXPERTS in the field of culture and the arts.

These bills would cut outer island representation and **silence** the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart [integrity]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture in Hawai'i CANNOT be conflated with Tourism; one is genuine and the other propaganda. They are completely different audiences, and tourism has stolen enough resources from our local communities already. Artists, arts organizations and Culture Bearers across the state continue to battle the negative misrepresentations and misperceptions of arts in culture in Hawai'i perpetuated by Tourism and big business. And, we are pitted against one another as we compete for limited resources. It is vital that **Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "[Cultural Prostitution](#)."** Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Mahalo



Kapena Alapa'i, Kona Hawai'i, 96740
Board President, Kahilu Theatre Foundation

LATE



February 7, 2024

TESTIMONY OF Kainoa Daines, Chair – King Kamehameha Celebration Commission

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

DATE: Thursday, February 8, 2024

TIME: 3:05 PM

PLACE: Conference Room 224 & Videoconference, State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street

Aloha Chairpersons Inouye and DeCoite and Members of the respective Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB2764 RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM which transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.

On behalf of the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission we oppose this bill.

Removal of the SFCA Commission removes the transparency of a state board or commission. Per the state's own website, "Boards and commissions provide an opportunity for citizens to have a voice in their government and provide a means of influencing decisions that shape the quality of life for the residents of Hawai'i."

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony,

Kainoa Daines, Chair
King Kamehameha Celebration Commission

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/8/2024 8:42:22 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Melody Young	Testifying for CARES	Support	In Person

Comments:

CARES testifies wishing to comment and wishes to inquire about Creative Labs a division of DBET which provides training to students artists, music producers & local talent, that if the new DBET office can consider more programs like this for filmmakers and to support the creative industries.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 10:35:57 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gaye Chan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Moving SFCA into the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism will work against SFCA's core mission of supporting artists by diminishing its autonomy and budget.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 9:40:49 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gwen Hiraga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am not in support of this measure at this time. The bill should be carefully reviewed before further action is taken.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 8:51:36 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeffrey Boeckman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee,

I am writing to express my opposition to SB 2764, and specifically to the repeal of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission.

Having an independent board, council, or commission whose members serve in an advisory or policy-making capacity is a requirement to receive Federal Arts funding. Losing Federal support would eliminate the Folk and Traditional Arts program, the arts education program and the biennium grants program

Losing community and neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.

This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of not for profit culture and the arts organizations.

To eliminate the commission would be to throw out the SFCA's 50+ year history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision making.

I urge the committee to vote NO on SB 2764.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Jeffrey Boeckman

February 5, 2024

From: Susan Browne, P.O. Box 1002, Haiku, HI 96708

Testimony against SB 2764- To Repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission; Transfer SFCA to DBEDT.

I am an educator and 42 year resident of Maui who has spent my life working in and advocating for the arts, particularly arts education. Serving on several non-profit boards in this field as well as being the education director of Maui Arts & Cultural Center for 18 years has given me a clear understanding of the importance of arts and culture in Hawai'i. SB 2764 will in fact destroy Hawaii's state arts agency. We will not be able to receive funding from the National Endowment for the Arts which means the end of the Artist in the Schools program, training for teachers and artists in arts integration, folk and traditional arts programs, and grants to other arts organizations. There will be no representation of the Neighbor Islands which eliminates community-based decision making and transparency. Placing Native Hawaiian arts and culture in the tourism and economic perspective virtually eliminates their voice in perpetuating Hawaiian traditions. At this point in our history, it is imperative that we have an independent agency, represented by members of all islands and communities, to ensure that authentic arts and culture thrive in Hawai'i.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:17:21 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alyce Dodge	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

I oppose SB 2764.

Repealing the HI SFCA commission (which are volunteer positions) eliminates neighbor island representation, community-based decision making, and transparency.

The mission of the HI SFCA is “to promote, perpetuate, and preserve culture and the arts in Hawai‘i”. As the HI SFCA is now, an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians, and is able to support the priorities of education and access to the arts. Attaching the HI SFCA to DBEDT limits native Hawaiian culture and art to a business, economic development and tourism perspective, completely changing the mission of HI SFCA.

National statistics show that state arts agencies who placement changed had an average budget decrease by 76%. This kind of action would gut the programs of our HI SFCA, and our communities would lose out.

For all of the above reasons, I am against this measure.

Mahalo.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 5:39:21 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Owen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill as it will weaken the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. The HSFCA would no longer be able to obtain Federal funding for the Arts Education program, for the Biennium Grants program, and for the Folk and Traditional Arts program if it loses its commission status, as this is a prerequisite for Federal funding. These programs are vital to the support of the arts in all our communities in Hawaii. We must preserve the strength of our 50+ year old HSFCA, which has a history of leading the nation in support for the arts. We must not risk weakening this vital organization. Historically, when this kind of shift is made, the organization suffers. We must not risk it.

The Honorable Chris Lee
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
Hawaii State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: **Please OPPOSE SB2764**

Dear Chair Lee:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 2764 (SB2764), which proposes significant changes to the structure and representation of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA). As a Maui resident and beneficiary of our state's vibrant art community, I am one of the thousands of individuals who benefit from the invaluable contributions made by the SFCA. I believe that this bill undermines the fundamental principles of community representation, cultural preservation, and equitable access to the arts.

First, the provision in SB2764 that eliminates representation from the neighbor islands on the commission threatens the core value of community representation within the SFCA. By centralizing decision-making power and reducing transparency, this change undermines the diverse perspectives and needs of communities across Hawai'i. The loss of neighbor island representation diminishes the voice of those who are directly impacted by cultural and artistic initiatives and jeopardizes the integrity of the SFCA's mission.

Second, SB2764's proposal to attach the SFCA as a branch of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) risks reducing native Hawaiian culture and arts to mere economic commodities. The independence of the SFCA is crucial for fostering authentic traditions and ensuring that cultural and artistic expressions are not solely driven by economic interests or tourism promotion. Preserving native Hawaiian culture requires an independent agency dedicated to safeguarding and perpetuating our heritage with integrity and authenticity.

Furthermore, I am deeply concerned about the potential conflicts of interest and misalignment of priorities that may arise if the SFCA becomes integrated into a department primarily focused on business and tourism. Education, access to the arts, and cultural preservation should not be subordinate to economic agendas. It is essential to maintain an independent perspective within the SFCA to prioritize the diverse needs and priorities of our communities, rather than being overshadowed by economic imperatives.

In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider the provisions of SB2764 and uphold the integrity and independence of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Preserving our cultural heritage and supporting the arts are vital components of Hawai'i's identity and should not be compromised. I implore you to prioritize the voices and concerns of our communities and reject any changes that undermine the SFCA's commitment to transparency, cultural preservation, and equitable access to the arts.

Thank you for considering these concerns. I respectfully request that you oppose SB2764 and uphold the values that are essential to the well-being and vibrancy of our cultural and creative landscape.

Sincerely,



SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 12:10:42 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dorothy S Billingsley	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please do NOT move the administration of the State Foundation on Culture and Arts to DBEDT. I believe that burying the commission in the mix of business interests will result in the elimination of the work the commission takes on to promote and preserve local arts and cultural endeavors.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 12:32:59 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
nancy young	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

WAKAI, KIDANI, Hashimoto, Moriwaki

SHAME ON YOU...

Culture is not a business. Culture contriutes to business, yes, but it is above and beyond the economic. Culture is root of knowledge, the best that humans can create and nurish. In Hawaii cultures from around our planet contribute as the roots of a large and vibrant tree. A tree much like our beloved Banyon at the center of Lahaina.

Don't attempt to destroy our Cultural vibrance, it's multitude of leaves, branches, it's huge trunk and hanging vines. Think about this image, and think about all that the SFCA has given Maui over its years, as it grew and spread, as it gave to all of our many cultural activities.

THE SFCA HAS NO BUSINESS IN DBEDT. I have benefited from both SFCA and of DBEDT. over the 50 years I have been in business and education on Maui as an Artist and Entrepreneur and teacher for DOE, UH and presently a DOE charter school and as the sole proprietor of Gallery Lele in Lahaina and formerly owner of Tropical Romance, Maui Girl's Wear and Maui Boy.

Recently I have recieved grants from Maui United Way and SFCA, through my work with Lahaina Arts Guild to bring art to young students and to display it to the public. I also applied for and recieved an artist in the schools grant for a sculpture to be created and placed at Lahainaluna High School in 2019. Truthfully, it was much easier to deal with the SFCA than with the help I sought from DBEDT for my small clothing business. Much less beauocracy, much more cooperation and collaberation.

The SFCA has been beset by gnawing resources for years, years it did not deserve such cuts, none of us in the arts and cultural community deserved them. We should have been nurtured, watered and fed. Now you are trying to kill us entirely.

WHY ????????

Nancy Young

Lahaina, Maui

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 12:36:40 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chais Pascua	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose Bill SB2764.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 12:42:08 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lois Sato	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in OPPOSITION to SB2764

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 1:30:03 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell Sato	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in **opposition to SB2764** which transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism and repeals the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission.

As a resident of Maui County, the disturbing negative impact and consequences of this bill are my main concerns:

Impact of Transferring to another department: According to [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies \(NASAA\) statistics](#), state arts agencies who placement changed had an average budget decrease by 76%. How can the public be assured the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer?

Impact of repealing the SFCA Commission:

Losing neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA’s community representation by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.

This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of culture and the arts.

I urge all committee members hearing testimony in support of this bill to seriously consider these consequences and vote AGAINST the further advancement of SB2764.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 1:26:32 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Safranski	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Opposed. Support of MAC Molokai arts center

6th February 2024

Senator Lynn DeCoite

Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street Room 230
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Opposition to SB2764

Dear Senator DeCoite,

I am a lifelong resident of Maui County who has long admired your dedicated leadership and community mindedness as you represent Maui Nui equitably with strength and compassion.

Recently retired after 42 years of service as a public school teacher, I have spent my life working in and advocating for the arts, particularly secondary arts education. My students have been the grateful beneficiaries of the SFCA's Artists-in-the-Schools program over the years. The valuable experiences provided opportunities for my high school students to meet and work with professional artists and private organizations extended learning far beyond the walls of the classroom and deep into the community. Many of them are now in varied professional careers who have continued their community mindedness in admirable ways as young adults with growing families.

Currently serving my first term as the Maui commissioner on the board of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, I have been impressed with what I am learning in regard to the breadth and scope of how the SFCA works tirelessly to positively impact every community member on every island. I am writing in opposition to SB 2764 which will transfer the SFCA to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT), eliminate the commission, and give the governor the job of appointing the executive director of SFCA.

These bills will in fact destroy Hawaii's state arts agency. We will not be able to receive funding from the National Endowment for the Arts which means the end of the Artist in the Schools program, training for teachers and artists in arts integration, folk and traditional arts programs, and grants to other arts organizations. There will be no representation of the Neighbor Islands which eliminates community-based decision making and transparency. Placing Native Hawaiian arts and culture in the tourism and economic perspective virtually eliminates their voice in perpetuating Hawaiian traditions. At this point in our history, wouldn't you agree that it is imperative that we have an independent agency, represented by members of all islands and communities, to ensure that authentic arts and cultural education thrive in Hawai'i?

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,
Janet Sato

Rebecca Dunning
2780 Booth Road
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re SB 2674

Dear Senators Lee and Inouye:

I am writing to express my extreme opposition to SB 2674, which proposes to transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to DEBDT and dissolve the State Foundation Commission.

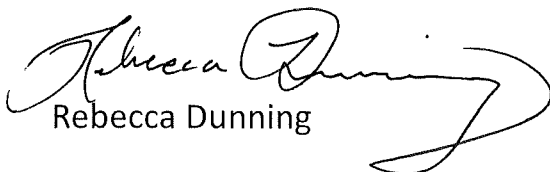
I have been involved with various arts organizations in Hawaii for over 45 years and am currently the Managing Director for Honolulu Theatre for Youth. I see every day the positive impact the arts have on students in Hawaii and fear that if the SFCA is transferred to DBEDT all of the positive progress we have made using the arts to improve student learning will be eliminated.

Support for the arts should not just be about using the arts to entice more visitors to Hawaii it should be about enriching the lives of all Hawaii residents especially our keiki.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts has served the people well and will continue to do so if you allow it to retain its autonomy.

I hope you will carefully consider the impact of the transfer and oppose this measure.

Respectfully,


Rebecca Dunning

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 12:56:11 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kendra Medeiros	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Impact of Transferring to another department:

- According to [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies \(NASAA\) statistics](#), state arts agencies who placement changed had an average budget decrease by 76%. How can the public be assured the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer?

I believe the arts and culture department budget would be negatively impacted. -Kendra

Impact of repealing the SFCA Commission:

- Losing neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA’s community representation by eliminating transparency and community-based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.

As a resident of Lanai, I believe wholeheartedly that this will negatively impact resources being sent to support the culture and the arts here. -Kendra

- This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

The culture and the arts are a big part of Hawaii as a whole and the culture and the arts must be represented continually as it's own department. As a native Hawaiian and an Artist I wholeheartedly believe that this will have a negative impact. I sell my art products in the Lanai Community Art Center on Lanai and they rely on grants that may be harder to come by if SFCA transfers over. -Kendra

- Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of culture and the arts.

As the culture and the arts continues to get lost and tossed to the way side in education of our keiki, I believe this is just another way we lose a lottle bit more of Hawaii. -Kendra

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 1:38:08 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathleen Murayama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in opposition to SB2764 which transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism and repeals the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission.

As a resident of Maui County, the disturbing negative impact and consequences of this bill are my main concerns:

Impact of Transferring to another department: According to National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics, state arts agencies who placement changed had an average budget decrease by 76%. How can the public be assured the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer?

Impact of repealing the SFCA Commission:

Losing neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.

This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of culture and the arts. I urge all committee members hearing testimony in support of this bill to seriously consider these consequences and vote AGAINST the further advancement of SB2764.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cathleen Murayama

TESTIMONY OF
SHERMAN WARNER
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON
TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS AND
ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

Thursday, February 8, 2024 Conference Room 224; Videoconference at 3:05 p.m.

S.B. 2764 RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Chairs Lee, DeCoite and members of the Committee, I am Sherman Warner, a resident of Hawai'i Island, and I'm thankful for this opportunity to submit testimony in OPPOSITION on S.B. 2764.

SB2764 Transfers placement of the foundation from the Department of Accounting and General Services.

I do not oppose that transfer, however I am in opposition to SB2764 because it would put an end to the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts board of commissioners, make the Executive Director a political appointee, and end the SFCA's governance model that has served the arts and culture community of Hawai'i so well for more than fifty years. Importantly, this change could threaten funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, which places heavy emphasis on grass-roots, distributed, citizen-based decision making in the arts, free of governmental pressures.

During the eight years that I served as an at-large commissioner with the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, I was continually inspired not only by the knowledge, talent, skills and dedication of my fellow commissioners but also of the many Hawaii residents who volunteered to serve on committees and panels dedicated to promoting, perpetuating and preserving culture and the arts in Hawai'i. To disband the SFCA commisson would be a disservice to students, artists, arts organizations and cultural practioners of Hawai'i and an insult to the thousands who have given so generously of their time and expertise to serve on SFCA's committes and grant panels.

My experience with not-for-profit arts organizations, funded in part by city, state and federal grants, dates to 1971. In 1978, I co-founded a not-for-profit theatre company that received much of its intial funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. At that time, we applied to and received finding directly from the NEA. Since then, I've watched as the NEA has evolved to giving block grants to states and supporting non-political, citizen- and community-based decision making in the arts. NEA funding that supports local decision-making, as has been the practice for fifty years at the SFCA, is the model for successful arts agencies across the country.

SB2467 will endanger future NEA funding by discarding the model of governance advocated by the NEA. Further, it would seriously diminish outer island representation in decisions relating to arts, cultural preservation and arts education. Government, if it truly wanted to support culture and the arts, should be trying to empower its community members rather than cancelling their involvement and discarding their expertise. I wonder what the point of SB2467 is, what problem it solves, or how it can be seen as anything other than a significant reduction in the SFCA's ability to achieve its mission to promote, perpetuate and preserve culture and the arts in Hawai'i. There is no upside to a political takeover of the SFCA Commission's mission.

In 1967, in the first round of grants made by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts—Oahu Development Conference received \$12,600. Hawaii should honor the founders of the SFCA and the NEA by supporting the original intent of those founders. For the sake of our culture and our arts in Hawai'i, please reject SB2467.

Frank O. Hay
kokee@okauai.com

6. February 2024

Senators Chris Lee and Lynn DeCoite and the Honorable
Members of the Transportation and Culture & the Arts Committee, and the
Members of the Energy, Economic Development & Tourism Committee
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Oahu, Hawaii 96813

Via email only

FOR THE JOINT MEETING IN HONOLULU ON Thursday, February 8, 2024

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SENATE BILL 2764, Relating to the Department of Business,
Economic Development, and Tourism

Aloha,

I have been a resident of Hawaii for more than sixty years. Over those many years, both my wife, Karen Gally, and I have been active members of the arts and culture community – with the Kōke'e Natural History Museum, the Kauai Society of Artists, the Hawaii Museums Association, the Kauai Museum, and the National Tropical Botanical Garden, among other organizations.

All those and many more organizations and individuals throughout the islands have received important and valuable support from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. For more than fifty years, the Foundation has been a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision-making. To transfer the Foundation to another department or to repeal the Commission would be a tragic step backwards.

I respectfully urge the honorable members of these two committees to oppose Senate Bill 2764.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hay". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large loop at the end of the "y".

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 8:59:58 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Solomon Enos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

A testimony in Opposition to SB2764

To the Chairperson Senator Chris Lee and Vice Chairperson Lorraine R. Inouye on the Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts.

To the Chairperson Senator Lynn DeCoite and Vice Chairperson Senator Glen Wakai on the Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism.

Thursday, February the 8th, 2024. Conference Room 224 at the Hawai'i State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street.

I am testifying in Opposition to Senate Bill 2764.

My name is Solomon Robert Nui Enos, Artist in Residence at Capitol Modern, Hawai'i State Art Museum.

The repealing of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, Senate Bill 2764 will have a cascading detrimental effects on the well-being of all our communities, especially on the outer islands.

Born and raised in Wai'anae, O'ahu, my family and I have been involved in helping to return our cultural practices to a community which is in dire need for a sense of identity parallel to the needs of everyday struggles. Going to Wai'anae High School, many of my peers would show up to school simply to attend art and music classes, for these were opportunities to find solace in the practice of creativity. With the loss of many of these programs, it has become critical for organizations such as the State Foundation of Culture and the Arts to help fill these voids, and this is especially important on the outer islands where access to art programs are greatly limited.

Though there are other needs that hold immediate importance to our communities, access to art programs is certainly no less important to our overall wellbeing, because the role that art plays towards issues related to mental wellness is absolutely priceless, and it is often said that globally, all ailments trace their origins to mental health.

As Artist in Residence, I volunteer a few hours every day to impart my passion as a Kanaka Maoli artist to all the students who visit the Capitol Modern, and in all the talks and workshops I

have had the honor to lead over the past 30 years of being a community artist, and the countless thousands of students and community members I have engaged, I can count on a single hand the amount of individuals who did not want to participate in a creative project. Art, whether participatory or as sources of inspiration, has invaluable worth to our communities, for at the very least, it is a way to act upon our passions safely and constructively, or to be a source of passion respectively.

I urge the members of this community to stop the passage of this bill, for art is at the core of everything we do, for is if we lose the ability to create, we slide further into a global narrative of destruction.

Me ka ha'aha'a ame ka mea 'ano nui,

Solomon Enos.

tolomona@gmail.com

1(808)-218-3731

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 8:50:21 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn M Young	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an Hawaii artist and arts educator at UHManoa I oppose the transfer of funds for SB2764.

The arts are vital to the health of this community! We need to keep funding the arts if we want a vibrant and healty and prosperous, community,

Most sincerely,

Lynn Young

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 8:41:50 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Shiroma	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Capitol Modern is a vital part of the local art community in so many ways. It serves as an important creative hub for artists and art lovers alike. One crucial way it provides a positive impact is through their student art exhibitions. Each year award winning artwork is on display inside of the museum, representing students from all over the Islands from grades K through 12. This is the first time these young artists have the opportunity to have their artwork shown in a museum setting. To see their creativity celebrated and valued causes a ripple effect that goes beyond the museum's walls. It encourages and inspires a new generation to continue on their journey as artists of Hawai'i. To cut funding would mean to silence creative voices and to snuff out the dreams of young local artists.

- Lisa Shiroma, artist and Capitol Modern special correspondent for Honolulu Magazine

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 9:01:41 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erendira Aldana	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill SB2764.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 8:29:09 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephen H. Yuen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My position on the matter: OPPOSE

I strongly oppose the repeal of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. The organization and structure in place is effective and does great work in the support of art for the people of Hawaii. The current structure is highly successful in encouraging artists, and providing opportunities for the people of Hawaii to experience the art.

The structure currently organized provides value and is efficient, and should not be repealed.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 8:21:48 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colleen Rost-Banik	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

My name is Colleen Rost-Banik and I am a resident of Waikiki. I strongly oppose SB2764, which would effectively transfer the State oversight and funds for arts and culture to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Arts and culture should NOT be in the hands of business, tourism and economic development. Arts and culture are not simply commodities to be used for profit, which is what transferring these responsibilities to the DBEDT would make them.

Please reject SB2764 and keep arts and culture out of the control of business and tourism.

Mahalo for your time and attention.

Colleen Rost-Banik

7 February 2024

Senator Lynn DeCoite

Hawaii State Capitol

415 S. Beretania St. Room 230

Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Opposition to SB2764

Dear Senator DeCoite,

I am writing to express my opposition to SB2764, which proposes the transfer of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, alongside the repeal of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission.

As a professional working in the arts sector, I have witnessed firsthand the profound impact that art can have on individuals' lives and the broader community. Therefore, I am deeply concerned about the potential negative consequences of this bill, particularly for Maui County.

One significant concern is the potential budgetary impact of transferring the foundation to another department. According to statistics from the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), state arts agencies that underwent such changes experienced an average budget decrease of 76%. This raises valid questions about the assurance of maintaining adequate funding for the arts under the proposed transfer.

Additionally, the repeal of the SFCA Commission would result in the loss of neighbor island representation, undermining the foundation's commitment to community representation, transparency, and community-based decision-making. These principles are fundamental to the foundation's mission and should not be compromised.

Moreover, by limiting support for native Hawaiian culture and arts to an economic and tourism perspective, this bill overlooks the intrinsic value of preserving and promoting authentic traditions. Maintaining an independent culture and arts organization is essential for safeguarding these traditions and ensuring their continued perpetuation.

Furthermore, I question whether the priorities of education and access to the arts will receive adequate attention within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. It is crucial to align the department's objectives with the unique needs, priorities, and funding requirements of culture and the arts to ensure their sustained development and accessibility.

In light of these concerns, I urge all committee members to carefully consider the potential consequences outlined above and to vote against the further advancement of SB2764.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Chelsea Kau

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 7:56:17 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
marcy katz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565! SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and

Tourism. Revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. ALL NONEXPERTS in

the field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous and reflects the darker history of humanity. These bills would cut outer island representation and silence the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart [integrity]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds the people of Hawal'i advocated for since the 80s. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards

for receiving funding from primary outside sources. Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "Cultural Prostitution." Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills

. We have 56 years of living in Hawaii being so proud that Hawaii was the first state and the newest to mandate the 1% \$ to go to arts and culture organized by the State foundation of culture and arts managed by the people that had the expertise to do so. Yes, we need to appeal to tourists, BUT art and culture is of the people of hawaii and by those who practice and support it, not by those who have business and tourism expertise only. PLEASE continue to support Culture and Arts by the folks who know it best and practice it best.

Marcy Katz

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 7:37:35 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Catherine Yee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a strong supporter of the Arts in Hawaii.

I am not in support of this measure. The bill should be carefully reviewed before further action is taken.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 7:34:38 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jodie Chock	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an arts educator in support of perpetuating the arts and culture in our communities, especially for the younger generations, I am in great **OPPOSITION of SB2764.**

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 5:57:37 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Suzanne Ivey	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Just say NO ... to lose the communities voices on funding for the arts would be a travesty. We need the arts to stay in the hands and hearts of the people!
this is not something to be decided on by those who push tourism. Our Keoki and our island home deserve better.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 5:27:44 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Motter Anne Snell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB 2764.

Chair Chris Lee
Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye

Senate Committee on Transportation & Culture & the Arts

Chair Lynn DeCoite
Vice Chair Glenn Wakai

Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, & Tourism

Thursday, February 8th, 2024
3:05 PM

**TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SENATE BILL 2764 RELATING TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM**

Aloha Chair(s) Lee & DeCoite, Vice Chair(s) Inouye & Wakai, Member(s) of the Senate Committee on Transportation & Culture & the Arts and Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development & Tourism,

My name is Jun Shin. I believe that the arts should be enjoyed by everyone in society and I am testifying as an individual in **OPPOSITION** to **SB2764**, Relating to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.

Firstly, I am concerned at the signal it sends to transfer the foundation to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Is this a signal that there is a desire among some at the legislature to shift the work of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts towards making more profit for the state? How about the work of the foundation in making art accessible to the public for its enjoyment?

Secondly, I am deeply confused and concerned as to why there is an attempt to abolish the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Ideally the commission is the place where those who care deeply about the foundation can get involved, abolishing means losing that passion. Getting rid of the commission means getting rid of seats at the table (including for those in the neighbor islands) where community members are not just indirectly participating in public policy through voting or giving testimony, but actively making decisions that shape the direction of one part of state government.

Please **DEFER** Senate Bill 2764.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Jun Shin,

State House District 23 | State Senate District 12

Cell: 808-255-6663

Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com

6th February 2024

The Honorable Chris Lee
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
Hawaii State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

SUBJECT: Opposition to SB2764 Relating to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.

Dear Chair Lee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important measure relating to the structure changes in the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA). As a born and raised resident of Maui County, public high school graduate and an individual working to make a career in art and design, I am writing to **strongly oppose SB 2764**.

I OPPOSE this measure for the following reasons:

1. As written, this bill will negatively affect the SFCA as it currently stands, removing the board of commissioners, including neighbor island representation. The structure that was thoughtfully put together and built upon for nearing 60 years from its fruition in 1965 will be lost and instantly strip Hawai'i from future benefits from SFCA. Currently, the board is made up of members from diverse backgrounds in the Arts and together they make a melting pot of ideas, much like our Hawai'i is a state. As a member of a public this ensures and reflects fair decision making.
2. Moving the SFCA to the department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) is a risk to the core values of the foundation. My first exposure to the SFCA was as a student in high school. As a student, one program that stood out to me was the Art in Public Places program. Thanks to SFCA, we do not need to visit museums but we can view art throughout the State, in everyday life. We had Art right on campus at our high school and many other public locations on Maui. This is just one example of the many programs SFCA supports that have little to do with economic development or tourism. The goal of SFCA has always been to perpetuate arts and culture for our own people of Hawai'i. The move to DBEDT may forever change or

diminish these programs that are so valuable to young artists and our communities.

3. The effects of this measure will negatively impact funding to SFCA. The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics over the years shows that moving the placement of State art agencies has a history of decreasing budgets by 76%. This means less or no funding for longstanding Arts education programs for students from K-12 across the state. As a student who directly benefited from and now an adult who has seen firsthand how art has positively impacted students and communities, it is disheartening to know this is on the line. For some students, SFCA has been the stepping stone that has propelled them into successful careers in art and design.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts not only supports Arts programming, but it is collecting a historical record of Cultural and Arts for our future generations. By providing grants to folk and cultural practitioners, supporting our Poet Laureate, educational programs and purchasing work for our State collection, the SFCA is creating a capsule of Hawai'i's history through the arts that will *always* belong to the people. As our world is rapidly changing around us, SFCA has been a constant pillar to the Arts community and I respectfully request you to consider this and **oppose SB2764**.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Matsumoto

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:24:51 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kenny Endo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Kenny Endo, oppose the dismantling of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. The arts are an important and intergral part of our lives. Funding for the arts will become scarce if the SFCA is eliminated.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 11:19:44 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Yee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii SFCA is extremely important to the communities of greater Hawaii. It should remain in tact as-is so it can continue to provide platforms and representation for artists, thought leaders, cultural advocates, and organizations throughout the state. In addition, transparency is very much important, and it is something that the current SFCA provides - placing the SFCA under the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism would threaten that transparency, as well as the integrity. The passing of SB2764 would be a travesty.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 11:06:04 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Kidd	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this measure to move the SFCA to the dept of business, economic, development and tourism. I feel this will create a conflict of interest in preserving native Hawaiiin cultural needs versus driving more tourism

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 10:50:20 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jorin Young	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My Hawaiian cultural practices are not a ploy for tourism. We don't even have culture and arts implemented in every school across the islands, and it's not easily accessible for Hawaiians that are born and raised. It's a privilege to learn about our own culture and cultivate it amongst our own people. What would DBEDT be able to do with our peoples history? Our islands are already a tourist trap. Where will the boundary be drawn between recruiting tourism numbers, and the cultivation and preservation of Hawaiian history? We are not promised it will maintain our rich authentic traditions, and this transfer will allow for our traditions and culture to be tainted and masked for tourism needs. Please do not allow for Hawai'i to go backwards.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 10:28:48 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Candace Choy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in opposition to bill SB2764.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 10:20:09 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sean-Joseph T.K. Choo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Respected Senators,

The SFCA and Captiol Modern are important to me as institutions that stand for art and artists, not tourist money-making schemes (no disrespect to DBEDT or any good reasons for this administrative shift). I am interested in hearing more about why DBEDT would be a good fit for SFCA, especially since:

"DBEDT's mission continues to be achieving a Hawai'i economy that embraces innovation and is globally competitive, dynamic and productive, providing opportunities for all Hawai'i's citizens. Through our attached agencies, we also foster planned community development, create affordable workforce housing units in high-quality living environments, and promote innovation sector job growth."

This seems in contrast to SFCA's mission:

"The mission of the SFCA is to promote, perpetuate, and preserve culture and the arts in Hawai'i."

Additionally, if the SFCA exists for "...diversity...transparency, and community-based decision making..." then stripping the organization of its current commission structure that (very importantly) has representation from all the islands in the pae 'āina and relegating that responsibility to DBEDT feels at odds with both diversity and community-based decision making. It also feels odd to me that the SFCA could potentially become a part of a department linked to HTA and development-minded orgs. Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of culture and the arts?

To eliminate the commission would be to throw out the SFCA's 50+ year history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision making.

I probably don't need to remind you of the legacy of Alfred Preis whose designs of various buildings around town (including the Arizona Memorial) are a testament to the power of public art. I probably don't need to remind you of his many years of heading the SFCA, and being instrumental in creating the landmark Percent for Art Program, funded by the Works of Art

Special Fund is found in [chapter 103-8.5](#), Hawai'i Revised Statutes, where money from development and renovation goes towards arts and culture, not the other way around.

To have access to funding, space, and support from the American Rescue Plan individual artists grant funding and SFCA to help me produce my queer theatre arts playreading series at Capitol Modern was something that was very special to me. Being granted money was an honor, and a relief to not have to worry about some bills a couple years ago. But more than that, the support of the wonderful people that work at the SFCA, just like the support of my mentors and other artists who have encouraged me along the way, have meant the world to me in my growth as an artist and human being. I fear that this shift for SFCA may negatively affect the potential for curators and artistic administrators and colleagues of mine to better promote art and artists. I hope amendments made to these statutes are taken seriously, thoughtfully, and not to make a quick buck by using artists.

Mahalo,

Sean Choo

Theater Artist
Head Advocate, Kamamo House

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 9:07:38 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kara Almonte	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a local artist, born and raised on Oahu, I strongly oppose this bill. To repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission would be a profound mistake. The funding and opportunities that come to local musicians, artists, exhibitionists and extending organizations would be severely hindered if not become nonexistent, should this bill pass. Currently, there is barely enough funding for arts and culture in our public schools and communities that this would be a major blow to the integrity and accessibility that is being provided. This bill is detrimental to the nurturing of arts and culture in our communities.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 10:19:13 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Taylor	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY oppose passage of SB2764. At a time when the Arts are in dire need of support putting them under the Department of Tourism makes ABSOLUTELY NO SENSE AT ALL. Oh my goodness!!!! Who is the world dreams up things like this? How will this be of benefit to anyone or anything? Please please please defeat this Bill.

Thank you for your consideration of my strong opposition to SB 2764.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 9:34:04 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laurel Nakanishi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to oppose Bill SB2764 that would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism and repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. The arts are of vital importance to Hawai'i. The SFCA does essential work to bring arts to young people, and community members of all ages. Repealing the SFCA Commission would mean losing neighbor island representation and eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.

This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Finally, the elimination of the commission would cause the SFCA to lose valuable coordinator positions like the Arts Education Specialist, the Folk and Traditional Arts Specialist and the Community Arts Specialist. These people are what allow for the arts to thrive in Hawai'i.

Please help the arts stay a meaningful, rich and robust presence in Hawai'i by opposing SB2764.

Mahalo,
Laurel

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 9:19:10 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steven Kean	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill and its potential to defeat the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community-based decision-making. The prospect of no longer being able to access federal funding will have a detrimental trickle-down effect on the arts, art education, culture, and communities here in the Hawaiian Islands. It is essential to have an independent arts organization to ensure the perpetuation of the authentic traditions of Native Hawaiians.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 9:03:23 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Punihaole Kennedy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

Government leaders are not cultural experts and should not be governing the State Foundation of Culture and the Arts Commission. True cultural practitioners from all the islands should be consulted and heard. Our Hawaiian Culture must have a safe space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development to perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Therefore, I ask that you vote in opposition to SB2764.

Mahalo

Cynthia Punihaole Kennedy

Kalaoa, North Kona, Hawaii Island 96740

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 8:56:36 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please HOLD this misguided measure.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 8:09:27 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rowland Morita	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB 2764 to repeal the SFCA Commission.

The SFCA is crucial to the support of the arts and artists of our state, including Kauai.

Please allow the SFCA Commission to continue to function and do the wonderful job that they have been doing for so many years and I'm sure will continue for years to come!

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 7:58:56 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Ruby	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Laura Ruby and I am opposed to SP 2764. I have known the two of the three founders of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and knew them very well--Alfred Preis Reuel Denny (and just an introduction to Pundy Yokouchi). They were all very committed to doing the best for culture and the arts. When I was a reviewer for grants for the SFCA, one of the criterion was "arts and culture for underserved locations."

At the founding of the State Foundation it was firmly stated that the neighbor islands were to be benefitted. This is so important, because culture and the arts not only provides for the creative endeavors, but also for the audience, and for the future of the keiki, who might want to go into various fields of filmmaking, music, dance, the visual arts, theater, and literature--all of the various arts so important to the "Hawai'i sense of place."

Over the decades I have been a part of many SFCA awards ceremonies including the Hawai'i Literary Arts Council Award for Literature (among the awardees were Mary Pukui and Samuel Elbert, W.S. Merwin, Maxine Hong Kingston, Reuel Denney, Marjorie Sinclair, and Leon Edel), and the SFCA Individual Artist Fellowships (of which I was a recipient). These should be continued again honoring the best in the arts and culture realm.

Removing the SFCA to the DBEDT will make the SFCA into a business model. The Foundation is not a business model. The SFCA is for the well-being of our whole Hawai'i community. It's about Hawai'i quality of life, so please deny this bill.

Furthermore, I've known every single Executive Director of the SFCA (with the exception of the most current one), and each one of them has been trying to do his/her absolute very best to keep the Foundation to its original mission. Alfred Price, the first Executive Director obviously had a great affinity for architecture as he designed the Arizona Memorial and many other buildings in town, but he was also very much committed to all of the arts.

There is small section of the bill stating that the Governor would appoint the Executive Director, but that is a normal thing that the Governor goes for all boards, for all commissions, and should be for all Executive Director positions. So, a person submits his/her application, it is reviewed by state employees overseeing the position criteria. The SFCA Commission then reviews the applicants and selects, in priority order, the best person suited for the job, and then the Governor makes the hire. I believe it should be a local search.

I thank you very much for this testimony please take it to heart, but this is something for the well-being, and the health of the Hawai'i community. It is not a business model, and this bill should be denied. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Laura Ruby

1 808 366-0847

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 7:36:14 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Warren Suzuki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am not in support of this measure at this time. The bill should be carefully reviewed before further action is taken. Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 7:36:11 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tlaloc tokuda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. ALL NONEXPERTS in the field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous and reflects the darker history of humanity. These bills would cut out island representation and silence the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart [integrity]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources. Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "Cultural Prostitution." Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 7:29:58 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Allegra Matsuo Mossman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello, Chairperson and members of the committee:

As a citizen of Hawaii who has grown up going to the then Hawaii State Art Museum, now Capitol Modern, it concerns me the limitations that might be placed should the foundation of arts and culture be repealed and placed under the business and tourism department. Losing the neighbor island representation of a commission I believe would be also detrimental to the SCFA and would be a loss to the heart of it's mission of empowering artists across the state. It surprised me to see that, after great local outreach over the years, that Capitol Modern may be affected so drastically and in such a way.

Aloha,

Allegra

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 6:56:06 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Clarice Miki Yokouchi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in opposition to SB 2764.

The enactment of SB 2764 would forever change the Hawaii's State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, the official arts agency of the State.

Not only would SB 2764 eliminate the agency's board of commissioners, but it would also take away critical funding opportunities. The agency will not be able to receive funding from the National Endowment for the Arts – funding that supports the Artist in the Schools program, training for teachers and artists, and various other arts programs.

I respectfully ask that this bill be reviewed carefully, and consideration be given to its impacts on our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 6:19:40 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolann Biederman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to SB2764. I write as a resident who is deeply nurtured and inspired by the creativity of the local artists and nonprofit arts and culture organizations in our state. I oppose SB 2764 to transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; repeal the SFCA Commission; and require the Governor to select the Executive Director of the SFCA, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

The richness and diversity of the arts in Hawai‘i – music, dance, visual arts, Hawaiian culture, media, crafts – impressed and inspired me from the day I arrived 36 years ago and I have supported the arts ever since. I've worked as a consultant to the nonprofit sector for the past 20 years in the areas of executive transition, grant writing, special events, and project management. Many of my clients are arts organizations. Through first-hand experience, I can say without reservation that repealing the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission will limit the independent voices of arts leaders who represent communities around the state and compromise the SFCA’s vital grant-making programs and partnerships.

It is critical that the SFCA policies continue to be informed by an independent Commission composed of individuals who know and understand the arts in its many forms, from many perspectives, rather than only from an Executive Director selected by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The SFCA Commission serves a real need and deserves to be celebrated and supported, not disbanded. While the administrative transfer from DAGS to DBEDT may be beneficial if it increases the efficiency of delivering SFCA grant contracts to grant awardees, the abolition of the SFCA Commission entirely discourages the community input necessary to be ever-responsive to changing arts and culture needs of students and our communities.

After 50+ years of the SFCA’s innovative multi-cultural leadership, SB2764 in its current form, sends a negative message. The bill will hobble and compromise resources for individual artists, cultural practitioners, educators and arts and culture nonprofit organizations that depend on grants from the SFCA for critical funding. In turn, their artistic output, funded by the SFCA, may result in limited engagement with students, teachers, audiences of all ages and educational results for beneficiaries in communities on every island. The SFCA must continue to make meaningful grants and support those who make creative dreams into realities. I ask you to oppose SB 2764

and maintain the SFCA Commission in its current form. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely, Carolann Biederman, 44-391 Nilu St. #4, Kaneohe, HI 96744

cabc.consulting@gmail.com

As an educator, artist, parent, researcher, and community member, I strongly object to 2764 SB RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM.

If SB2764 Transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, there would be several negative impacts on the culture and the arts in Hawaii.

- 1) HSFCA currently prioritizes education. For example, for the past 25 years, Artist in the Schools (AITS) grants support both teaching artist professionals, and the standards based services to children and teachers throughout the state. Hawaii Community Foundation matches the state funds and as a result, millions of Hawaii children have experienced learning with, in, through, and about the arts. The department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism does not prioritize education, and therefore these quality programs would be at risk.
- 2) HSFCA currently prioritizes access to the arts. As a critical leader in the ARTS FIRST legislation, HSFCA anchors community partners and art in public places so that communities that are hard to reach can still experience access and equity in the arts. The department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism does not prioritize access to the arts, and therefore these quality programs would be at risk.
- 3) According to [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies \(NASAA\) statistics](#), state arts agencies who placement changed had an average budget decrease by 76%. The public CANNOT be assured the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer.
- 4) Losing neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.
- 5) This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Thank you for considering the many ways our community, which holds a unique position with respect to arts and culture in the Pacific, would suffer if this bill passes.

Jamie Simpson Steele

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 5:58:30 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elliot Omiya	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Chairpersons and Members,

As a West Hawai'i community member and a supporter and committee member of the Donkey Mill Art Center in Holualoa, I strongly oppose SB2764 for three reasons:

1. **Budget Cuts:** Transferring the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to another department like the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) could lead to significant budget cuts. According to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), such changes have led to an average budget decrease of 76% for state arts agencies. Even a 25% cut could endanger vital SFCA programs like Artist-in-the-Schools (AITS) and the Arts in Public Places Acquisition Program.
2. **Loss of Representation:** The bill proposes eliminating the SFCA Commissioners and allowing the Governor to appoint the Executive Director with Senate approval. This could undermine transparency and community-based decision-making, as it removes representation from outer island organizations, artists, and cultural practitioners. Furthermore, without a community-represented board, Hawai'i may lose eligibility for National Endowment for the Arts funding, according to NASAA.
3. **Importance of Arts and Culture:** Arts and culture are essential for community well-being. They connect us to our heritage, provide a therapeutic outlet for expressing emotions, and help us build resilience, especially in times of crisis like the pandemic and the Maui wildfires.

I urge you to consider these points and oppose SB2764. Thank you for your consideration.

With gratitude and aloha,

Elliot Omiya

Holualoa, HI

Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
Hearing on SB 2764
Relating to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism

February 8, 2024

Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Gail Mukaihata Hannemann. I am submitting my personal testimony in **OPPOSITION of SB2764**. The bill fundamentally changes the mission, purpose, and functions of the State Foundation and Culture and Arts (SFCA) by eliminating the current commission, restructuring critical personnel, and embedding it in the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT).

The changes being suggested, create the conditions in which the opportunities to study, practice, experience, and share the wisdom and understanding gained through culture and the arts will be limited, therefore, detrimental to communities throughout the state. For the mission of SFCA is, “to promote, perpetuate and preserve culture and the arts in Hawai‘i.”

This is not to say that DBEDT’s mission is misguided. Rather because its purpose is to develop and grow Hawai‘i’s economy, it views culture and the arts through a business lens. Achievements are measured by the monetary value the work products and services of the creative sector bring to the state’s coffers and the return on investment in quantifiable dollars. While it’s important that cultural and artistic creators enjoy economic success, if the Legislature makes the changes suggested in this bill, one must question how the creative sector will be sustained over time. DBEDT does not have the capacity to deliver on significant aspects of SFCA’s mission such as arts education and curated museum visits, nor is it within its mission to do so. SFCA as we know it, is critical to ensuring the people of Hawaii’s are grounded in their history, culture, and arts. All necessary elements for a thriving, democratic society.

Also, SFCA is a state arts agency (SAA). Like its counterparts in every state and insular area in our nation, this organizational structure makes it possible for SAAs to receive 40% of the federal grant dollars Congress provides to the National Endowment for the Arts.” According to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), “State arts exemplify government by, for and of the people. Each state arts agency is governed by a council of citizen leaders that oversees its work. Broad public engagement is central to state arts agency planning, grant decisions and programs that respond to local needs. <https://nasaa-arts.org/state-arts-agencies/>. Thus, it is imperative, especially in this hyper-politized, highly contentious world we are living in, that the SFCA continues to exist as an independent state arts agency so our culture and our arts can enrich our lives and communities beyond the almighty dollar.

Thank you for allowing me to share my views about the bill. I urge you not to support the bill.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 5:44:38 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Momi Nuuhiwa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565!

SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. It requires the Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. ALL NONEXPERTS in the field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous.

These bills would cut outer island representation and silence the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities, giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background and experience. Instead, in tourism and economic development, the funds the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s, will be used indiscriminately and would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "Cultural Prostitution."

Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Mahalo,

Momi Nu'uhiwa

Hilo, Hawai'i

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 4:12:36 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Suzanne Sato	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislature:

SB2764 proposes transferring the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT). Repeals the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the Governor to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

With respect to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, the proposed bill is ill-advised and would do irreparable damage to the already fragile ecosystem of the arts in Hawai‘i. It also ignores the needs of the variety of arts organizations that are served by SFCA that do not intersect with the work of DBEDT.

I am a Board member of the Honolulu Theatre for Youth which just celebrated 64 years of operation. It is the only fully professional theatre company in Hawai‘i in that it pays its artists full-time, albeit modest, salaries. My own background is in arts administration with an MFA from the Yale School of Drama, eight years of producing non-profit theatre and dance in New York City, and 16 years of philanthropy on behalf of performing arts and film production nationwide for the Rockefeller Foundation and the AT&T Foundation.

Commercial production which is the purview of DBEDT in no way acknowledges the role of the arts in the non-profit sector in developing new work and artists, in arts education, and in giving voice and public access to the array of artistic expression that has not and will not find its way to the retail public. The diverse artistic expression of Hawai‘i would be severely hamstrung by limiting resources to market forces and tourism.

DBEDT’s title says it all – resources for cultural and artistic expression in Hawai‘i should not be adjudicated by the interests of Business, Economic Development or Tourism. The arts community should be supported by an agency that understands the breadth of its constituencies and needs—SFCA.

Losing SFCA means:

- Losing neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community-based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.
- Limiting native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. An independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians, which cannot be assured as a branch of an DBEDT.
- Endangering the priorities of education and access to the arts.

Honolulu Theatre for Youth (HTY) is very active in the Artists in the Schools programs and is one of the most respected sources of classroom residencies statewide. More than 100,000 school children attend HTY school performances each year, and hundreds of families see HTY public productions. SFCA helps HTY serve schools, teachers, the Neighbor Islands, as well as children with developmental differences and disabilities. We know that the community values the art we produce, and we have been fortunate enough to receive national accolades as well, including regional Emmy Awards, and recognition from our TYA (Theatre for Young Audiences) peers across the country.

SFCA has been a partner, expert advisor and resource for the arts community for decades, and its positive impact on the community far exceeds its much too modest budget. SFCA has been punching far above its weight on behalf of the arts for years and repealing it would disadvantage a set of organizations that collectively enrich the quality of life across Hawai'i.

Please do not pass SB2764. Thank you for your attention.

Suzanne M. Sato

Kaka'ako resident

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 4:06:13 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen Suzuki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am not in support of this measure at this time. The bill should be carefully reviewed before further action is taken. Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 4:02:33 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristen Jordan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please consider the following.

Impact of Transferring to another department:

- According to [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies \(NASAA\) statistics](#), state arts agencies whose placement changed had an average budget decrease by 76%. How can the public be assured the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer?

Impact of repealing the SFCA Commission:

- Losing neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.
- This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.
- Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of culture and the arts.

Thank you for your consideration, Kristen Jordan

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 3:56:56 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary R. Begier	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Lee, Senator Wakai, Members of Committee, I am writing as a tax payer, a private citizen of Hawaii. I live on Hawaii island and proudly represented the island of Hawaii on the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture & the Arts (HSFCA) for 8 years. I served as chair for 18 months of that 8 years. Prior to serving as chair of HSFCA I chaired the Grants committee for 5 years. I was recruited to serve on HSFCA for my business background and respect and appreciation for the arts and culture of our communities. Having neighbor island representation on HSFCA is critical and crucial! The idea to do away with the HFSCA commission is so inappropriate for an agency that has such a broad mission with a success rate that is envied by other programs. I am startled to see it even suggested let alone put in a bill for consideration.

It is always a challenge to glean from a bill what may have instigated action of this nature so I offer my time to learn more about your intentions. Anytime there are as many employees and volunteers as the arts community hosts there are bound to be differences. I find that the differences are the root of work being done to a higher standard thus better serving the taxpayers that fund an entity such as the HSFCA.

During my tenure the Governor selected the Chair of HSFCA who then works very closely with the Executive Director. The ED is responsible for the staff, the Chair is responsible for the Board Members Participation. While I served on the commission, we had 3 ED's. Human nature being what it is they all had strengths and weaknesses. I like to think the person we hired as I departed the commission did a quality job as they served for several years. The current Executive Director came up through the ranks and strives to bring out the talent of the staff as well as the numerous volunteers in the arts and culture programs. Being the Executive Director of such a multi-faceted organization takes a very special person. Continuity is important to programs. Having the ED appointed by a political body doesn't seem like a wise HR decision to my business mind. The State of Hawaii is a business, we need to strive to run more of our programs in a business-like manner.

Please do NOT destroy the good work of the arts community. Please hold SB2764 today. I close with offering my ear if either of you esteemed Senators wish to discuss further with me your intentions. Thank you for your many years of service! With Aloha Mary Begier

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 3:47:39 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Douglas	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB2764 and HB2565.

It is no coincidence that the academic community has finally embraced and added the A for arts in STEAM. The very device that you are using to read this was created by engineers steeped in the arts. Apple the most successful of corporations counts the arts as a core competency. Steve Jobs valued the arts. The book “The Toyota Way”, expounds the use of creativity and is considered a must have skill. Our future workers benefit from exposure to the arts. it's a competitive edge. Travelling in Europe one becomes painfully aware that American expenditures on public art are embarrassingly anaemic. Incredibly the outer islands have no museums of art. This is so embarrassing.

SB2764 and HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires that the Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate of which few and probably none have experience in the professional field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous and harks back to a very dark period of history.

These bills would cut outer island representation and silence the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart or integrity and instead to people with a vested interest in tourism and economic development. These funds have been advocated by the people of Hawaii since the 80's. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

The leadership of Arts and Culture must be in the hands of expert practitioners and never be under the stewardship of corporate interests.

The commission must continue to be well-represented with neighbouring island voices and experts in this field. Culture must be guided by practitioners and educated professionals especially when it comes to preserving and promoting kānaka maoli culture otherwise, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, we are headed towards "Cultural Prostitution."

To be clear, the dismantling the SFCA and its funding is tantamount to cultural and economic hari-kari.

Respectfully,

Bob Douglas

Hilo, HI 96720

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 3:44:00 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Y Omura	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am presently not in support of this proposal as further careful review of its ramifications should take place. Moving in this direction may jeopardize neighbor island representation.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 3:41:31 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gary Mukai	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I do not support this measure right now. The bill should be carefully reviewed before further action is taken.

Respectfully,

Gary Mukai

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 3:27:09 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Allan Murayama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in opposition to SB2764 which transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism and repeals the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission.

As a resident of Maui County, the disturbing negative impact and consequences of this bill are my main concerns:

Impact of Transferring to another department: According to National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics, state arts agencies who placement changed had an average budget decrease by 76%. How can the public be assured the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer?

Impact of repealing the SFCA Commission:

Losing neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.

This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of culture and the arts. I urge all committee members hearing testimony in support of this bill to seriously consider these consequences and vote AGAINST the further advancement of SB2764.

Thank you for your consideration

allan murayama

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 3:03:31 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
bailey a ferguson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairpersons and members of the Transportation and Culture and the Arts Committee as well as Chairpersons and members of Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism Committee,

As a member of the West Hawai'i community member of Donkey Mill Art Center I strongly OPPOSE bill SB2764.

First, I address the opposition to moving SFCA to another department like DBEDT. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics show that state arts agencies facing such changes experienced an average budget decrease of 76%. Even a 25% budget cut for SFCA could jeopardize vital programs that the Foundation administers like Artist-in-the-Schools (AITS) and the Arts in Public Places Acquisition Program. How can we ensure the arts won't face funding cuts with this proposed transfer?

Secondly, I strongly oppose the second half of bill SB2764, which would eliminate the Commissioners of SFCA and allow the Governor to appoint the Executive Director of the Foundation with support of the Senate. This is alarming for outer island organizations, artists, and cultural practitioners as it removes neighbor island and community representation, undermining transparency and community-based decision-making, core values of the Foundation. Every voice in the arts and culture community matters, as representation is critical for those consistently repressed but needing amplification. The Commissioners, experts in our field, represent the entire arts and culture community. Giving sole authority to the Governor to appoint the Executive Director risks appointing someone lacking expertise in arts and culture, endangering vital programs. Additionally, according to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), Hawai'i may lose eligibility for National Endowment for the Arts funding without a community-represented board. How can the public be assured that the voices of the arts and culture communities will be represented with the removal of the Commissioners and a Governor appointed Executive Director?

Finally, I emphasize why advocating for arts and culture matters. Arts and culture are the fabric of our communities, linking us to our heritage and enabling story sharing. Art heals. The pandemic has deeply impacted mental health, particularly among our youth and communities. As we all continue to heal from the Maui wildfires, arts and culture offer powerful support. Creative expression serves as a therapeutic outlet, allowing individuals to articulate emotions that words often cannot capture. Arts create a refuge where emotions can be woven into resilience. By embracing creativity, we heal wounds and equip future generations to face challenges. Supporting thriving arts and culture is an investment in community well-being, ensuring that future generations not only survive, but flourish.

I sincerely thank you for your consideration to oppose bill SB2764.

With gratitude,

Bailey Ferguson

Kailua-Kona, 96740

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 2:44:12 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Otani	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am NOT in support of this measure at this time. The bill should be carefully reviewed before further action is taken.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 2:38:43 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathi Mukai	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I do not presently support this measure. The bill should be carefully reviewed and considered before further action is taken.

Respectfully,

Kathi Mukai

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 2:21:00 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ross Wilson Jr.	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

DBEDT has enough on its plate without adding SFCA. While the arts are indeed a component of our Hawaii economy, don't fix what's not broken. Leave SFCA where it is.

Mahalo,

Ross Wilson Jr.

Kailua-Kona

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 9:26:13 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marsha Schweitzer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony on **SB2764**

I have a long history with the SFCA, going back to its early days when Alfred Preis was its director. As an arts manager, I have written grants to the SFCA for several organizations, and I was on the SFCA grants review panel twice in the 1970s. As an artist, I have received SFCA funds in my paychecks in the course of practicing my musical profession. I have a good knowledge of how the SFCA has functioned in the community and among artists and their organizations, and the powerful effect it has had on the success of Hawaii's arts.

Therefore, I am opposed to anything that would weaken the SFCA, reduce its budget, obscure its visibility to artists and the public, or take control away from those with knowledge and experience in the arts. I suspect that this bill would have a negative effect in all these ways.

Your description of the bill does not tell us about the motivation for this bill. I am concerned that it is based on a misunderstanding of the purpose of the SFCA. The SFCA was not created and does not function primarily for economic development or tourism. It exists to support, protect, and defend Hawaii's arts, artists, and arts organizations and to present their work to the public. Hawaii's artists and resident population are the main focus and primary beneficiaries of SFCA-funded programs. There are of course economic benefits to this work, and tourists may also partake in Hawaii's arts, but these are ancillary to the main purpose of the SFCA. As Hawaii's federally recognized state arts agency, it needs to keep its independence and keep art, not economics, as its top priority and reason for existence.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:04:44 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Greene	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

OPPOSE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 9:58:32 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Janes-Brown	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Paul Janes-Brown, the former vice chair of education for the Maui Democratic Party, a 26 year resident of Upcountry Maui. I have been involved in the arts for my entire 75 years and 11 months on this planet. I was the first coordinator of Cultural Affairs for the City of Hartford, Ct. I received national recognition for the Youth Art Employment Program I developed utilizing Comprehensive Employment & Training Act Funds, and a replication study was done. I served on the commission to establish an Arts Policy for the City of Hartford, I was responsible for obtaining a \$50,000 matching grant to install original works of Art by the great African-American artist, Romare Bearden at the Hartford Civic Center.

Here on Maui, i was the arts reviewer for the Maui News, Lahaina News and Maui Weekly for 15 years. I've a weekly arts review tv show with Maui TVNews and Akaku since 2010. I was the general manager of the Maui Academy of Performing Arts, directed several plays and acted in a few as well. I am also an arts consultant advising the state on works of art for purchase through our first in the nation arts in public places program.

I actively participated in the development of the percent for art program in Connecticut and in Hartford and that is when I became aware of Masaru “Pundy” Yokouchi, the first Chairman of the Commission this bill seeks to dismantle. Pundy was responsible for developing the first state Art in Public Places Program in the nation, making Hawai’i the paragon for all other art in public places programs, not just in the states of this country, but also in every major city and town throughout America. He was a visionary. A saint, who advocated not only for Art in Public Places, but he also established the Artist in the Schools Program. A program which has transformed education and demonstrated the value of the arts to the human spirit.

Pundy used to say, “art is education and art is for everyone.” This bill would defy that statement. It is an insult to his memory and his legacy and belongs in the trash. I urge you to put it there. Please do not let this bill leave this committee.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 9:33:51 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tamara Moan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a teaching artist supported by the programs of the SFCA, I feel it is very important that the SFCA remain independent and not subsumed under DBEDT. The arts and culture activities of SFCA deserve more prominence and funding than they would receive as part of our state's tourism apparatus. As an artist and educator, my work is aimed at our local residents, celebrating our community and its richness.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 9:45:48 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cris Lindborg	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stronly oppose SB2764 and HB2565!

Cris Lindborg

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:17:53 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ChetYeng Loong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I opposed this bill, we need to support arts among our community. Kids need to have more experience making music and creating arts, which is critical for their Social Emotional Learning, which apply to the HA standards.

“...that sweet insincerity which aims only for success and for money should be suppressed under any circumstances.” Arnold Schoenberg, composer

inā ‘a‘ole i haki, mai ho‘oponopono (if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it)

I strongly oppose the SB2764 that would erroneously try to fix something that is not broken and thereby make it worse. This bill will send SFCA into a “death spiral.” We want Life. We want Peace. Art presupposes Peace. We as a species will survive only with Peace. The contemplation of Art and Music requires a peaceful environment. Support the Arts, increase funds to the Arts. Cultures are remembered not for their bridges, tall skyscrapers and international, commercial franchises. Cultures are remembered for the Art they create.

Here are some of the deleterious effects of this proposed legislation:

Impact of Transferring to another department:

- According to [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies \(NASAA\) statistics](#), state arts agencies who placement changed suffered significant (76%) budget decreases. How can the public be assured the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer?

Impact of repealing the SFCA Commission:

- Losing community and neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA’s community representation by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.
- This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.
- Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of **not for profit culture and the arts organizations**.
- To eliminate the commission would be to throw out the SFCA's 50+ year history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision making.

In 2022, nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences generated \$151.7 billion in economic activity—\$73.3 billion in spending by the organizations, which leveraged an additional \$78.4 billion in event-related spending by their audiences. The impact of this economic activity is far reaching, supporting 2.6 million jobs, generating \$29.1 billion in tax revenue, and providing \$101 billion in personal income to residents. AEP6 (the authoritative Arts and Economic Prosperity Study - <https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-6>) sends a strong signal that when we support the arts, we are investing in economic and community well-being.

However the Arts are essential in more profound ways than the material, economic, and bureaucratic. Imagination and creativity are uniquely human traits. Through our senses we experience colors, forms, sounds, and motion. We transform these objects of the senses into powerful, emotional, intellectual and healthily creative works. Such activity humanizes us and distinguishes us from the rest of the animal world. Such artistic activity enlivens our spirits and nourishes our soul with its beauty and freedom.

Art has always needed outside support: state, church, aristocratic, foundation, corporate, philanthropic, etc. If a market economy could alone sustain Art, then famous artists such as Dutch painter Vincent Van Gogh, German composer Franz Schubert and American author Herman Melville would have been rich men. But they made little money from their art during their lifetimes.

Art is a survival tool. There are countless stories of survivors from the Holocaust and other disasters who attended concerts or viewed exhibits, or heard a poetry reading that allowed them to enter the realm of Spirit and transcend the horrors of their subjugation. They survived because of Art. We must place the enlivenment of our spirits and nourishment of our souls as high a priority as the necessary sustenance of our bodies. Body is a function of Spirit. The experience of Art transcends and includes the experience of surviving. We must integrate Art into our lives and in all sectors of the society, private, civic and government. If we do not, then the reason for surviving disappears. Art reminds us of the priority of things - of what is most important in life. It pulls us away from the dark, destructive societal forces that create the “death spiral.”

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:14:58 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sabrina Saiki-Mita	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As faculty from the UH Manoa Music Department I strongly oppose SB2764 and feel that it would negatively impact the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Many of our students and faculty have benefited from SFCA support in the past. In 2 decades of teaching at the university, I have witnessed the loss of support for our department and how it has adversely impacted the students, and a bill like this would be another negative blow. Please do not allow this bill to pass!

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:20:09 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Arnold Rabin	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The state foundation and culture and arts s is provided our education in south Kona to many individuals for the 49 years I have lived here

It is a horrible idea to have the tourism bureau run the organization

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:20:31 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nona b wilson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am surprised by this legislation. So much work has been done to expand the sharing of our culture under the direction and management of the SFCA. To eliminate or move the SFCA under the DBET would place focus on economics verses culture of this ‘aina. What is our Hawaii Nei without its culture? .

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:20:53 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheryl-Lynn Suzuki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please accept this testimony in opposition to SB 2764.

SB 2764 will impact the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, our foundation whose mission is to promote and preserve culture and the arts in Hawaii.

It will eliminate the agency's board of commission, which is integral to providing representation across the islands on this subject.

The bill will also impact the funding that this agency relies on to carry out its mission.

Please consider the unintended effects of the passage of this bill.

Mahalo.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:29:10 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Marker	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairpersons Lee and Inouye and Members of the Transportation and Culture and the Arts Committee:

As an individual who loves our island arts and culture and believes it should be directed by our arts community, I oppose SB 2764.

We should not dismantle the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. The structure should not be changed to an Executive Director appointed by the Governor, working in the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBED&T). It should thrive with representation from our communities statewide and retain the membership and working structure of the current Commission. This provides for wider input and direction, including from appointed members from every island. Each of our islands have outstanding professionals in the field of culture, arts, and humanities. They are the experts on Hawaii's arts and culture. I believe our local artists and those of us who find such pleasure from their works would be directly impacted by no longer having a Commission. The direction and oversight should not be moved to DBED&T where it is uncertain how decisions will be made and if SFCA will be able to receive funding from various sources. This bill raises concerns about possible funding cuts and bureaucratic challenges resulting from the proposed transfer.

Children and adults, particularly in our rural communities who would not always be introduced to Hawaii's rich artistic talents, have benefited greatly from the work of the Commission and its spread of arts education and appreciation. I'm so thankful for what we're able to view and experience and I spread the word to many people who I know will appreciate it too. When I have visitors, I take them to see as much of our arts and culture as possible, pointing out the outdoor public arts as well as those in buildings. It should make us proud that we've done such a good job with cultivating and sharing our arts. I respectfully ask that you not move this bill forward.

Thank you for consideration of my written testimony.

Sincerely,

Nancy Marker

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:37:15 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Kajiwara	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. I am against SB2764 transferring the State Foundation on Culture and Arts (SFCA) to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, as well as the repeal of the SFCA Commission. The SFCA has been an integral part in developing, maintaining, and promoting Hawaii's unique local arts and culture scene. Art and culture are not the same as "business, economic development, and tourism" and should not be lumped together with them. Doing so will likely lead to a degradation and commercialization of Hawaii's art and culture, and hinder local artists from flourishing. Capitol Modern (the Hawaii State Art Museum) in particular is an important part of Hawaii, and it would be a loss for everyone if this bill were to negatively impact the museum. Mahalo for your time.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:41:53 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ronald Michioka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Ronald Michioka and I am a seated Commissioner on the Board of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA). I am writing in opposition to SB2764 and its likely deleterious effects on culture and the arts in the State of Hawai'i

The SFCA is dedicated to the perpetuation of authentic native Hawaiian traditions through its support and funding of culture and the arts in Hawai'i. This bill will effectively shift oversight of SFCA to a department that focuses primarily upon economic and tourism factors, to the exclusion of the more impactful factors of education and access to the arts that are so important to the nurturing and perpetuation of a vibrant and authentic culture and arts community.

SFCA has been diligently performing its duties and accounting for its expenditures and grants. I am not aware of any fiscal reason to transfer SFCA to an economic-based department separate from the Department of Accounting and General Services. Statistics also show that transferring an agency like SFCA to another department results in a dramatic decrease in the agency's budget. Neither SFCA nor the culture and arts community can function with further decreases in the already stringent budget. And, it is the public that bears the brunt of this.

Repealing the SFCA Commission sounds like a punitive measure, rather than an ameliorative step designed to correct some unidentified problem that requires such a drastic measure. Ask yourselves: What is the driving force behind this proposed change in the law? Besides, Commissioners are currently appointed by the Governor and confirmed via hearing in the appropriate Senate Committee. This is not inconsistent with what is being proposed by SB2764, which begs the question of whether SB2764 is even necessary or prudent.

Moreover, there is a real and daunting risk that representation of the neighbor island cultural communities will suffer, as will transparency, community-based decision making, and independence of culture and arts organizations.

I submit that SB2764 should not be adopted for the reasons set forth above, and the reasons presented to this Committee by the testimonies of others. Mahalo.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:50:27 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Manu Powers	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB 2764. Such a significant component of our culture should not be wrapped up in the bucket of business development and/or tourism.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 11:16:24 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Best	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Culture should not be under the domain of business

Mahao

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 11:17:36 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gertrude Koszarek	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB2764. If the State Foundation on Culture and Arts are moved to the business,economic and tourism to the department of business, economic and tourism I fear arts and Hawiian culture studies will suffer. According to statistics from NASAA (National Assembly of State Arts Programs) state arts programs lose an average of 76% of there funding when the placement is changed. We must not do this. We need a healthy art programs and Hawaiian cultural studies programs in our schools. Please do not do this to Hawaiian children.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 11:11:30 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terry Savage	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Terry Savage Testimony OPPOSING SB2764

Aloha Committee Members,

As a Hawaii taxpayer, artist, and arts patron I strongly oppose SB2764 which would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, and eliminate the SFCA Commission. Similar measures in other states have resulted in reduced public funding for arts and cultural programs. Continued support for SFCA's Artist-in-the-Schools, Biennium Grants to Arts Organizations, Arts in Public Places and other programs is necessary to enrich all of our lives.

Eliminating the Commissioner's of SFCA will move neighbor island and community representation in the agency's decision-making. Commissioners possess diverse expertise and represent the entire arts and cultural community. The removal of a community-represented board may also jeopardize important National Endowment for the Arts funding for SFCA.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts has nurtured quality arts and arts organizations in communities large and small throughout the state since its founding in 1965. Please do not enact SB2764 which will no doubt diminish the positive impact of state funded arts and cultural programs.

Thank you.

Testimony to Oppose SB 2764 - RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Wakai, and
Committee
Members,

As a resident of Hawai'i County and an advocate for the arts in our community, I am writing to oppose SB 2764

SB2764 proposes significant changes to the administration of the arts in Hawai'i. Specifically, it seeks to repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission (SFCA Commission), relocates SFCA within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, and mandates the Governor, with the Senate's advice and consent, to appoint the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA). This shift in governance structure could fundamentally alter how arts funding and policies are decided in Hawai'i.

Reasons for Opposition:

- Impact on Funding: Historical data from the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) indicates that state arts agencies undergoing similar governance changes have experienced an average budget decrease of 76%. This bill raises significant concerns about potential decreases in arts funding, which is critical for the flourishing of culture and the arts in Hawai'i.
- Diminished Neighbor Island Representation: The elimination of the SFCA Commission could lead to reduced representation for Neighbor Islands, impacting the equitable distribution of arts funding and the attention to diverse cultural needs across the state.
- Loss of Transparency and Community-Based Decision-Making: The commission's current structure supports transparency and incorporates community voices in decision-making processes. This bill threatens to

centralize control and potentially diminish community input that has been vital in shaping Hawai'i's vibrant arts landscape.

- **Uncertainty Around Priorities:** Placing the SFCA within a department focused on business, economic development, and tourism raises questions about the continued prioritization of education and equitable access to the arts. It is unclear how the SFCA's priorities will align with or be impacted by this new administrative arrangement.
- **A Step Backward for Arts and Education:** The arts and the work of the SFCA are crucial for creating connections and opportunities that transcend individual islands and communities. This bill represents a concerning step away from supporting artists and art education, which are essential for nurturing creativity, cultural understanding, and social cohesion in our state.

SB2764 poses significant risks to the funding, representation, and prioritization of arts in Hawai'i. I strongly urge the reconsideration of this bill to ensure the continued support and development of a rich cultural landscape in our state, which benefits all residents and visitors alike.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Stevens". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Matt Stevens

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 11:33:54 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colleen Chang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am not in support of SB 2764. I kindly ask that this measure be carefully reviewed before taking any more action.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 11:34:31 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elise von Dohlen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Regarding SB2764 Relating to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism

February 7, 2024

My name is Elise von Dohlen. I reside in Honolulu and am an advocate for the essential importance of arts and culture experiences for our community.

I oppose SB2764. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts should remain administratively attached to the Department of Accounting and General Services. This enables SFCA to continue to apply and receive needed federal funding to support arts and culture throughout our islands. Arts and culture programs continue to be underfunded, and the impact of this bill could be catastrophic. Additionally, the commission serves an important function to include diverse community voices and community-based decision making. Arts and culture are so much more than business development and tourism. It is also important that the Executive Director of the SFCA not be a Governor appointed position, to maintain continuity for this essential leadership position. To ensure the promotion, perpetuation, and preservation of culture and arts in Hawaii, this bill should not be passed.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 11:34:10 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Wong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing with strong, vehement OPPOSITION to SB2764 (the proposed repeal of the SFCA commission). As a passionate advocate for the arts and a concerned citizen, I firmly believe that dismantling this commission would be a grave mistake with far-reaching consequences for our community's cultural vitality.

The SFCA plays a pivotal role in fostering a vibrant and diverse arts scene within our state. This dedicated body has consistently championed initiatives that support local artists, cultural organizations, and educational programs, enriching the lives of residents and contributing to the overall well-being of our society. The commission's commitment to preserving and promoting the arts has been instrumental in creating a thriving cultural landscape that is the envy of many.

One of the key reasons I stand in strong opposition to the repeal is my firm belief that arts leadership should remain in the hands of individuals who possess a profound understanding and appreciation for the arts. The cultural landscape is nuanced, and those who guide its development must possess the insight to recognize the intrinsic value of artistic expression beyond the constraints of a profit-driven mindset. The arts are not a mere commodity; they are a reflection of our collective identity, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and empathy.

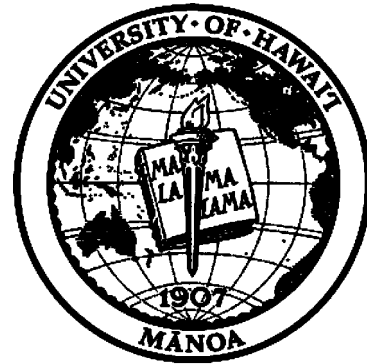
Furthermore, the SFCA has a track record of successfully navigating the complexities of the arts world, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively to benefit artists and the community as a whole. Their expertise is irreplaceable, and we must recognize the unique skills required to navigate the intricate web of cultural preservation and promotion.

The vitality of the arts & culture in Hawaii are dependent on having an SFCA commission whose primary mission & objective is the stewardship and development of the arts; not simply as a byproduct of economic development or tourism. Yes, the arts sector contributes to a healthy economy, but it has to be run by people who understand and champion what makes the arts different. Repealing the commission will lead us down a dangerous path.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

Randy Wong
Professional musician, arts administrator

Department of Music
College of Arts, Languages & Letters
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I AT MĀNOA
2411 Dole Street • Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96822
E-MAIL rtrimil@hawaii.edu



7 February 2024

RE: SB2764

Welina e Legislator colleagues,

I vehemently oppose all provisions of SB2764. The multiethnic arts and cultures of Hawai‘i are not only a point of pride for the people of Hawai‘i, they are critical to the uniqueness, the spirit and the wellbeing of this society. As such they cannot be subsumed under DEBDT, an agency whose principal purpose and priorities are economic and touristic. Both focusses are too often in conflict with the values and meanings of the arts and culture in our society, as poignantly presented in the version of “Hawai‘i ‘78” sung by the Iz. Unfortunately both economics and tourism tend to exploit the arts and cultural practices rather than stewarding them.

The Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts over more than a half century has built trust among the various communities of culture carriers in Hawai‘i over more than half century. In addition it has led the way for a national conscience about arts and culture. The SFCA and Hawai‘i under Alfred Preis were the first to establish an Arts in Public Places Program for state-supported CIP projects, which now exists throughout the U.S.

The stewardship of Hawai‘i’s arts and culture cannot be just one of the concerns of a large (and unwieldy) agency like DEBDT. It demands an independent, self-standing administrative unit dedicated to the flourishing of arts and culture unfettered by other priorities. In DEBDT the arts will become a stepchild, wanting for proper attention and commitment.

The Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts must continue as a recognized State of Hawai‘i agency not only as a statement about ourselves but as an independent and committed advocate—if not champion—for the multi-cultural diversity and quality of life we all take for granted.

Yours truly,

(Dr.) Ricardo D. Trimillos
Emeritus Professor in Ethnomusicology and Asian Studies



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ON: February 7, 2024

TO: Senator Chris Lee, Chair,
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair,
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Members of the Committees

RE: **Strong opposition** to SB2674,
Bill to Repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission

Governor John Burns, with Maui businessman Masaru “Pundy” Yokouchi, architect and planner Alfred Preis (designer of the Arizona Memorial), and Senator Nadao Yoshinaga, conceived of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts as a way to “promote, perpetuate and preserve culture and the arts in Hawai‘i.” The Hawai‘i State Legislature agreed with the visionary purpose of the group and established the SFCA in 1965. Its formal establishment enabled the SFCA to receive federal grants from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Since then, the Legislature enacted the Art in State Buildings Law, which mandated one percent of construction costs of new state buildings to purchase art: we were *the first state in the nation* with a “percent for art” law. That law was later expanded to establish the Works of Art Special Fund, managed by the SFCA, which provides a permanent fund for the purchase of art. The result, with the opening in 2002 of the Hawai‘i State Art Museum, is a growing collection celebrating and illuminating Hawai‘i’s heritage that will still be valued 300 years from now.

Our state’s dedication to Art in Public Places keeps the unique culture and vision of our islands’ people accessible and central to our sense of place. It provides those of us on the neighbor islands a voice and a connection to all of Hawai‘i, including the ability to engage with the leadership and staff of the SFCA as organizations work to fulfill their own operational mandates.

The SFCA is in its appropriate sphere, being administratively attached to the Department of Accounting and General Services. It should not be absorbed by the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism.

I humbly ask you to keep the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission in place as it stands now. Please do not transfer it to the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism—kill this bill!

Sincerely yours,

Pat Griffin
President emeritus, Lihu‘e Business Association

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 11:57:28 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wayne Levin	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB2764 and HB2565. This bill would create an extremely detrimental atmosphere for the artists of Hawai`i. Transferring the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, would absolutely undermine the creative arts of the islands. These bills attempt to make art something that it is not - A commercial tool for advertising and corporate businesses. It is obvious that these bills were set into motion by an individual with no concept of what art's true purpose is - To communicate from the heart, and to inspire, not to sell products; to sell Hawai`i. If you sincerely wish to preserve and share the culture and beauty of these islands for years to come, you will not approve SB2764 and HB2565.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 11:48:01 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Hamasaki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB1764 must be defeated; in fact, any attempt to reduce funding for the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts is unacceptable. Given Hawai'i's physical isolation from the rest of the world, it is essential that the arts be fully supported by capital improvement appropriations for renovations of state buildings as a source of funds for the works of art. The Art in Public Places program has proven that countless individual artists along with arts organizations + programs statewide make a difference. Funding for the arts is not only essential, but it significantly benefits Hawai'i's diverse communities, helps to bring people together, and continues to open our minds to many different perspectives and thinking. Please do not make Hawai'i a laughing stock of the world by reducing this essential funding for the arts. If anything, it is essential that the arts see an increase in funding, not a reduction.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 11:49:08 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leila L. Kawano	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am not in support of this measure at this time. The bill should be carefully reviewed before further action is taken.

Thank you for your consideration.

I, Florani Camacho, am writing this testimony to oppose SB 2764 as an individual citizen, an artist, and a student. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts has helped my friends and me grow as artists by participating in Capitol Modern's first Friday events and Vibe nights. The free events they host not only serve as enjoyment for the residents and visitors of Hawai'i, but they also create a space for artists like myself to showcase their work and establish a good standing in the community so that one day, we can give back to our community. Arts and culture are the heart and soul of Hawaii and transferring the funding to the tourism industry goes against what the Hawaiian culture believes in. Although yes, our culture accepts our visitors with "Aloha". However, the "Aloha" we showcase to the tourists creates a false narrative of what true Hawaii is. The tourism industry feeds off of those who see Hawaii through the rose-colored Hollywood lens yet the true Aloha and true Hawaii is the gift of community.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 11:53:45 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jayne Kerns	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB2764.

Arts and culture are vital for individual and community health! Art education and the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts need our support on each island and across the state - not cuts in funding or the placement of politicians over experts.

Please do not cut arts and arts education programs or silence neighbor island voices!

Mahalo,

Jayne

Testimony - Senate Bill SB2764

If the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission is repealed, the impact to the artists and art community will be devastating. The SFCA ability to nurture and represent Hawai'i artists will be hamstrung by revolving administrations and political special interest groups. Politics should never be present in an organization that has proven to be independently service the unique needs of artists, and to perpetuate the arts in Hawai'i. The SFCA and DBEDT are independently both mission critical to the success of Hawai'i and its people. Please do not repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission and its lifelong service to the artists, the arts, and the future generations of Hawai'i.

Testimony - Senate Bill SB2764

If the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission is repealed, the impact to the artists and art community will be devastating. The SFCA ability to nurture and represent Hawai'i artists will be hamstrung by revolving administrations and political special interest groups. Politics should never be present in an organization that has proven to be independently service the unique needs of artists, and to perpetuate the arts in Hawai'i. The SFCA and DBEDT are independently both mission critical to the success of Hawai'i and its people. Please do not repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission and its lifelong service to the artists, the arts, and the future generations of Hawai'i.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:08:01 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bonnie Kim	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Whom It May Concern:

As an artist and educator, I oppose this bill. The Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (HSFCA) is probably the only arts agency in the state of Hawai'i that provides programs and support for various arts and culture programs in Hawai'i. As a teaching artist, I provide arts-integrated workshops and residencies in public schools for the Artists in the Schools Program statewide. This is one of the programs that HSFCA provides and administers under the arts education program. Many students benefit and have invaluable creative learning opportunities to learn not only the arts but also other subjects through arts to help them develop many of the 21st Century Skills, such as innovation, collaboration, critical thinking, and many more.

The impact of transferring the HSFCA and repealing the HSFCA Commission would limit or eliminate the highly qualified arts administrators and various arts programs in the State of Hawaii. This would result in having less arts education which is already not enough in many public schools due to lack of funds in school budgets. We will be depriving children and youth of critical creative and innovative learning. This is just one example of the significance of the HSFCA and its programs for the people of Hawaii. The independent arts agency perspective must be maintained and supported to ensure to administer and seek other federal sources of funding for arts, culture and education for the state of Hawaii.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:12:48 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolina Leon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565!

SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. ALL NONEXPERTS in the field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous and reflects the darker history of humanity.

These bills would cut outer island representation and silence the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart [integrity]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "Cultural Prostitution."

Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Mahalo,

Carolina Leon

Honolulu 96816

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:12:53 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elise Byers	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565.

SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. As a public school teacher, I believe culture should be cultivated through education and community.

Elise Byers

Honolulu

96822

February 7, 2024

Aloha to the Honorable Senate Committees,

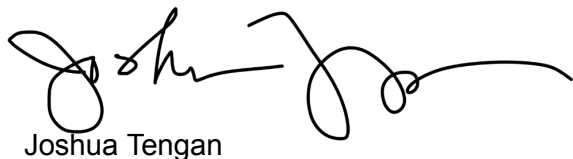
As an arts professional in Hawai'i for the last decade, I am deeply concerned about the potential repercussions of Senate Bill SB2764. This bill, which seeks to transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to the Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) and repeal the SFCA Commission, poses a significant threat to the vibrancy and sustainability of Hawai'i's arts and cultural landscape.

One of the most alarming aspects of this proposed legislation is the potential impact on funding for the arts. The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) has found that state arts agencies whose placement has changed experienced an average budget decrease of 76%. This staggering statistic raises serious doubts about the assurances provided by proponents of this bill that funding for the arts will not suffer due to the proposed transfer. As someone who has directly benefited from SFCA's support, I am deeply concerned about the potential loss of vital resources for Hawai'i artists, culture bearers, and arts organizations.

Repealing the SFCA Commission would have far-reaching consequences for transparency and community and Island-based decision-making. The SFCA Commission plays a crucial role in ensuring neighbor-island representation and facilitating inclusive dialogue that reflects the diverse needs and perspectives of our communities. Furthermore, It is essential to recognize that the arts are not merely commodities for economic development or tourism promotion. They are integral to our cultural identity, social cohesion, and well-being. Placing the SFCA within the DBEDT raises serious questions about prioritizing arts education, public access to the arts, and aligning funding priorities with the unique needs of Hawai'i's cultural and artistic communities.

Requiring the Governor to select the Executive Director of the SFCA introduces unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles and politicizes an appointment process that should prioritize merit and expertise. Subjecting the Executive Director's appointment to Senate approval risks injecting partisan politics into a decision that should be based solely on the candidate's qualifications and dedication to promoting Hawai'i's arts and culture.

Mahalo nui for considering my testimony on this critical issue,



Joshua Tengan

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:16:16 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janis Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm opposed to sb 2764

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:19:28 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Libby J Hoffenberg	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565!

SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. It would revoke and dismantle the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission, requires the Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate, all nonexperts in the field of culture and the arts. This reorganization is dangerous, since it takes away the voices of cultural practitioners who know and love the arts community in Hawaii. Art and diversity and a lively citizen population go hand in hand in hand; a threat to the agency of art is a threat to meaningful civic participation.

These bills would cut outer island representation and silence the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. It would give power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "Cultural Prostitution."

Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Mahalo
Libby Hoffenberg

Honolulu, 96825

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:25:18 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rebecca Mazur	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565!

SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. ALL NONEXPERTS in the field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous and reflects the darker history of humanity.

These bills would cut outer island representation and silence the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart [integrity]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "Cultural Prostitution."

Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Mahalo

Rebecca Mazur

Honolulu,96816

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:32:14 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
darryll akamine	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Regarding Senate bill SB2764.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission should not be repealed. The art community has an advocate, a commission that is independent and fair, not swayed by revolving door administrations and politics. The SFCA and DBED-T are separate entities, experts in their houses, both working for the success of Hawai'i and its people. Both organizations have their own culture and priorities and this should never change. Please do not repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

7 Pepeluali 2024, Pō'akolu

TESTIMONY OF Shelley Kēhaulani Pe'a, individual - **STRONGLY OPPOSE**

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Senator Chris Lee, Chair Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

DATE: 8 Pepeluali 2024, Pō'ahā

TIME: 3:05 PM

PLACE: Conference Room 224 & Videoconference, State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street

Aloha e Chairpersons Inouye and DeCoite and Members of the respective Committees,

My name is Shelley Kēhaulani Pe'a. I am a native Hawaiian who **STRONGLY OPPOSES** SB2764, RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM which transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. It repeals the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the Governor to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

According to [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies \(NASAA\) statistics](#), state arts agencies whose placement changed had an average budget decrease by 76%. However, I greatly value continued funding to support our King Kamehameha Celebration events, for example, in honor of our ali'i, King Kamehameha 'Ekahi. I feel that if the power were to remain with the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission (SFCA) to select the Executive Director (ED), SFCA would choose a skilled candidate in support of the arts and their mission, which is to promote, perpetuate and preserve culture and the arts in Hawai'i. Therefore, I feel SFCA will keep alive the authentic traditions, like the King Kamehameha Celebration events, by our native Hawaiians and people of Hawai'i. Overall, Hawai'i is more than a commodity.

'O Hawai'i ku'u 'āina aloha. Hawai'i is my beloved native homeland.

Please DO NOT PASS SB2764.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on this measure.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,



Shelley Kēhaulani Pe'a

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:39:44 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monica Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 7, 2024

Dear Honorable Chairman and Members of the Hawai‘i State Legislature Senate Committee,

I was born in Hilo on Hawai‘i Island, grew up in Salt Lake and Moanalua on O‘ahu, and now live in Waikīkī. I am a concerned Honolulu resident, art enthusiast, culture advocate, and am writing to submit my opposition of **Senate Bill 2764**, which would **transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts** and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; and **repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) Commission**.

Like so many, I felt isolated, scared, and uncertain during the COVID-19 pandemic. Searching for solace, I found myself at the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts’ Hawai‘i State Art Museum. I was so moved and comforted by the art and programming, I left my job to pursue work in the arts, hoping to contribute to this beautiful community. Even the World Health Organization has affirmed that “the arts are uniquely suited to help us understand and communicate concepts and emotions by drawing on all our senses and capacity for empathy.”

As such, I am concerned that:

- state arts agencies whose placement changed had an average **budget decrease by 76%**, according to National Assembly of State Arts Agencies statistics;
- flexibility and timeliness to respond to the needs of the creative community will be at risk without **accountability from an independent agency**;
- **education and access to the arts**, as a priority, will diminish under a new department;
- **neighbor island representation** will be jeopardized with the repeal of the SFCA Commission;
- **transparency and community-based decision making**, a core value of SFCA, will be compromised in the abolition of the Commission;
- perpetuation and preservation of **authentic indigenous Native Hawaiian culture and arts** cannot be assured

In seeing the intrinsic value that the arts bring to our Islands, including developing human potential, building empathy, encouraging individual identity and empowerment, and bridging divides between communities, the work of the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts is so important to the city’s overall vitality and the well-being of its people.

As such, I believe it would be detrimental to transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission; and repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) Commission. **I hope that you will vote to oppose Senate Bill 2764.**

Kind regards,

Monica Lee

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:35:34 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Miller	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a 20 year resident of Hawaii and a working artist with art in the SFCA Public Art Collection, I stongly oppose moving SFCA to the Dept. of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, and so does every artist i know. It would deal a severe blow to all the professional artists on all the islands. The job of the SFCA, and THEY do it very well, is to support the ARTISTS who make the work that SFCA places in schools, libraries, airports, state offices, parks and public places throughout the islands. And SFCA is about artist residencies in SCHOOLS that help spark and develop CREATIVE thinking in our future citizens. Managing art programs is most definitely NOT about business, economic development and tourism, which would be administered by people who know nothing about art, artists, the creative process or how to visually and emotionally insitgate vibrant arts communities. This would be a very bad move, for artists and have a detrimental effect on the state of Hawaii. SFCA knows what they're doing. You need to let them continue! Thank you.

SAMPLE TESTIMONY

HOW TO TESTIFY

First time? Click [here](#) to learn how.

Or go to <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/account/login.aspx> to register, create a login, and submit testimony.

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565!

[SB2764](#), [HB2565](#) would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. ***Revoking and dismantling*** the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the **Governor**, *a nonexpert in this field*, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. ALL NONEXPERTS in the field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous and reflects the darker history of humanity.

These bills would cut out island representation and ***silence*** the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart [*integrity*]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds *the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s*. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "[Cultural Prostitution](#)."

Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Mahalo

[FULL NAME]

[TOWN, ZIP CODE]

Sheila Rosales
Honolulu, HI, 96814



SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:40:18 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Laycock	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565!

SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. This requires the Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. This is dangerous and reflects the darker history of humanity.

These bills would cut outer island representation and silence the input from professionals/experts in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. It would give power and authority to people not vetted with the appropriate background, experience, and heart [integrity]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. Every visitor, transplant and local should have the opportunity to be educated by an expert of Hawai'i's culture.

Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills. These islands are the heart of the world and a special place to many. It's history should never be misrepresented.

Mahalo,

Anthony Laycock

Aiea, HI

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:40:54 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lei Ahsing	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565!

SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. *Revoking and dismantling* the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the *Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts*, with the advice and consent of the Senate. ALL NONEXPERTS in the field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous and reflects the darker history of humanity.

These bills would cut outer island representation and *silence* the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart [*integrity*]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds *the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s*. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It *reverts us* towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "*Cultural Prostitution.*"

Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Thank you,

Lei Ahsing

(Aiea, 96701)

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:41:42 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqueline Fromen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565!

SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King

Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and

Tourism. Revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission.

Requires the Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State

Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. ALL NONEXPERTS in

the field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous and reflects the darker history of humanity.

These bills would cut out island representation and silence the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart [integrity]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest

expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, “Cultural Prostitution.”

Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Mahalo

Jacqueline Fromen

Honolulu HI 96816

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:42:46 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jacqueline stewart	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to testify against this bill because as an artist in Hawaii, a local and resident citizen, I want our culture and arts to be represented authentically. Not to be exploited, profited off of and disrespected. The people of Hawaii deserves and have rights to be heard. And for a long time, it has not been this way. The tourism, business, etc. industry has for a long time been prioritized over the people and it's time our leaders support us by not allowing for this bill to be passed. People > profit. Community < corporations. Always.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:43:27 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Moffitt	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Hello,

I am opposed to SB2764.

It is important that those who understand the arts with all of their nuances are the ones making decisions or arts funding. In locations where the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies reports that arts agencies whose placement have changed have seen reductions in funding of up to 75%. This would be disastrous for the arts in Hawaii. Please let those who understand and deal with the arts and arts organizations remain in charge of the funding.

Thank you,

James Moffitt

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:44:23 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Fromen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565!

SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King

Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and

Tourism. Revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission.

Requires the Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State

Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. ALL NONEXPERTS in

the field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous and reflects the darker history of humanity.

These bills would cut out island representation and silence the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart [integrity]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest

expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, “Cultural Prostitution.”

Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Mahalo

William Fromen

Honolulu HI 96816

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:45:47 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Malanaphy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I don't think this is a good idea, the way the organization is setup now is fine and funding needs to belong to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

- Brian Malanaphy

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:50:41 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jasper Cabiao	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB2764

February 7, 2024

Dear Chairperson Lee, Inouye, and TCA and EET members:

As an individual artist, educator, and member of the arts community in Honolulu, I strongly OPPOSE bill SB2764- it should not be heard.

The bill stated: *Transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Repeals the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the Governor to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate.*

This dismantling of the State Foundation of Culture and the Arts Commission and selecting the role of Executive Director through the Governor with Senate approval, would impact the art's community throughout the islands in negative ways. The risk of funding decreases is very concerning and the ability for SFCA to garner funds from other resources would be jeopardized.

Artists like me have personally benefitted in numerous ways from the care of the SFCA, and know and trust their impact. The SFCA has supported numerous informative multi-day professional developments and meetings which bring together the arts community across all islands and highlight the understanding and perpetuating of authentic Native Hawaiian culture. Through the awarded Artist in the Schools grants, they fund local artists and include the ability to bring Cultural Practitioners into the classroom space for students and teachers to learn from. As a board member with the Honolulu Printmakers, the SFCA supports programs and organizations such as this to recover and thrive again, which is especially needed with the effects of covid and other traumatic events that occur in our island communities. Their selection committee creates an atmosphere of possibility that fuels artists throughout the state to be motivated to create more impactful art and potential have it purchased with the SFCA.

The list of their trusted impact can go on.

It would be absurd to move roles for the SFCA and decisions to those intertwined with other interests. I have seen great heart and feet on the ground to all of the community art shows and moving the SFCA from having independent agency to being attached to the perspective of business, economic, and tourism cannot assure a healthy continuation of this.

Please do not jeopardize the recovery to the organizations that benefit from the SFCA funding, and the local people who rely on the trust of its leadership for stability and hope. Especially in a time of financial instability across the islands that force too many to leave, and a questionable focus of tourism to fuel the economy.

I appreciate your care in reading my words and your consideration to oppose this bill along with its companion bill, HB2565. Do not even bring it to be heard.

Aloha,

Monica Garrett

Artist in Kahaluu and Honolulu, Oahu
Honolulu Printmakers Board Member

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:58:20 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bon Moore	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I speak as a craftsman living on Kauai who works with coconut husk fiber, which I learned from a traditional Polynesian craftsman from Tahiti. The coconut husk fiber craft is still not widely recognized, however, you can find it in the crafts from over three hundred years ago in Polynesian islands. My work was selected for the Art in Public Collection by the SFCA committee that gave me great encouragement to me to carry on.

Please keep the SFCA committee as it has been and continue to support it, as it has supported so many cultural practitioners, craftsmen, artists and community programs on all the islands.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:05:08 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
May Izumi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Opposed. This is a terrible idea. Going from people who are well-versed in culture and the arts to people who know little to nothing about either. How is that supposed to improve things?

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:10:55 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julie Lau	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition of SB2764

Aloha Senator Chris Lee, Chair of the Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts, and Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism. My name is Julie Lau and I am opposed to SB2764. If this bill is passed, it can have several negative repercussions to the Foundation’s ability to advocate for artists consistently and authentically across the islands.

The foundation has a new director who has been making great changes to the Hawai’i State Art Museum. Recently, she completed a rebranding of the museum which appears to be very positive. The new director, who has decades of experience in the art field, has a 5-year strategic plan that she is currently pursuing. In contrast, the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) has no experience working with art and should not oversee State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA).

The SFCA needs to be overseen and led by individuals who have experience with the arts and who’s mission is to promote art and advocate for artists across the state of Hawai’i. DBEDT will try to commercialize what SFAC does and will not be line with the SFCA’s current mission. Currently, DBEDT’s Creative Industries Division mission is to “promote the development and growth of Hawaii’s Creative Economy”. This contrasts with SFCA’s mission which is to “promote, perpetuate, and preserve culture and the arts in Hawai’i.” These two missions do not go together and are in direct conflict. Simply stated, DBEDT is focused on making money for the Hawai’i economy while SFCA is focused on promoting art in and across the state of Hawai’i. Hence, every action taken by DBEBT will be to generate financial growth for Hawai’i’s economy which is not the purpose of promoting art and culture in both our public and artistic communities here.

SFCA should remain administratively attached to the Department of Accounting and General Services and not be moved to and overseen by DBEDT. Thank you for your time.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:17:26 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lila Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Funding for the arts in Hawai'i should not have to be fought for. With tourism being one of the biggest money-makers on Oahu, we don't need any more funding going towards that. What would this world be without art? Street signs, architecture, and package design (all things that contribute to tourism, by the way) are all byproducts of art. Art is more than products, it's a way of healing, and evolving in this world.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:18:51 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Duarte	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The arts are vital to the wellbeing and well roundedness of a culture and community, allowing for the very essence of our humanness to be expressed and envisioned. So many worthy arts organizations and artists in Hawai'i rely upon the knowledgeable support of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA). I believe that SFCA should remain independent and able to make decisions to support the Hawai'i arts community without being hampered by bureaucracies and agendas of economic- and tourism-centered oversight. SFCA prioritizes the **people** of Hawai'i and its arts and cultural community, which is needed for the arts to survive and thrive in the islands. I also believe that the SFCA Commission should also remain in tact, ensuring transparency and neighbor-island representation. Mahalo.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:28:17 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Phillip Sowers	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha from Lana'i,

Please do not take culture and art from our islands and spend more more on corporate needs and tourism. Everyone knows Hawaii is here. More visitors every year.

As a member of the Lana'i Community and the Lana'i Arts & Culture Center (LAC), I am against the transfer of SFCA dollars to DBEDT.

LAC has been an entity on Lana'i for over 30 years, and was developed when the talents of our community members were discovered. The interest in the arts exploded and LAC has positioned ourselves to address the needs of visual art participation.

As the only visual arts entity on the island, the Lana'i Art Center has supplemented the arts in the schools. With the continued cuts in Education, the small community and lack of support from the State, LAC has filled the needs of art in both public and private schools here.

The funding from SFCA assists us in providing those programs for the public schools, and we are able to give classes to private schools in exchange for helping with ornaments, which are a fund raiser for LAC. We supply each with the necessary knowledge and supplies they require to create art for ages 18 months up to senior citizens. Should funding be disturbed in anyway, it would be detrimental for the arts and our community.

While DBEDT is an entity that deals with progress and developement, their needs and vision do not align with that of the arts. While art is an important part of tourism, it is the completed arts which are viewed. Lana'i Art Center has produced many artists who are selling in our gallery, and other galleries throughout Hawai'i, while sharing their mana'o with the community. The ability to learn from featured artist has been a thrill for many of our youths as they learn perspective, woodwork, textiles and other art forms which are the specific talent of each instructor.

Lee Cabanilla, our Co-ED and workshop instructor has recently won the Merit Award for his representation of Laka right after the Maui fires. As the center piece of the show, it brought much attention to our island and our arts. The transfer of dollars would put non-profit organizations in competition with other entities which align more with the needs of DBEDT and not the arts.

None of our programs would be possible without the guidance of SFCA. It is their expertise which helped to guide us through our vision and mission. This one on one assistance is extremely valuable to our organization, as they keep us on course with our programs. I do not believe this would be a priority for DBEDT as their focus is in economic development.

Studies have shown that more than 75% of funding is lost to the art community when funding has been redirected to other entities to manage. Nonprofits would be in direct competition with for profits and state agencies whose mission aligns more clearly with DBEDT and put nonprofit

art programs at risk.

Losing community and neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.

This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of not for profit culture and the arts organizations.

To eliminate the commission would be to throw out the SFCA's 50+ year history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision making.

Please reconsider this bill and DO NOT PASS IT.

Mahalo for you consideration,

Phillip Sowers
Island of Lāna'i.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:30:40 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am a k̄anaka maoli visual artist, educator and a filmmaker. I do not believe SB2764 to repeal the SCFA Commission is the right thing to do. Already DBEDT does not do enough for Hawai'i and Hawaiian artists in the area of cinematic production, business development and tourism. All of their programs benefit Hollywood and foreign filmmakers and TV producers and production studios and networks, and their friends, and a narrow, but important band of Hawai'i cinema-TV workers in below-the-line, industrial positions. And now someone wants to make DBEDT responsible for the rest of our artistic community? DBEDT and the Film Office need to concentrate on bringing above-the-line local and Hawaiian artists into the production loop, not just below-the-line crews. Making our Art Agency subordinate to Economic Development and Tourism is a bad idea. Art and Commerce are interrelated tracks but different ethical and philosophical endeavors. SCFA allows for a kind of artistic engagement and competition without borders for our community, and within that, our community of creatives of all ages. To stick such a worthy endeavor under the auspices of business, economic development and tourism would be to degrade and commercially revalue the effort, and the work being produced. We need a stand-alone SCFA to continue to create art-based programs, projects, exhibitions and other opportunities for our community, and to do so across media platforms, and without the imperative of touristic expectations and commercial revaluation. Artists help think tank the future. We need to see things in lots of different ways. To stick SCFA's mandate under DBEDT would be to further devalue our community voice and vision. Limiting Native Hawaiian culture and arts to a commercial and tourism perspective would as well further degrade native production, socio-political engagement and cultural authenticity, the very foundation upon which our tourism economy rests.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:34:48 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jayne Lane	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings,

I am submitting this testimony in opposition to SB2764, as I believe it will decrease funding to the arts in Hawai'i. I am assistant grant officer of a publishing company based in Hawai'i which publishes original works by Hawaiian writers and artists, as well as Asian American and Pacific Islander writers who live here. We rely on private donations, book sales, and grants to publish two books per year, with the majority of the funds coming from grants. We have received numerous affirmations of the impact and importance of our publications when we gather surveys at our public readings. Attendees have said that they have been informed and inspired by the authors and their works, and many have subsequently submitted works of their own as a result. We focus on those who would not be published by established mainland companies, and many of the stories describe families and events in Hawaiian culture. Readers here and around the world have described their joy in discovering our publications and stressing the importance of preserving Hawaiian art and culture through the sharing of stories and artwork.

I am concerned that the transfer of support from the Department of Funding and General Services to that of Economic Development and Tourism would focus solely on economics and tourist revenue and would eliminate the arts entirely. This would be a tragedy and should not occur.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:37:36 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Crystal Gray	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB2764 and HB2565.

Mahalo,

Crystal Gray

Honolulu, HI 96815

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:39:09 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Feltz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Friends/Legislators,

I wish to **STRONGLY OPPOSE** SB 2764, regarding the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, which was an amazing and pioneering effort by the State of Hawai'i, and has served the people of Hawai'i splendidly, as well as a model for most other states! In particular, the slate of Commissioners is drawn from the various cultural and ethnic groups and stakeholders, and has guaranteed that no matter what your art form, *you have a voice at the SFCA*.

Also, DBEDT is **NOT** a good fit for the rich and varied Arts and Culture of this state, even though the arts certainly **DO** contribute to the attractiveness of Hawai'i as a visitor destination, and contribute significantly to the state's economy, both directly and indirectly.

This bill's proposals are retrograde: our state, with its enlightened leaders, should be giving the arts and culture **ADDITIONAL** resources and more independence! That is what contributes to our **QUALITY OF LIFE!**

Aloha nō,

William Feltz, 58-year resident of Honolulu

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:39:10 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Pagan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Nicole Pagan and I am a concerned patron of the arts in the state of Hawai‘i. I am testifying in opposition to the passing of the Senate Bill SB2764 and how the lack of funding for the local artisans, musicians, and art teachers will be a huge detriment to the arts community in my home state.

As members, creators, and patrons of the arts community, it is with the SFCA Commission that we are provided a voice and a platform to share our thoughts and decisions on what may shape our quality of life in Hawai‘i. If this repealed, not only do we lose that representation for all islands, but it will effectively eliminate the transparency and the decision making that the community is owed.

It is also my understanding that if the SFCA Commission is repealed, funding will be cut so deeply that it will affect the longevity of the arts in Hawai‘i as a whole. There will be no Capitol Modern (formerly the Hawai‘i State Art Museum), no support of local up-and-coming and currently established artists, musicians, and teachers, and no events free to the public that will encourage the arts in both youth and adults.

The SFCA does more than just hand out free events and jobs to the public. They understand opportunities, a future, and most importantly, they understand the heart of the people. Without funding, it could be like seeing a child who gravitates toward a paint brush and the ability to create within them, having to be turned away because their families couldn’t afford the cost. It is your favorite cousin with the great voice who only sings at potlucks and family get-togethers but discredits the idea of “going anywhere with music” because they do not see an opportunity for local talent wanted. The SFCA and everything it stands for holds the significance of the arts in Hawai‘i in one hand and the importance of the people in the other, both above all else.

The SFCA should receive the support they are looking for in maintaining the arts community in Hawai'i. They should be allowed to elect the representatives that best reflect what the community and the public want for Hawai'i. Most of all, they should remain fully funded to nurture and grow Hawai'i's future in the arts.

Thank you for reading my testimony and your consideration of this matter is very much appreciated.

Richard L. Mills

2235 Palolo Avenue

Honolulu, HI

96816

Oppose: SB2764

Dear Honorable Members of the State of Hawaii Senate and House of representatives:

I strongly oppose SB2764 transferring the Hawaii State foundation on Culture and the Arts, the SFCA to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism on the grounds that this will decentralize the unified coalition and governance of the SFCA to a much larger body that lacks the detailed understanding of the SFCA and working with artists and art groups. The SFCA's autonomy as a standalone entity was tantamount to Alfred Pries in his framing of the institution in 1966. While I believe the SFCA should have representation on Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, it should not come under their sole jurisdiction and control; this in fact would curtail the SFCA's ability to control its own direction and to facilitate artists and art institutions directly. Furthermore, it will curtail the Foundation's ability to consistently and authentically advocate for artists across the islands.

Respectfully:

Richard L. Mills

808-349-0289

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:40:06 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gay Chinen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:40:29 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ray Galas	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kakou Chair, Vice Chair and Members,

I support continuing the public service role, mission and independence of the SFCA Commission Members, and so, I oppose this bill for an act to abolish the commission. And, I oppose the intent of the bill to discontinue the many years of administrative purpose relationship between DAGS and the SFCA. Further, such a bill for an act related to SFCA best practices and improvement would be to further refine the membership language of the membership of the commission so that candidates for nomination better reflect the cultural and socioeconomic diversity of Hawaii's population, and, broaden the composition of the commission membership to a wider scope and level of experience of those in the Arts in Hawai'i, for example more clearly including arts novices in the early stages of their artistic pursuits, those at the mid point of their artistic journey, who have demonstrated body of work and have achieved some level of local acclaim, peer recognition, cohort success, etc. (For example, for the performing arts, having been awarded an HSTC Po'okela early in their community theatre volunteerism in Hawai'i. (The intent being that the membership of the commission would not mainly be limited to in practice, if not policy, those senior, well established, pillars of Hawaii's community, who, by their decades of accrued resources and networks, already greatly influence and shape and advocate for their Arts interests, through their personal, spousal, and corporate philanthropy, board of director leadership on local arts affiliated organizations, etc. Thank you for your consideration of my testimony in your deliberations. Mahalo nui loa, E Akahale, And, thank YOU legislators, for YOUR Service. With Aloha, ~Ray :)

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:42:39 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Fleur Green	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm a long-time visitor to the Islands. When we started coming nearly 30 years ago, it was for the beach, beauty and weather.

About 5 years ago, after being introduced to EKK on Kauai, we've been coming for the rich cultural programs EKK puts on for a large, wonderful Ohana mixture of Hawaiian residents and visitors.

The programs are exceptionally well managed. And we've not only learned a great deal from them, but they've deepend our feeling of Hawaii as our 2nd home that we get to visit every year!

Please do not abolish the agency and risk the kind of drastic funding cuts that often follow from agency consolidation.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:48:05 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Harvey Stone	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I cannot over-state my concern that you will consolidate agencies and that, downstream, Kauai's Garden Isle Arts Council will get less funding and the program will be cut back or lost forever.

We love the program. It does as much as anything to help us feel "hawaiian" to be part of the

Hawaiian Aloha ethic. This EKK program is one of the top reasons we keep coming here, at this stage of our lives.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:48:40 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Sanchez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

What kind of future do you envision for the young artist in Hawai'i? What do you hope for them to inherit?

It is my hope that our communities leaders see the value in our vibrant artist community. However, I do not think they understand the scarcity that we operate under. It does not fill me with hope knowing that the dissolution of the SFCA is underway.

The passing of this bill would put the future of arts in jeopardy and my own personal future in jeopardy. Please, consider the aspirations of young artist like myself before making your decision.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:49:17 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ayaka Takao	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a state that already suffers from underfunded educational and arts programming, we cannot afford to compromise the future of artists in Hawai'i. Artists deserve to have a say in legislation that affect their communities directly. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts deserves to be independent of other departments, as it requires individuals with specialized skills who understand the needs of artists. The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism will not possess the required experience to handle the SFCA with the care and consideration it needs, and will not put in the effort necessary to ensure a bright future for artists in Hawai'i. This jeopardizes not only the future of the arts, but the future of our state at large.

February 7, 2024

Thirty-Second Legislature, State of Hawai'i
Hawai'i State Legislature

Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
Honorable Chris Lee, *Chair*
Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, *Vice Chair*

Testimony against Bill# SB2764

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the committee,

As a member of the arts community here on Oahu, I am skeptical of the merit to repealing the State Foundation on Culture and Arts Commission. Eliminating the SFCA commission would be disrupting over 50 years of community based arts funding and decision making.

I am a musician in the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, a union member of Musicians' Association of Hawai'i (American Federation of Musicians Local 677), a music teacher for the Hawai'i Youth Symphony, and the General Manager of Chamber Music Hawai'i. Just about everything I do in my professional life has been positively impacted by the support of SFCA. I am worried about the changes that are proposed within this bill and the effect it will have on our state's arts community.

According to [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies \(NASAA\) statistics](#), state arts agencies whose placement changed suffered significant (76%) budget decreases. Please consider how this Bill will affect funding opportunities for arts organizations that may otherwise find it very hard to continue to serve the community in their current capacity.

Thank you,

Christopher Cabrera

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:49:31 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alyssa Lau	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm in disagreement with this bill because this directly affects me as an individual artist who actively pursues the arts as a profession and develops programming that helps build confidence in new artists. As Hawai'i is already a state that suffers from inadequate funding and distribution of resources to art programs -- this will only hurt more. Hawai'i prides itself on our culture, to share, educate, and protect artistic practices that requires support from our government. Often times, funding for programs (such as cost of materials, time, space, etc.) comes from our own pockets. A cut in budgets will only lead to more frustration and lack of confidence in our governments ability to support local communities involved with the arts. Art is fundamental to our culture and if you share this opinion, I hope you can understand why this bill is harmful to our communities.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:50:49 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Meinke-Lau	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a local artist and community member, I oppose this bill.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:53:58 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen Drozd	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a musician and educator in Hawai'i that has received grants from the State Foundation of Culture and the Arts, I wish to submit my opposition to bill SB2764 that proposes the transfer of this foundation to the Department of Business. I believe that artists from the state will suffer from this decision. We cannot be truly advocated for and represented by a larger department that has so many other "umbrellas" and we will lose the many, many programs in education, culture and the arts that this foundation has spearheaded over several decades. It will be a tragedy to the people of these islands, residents and tourists alike. Please reconsider and do not pass this bill.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:54:04 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lee McCartan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Regarding proposed SB2764: Passing such a bill would likely have several negative repercussions to an entity's ability to consistently and authentically advocate for artists across the islands. Where we reside, doing so would definately affect the work that The Moloka'i Arts Center can do as a collaborative, which would be an absoute shame to see.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:56:13 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Pollak	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am opposed to SB2764. The cultural arts, and arts in general need as much autonomy and separation from politics as possible. If the arts is grouped with business, tourism and other focuses as it will lead to a devaluing of the craft. It will also leave the beauty of art to be decided by partisan representatives.

February 7, 2024

TESTIMONY OF Erin O’Kief

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

DATE: Thursday, February 8, 2024

TIME: 3:05 PM

PLACE: Conference Room 224 & Videoconference, State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street

Chairpersons Inouye and DeCoite and Members of the respective Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB2764 RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM which transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. It repeals the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the Governor to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

I would like to strongly oppose this bill. This bill is damaging to the arts and culture sector in the State of Hawai’i. I work for a nonprofit arts center, which relies on the commitment, passion, and community-based approach of the SFCA and the Arts Commission to support arts and culture on Maui and statewide. The SFCA supports educational initiatives that enhance and enliven the cultural framework of our communities. The Art in Public Places program highlights and celebrates the works of our local artists.

This bill will limit culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization perpetuates authentic arts and cultural experiences and learning – and especially the traditions of native Hawaiian practitioners and artists. Moreover, according to National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics, state arts agencies whose placement changed to another department had an average budget decrease by 76%. How can the public be assured the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer? Aside from a reduction in funds, I fear that DBEDT will not prioritize arts education and access to the arts with the same dedication, experience, and fervor as SFCA. All of this at a time when the arts are more critical than ever before for community connection, expression, and healing.

The State is already driven so much by tourism. The pandemic and the Maui fires have highlighted that we cannot and should not put all of our eggs into one tourism basket. Hawai’i is dynamic BECAUSE of the richness of our culture, natural environment, and our people. Seeing everything through the tourism lens challenges the stability of our systems and hurts our communities. SFCA’s sole mission is to promote, perpetuate and preserve culture and the arts in Hawai’i. Let’s let them continue to do so without business, economic development, and tourism at the helm. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Erin O’Kief

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:01:07 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Juvana Soliven	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting testimony to ADAMANTLY OPPOSE SB2764. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts along with a trusted Commission of artists, art historians, cultural practitioners, and organizers should continue to lead any decision making with funds regarding Art in Public Places, state acquisitions, and state commissions. Having a trusted group that works towards the visibility of local and Hawaiian culture and cultivates the visibility of art that is concerned with social, political, and cultural issues should be the focus of an arts commission. The funds controlled by SFCA directly benefit artists. If these funds are given to the Department of Business, Economics, and Tourism, whose pockets will you be lining? Art can't be treated like a product. It is a spirit and a voice that belongs to the art community to share with the wider community.

My concern with any funding being controlled by the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism is that instead of celebrating the arts and caring about the pulse of the community that they would rather exploit the arts of and in Hawaii for financial gain.

Our community should not and cannot rely solely on tourism as a source of income and business. This would lead to more financial instability in an already economically fragile place.

Art is revolutionary. Have you ever been in the home of a typical business person and thought that they had the best taste in art? Probably just some resin ocean paintings. How stale. How bland. Stale and bland and commercial are not the words that come to mind when curating revolutionary art. STOP trying to keep the voice of art out of artists mouths. You are harming us directly if you choose to pass this bill.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:09:22 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mina Elison	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairpersons Lee, Inouye, and members of the Transportation and Culture and the Arts Committee Elefante, Kanuha and Awa,

As a Curator of the Donkey Mill Art Center located in North Kona on the island of Hawai'i, I respectfully present this testimony with gratitude for the legislature's steadfast support of the arts and meaningful community activations made possible by through the Donkey Mill Art Center and our programs.

I strongly OPPOSE bill SB2764. This bill impacts the culture and arts on every island, every large metropolitan community, and every small, rural community like ours. SB2764 Transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, and it repeals the SFCA Commission.

First, I address the opposition to moving SFCA to another department like DBEDT. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics show that state arts agencies facing such changes experienced an average budget decrease of 76%. Even a 25% budget cut for SFCA could jeopardize vital programs that the Foundation administers like Artist-in-the-Schools (AITS) and the Arts in Public Places Acquisition Program. SFCA's AITS program provided our organization with \$45,000 over the past two years, offering arts education to over 450 school-aged children in three Title 1 elementary schools. This is crucial for our rural communities where so many students lack access to such expansive and culturally relevant education outside of school.

Additionally, over the last two years, SFCA acquired more than \$85,000 worth of artwork from the Donkey Mill Art Center, with \$55,000 purchased from Native Hawaiian artists. These acquisitions put money directly into the hands of artists and cultural practitioners, and provide national recognition for these artists, further perpetuating their careers. These two programs alone are integral to our mission to serve as a place of convergence for the exploration of arts and culture to inform, inspire and strengthen individual and collective well-being. We never stop advocating and speaking up as our vision is to establish West Hawai'i as a model of a resilient, thriving community where art is considered a necessity, not a luxury; SFCA is a partner in this vision and mission.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration to oppose this bill and stop it from moving forward. The wellbeing of so many underrepresented people are truly at-risk through this proposed legislation.

Sincerely,
Mina Elison

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:12:21 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Masami Teraoka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Funding the art community is very important, and it's also a direct way to bring in tourists from all over the world. Personally, as an 88 year old artist, to support the Capital Modern's State Foundation Culture and Arts is great contribution to not only Hawaii's prosperity and immediate business but also to tourism relating cultural activities. Since the established cultural base especially I see the cultural attitude from Japan that they are tuned in visiting museum and spend money and eat out all comes together to promote business.

Art and prosperous rich culture, based on were our indigenous history and natural beauty meet, are in this precious Hawaii. Taking away this prosperous cultural attraction and program is surely an unthinkable and narrow view.

Capital Modern is a key driving force now and for immediate next generations. I do not think taking away or reassigning the budget makes any sense after witnessing how well the Capital Modern has been evolving and their support for the arts community here in Hawaii.

No on SB2764!

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:23:20 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rose Anne Jones	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a former Executive Director of a Statewide Arts Organization and as a present Board Member of a non-profit arts organization on Kaua`i, I am distressed to see that the Governor who I voted for would be supporting this change.

Art organizations rely on the HSFCA for support since its founding in 1965. It's an organization that is active in sustaining an active cultural and artistic community. The community that values its heritage and artistic expression is one that thrives and survives. To effectively place this under the Department of Tourism means that our cultural heritage is just something to be used to attract tourists to the State. Arts & Culture are more than just advertisements promoting Hawaii. Arts & Culture are the backbone of the rich cultural heritage of its people.

Please don't shake the foundations of the unique cultural gifts that Hawaii has to share. Please don't be the force in government that devalues the heritage and support of the arts in this great state. Mahalo.

To the head of the committee and its members:

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565!

SB2764 and HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, Tourism. Working within many facets of the social work field and throughout the Hawaii Islands. These bills continue to perpetuate colonization of Culture and Human value for the sake of money and power-driven leadership. Will once again be made for tourism and displacement of those that have worked to curate the vast number of culture representation of art, artist, and the possibilities for the future. All while working to include and incorporate community and honor of the Aina and her people. The thought of having yet again, leadership that is not equipped to fill the positions they are in. As a current art student, artist, and social worker, the potential outcomes from these bills passing is terrifying and heartbreaking. Please be the voice of the people and communities that have and do give their hearts, souls, and lives to the arts. Please **do not** allow **SB2764 and HB2565** to pass.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Tristan Renae

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:26:14 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Blanco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Barbara Blanco, am advocating for the Capitol Modern Museum to maintain its funding from the State of Hawaii. This venue is crucial in supporting and showcasing our local artists from diverse mediums to the community, fostering their growth and success.

As a vendor, my participation enables me to introduce my business and market my goods to both the Honolulu community and visiting tourists, fostering my prosperity, and enriching the city's cultural scene. Given Honolulu's reliance on tourism, this senate must endorse this exceptional museum that enhances the city's appeal and brings in revenue to each of us.

I implore you to regard my testimony as truthful and precise. Please refrain from reducing funding for this historical museum, which holds such significance in our community.

Mahalo

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:26:38 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julie Matheis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an art teacher I am not understanding how merging the SFCA into the same category as tourism and transportation, would be anything less than a loss to the community. In 2022, I witnessed funding for the Creative Workforce Grant (\$500,000) and the Culture Fellowship Grant (\$200,000) be redirected to tourism, which robbed this community of financial and spiritual enrichment, and left any takeaways within distant communities that will not have any lasting value for this community at large. There is no reciprocity in that investment.

Art has no chance in a funding competition with tourism, because many people want to reap immediate rewards and are not patient and attuned to the benefits that exist within a society with a rich balance of culture and the arts.

We don't need more marketing to visitors, bigger landfills, or extra cars creating excessive traffic and wearing out roads - which requires more funding.

As it stands, the SFCA provides essential opportunities that connect many people to the arts, but above all, it engages public school children in complex problem solving, creative thinking, and social emotional development. I strongly oppose this bill because we need a community of children and individuals who can access meaningful knowledge through hands on arts experiences, like the ones the SFCA already provides. I am saddened by what the possibilities of this takeover could lead to. Will art be purchased for hotels to display while the community will never see it? Does this mean a pothole will be filled with money that could have provided supplies for a cultural practice? Will new commercials on TVs far away, share images of practices that are not accessible to the next generation because the funding went to a commercial instead of a hands on workshop? The arts engage people in an unparalleled, natural way, with lasting legacies, so I want to continue to see an independent SFCA that provides funding for activities that provide ripples of equitable enrichment throughout our communities. Whoever proposed this is seeing dollar signs they can leach. I am seeing the individuals that would be impacted.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:27:12 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tim Garcia	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha I'm Tim Garcia Artist living on Maui. I'm against sb2764 . I don't see enough information in bill on how this effects outer islands and with that the practice of Comission purchases of art from jurried Exhibition on Maui . 2) Having a new director appointed every 4 years seems a very disjointed way to run this organization, no continuity to programs ect . 3) Is this a end run to try again to the \$\$\$ money the commission receives from the 1% for art in public places and use for other things .

without more transparency on why this is being brought forward I would not support this bill .

please vote NO on sb2764

February 07, 2024

Good afternoon, Legislators:

I am Leigh Nakamura and I have been a Social Studies teacher at Konawaena High School since 2009 and I also started teaching Arts and Crafts in 2018. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to voice our concerns with SB2764 that proposes to repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission and transfer the SFCA to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Art plays an integral part in all of our lives and for some, this is the main way that they express themselves. I am concerned that these two proposals will negatively impact how our students will be exposed (or not exposed) to culture and the arts.

I am including a pdf compilation of student testimonials regarding the importance of art in their lives and the need for these types of programs in our schools. Our students are the main reason why we do this and providing these opportunities for them is vital. It allows them to build upon their creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, analysis, and collaboration - all of which are essential skills in our world today. Our students need a variety of ways to express themselves and to help them get through difficult situations in healthy ways. We have seen what not having these types of programs can do and that is why it was deemed necessary to bring them back. It will be a huge step in the wrong direction that could threaten these programs in the future.

With this being said, I am concerned that eliminating the current team members that work with us for the Artists in the Schools Program and others would be detrimental. The team members are familiar with what our keiki and community need and I am not confident that the person/people who will oversee these programs will have the students' best interest in mind. Having been a beneficiary of the AITS Program for five years now, I have truly seen the positive impact that our local artist has had on my classes, our school, and our community. The concepts and principles that we try to teach our young people can be seen in their excitement and pride when they are able to share a part of themselves with others.

As a Social Studies and Fine Arts teacher in Hawai'i, it is evident that we need to ensure that the perpetuation of indigenous cultures is focused upon. It is questionable to have Hawaiian cultural education tied to a department that focuses on economic development and tourism. I am concerned with what the priority will be because we know that tourism does not necessarily go well with traditional Hawaiian culture and it can magnify the colonialism that is still affecting our community today.

Mahalo nui loa for taking the time to read our students' and my thoughts and concerns. We greatly appreciate it and trust that you will prioritize our young people's futures when assessing the impact that SB2764 can have.

Sincerely,



Leigh M. Nakamura
Konawaena High School Social Studies & Arts and Crafts teacher

[REDACTED] P2.7
 Art
 2/6/24

Arts and Crafts has had huge positive benefits for me inside and outside the classroom. It has given me a space for my creativity to blossom and has provided me and many students a way for us to focus and shows us physically what happens when we put our time and effort into creating something and watching it come together. It's a very fun class and I enjoy being a part of it. Bringing Miss Crocker in to teach us about Sumi-e was very engaging and I learned a new thing everyday.

[REDACTED]
 P07 2624

Art

Art is important to me because it had shown me more ways to be creative & more ways I can put art into my life. The more art I do the more I realize how creative I can get. I found out about new art techniques like Sumi-e. Sumi-e was a really fun art project. I got to learn about the ink & traditions & history. All of these projects made me realize the beauty of art & how we should appreciate it more.

Arts and crafts has impacted me by giving me more ideas and gives me a break from school so it's a good stress reliever.

Art has also impacted me by making friends because I can enjoy and laugh with people about my or their art. I also learned about other artists.

02/06/24

I really enjoyed doing the unit with Mrs. Becker and it made me learn new things about a culture that was introduced but this helped me learn how in every culture there is different ways of doing things and it also taught me to be more creative for the future and bring better bigger ideas.

This Arts and Crafts class has let me express and try new things I would be reprimanded doing in other classes. plus it would be horrible if this class was state funded cuz they small kind broke. it's a fun class for non physical people and for me who walks half way home I like that.

Art can impact people in all different kinds of ways. Children use it to discover all kinds of new ideas, and teenagers use it to spend their time. Without it, kids won't be able to experience the freedom and fun art brings. I have all kinds of memories of having fun while drawing. I wouldn't want other kids to miss out on these fun experiences.

P.7
Feb 6 2024

Art is important to me because it helps me be more creative in the things I do and helps me think outside of the box which kinda helps with other class I go to. Doing art is also relaxing which helps people get de stress and that helps them focus better and a effect hobby for people to use

Art is a really fun and when you do art it really makes time really fast. Also art is really needed in the mind, it is really needed in people's lives because it really brings in all of people on how creative it is and a really good job.

02-06-24

[REDACTED] 2/6/24

Arts and Crafts has helped me a lot with my creative thinking. It also taught me many different styles of art and how it was originated. I also get to try out the styles and tell others about it. It also a big ~~take~~ take away from school, like I don't have to stress about work in this class.

Art inspired me to do more, it opened up to me, and now I do art when I am not in school. It really gives you ideas for things in the future, you can make things you've never made before. It can get you somewhere in life and make you successful.

[REDACTED]
Pd 7

2/6

Art is important to me because I can learn about the history of the world, and how art is made in different way. Art also can have a meaning or can capture the world during a different age. Without art, the world wouldn't be the same so I'm glad I get to experience it.

[REDACTED]
Pd 7

Art has benefited me by painting, being created and art is very beneficial because it helps kids/teens to be more creative.


AR +

is

COOL.

Why is Art important to you?

Art is important to me because it shows creativeness with individuals. Relieve stress and express how people feel. Especially music, expressing feeling and emotion between one's self or with other. Drawing, painting, coloring, etc, relieve stress and challenges through everyday life.


2/7/2024

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
2/6/24

Art class has impacted the way I see things and has shown me a different perspective when I look at pieces of ~~the~~ art. It's also a very fun class to take and you learn so much within just one art class.

2/7/24
Period 7

[REDACTED]
Art has affected me in so many ways. I got to experience things that I thought I would never do. Art is important to me because I get to express myself and do the things I like.

[REDACTED]
Art is quite good for schools to have art because it gives students a chance to learn and do new things.

Why is art important to me?

Art is important to me because I listen to music 24/7. I also like to take pictures of everything anywhere.

Page 1 [REDACTED]

Art is extremely important in education. It is important to help students creativity. A school day without any creative program is very boring. It helps students to express themselves.

Art work is important to me because it brings out my creativity. It also helps me express myself at times when I can't use my words.

It can be calming for some people. It can be a way for people to express their feelings.

I think art is important to me because it helps me be more creative and is a way to help de stress.

Art is important to me because it brings a sense of calmness and art has different forms not just painting on paper. Music is one, when you take the time to learn an instrument it's the most beautiful form of art.

I help me keep a strage mind and help me de stress

Art is an way of expression of self-identity and cultural identity. And this is within every students right to express. Also some students take art as a escape/safe place.

Art:

I like music and photography because I like those types of art. I listen to music everyday and I can express myself through photography.

Art:

I like music and photography because I like to listen to certain music and take pictures with friends. I don't really like to draw or paint though.

Art is the clearest way of expression. Art is how we preserve culture and how we can communication without art my life would be different. I learnt through art and art is how I express myself. without art or the chance to learn and have artistic opportunities how will people express themselves

Art

Art has been a big part in my life ever since I was young getting inspired by my friends and family I looked up to them because of there are so it inspired me to do art and ever since then I have practice art since then and improve and improve and now it allows me to express my self and show my love for the things I draw and share that with the people.

[REDACTED]

Art is important because it's a way to express emotions and creativity,

[REDACTED] PD 4 02/07/2024

ART HAS BEEN ONE OF MY FAVORITE SUBJECTS SINCE I WAS IN PRE-K. TO ME, IT'S A WAY TO EXPRESS MY FEELINGS, AS FOR A PERSON THAT DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES. AND HEARING THAT IT MIGHT BE GONE FOREVER IN SCHOOLS, IN SUCH ESPECIALLY, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO FEEL. BUT I KNOW FOR SURE THE FEELING ISN'T GOOD. ART, LIKE I SAID, HAS BEEN A WAY FOR ME, AND PROBABLY A HANDFUL OF OTHER STUDENTS, TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES AND TO RELIEVE STRESS. SCHOOL IS ONE MAIN FACTOR OF CHILDREN AND TEENS STRESS AND WORRIES. THE ART SUBJECT TAKES THAT AWAY. NEARLY YOU'RE 5 OR 17, ARTISTIC OR NOT, ART IS NEEDED AND ART MATTERS.

[REDACTED]

Why is art important to different cultures and their lives? 2/7/23
Par. 4

Art is very important to me for many reasons. I consider art as the unexplored creativity in our minds. Art could be drawing, painting, dancing, acting, performing arts, music, and many more. Different cultures adapted to developing their own arts and crafts for centuries as a way to express their own culture and creativity, thoughts, and feelings.

[REDACTED] P.4.

It is crucial as it is used for various reasons like telling stories, expression and whatever comes to mind. You can look at a piece of art and it makes you feel happy while another will look at the same and feel sad. That's what art can do not only can you express feelings using art you can also evoke feelings which is just as important. It is a form of escapism for so many especially if your life is full of trial and tribulations. It is a way to captivate, influence and create something that'll last a lifetime. Art should be just as important as reading and writing.

Art helps express someone's emotion or ideas. Art also helps express someone's culture or belief. Art can help with stress or can be fun.

Art is important to me because I like drawing. Art is important because it can be music and I can't live without music.

Art is important because it helps other bond with their music, paintings, pottery, and etc. It helps build teamwork.

Art is important to me because it shows a lot of the culture of different places around the world.

In my opinion art is a very important part of our culture here in Hawaii because it expresses not only our culture but why we belong here in Hawaii. It is a way the Hawaiians expressed their art to share their stories for generations to come.

If they didn't express their feelings through artifacts and art they made all history would be lost.

Art is incredibly important and can have connection to almost everything. Every job, every structure, writing, clothing item, car, story, song, everything!

It has been so important to me as I've grown, through TV shows, games, my moms own art, animation, knitting and design. I'd like to think I could find a job in character design or animation or something similar. I love making characters and stories and have been working on making comics and animations. It is a medium for showing experiences and teaching, spreading awareness for problems and showing how characters have endured and worked through it, or not. How they've grown for better or for worse through everything.

Pg 4

Art isn't just coloring or drawing, it's much more. It tells stories, teaches us about different techniques and cultures so far we learned and got to do sumi-e ink painting. We learned that it originated from Japan and it's quite a process to make. Soon we'll be moving on to one Kapala stamping. That teaches us about the Hawaiian culture. So Art is important to me because it teaches important things.

P.4

Art is important to a lot of people. It affects many people's life. For example in culture there are many different art styles that show expressions and express emotion. These culture arts are extremely important to all cultures world-wide.

Art can help people show emotions and creativity through drawing, painting, ect. It can bring lots of creative inventions that can help with certain things. It's a way for people to relax, connect, and express themselves.

[REDACTED]
Period 4

Art for me is means of expression and self-expression as well as a source of inspiration and satisfaction. For society, it plays role of cultural heritage, promotes the development of creativity, emotional perception and interpersonal understanding.



[REDACTED] 2/7/24

Art is important because it can be utilized as a way to show inner emotions or having a subtle message that the author tells. Art is also important for historical pieces and culture. For people who can embrace their cultural heritage to connect with their ancestors. Another reason art is important because museums want have anything to show others.

[REDACTED]
Art is important to life. I say that it's important because we need it. We need it because in order to show & explain things without language we need art. Art expresses many types of things, it's a way of explaining things in a very unique way without any language. P.4

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

This art class has benefited me in many ways. It taught me that art is just as important as any other elective at this school. It is important because it teaches students how to use their creativity to make something great. Science, Math, and English are very important classes for education, but what a great deal of people don't realize is that classes like arts and crafts are very important. I learned how to channel my creativity to create something new and original. I also think that it was very beneficial to have an artist come in and teach us how to do something correctly. Thank you.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ 2/6/24

Art isn't just a fun little thing we do. It teaches about the different cultures and the techniques they use to create art. Art benefits us because we can learn those techniques. So far this year we learned about Sumi-e ink. We learned that it comes from Japan and it's a long process to make the ink. Soon we will be making a stamp for MTH class and I'll teach us about the Polynesian culture. So art teaches us other things than just coloring and drawing.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

Why is Art important?

2/7/24
Pd. 6

Art is important to me because it is very informational and genuine. Art has different variations all around the world. It teaches us history and is very fun. Art allows you to be creative with no limits and letting you express yourself and feelings. Don't take art from the kids.

pd-6

Art is important to me because it's a way to express how I feel by using music, dancing, and coloring. Art makes me feel calm and sometimes it makes me take my mind off things. Art is a good way to express our feelings and take our minds off of things.

Art is important because it allows us and lots of other people to express and show our creativity. Art lets our imagination run freely with lots of ideas to create and come true. Art is also important because we can use it as a way to express ourselves.

Per 6

2/07/24

Imagine a world without art, without this creativity that drives our growth mindset. A student already has to do task after task, so when given the task of creation (artistically) one cannot help but relieve the weight of the rest of the work school & incidentally life gives. Creation is relief, relief is the loss of burdens, no burdens lead to no strains, the catalyst to exploring potential.

Aloha my name is Regine Medeiros and I am in support of this bill. Art has transformed me a life stage of my life. I have been dancing hula since I was 8 years old. This art form has taught me the importance of Hawaiian culture. It tells & passes down the traditions of the Hawaiian people.

Art is important to me because it plays such a big part in my life whether it be through music or dance ~~or~~ or even drawing. Music especially because I listen to music everyday of my life without a doubt, it helps me through everything. Art is important in cultures also, it helps show how we do things and how we can share stories through dance and music. for example Hula, Hula is a very important form of art that some people do daily.

Art is important to me because it helps me express my ideas on other objects not just paper. I do art by painting rocks, pots, wood, etc. The ways to do art endless.

Art is important to me because it help express history

Art helps preserve traditions

Art brings out joy and pride

Art expresses ideas

Art connects people

Art connects things

Art passes on messages

Art brings peace

Art speaks messages

Art is peace.

Art is extremely important for learning about culture & about life in general. Art is not only a medium with I express my self its a medium with I learn without Art I would have been deemed to fail in our society without it so it is an extremely important part of my life as an artist & visual learner. Art is also extremely important about learning culture. Art such as dance, song, physical media, ect. teach us so much about a culture of people all over the world through all centuries & eras & it should not be taken away because without art what would even make us human as art is such a fundamental part of humani

Art is important to me. When it pertains to art programs like the Sumi-e lessons with Ms. Crocker, it enriches my knowledge & insight on Japanese art techniques & the origins of ink & how ancestors of people & cultures developed substances they used to document history & the human experience. Culinary Arts is also especially important to me because it is my avenue of creative expression. Food & the way it is served & presented not only appeases the eye, but also tells a story of the ingredients, the ecosystems they ~~are from~~ originate from, the culture the food represents & why certain ingredients & techniques are used by those cultures.

Art is important to me because it is able to tell stories, teach lessons, people are able to showcase their talents. Each and every type of art shows a sort of significance. We just need to find it.

Arts is important to me because it helps me calm myself down and it's really fun drawing and painting.

Art and expression are vital pieces of culture. It is important that in such a diverse environment like Hawaii, we Kama'āina get the opportunity to learn about the cultures that reside here. For example, many students that attend Korawaena High School have Japanese roots but may not have access to educating themselves. Having these inclusive art programs in school gives ALL students the chance to be a part of something special.

Art is important to me
because it helps me
Distribute My feelings
on to it

Art is important to me because I see art everywhere, not only in just art like painting/drawing but other things like music, culture and other things. To me, music is one of my most beloved forms of art by the way it makes me feel when I listen to it. Music helps me relax and enjoy life.

Art is important to me because it helps preserve my culture, helps me be creative, helps nourish me physically and mentally, and makes me have fun and enjoy myself. I find that music and cinema especially help me because I find peace when listening to music.

Art is important because it is a way where people can express themselves and express their culture in ways where it can inspire others.

god's art - the ocean is my safe place
and my favorite art

Art is important to me because it plays a significant part of self-expression. Art is used to express messages, emotion, and other things. It helps to learn of culture, history, and ourselves. It can provide an outlet of feelings and such.

Art is important because it worth money
like NFT

- Because arts became part of our daily life, we hear it anywhere, we see it anywhere, and we create/have it anywhere.

Art is important to me because it helps me relax

~~Ilana Wilentz~~ Feb. 7, 2024

Art, for me, is a way to express my thoughts and feelings. It also represents tranquility and joy. Whenever I feel depressed, art has always been an escape from sadness and hopelessness.

As an immigrant who has left everything behind to start a new life, art has allowed me to remember my culture and family. Thanks to art, everything I left in Colombia feels close when I experiment with expressions of a work of art. The music comforts me with the tunes that describe the landscapes and behaviors of my people and with the poems that embellish those memories.

2/6/24

Why is Art Important?

Art has benefitted me, by giving me an outlet to express my creativity and collaborate/share ideas with my peers. Art allows people to express their ideas visually, without any spoken words. It taught me to give meaning and to put intent behind every part of my pieces. And it also taught me how to think more deeply about meaning, symbolism and how I can represent something creatively. I believe that art made me more thoughtful and open to new ideas I usually wouldn't have tried otherwise.

1/6/24 pd 7

Why art is important to me.

Art class is important to me because I got to experience and learn how to express myself and grow with my classmates. I learned a lot about culture through Sumi-e, etc. and it's grown my mindset and ideas. I've also learned a lot about myself through this class, such as my art style, what I like and what I don't, etc. I've tried things I would never have tried outside of school and I, as well as other students, are very grateful to have it.

From,

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:27:39 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diliaur Tellei	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It doesn't make sense to remove the SFCA commission -- every island should have a voice in public arts. Replacing the commission with a governor-appointed director who can choose their own support without regard to varied perspectives seems like a recipe for lopsided access to public arts processes and a move toward Oahu-centrism (and no that's not a good thing).

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:28:02 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alison Beste	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wholeheartedly disagree with this bill that would repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. SFCA Commission is an incredible program that consistently advocates for artists across the islands and brings awareness to the transformative power of the arts to the public. Please do NOT pass this bill.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:29:35 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ewa Moscicka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it alters the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts in our society.

February 7, 2024

RE: SB 2764

Aloha,

I am writing in support of keeping the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission and allowing it to continue its work supporting local artists and programs, particularly the Folk and Traditional Arts program.

I personally benefitted from their apprenticeship program which allowed me to study gagaku (ancient Japanese court music) under the late Rev. Masatoshi Shamoto for three years. He passed away in 2020 and I am honored to have been asked by his family to take over and teach his gagaku course at UH Manoa, which I continue to do to this day.

I also separately worked with the late Shizuko Akamine who taught a handful of koto (Japanese zither) students in my hometown of Hilo. The SFCA was extremely supportive and provided much needed financial assistance with the outer-island travel expenses to assist Akamine-sensei as she trained me to teach her group, the So-shin Kai. Akamine-sensei passed away in 2014, but her wish to have me continue teaching koto in Hilo has been fulfilled, and the So-shin Kai has grown to over ten active members today.

Although the financial support was much appreciated, neither of these projects would have been as successful without the formal recognition provided by the SFCA through this program.

I hope that the SFCA Commission will not be repealed, so that programs like this can continue to support current and future perpetuators of these traditional arts that are invaluable to the various cultures and communities that make up our special homeland.

Mahalo,



Darin Miyashiro
darinm@hawaii.edu

Gagaku/Koto Instructor - UH Manoa music department
Instructor/Director - So-shin Kai
Instructor/Director - Sawai Koto Kai

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:35:13 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gloria Lau	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 7, 2024

Honorable Members of the Hawai‘i State Senate Committee(s):

As a concerned citizen and longstanding supporter of arts and culture in Hawai‘i, I am writing to express strong opposition to Senate Bill 2764. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) provides a vital mission: promoting, perpetuating, and preserving culture and the arts in Hawai‘i.

Eliminating the SFCA commission and transferring SFCA to the Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism does an enormous disservice to arts and culture overall and especially that of native Hawaiians. Authentic traditions that extend deep into time are part of our identity and form the roots of our community. An independent culture and arts organization ensures – as it has done for the 50+ years of the SFCA – the perpetuation of these traditions at the core of our history and future, equal to and not “underneath” economic and tourism considerations.

The State of Hawai‘i has established one of the first state arts agencies in the country, a national model and point of pride recognized for its independence, which the proposed bill would eliminate. Studies have shown that state arts agencies whose independence was compromised experienced an average budget decrease of 76%. The negative impacts across Hawai‘i would be far-reaching.

- SFCA plays a crucial role in reaching young people across the state through education programs, providing important opportunities for students to pursue creative careers here

in Hawai'i and helping combat the state's "talent drain." At 4.5% of total state GDP and the fifth largest private sector source of jobs, the creative sector is vital – and it starts with the kind of education which SFCA supports.

- SFCA invigorates the creative ecosystem by supporting exhibitions across the island through its Art in Public Places program, which showcase local talent and contribute to the cultural enrichment of our communities.
- SFCA supports numerous arts organizations statewide. The benefits of such investments extend to all ages. Studies show that arts and culture programs enhance student academic performance, especially those of low income; boost mental health and well-being; help aging brains to remember; and foster community unity. The "payback" is undeniable over time.

In conclusion, I urge you to vote against the proposed changes to SFCA outlined in Senate Bill 2764 and urge the committee to recognize the value of an independent SFCA and its indispensable contributions to our state's venerable arts and culture. Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Gloria Lau

Gloria Lau

139 Makaweli St.

Honolulu 96825

415.307.6441

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:35:26 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Aruga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:40:17 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Asagi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill jeopardizes crucially needed funding for arts programming that has provided much support for local artists, youth, educators, seniors, and marginalized communities. As a local resident and artist, I have seen the growth of an inclusive creative community (especially with representation for neighbor islands) that would not have been possible without the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts in its current manifestation. For these reasons I am opposing SB2764.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:42:45 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JEFFREY LIM, M.D.	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Do not disable the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. I, like Governor Green, am a practicing physician, specifically in pediatrics for over 30 years in Hawaii and have seen the steady eroding of support for the arts in education throughout my years of practice, with its chilling effect on the well roundedness of education in the State of Hawaii, promoting long-term narrowness of perspective in the general population, not to mention the automatic marginalization of the artistically inclined.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:42:58 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel A. Kelin, II	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Opposition to SB2764.

Once the words 'culture' and 'arts' are removed from an agency, unfortunately those two entities will lose support, purpose, importance and financial support. To demonstrate commitment to the importance of culture and arts within our community and our schools requires dedication of an agency and staff specialists. Without that, the dedication and needed financial support will dwindle and possibly disappear completely. We don't need to look too far into the past to see the reality of this. When, in the 1990's, Hawaii faced economic downturn, one of the decisions made by the governor at the time was cutting the SFCA budget. There was the feeling that, once cut, the money wouldn't return. Which, for the most time, has proved true. If SB2764 passed, it would further reduce support for culture and the arts or, more realistically, would give government officials an opening to reallocate and financial support to other purposes.

Secondly, federal funding for the arts might be threatened if there exists no agency to receive and distribute those funds for the arts locally. Why would we want to threatened access to such funding?

Most importantly, culture and the arts are a core part of Hawaii's identity, beyond the tourist-focused entertainment. SFCA is about our local community, giving residents, and school children most importantly, access to quality art work and experiences. Take away the SFCA and you are only perpetuating arts for tourists, not for our own residents.

The SFCA has played an important role in our community for many years. I encourage you to consider how removing such an agency demonstrates a lack of support for culture and the arts in our state and to our local population.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:48:38 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dennis Hanshew	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I was shocked to learn of SB2764. I have a BFA from U. of Hawaii at Manoa and lived for nearly thirty years in Honolulu. As a student and later as an aspiring artist, the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) purchased eight of my paintings, one of which was eventually placed in Senator Briant T. Taniguchi's office at the State Capitol. The other paintings are in a revolving placement program in public buildings throughout the state. In the late 1960s and on I came to know Alfred Price, the first Executive Director of the SFCA). While not everyone agreed with Alfred's aesthetics, it was apparent throughout his Directorship that he guided the SFCA with the eye of a trained artist (architect) to establish one of the foremost public agencies in support of the arts in the country, a model that has been copied and envied by others jurisdictions. To remove the decision making process from the directorship of an artist and put it in the hands of politicians would prove a death nall to the arts in Hawaii. Public art would thereafter be of the lowest common denominator. The SFCA supported me as a student artist and later as an independent artist. It fostered an intellegent purchase of art for the public domain that was largely outside of politics. The thought of disembling and restructuring the SFCA as proposed is so discouraging. Would you go to a mechanic to have heart surgery? No, you would go to an expert in the field. The same is true of art and especially true of art for the public domain. It should be left to the expertice of those trained and experienced in the arts. Please do not pass this legislation. The SFCA is a unique foundation that has contributed enormously to the beautification of the State and provided wonderful opportunities and inspiration to so many artists. Thank you.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:52:08 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Piia M. Aarma	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in opposition to Senate Bill 2764 and in strong support of SFCA.

SFCA plays a crucial role in our community – from the Art in Public Places program to supporting and invigorating our arts sector to reaching children across the state through its education program and nonprofit support. Its mission to promote, perpetuate and preserve culture and the art in Hawaii is financially supported by the State of Hawaii and the National Endowment for the Arts, a vital infusion of funds that should not be jeopardized.

In 1979, SFCA and the Department of Education established the Artists in Schools program, making Hawaii the first state in the union to develop a statewide partnership between schools and professional artists. This is a point of pride for Hawaii.

SFCA supports numerous arts organizations statewide, enriching our environment, contributing to our economy and supporting our growing creative arts industry. Importantly, it highlights and preserves our Native Hawaiian culture.

The SFCA does a tremendous amount of work, working directly with communities statewide and should remain independent. Studies have shown that state arts agencies whose independence was compromised experienced an average budget decrease of 76%. Such a drastic reduction in funding would severely undermine the impact SFCA has had throughout Hawai‘i.

Thank you for considering my testimony. Please do not move this bill forward.

Piia M. Aarma

piia@pineappletweed.com

808.221.2102

1829 Bertram Street

Honolulu 96816

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:48:39 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
betts cruz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is not a good bill, our arts need to be kept in the hands that are now in control. I oppose SB 2764.

Betts Cruz

Molokai Resident

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:53:43 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexandra Eyer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SB2764 and HB2565!

SB2764, HB2565 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. Requires the Governor, a nonexpert in this field, to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. ALL NONEXPERTS in the field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous and reflects the darker history of humanity.

These bills would cut outer island representation and silence the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Giving power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart [integrity]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "Cultural Prostitution."

Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Mahalo

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:54:15 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiana Duvauchelle	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to express my strong opposition to Hawaii's Senate Bill 2764, as I firmly believe that the realms of business, economic growth, and tourism should remain distinct from the rich tapestry of culture and arts.

While economic prosperity is undoubtedly crucial, it is equally important to preserve and safeguard the authenticity of our cultural heritage. Culture and arts are expressions of our identity, history, and traditions, deserving of protection independent of their economic impact.

In conclusion, I respectfully urge you to reconsider and oppose SB 2764. Let us strive for a harmonious balance between economic growth and the preservation of our unique cultural and artistic identity.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tiana Duvauchelle

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:54:18 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Glazier	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Lee and De Coite, Vice Chairs Inouye and Wakai and the Members of the Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in OPPOSITION of Section 2 of SB 2764-RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM.

I am an independent filmmaker, producer, writer and SAG-AFTRA Board member.

I support education and access to the arts. I support the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts and their decades long history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision-making. Please consider keeping this important organization intact.

Respectfully,

Deborah Glazier

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:54:57 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth Marcil	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislators,

I am writing in opposition to SB2764 which transfers the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism and repeals the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission.

As a forty-year resident and visual teaching artist from Maui County, I have had the honor of serving our public school youth through the Artist in the Schools (AITS) program for many years. Through arts integration, I have witnessed firsthand the profound impact on student engagement and learning, as well as the invaluable social-emotional (SEL) life skills and emphasis on Hawaiian values that it fosters. As teaching artists, we are on the frontlines, providing academic, emotional, and psychological support to K-12 students through the arts. The value of this work has been evident for many years, but it has never been more clear than in the aftermath of the Maui fires, where the work we do has become a lifeline that cannot be denied. None of this invaluable work would be possible without the incredible contributions of the SFCA.

I firmly believe that SB2764 undermines the fundamental principles of community representation, cultural preservation, and equitable access to the arts within our island communities.

The disturbing negative impact and consequences of this bill are my main concerns:

Impact of Transferring to another department:

According to National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics, state arts agencies whose placement changed had an average budget decrease of 76%. How can the public be assured the arts would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer?

Impact of repealing the SFCA Commission:

Losing neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community-based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.

This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of

authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of culture and the arts.

I urge all committee members hearing testimony in support of this bill to seriously consider these consequences and vote *AGAINST* the further advancement of SB2764.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,
Beth Marcil

February 7, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

I oppose **SB2764**.

In a time when we are experiencing so much upheaval and uncertainty – locally, nationwide and globally – it is imperative that we keep in place opportunities for artists and cultural practitioners to not only survive, but to thrive. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) and the SFCA Commission are important entities that make the arts accessible and attainable for all and **I heartily support their continuation in their present form.**

The value of creative expression and true and authentic cultural understanding cannot be ignored. **ALL** of us benefit in many ways by being exposed to and participating in the kinds of events and opportunities fostered by the SFCA; this allows us to connect with and understand others in our communities and beyond. Please respect and acknowledge the expertise of the SFCA and SFCA Commission and allow their work to continue uninterrupted; I do not believe transferring to the DBEDT is appropriate.

Eileen Towata
Kailua, HI 96734

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:55:23 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megumi Kean	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It would be a disaster if local artists and practitioners were to lose the SFCA's support. I strongly oppose this bill. Please consider the community of artists and Native Hawaiians that make this land so special. Arts and culture should stand in leadership of the expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:56:58 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Bae	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good afternoon. My name is Michelle Bae and I am a concerned Honolulu resident in Senator Moriwaki's district. I am testifying in opposition to Senate Bill 2764. I believe that the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission should not be transferred to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, and that the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission should not be repealed. Without the SFCA, there will be no dedicated agency committed to promoting and preserving the vibrant arts and culture of Hawaii, along with its diverse artists and arts educators. There will also be no dedicated commission that otherwise provides transparency, community-based decision making, and neighbor island representation and engagement. Commissions allow for constituents and local residents to be engaged and represented in their local government. Without the SFCA, there will be no such engagement moving forward.

I would like to conclude my testimony by stating once again that I am against Senate Bill 2764. Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:57:21 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaela Teho	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill would effectively eliminate funding for the arts and related events. The events that the SFCA puts on are cultural hubs essential to providing safe space for individuals and families alike. The SFCA is an irreplaceable institution that allows for the creation of connection that is essential to the community in Hawai'i. To support this bill would be to support the dismantling of safe and creative spaces for all.

Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Opposing SB 2764, Relating to the transfer of the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts to DBEDT, repealing the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts Commission, and requiring the Governor to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts.

Aloha mai kākou-

I am an independent artist and arts educator with over 30 years experience in Hawai'i and on the continent. Because of my expertise, I have been asked to review arts and culture grants by city government arts agencies, state government arts agencies, and philanthropic entities. I am also experienced in leading non-profit culture organizations.

Through these roles I have interacted with the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts (SFCA) in numerous ways. The organization has an excellent reputation throughout the state as being an advocate for individual arts and culture practitioners as well as advocating for the sector as a whole. The SFCA is also a leader in promoting arts education state-wide through the "Arts First" initiative.

I am testifying against SB 2764.

Primarily:

- In my work and experiences across the nation in arts and culture, there are few if any communities that are so strongly tied to the arts and to cultural values as Hawai'i. Displacing the SFCA, its commissioners, and its leadership process would show an incredible lack of recognition for what forms the core of our community.
- There is an ongoing, concerted, and vital push to support and increase the numbers of cultural practitioners in Hawai'i now. Moving the SFCA under DBEDT reduces their work to be at the service of those looking out for tourists rather than celebrating these practitioners as continuing the foundation of our community in Hawai'i.
- The SFCA's budget is miniscule in comparison to the entire state budget. Moving the SFCA under DBEDT will put even this small funding in jeopardy.
- Having the Executive Director of the SFCA be selected by the governor could lead to extensive and unnecessary loss of institutional knowledge as well as lack of continuity in funding and work on important arts, cultural, and arts education projects.

Additionally:

- Losing neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community-based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.
- How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities for funding culture, the arts, and arts education?

Mahalo for your consideration, and I encourage you to vote against SB 2764,
Elizabeth Lentz-Hill, M.F.A.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:59:00 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terry Batte	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha from Lana'i,

As a member of the Lana'i Community and the Lana'i Arts & Culture Center (LAC), I am against the transfer of SFCA dollars to DBEDT.

LAC has been an entity on Lana'i for over 30 years, and was developed when the talents of our community members were discovered. The interest in the arts exploded and LAC has positioned ourselves to address the needs of visual art participation.

As the only visual arts entity on the island, the Lana'i Art Center has supplemented the arts in the schools. With the continued cuts in Education, the small community and lack of support from the State, LAC has filled the needs of art in both public and private schools here.

The funding from SFCA assists us in providing those programs for the public schools, and we are able to give classes to private schools in exchange for helping with ornaments, which are a fund raiser for LAC. We supply each with the necessary knowledge and supplies they require to create art for ages 18 months up to senior citizens. Should funding be disturbed in anyway, it would be detrimental for the arts and our community.

While DBEDT is an entity that deals with progress and developement, their needs and vision do not align with that of the arts. While art is an important part of tourism, it is the completed arts which are viewed. Lana'i Art Center has produced many artists who are selling in our gallery, and other galleries throughout Hawai'i, while sharing their mana'o with the community. The ability to learn from featured artist has been a thrill for many of our youths as they learn perspective, woodwork, textiles and other art forms which are the specific talent of each instructor.

Lee Cabanilla, our Co-ED and workshop instructor has recently won the Merit Award for his representation of Laka right after the Maui fires. As the center piece of the show, it brought much attention to our island and our arts. The transfer of dollars would put non-profit organizations in competition with other entities which align more with the needs of DBEDT and not the arts.

None of our programs would be possible without the guidance of SFCA. It is their expertise which helped to guide us through our vision and mission. This one on one assistance

is extremely valuable to our organization, as they keep us on course with our programs. I do not believe this would be a priority for DBEDT as their focus is in economic development.

Studies have shown that more than 75% of funding is lost to the art community when funding has been redirected to other entities to manage. Nonprofits would be in direct competition with for profits and state agencies whose mission aligns more clearly with DBEDT and put nonprofit art programs at risk.

Losing community and neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the SFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation.

This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? How does the department of Business Economic Development and Tourism align with the needs and priorities and funding of **not for profit culture and the arts organizations**.

To eliminate the commission would be to throw out the SFCA's 50+ year history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision making.

Please reconsider this bill and DO NOT PASS IT.

Mahao for you consideration,

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:59:20 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kiara Womack	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

I am a teaching artist who lost my livelihood during the pandemic due to uncertainty in arts organizations. I was employed by an arts organization that let go ALL teachers March 2020.

Thankfully, in 2021 I found hope to continue my career as an arts educator through the SFCA. The arts Education specialist gathered many new teaching artists, like myself, with a diverse range of knowledge and application in the classroom. The arts specialist is highly educated, motivated, and passionate, as an artist herself, as well as an arts administrator helping us teaching artists navigate grants funding, which was new to many of us. She has observed my classes and offered detailed, invaluable feedback, and coached and motivated me to improve myself as an educator. She also coordinated professional developments with worldclass, transformative, highly trained arts educators so all artists in the schools TAs are more qualified and skilled and relevant due to these PDs. I am able to offer the keiki of Hawai‘i a higher quality of arts education due to the SFCA arts education specialists' unfailing support, guidance, programming, and passion for their work. If this legislation is approved, these programs will lose the voice of artists, artists will lose their livelihoods, and the keiki of Hawai‘i will lose high quality arts programming that coordinated with National Core Arts Standards. Artists and arts Education Specialists are invaluable to our artist communities in Hawai‘i. The loss of them will hit our communities hard.

Neighboring island organizations will lose funding for transformative ‘āina-based programming. The keiki will suffer most. On every island.

I strongly oppose this bill.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:59:24 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
samuel schryver	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Samuel Schryver, and I am a working professional artist on Kauai. I am writing to express strong opposition to Senate Bill 2674, particularly concerning its implications for the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA). This disruption to the foundation opens it to potentially devastating budget decreases, loss of community representation, and limitations for native Hawaiian culture. It also jeopardizes and disregards SFCA's history as a leader in community-based arts funding and decision-making. Preserving SFCA's independence is crucial for supporting and perpetuating Hawaii's diverse cultural heritage.

Our state's fine arts and cultural community constitute a delicate ecosystem that should not be disturbed. I urge you to reconsider SB2674, emphasizing the importance of preserving SFCA as it stands - a crucial component to our state's arts and cultural communities. Your thoughtful consideration is imperative for safeguarding Hawaii's vibrant cultural and artistic traditions.

Mahalo,

Samuel Schryver

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:00:07 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jodi Endicott	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

2024-02-7

Dear State Legislature:

I am submitting this testimony on SB2764 that seeks to transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. This bill also requires the Governor to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts with Advice and consent of the Senate.

While on the surface, the purpose of this bill intends to **expand our economy and cultivate support regionally and globally of Hawaii's art, artists, arts educators, organizations, supporters and our many other audiences.** Sadly though, this purpose has forever been questionable as the funding of the SFCA educational programs and Art In Public Programs have been sought to be used in other ways by legislative officials every year.

Another aspect is that there would also be a loss of continuity if arts representatives are appointed by the governor every 4 years. In the past I have met with representatives from Hawai'i's Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism to foster interest in business/art collaborations such as ArtPrize and other popular tourist-focused events. They were open and encouraging. They gave me hope. Then it became a very frustrating experience as soon there was a change in personnel with a new administration. Goodbye hope! Such disruptions have a detrimental impact on educational programs and exhibitions not to the mention public interest that has taken decades to develop. This breakdown in continuity would also severely impact the public art program as these projects take many years to complete and could overlap two different administrations with two different approaches on how art should be made.

SB2764 fosters more questions than answers at this time including:

1. **Will this transfer reduce or expand the 1% funding for Art In Public Places?**

1. **How will neighbor islands be impacted by such a change?**

1. **How will transparency of decisions be maintained and expanded? Neighbor island folks need to be able to attend the meetings in live time and on-line. Being able to interface with their representative is an important aspect of the commission especially as they can address community issues directly.**

1. **Will separate additional funding be added for performance art or will that be taken away from the 1% fund?**

5. **In 2021 \$421 million in state and county expenditures and generated an estimated \$728 million in direct and induced impact. Will such a transfer of these two sought after commissions to DBEDT expand or reduce these expenditures? This is especially important as the funding the arts clearly generates many hundreds of millions of dollars back beyond what they cost. Given our isolated location, DBEDT must be wanting to further develop more circular economies here. majority of the income generated by an artist working in Hawaii goes directly back into the local economy.**

6. **Is this change driven by the need to further develop tourism at the cost of cuts to arts services for our residents?**

7. Instead of taking away many things that are already working, why not adapt this bill to bring representatives of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism onto the SFCA and Kin Kamehameha Commissions? That way, everyone will be working together for the common purpose to promote our arts to 1) ourselves 2) to tourists and 3) a global audience.

In all honesty, SB2764 reminds me of how we were asked once to vote for rail without being able to consider its overall impact and costs to our residents and community.

There are too many variables here. Until there are more answers as to who, what, why, when and how, I cannot support SB2764.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jodi Endicott

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:01:21 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Iijima	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB2764.

The Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) was created in 1965 as part of an expansive and inclusive vision for Hawai'i and its people. The result of that vision was more than five decades of investment in the local community and in the culture and arts of our islands.

Arts and culture are more than things created by people. They are the foundation of our identity and the expression of our humanity. In Hawai'i, this identity and expression are more diverse than anywhere else in America. We are presently living in times when people may want to judge, suppress, or eliminate such diversity.

This reorganization of the SFCA will reduce its broad representation, and it would do irreparable harm to our entire community. It would destroy decades of collaboration, relationships, and partnerships. It would jeopardize essential funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. Programs that have nurtured students could vanish, and they could lose the joy, support, and validation that the arts and cultural activities provide.

As an artist, I am witness to what the SFCA can do for an individual. My early work focused on my identity as a Japanese American in Hawaii and on my family's intergenerational experiences and struggles. The Hawai'i State Foundation validated my efforts by purchasing my work and awarding me an individual artist fellowship. Such invaluable support encouraged me to continue and to share my work with others. I have also seen the SFCA nurture and support numerous arts organizations, artists, and cultural practitioners.

It is essential that the SFCA be allowed to continue its work in our community, and that it be headed by those who have experience working with artists and cultural practitioners. We have so much that is already in place, and it will all be lost if this bill takes affect.

LATE

To Whom It May Concern in the Hawai'i State Legislature Regarding SB 2764

**I really do not want to offend anyone by asking,
but is there anyone in our state government
who is an advocate for the arts, who can explain the value of arts funding,
so that more citizen input on this basic level of understanding
becomes unnecessary? If so, maybe there's no need
for anyone to write testimony like this anymore.
Does any legislator even really read it all?**

**Are they all too young, too new,
or do they know that this is generally the same old subject,
Variations on How to Defund, Demean, or Dilute the Arts,
which for decades has pitted Art against lawmakers,
unlike the lobbies for over-building on this limited 'aina,
or those who too easily degrade the host Hawaiian culture
which itself is known to value arts in literally every aspect of life?
Or is this all *shibai* for no good reason at all? Why waste time?
Doesn't everyone know that all great cultures nurture great art,
or are we simply settling for less now?
'Auwe already. *Poho.***

**Is it just too late to defend a fading lifestyle
where people have a sense of culture
which not only includes various art forms,
but knows that without the arts the lives of the people
will descend to the lowest, crass, social media level of existence
which permeates every aspect of our lives?**

**Can everyone stop using their phones for entertainment only
and instead do some serious research on the different ways
the arts are correlated to any number of good things,
like the old cliché of how music helps students improve their math skills,
or how art or poetry therapy helps survivors of domestic violence, rape, bullying,
PTSD and all manner of grief? Children who can barely write can draw or paint
a picture of their family, of who is missing from their home.
Has no one ever known the comfort of a favorite song
that enabled them to get through a rough patch?
Maybe your mother's or father's favorite,
and you honor them, keep their spirit alive, in your life, that way.**

**Has no one found intellectual stimulation
in a complex character in a story with a good plot?**

Do we need to review *Critical Thinking vs Passive Screen Time*?

I suppose it's too much to expect anyone to maintain a focus on how life lessons are not only conveyed in thematic messages, but also how cultural values that define who we are as an ethical people are actually preserved in the arts. What? Religion already does that, you say? Has no one read the *poetry* of the Psalms of David or the *storytelling* variations of New Testament authors or *parables* of the Buddha or Jesus, even *mo'olelo 'aina*, which integrates the *literary* with the *music* with the *dance* with the *drama* that only live performance can truly provide?

How do you teach your children their human values? TikTok?

Where do you learn to evolve your adult sensibilities?

How does a culture thrive without constantly nurturing art?

Are we even talking yet about the aesthetics of Beauty with a capital B?

We take so many things for granted and are the lesser for it.

I really do not want to offend anyone or insult anyone's intelligence, but policies directing funding away from the arts are asinine. There are always factions who want arts funding directed toward contractors in construction or defense or any other industry that can afford lobbyists, anything else that pays way more than is allotted to arts programming; and each time the burden is placed on the arts community to defend its very existence, the paltry crumbs thrown its way. But to demean the arts by subsuming them under business and economic development demands that we ignore decades and centuries of history that illustrate how business and economic development are usually anti-art! *Auwe*. What beauty finds money glittering in a hollow heart.

The statistical fact that 76% of ARTS FUNDING IS LOST when such reassignment of agencies is "committed" or when this kind of degrading of arts commissions occurs-- Can you guarantee this won't happen? How about the 1% idea? Can it go higher to account for inflation, like transportation and building costs? And to view Hawaiian culture through the lens of tourism and money— how *shame* to prostitute native people yet again! What game are we playing today? Is shibai the right term? Or worse?

I hope to write words that have purpose and impact and actual effect. I hope to reach the souls, if not the minds, of those in seats of power today, as I have for decades as an arts practitioner, educator, arts administrator, arts advocate, as a community activist who feels that fighting a losing battle

is better than never fighting at all.

So I try to have faith once again
that some people who are paid money by non-art sources
will find it in themselves to do what is right, what is *pono*,
and will not need any more testimony to explain to them
that a basic human characteristic—to make and appreciate art—
to use art as a tool like any other human tool—to nurture life--
is not something that should have to be fought for in legal arenas.

It's not for a politicized Senate to have final say
in appointing an arts director, or to dissolve a representative arts commission
that is hopefully composed of artists and arts educators.
Rather, the arts should be understood to be a unique category
of human rights, and all people should have equal access to art,
from all cultures, in a living, breathing (inspired, *ha!*) interactive art form.

We know. This is politics. The art of compromise.
So let us find a reasonable compromise which supports Art
which has to defend its honor yet again. What is informed and fair?
Is there no leadership to stand up for art? We the people
elected politicians who formed committees on important subjects.
Art used to be among them, on its own, not in a forced marriage
with Transportation or Tourism. Let us not forget our ideals.

Where are you going? Where does your road lead?
Do you look down that road and see a good place or just another urban desert?
Do you as a leader of this island culture plan ahead for your children's children?
Please do not give in to lobbyists that put their self-interest ahead of others.
While that is necessary sometimes, as a political leader you cannot do that
and still do a good job. Please do a good job. Look for what is *pono*.
You may not realize it, but generations are counting on you for that.

So next time you find yourself
standing among your fellow legislators, holding their hands
and singing *Hawai'i Aloha*, think of how complicated aloha is,
feel it in your bones, your iwi, your iwi kupuna, way back and way forward,
and know that your actions must be *pono* for where you live now.
Wherever you were born. Whoever you are. Is it *pono*?
Ua mau ke ea i ka 'aina i ka pono.
Mahalo.

Eric Chock
Unaffiliated

Aloha kākou.

My name is Kumulā‘au Sing Jr. My wife Haunani Balino-Sing and I are presenting our testimony in opposition of SB2764 that will Transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) and also repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission that would require the Governor to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

There exists many flaws in this proposed bill. For a brief background, both Haunani and I are Hawaiian cultural practitioners and former educators. For the last several years, we have received the Folk and Traditional Art (FTA) grant funding from the SFCA to support our efforts to revive and proliferate the art of ulana ‘ie‘ie (traditional twined basketry) throughout our State. We have taught year-long weaving cohorts in our neighbor island communities of Maui, Hilo, Kona and O‘ahu. Too many times in the past has our neighbor island communities been overlooked from receiving and benefitting from cultural art workshops and experiences; these opportunities tend to stay and continue to be offered on O‘ahu. If SB2764 goes forward, it will affect neighbor island representation on the SFCA Commission by eliminating transparency and community based decision making which is a core value of the foundation. Let us not forget also that the SFCA has a 50+ year track history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision making by operating as its own independent organization.

Having the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) take control of SFCA would be a detrimental mistake because often times their focus is NOT ART and CULTURE. Their view and perception of art and culture lies heavily to support tourism; a “political people pleasing” agenda that manipulates and at time perverts our authentic traditional arts and cultural practices. This bill will limit true representation and perpetuation of authentic cultural art. Keeping SFCA as an independent organization will ensure that the perpetuation of authentic cultural traditions by Native Hawaiians will continue.

As beneficiaries of the SFCA FTA grant, we are able to teach ‘ie‘ie basketry in our communities with the intention of increasing cultural practitioners who will in turn become invaluable resources and assets in their communities. The pinnacle of our teaching efforts with the support from SFCA will be on full display at Capitol Modern (Hawaii State Art Museum) this June during the Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture with our exhibition, Nā Akua Ākea o Ko Hawai‘i Pae‘āina: The Vast and Numerous Deities of the Hawaiian Islands. This exhibition will bring to life traditional ancestral images while expanding the realm of ‘ie‘ie weaving to include contemporary Native Hawaiian expressions of *demigods and goddesses, shape shifters* and *‘aumakua* images. With the support from SFCA, this exhibition has a lot of potential opportunities to educate our local and global community about this unique Hawaiian art form free from political bias.

Mahalo again for allowing us time and consideration to share our thoughts and views to the committee today. ‘O māua nō me ke aloha a me ka ha‘aha‘a.

Kumula'au & Haunani Sing

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:02:00 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eric Chang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please do not strip SFCA of its independence and agency to serve all of Hawai'i, with the requisite oversight that already exists.

Mahalo,

Eric Chang

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:08:16 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine McQuiston	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write to urge you to not pass SB2764 this Thursday, February 8th. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts plays a vital role in facilitating performances, education, and public enrichment. Without these valuable activities, both innovative and traditional forms of creativity in the islands is threatened. These endeavors should not be comingled with the concerns of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.

I urge your commitment to the future of arts and culture in our state by maintaining the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and its Commission.

Respectfully,
Katherine McQuiston

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:16:15 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Naoise magee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a member of Honolulu printmakers and as a parent to elementary school students I know the potential of the arts to our young children and to dispose of the sfca is a crying shame and should not be allowed. The arts are best kept by the sfca and well funded

kindest regards

naoise

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:22:34 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Summer Escajeda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please oppose passing this bill. There is no reason given that adequately defends moving the SCFSA from an independent commission to be lumped in the DBEDT - where there is no guarantee that our Arts program will not suffer budget cuts. If the reason for this move is to reduce the administrative operating costs for the State, I am sure there is another place in the State Budget to make up for this. We rely on tourism for much of our economy, and having a robust Arts culture in the State is a way to keep tourists engaged with our vibrant diverse community/culture. Culture should not be for sale, but access to it so that our visitors understand who we are and appreciate Hawaii is a cost-benefit. The more cultural practitioners, and Hawaiian artists producing art, the more we can ensure the longevity and success of our peoples.

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:23:37 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Allison Seales	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Allison Seales. I'm a community member of Moloka`i and Lana`i islands and **I strongly oppose SB 2764.**

Our small, rural communities depend on our art centers for education and community gathering and I believe that their current mission do not fit within those of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. These art centers have been such an important part of our community and this change would be a detriment and possible risk to their existence.

I humbly request that the committee **oppose SB 2764.** Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Allison Seales

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:33:28 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kilihea Inaba	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

My apology for this late submission.

This testimony is in opposition of SB2764 and what it is seeking to do. Please do not support this bill that will repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. The culture of Hawai'i, which is encompassing of things not only Hawaiian, but all that have found its place here, is critical to the health (in all ways) of Hawai'i. Transferring the SFCA to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism and allowing the Governor to decide on its Executive Director would be harmful to the true essence of Hawai'i. As a Native Hawaiian, seeing that the culture and arts of this place could be "lumpsummed" into a department that primarily deals with tourism and thus capitalism, is angering. This bill would take away decision-making capabilities within smaller communities who really depend on maintaining genuine traditions for their livelihoods. Please do not hear this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Kilihea Inaba

Kaloko, Kona, Hawai'i

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:24:41 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kirk K Kurokawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a local artist I cannot support a bill that will negatively impact the arts in Hawai'i. We are a unique state that produces some of the most brilliantly powerful art that can only be produced and created by artist here in Hawai'i. The SFCA commission makes sure the arts are represented and protected. I personally have worked with their staff on many occasions and I can say that they are some of the most dedicated, knowledgeable and supportive people I have ever worked with. Please support them and our art community.

Mahalo,

Kirk Kurokawa

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:40:27 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leleiohoku Castillo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition of SB2764

Senate Bill 2764 seeks to: 1) transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT); and 2) repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission and grants the Governor the authority to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

In analyzing the potential consequences of this bill, there are several concerns and reasons to oppose it including, but not limited to, the following:

Impact on Cultural Preservation: The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts plays a vital role in preserving Hawai'i's rich cultural heritage. Transferring its responsibility to DBEDT may lead to a dilution of focus and reduced commitment to the preservation and promotion of Hawaiian arts and culture. It is crucial to maintain the SFCA Commission as an independent body solely dedicated to preserving and fostering cultural activities.

Loss of Expertise: The proposed repeal of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission raises serious concerns about the loss of specialized knowledge and expertise in the field of arts and culture. The Commission is comprised of individuals with extensive experience and understanding of Hawai'i's unique cultural landscape. Dissolving this Commission could result in a concerning lack of expertise in making informed decisions regarding not only cultural affairs, but also community representation arising from the removal of requirements related to ensuring individuals from the outer islands are included in the Commission.

Conflict of Interest: Placing the SFCA and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission under DBEDT creates a conflict of interest. The primary focus of DBEDT is economic development, which could undermine the artistic and cultural considerations in decision-making processes. It is important to maintain the independence of the SFCA and the Celebration Commission to ensure cultural preservation remains a priority.

Lack of Public Input: The bill does not appear to emphasize the inclusion of public input in the selection of the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. This omission may limit transparency and public accountability in the decision-making process. It is

crucial to ensure that the selection of the Executive Director involves appropriate public involvement to represent the diverse perspectives of Hawai'i's communities.

Considering these concerns, I strongly oppose Senate Bill 2764.

The proposed transfer and repeal will have negative consequences for Hawai'i's art & cultural preservation efforts, risk losing invaluable expertise, create a conflict of interest, and limit public input. I encourage the legislators to reconsider this measure and preserve the independence and effectiveness of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:51:40 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jun funahashi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Save the art foundation!

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:56:23 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dio Bacchus	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Culture and Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission would better serve its mission as a separate entity, Culture and Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission can only continue to grow with independence. Any merger with the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism would only increase the responsibilities of the agency.

February 7, 2024

Re: SB2764

Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Committee on Transportation, Culture and Arts

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Committee on Energy, Economic
Development and Tourism

Aloha Senators Lee and DeCoite and Committee Members:

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts was established by the Hawaii State Legislature in 1965. Its purpose was to “promote, perpetuate, preserve and encourage culture and the arts. . . as central to the quality of life of the people of Hawaii.” I personally knew both “Pundy” Yokouchi and Alfred Preiss who helped craft the legislation.

If SB2764 passes, it will harm the people of Hawaii. Instead of transferring the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, passage of the bill effectively kills the SFCA.

For nearly sixty years the Foundation has fulfilled its mission. Staff painstakingly review applications for grants. Staff is meticulous in screening qualifications of applicants to assure that authentic traditions, dances, practices are preserved by recognized cultural practitioners. While the emphasis is in protecting and preserving our Hawaiian host culture, the Foundation also assists other immigrant groups to preserve their unique cultures which became part of life in Hawaii beginning with the arrival of Chinese immigrants in 1852. I was privileged to have been tasked with writing grants that helped the Portuguese Association of Maui preserve many of the customs my ancestors brought with them in the late 1800's. Without the Foundation's assistance, we could not have presented an annual Festa (festival) featuring traditional music, dances, displays, culinary workshops and a genealogy workshop. The Foundation's grant allowed for beginning Portuguese language classes, embroidery and Portuguese sausage-making workshops, and most popular, workshops on baking bread in a round, outdoor wood-burning stone oven. This workshop invites parents and children (eight years and older) to learn how bread was made 145+ years ago before plantation homes had electricity. The children knead dough, shape it into rolls and watch it going into the stone oven. They churn butter while the bread is baking and have their labor deliciously rewarded when the bread cools enough to be buttered and eaten. The grant also funded a 26-weeks radio series entitled “Stories of our People” that covered the history, cultural practices, folktales, music, literature and tidbits of information about famous and infamous Portuguese people. The people of Maui were the true beneficiaries of the grant. “Stories of Our People” still airs during the “Sounds of Portugal” program on KEWE 1240AM and 97.9FM Sunday evenings 8 to 9 PM. “Stories” is sponsored by Maui Toyota, Maui Realty Company and the Portuguese Association of Maui. Today, the Portuguese Association of Maui is able to sustain and grow its activities financially.

The State Foundation recognizes that art is not only ballet and opera. It is not only classical music and painting. Art is all of these and more. Art encompasses the beauty and soul expressed by diverse cultures through their traditions. The late Dr. Martin Luther King recognized Hawaii's ethnic groups living together in relative harmony as an example for the rest of the world to follow.

Very often, the needs of the Neighbor Islands are ignored. The State Foundation's Commission has representatives from Neighbor Islands. Having this representation ensures that arts are accessible statewide. Also the Commissioners select the Executive Director and are positioned to know the qualifications and experience of candidates. Current Executive Director Jonathan Johnson is a Foundation employee who rose through the ranks before being selected as Executive Director. Per SB2764, the Governor will appoint the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and Arts, suggesting a purely political action. How will Neighbor Islands benefit? The State will lose not only the Executive but the Commissioners. The State must not cavalierly allow dedicated, talented people to be let go, taking their wealth of knowledge and years of experience with them.

SB2764 suggests that the “keepers of the culture”--Hawaiians and others---are being put in the position of raising money to benefit tourism while ignoring the purpose that created the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts--to “promote, perpetuate, preserve and encourage culture and the arts. . . “

This bill does not ensure preserving “culture and the arts . . . as central to the quality of life of the people of Hawaii.” Please do not allow it to pass.

Very truly yours,
Audrey Rocha Reed
Producer, “The Sounds of Portugal”
(Full time volunteer at Heritage Hall, Inc.)
Email:audrey@mauigateway.com.

REGARDING STATE BILL SB2764.

2/7/2024.

To all Government members who have a say in this issue.

My name is Jodi Ascuena. I'm writing on behalf of myself & my husband, Victor. We are **STRONGLY** opposed to SB 2764.

We've been volunteers for Garden Island Arts Council for the past 27 years. As artists ourselves, we've been involved in many community programs that provide the general public with opportunities to experience Hawaiian music, theater, and any other artistic pursuit to make sure that art is always offered, particularly in the schools here on Kaua'i, where every child has a chance to weave fabric, to make a ceramic tile, to design a card or T-shirt. In other words, that every child has a chance at "art".

Over the past 27 years, I've visited the SFCA offices in Honolulu, where I've experienced person-to-person discussion on the progress of these terrific Kaua'i programs. In these days of technology, the human interaction is vital. Where's our humanity if not for those personal exchange of ideas and information? Every visit I've made to SFCA has been successful on a deep human level. Never mind Facetime, how about some "face" and some "time"? I fear our island community will be put on the back burner, that our "faces" won't be seen and that "time" will be lost if we have to deal with a larger and more all-encompassing entity.

Please do not allow SFCA to be swallowed up into the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism. Please vote to keep SFCA the way it is today. It has been hugely successful. We **VEHEMENTALLY** oppose this bill, SB2764

Yours sincerely,

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 4:58:08 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Mager	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. I feel it is a detriment to the arts in Honolulu and damaging to the enrichment of local citizens and culture.

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 5:04:48 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Domingo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB2764 because it eliminates the following requirement for appointment: "the needs of public educators; neighbor island communities; native Hawaiian culture and diversity; and urban design and infrastructure."

Eliminating this requirement in appointing the foundation members on culture and arts loosens appointments where they would not need to have any specific interest in the neighboring island communities. Removing the diversity of background and experience by geographic location severely disrupts the balance of opinions, opportunities, and collective knowledge that creates any committee.

Preserving Hawaiian culture mandates the collective experience of all islands, and we should not ignore our different backgrounds and experiences.

LATE

It is very important to the culture of Hawaii and to the artists of Hawaii that the SFCA Commission be retained. As an artist and an architect I know that art and all its ancillary functions must be directly cultivated in order to thrive. The SFCA Commission focuses on this with experienced, informed people. The SFCA Commission is essential for this function and purpose.

Art that thrives is good for business and art makes business. The SFCA Commission supports this and cannot be replaced.

Vote **NO** on SB2764 to repeal the the SFCA Commission.

Yours truly,
Lynne Gilroy, Artist
Pukalani, Maui

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 5:25:11 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Don Bernshouse	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is very important to the culture of Hawaii and to the artists of Hawaii that the SFCA Commission be retained. As an architect I adamantly oppose the misguided proposal to repeal the SFCA Commission. The SFCA Commission must be allowed to continue its essential work. Art is a boon to our community and our economy and must be fostered exclusively by informed people focused on its needs and requirements.

Art is good for business and it creates business. The SFCA Commission supports this and cannot be replaced.

Vote **NO** on SB2764 to repeal the the SFCA Commission.

Yours truly,

Don Bernshouse

Architect

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 5:32:01 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dayna Yogi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a resident of Honolulu, HI writing in strong opposition of Bill SB2764. Art is such an important part of the community. In a highly technological and disconnected modern day, art is what uplifts local voices and allows them to be heard. Art brings us together to celebrate the vibrance, history, and diversity of our local culture. The SFCA is the facilitator of art across Hawaii and the Commission is made up of individuals from each island to maintain representation and understand community demands as the islands grow and change.

Transferring the SFCA to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism immediately sends the message that the State views this agency as an economic opportunity, not a community value. Additionally, repealing the Commission makes it clear that neither transparency, representation, nor community input is desired, which completely goes against the values and intentions of the SFCA.

The Art in Public Places (APP) Program alone affects 640 sites statewide including schools, libraries, hospitals, airports, state office buildings, the State Capitol and the Hawai'i State Art Museum. The SFCA also runs several arts education programs for Hawaii's youth.

If there is a functional reason for why the State feels it should transfer the SFCA to the DBEDT that will benefit the SFCA, the State should be upfront and transparent about that. Otherwise, there is no reason an art argecy should be regulated by the Department of Business and Tourism.

The ask is clear and simple: uplift local voices by keeping arts within the community.

Thank you,

Dayna Y.

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 5:48:54 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hannah Hartmann	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2764.

SB2764 would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, revoking and dismantling the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission. The Governor, a nonexpert in this field, is to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. None of these individuals are experts in the field of culture and the arts. This is dangerous and reflects the darker history of humanity.

These bills would cut outer island representation and silence the input from professionals in this field of culture, arts, and humanities. Instead, it gives power and authority to people not vetted with the right background, experience, and heart [integrity]. Instead, in tourism and economic development, they have long eyed the funds the people of Hawai'i advocated for since the 80s. It would cause a catastrophic domino effect on the ability of SFCA to receive significant funding because this bill would deconstruct the organization, and it would no longer be eligible to legally meet oversight standards for receiving funding from primary outside sources.

Arts and Culture should stand in the leadership of those expert practitioners and not be dictated by corporate gain. The commission should continue to be well-represented with neighboring island voices and experts in this field. When the government leadership dictates culture and the arts, it poisons the purpose of pursuing pure, creative, honest expression and the true power and value of culture and the arts to our society. It reverts us towards, as the late Haunani-Kay Trask puts it, "Cultural Prostitution." Hawaiian Culture must take up space as a valid cultural practice away from economic development and perpetuate the culture through education, spirituality, and skills.

Again, I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2764.

Mahalo,

Hannah Hartmann

Pāpa'ikou, 96781

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 6:02:38 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Ray	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. As an artist, I am saddened and disturbed by the proposed measure SB2764 which would transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, and repeal the SFCA Commission.

First, while I am a professional artist (exhibiting and selling work internationally), I am nonetheless repelled by the idea of viewing "Culture and the Arts" through the limited and purely transactional lens of "Business, Economic Development, and Tourism."

Can "Culture and the Arts" lead to the formation of successful businesses? Can "Culture and the Arts" help economies to develop and thrive? Can "Culture and the Arts" foster tourism? Of course. But "Culture and the Arts" do SO MUCH MORE than can ever be suggested by this narrow framing. That Hawai'i would suggest to its citizens, its artists, its keiki and the world that the only value that the state places on "Culture and the Arts" is that which can be monetized and instrumentalized in service of capitalism and economic growth is a true disgrace, a shame, and a disappointment.

Moreover, according to National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) statistics, state arts agencies whose placement changed had an average budget decrease by 76%. When "Culture and the Arts" are valued only by economic and tourism factors, it doesn't take a psychic to foresee funding cuts to the SFCA.

In addition, repealing the SFCA Commission would eliminate neighbor-island representation. As a Hawaii Island resident, I have experienced how easy it is for neighbor island residents to be neglected and overlooked when it comes to statewide opportunities. The state should support artists on neighbor islands, not marginalize them.

I respectfully advise that the Hawai'i Senate reject this tone-deaf, ill-informed measure and allow the SFCA and SFCA Commission to continue independently of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. "Culture and the Arts" must be promoted, supported and recognized on their own terms, for the many benefits (economic and otherwise) they provide.

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 7:06:22 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Ball	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

David Ball

Waiialae-Kahala

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 8:01:32 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Meredith Buck	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a cultural practitioner who has applied for support from HSFCA, I oppose this bill.

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 8:06:04 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholas Kaleikini	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We should not be cutting funds from our artist community. I have had the privilege to have worked with the Hawaii State Art Museum (Capitol Modern) a few times. They do everything to not only give the artist community a platform to showcase their work, but they also compensate them. Quite frankly, our state doesn't do enough to provide funding or outlets for our greater artist community to showcase their work AND compensate them. I lived in Chinatown growing up and never heard about the museum. The museum is now thriving with free events for all ages and promoted to the public. These events have children running around in the sculpture garden, people coming together to celebrate art, and opportunities for artists to promote their work. The last time I performed with my grandfather was at one of these events and I will never forget it. It would be quite a disappointment for our artist community if this bill is passed.

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:56:14 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teri Skillman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Wakai, and Committee Members of Transportation, Culture, and the Arts and Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism,

I am writing as a private individual to submit my testimony **in opposition to SB 2764** as it is written.

In January of 2021, I worked with architect and author Axel Schimtzberger on a traveling exhibit focused on Alfred Preis that we debuted in Honolulu Hale's Lane Gallery. Alfred Preis worked in the Governor's office at the time. In 1965 he helped found the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts following a meeting he attended at the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D.C. Hawai'i was the first state to establish a State Arts Agency. We have a groundbreaking legacy that we must protect. Because of Preis' forward-thinking vision, he became the first Executive Director for SFCA. By 1980 Preis, Masaru Pundy Yokouchi, and Rep. Calvin Say began advocating for the §103-8.5 Works of Art Special Fund which was finally passed in 1989 ([HRS 0103-8.5](#)). It was the first-ever public art fund in the nation. The Geri Lange interview with Preis on Spectrum is publically viewable on the American Broadcasting Archive [[Preis Spectrum interview](#)] and details a lot of his accomplishments. In 1991, UH Manoa awarded Alfred Preis and Masaru Pundy Yokouchi Honorary Degrees for their exceptional contribution to the Arts in Hawai'i.

Knowing the history of the SFCA is critical if the Senate intends to "clean house" at SFCA. This Bill does not accomplish that, rather, it would decimate SFCA to the detriment of Hawai'i. Many of us in the community who are watching what is happening at SFCA, feel that there may be mismanagement, conflicts of interest, and deviation from the original intention of the foundation.

There are several points on which I believe that SB2764 misses the mark:

- SFCA must stand on its own as a State Arts Agency; it does not fit with DAGS nor does it fit with DBEDT.
- Subsuming SFCA administratively under DBEDT will not improve administrative functions but may worsen the structure of the Foundation; it may also jeopardize the State Arts Agency's status as a re-granting state-level institution for Federal Grants.
- The Governor is not knowledgeable or trained in the Arts so he cannot choose the Executive Director; rather, the position MUST be held by an individual who has

exceptional qualifications in the ARTS, a breadth of knowledge of visual and performing arts, as well as knowledge of arts and cultural practices of the Asia-Pacific region represented by resident artists in Hawai'i. There should be a public interview process and the interviewees should make public presentations so that the Arts community can have input in the selection.

- The Board of Commissioners should be comprised of individuals with track records in the ARTS and well-qualified to help advise the ED; most of the current Commissioners need to step down for lack of qualifications.
- The Governor should not appoint the Board Chair, especially since there were objections to the last appointment which were ignored. The ARTS positions should not be used as political rewards or favors.

Some important questions need to be asked before re-introducing this Bill. It would be advisable to have knowledgeable community scholars & long-time artists who DO NOT have conflicts of interest to be on a committee to formulate a better overhaul plan.

Possible questions that should be asked:

- What conflicts of interest exist with current personnel in the SFCA and at HiSAM?
- Are funds being mismanaged, e.g., the 1% Works of Art Special Fund?
- How are contracts awarded and are there conflicts of interest with the recipients?
- Are public works of art being installed in new or renovated State buildings, e.g., the new buildings at UH Mānoa?
- Is there a detailed online catalog of all the works of art that the State owns that can be publically accessed?
- Why was there an expensive rebranding campaign for the HI State Art Museum but the HI Revised Statues were not amended first?
- Why are key positions that are critical to SFCA and HiSAM contract hire, e.g., the Folk Arts coordinator? The Folk Arts program was built and supported by Bess Lomax Haws in the early 1980s with Lynn Martin as the first coordinator. This position was critical for Hawai'i's artists to get recognition as Heritage Award Fellows by the NEA. Also, HiSAM needs salaried museum positions held by qualified, trained experts which is critical for best practices and maintaining museum standards for the collection.

As an institution, SFCA and HiSAM are critical to Hawai'i. SB 2764 is not even a bandaid solution, but a death sentence for the Arts Agency. Please DO NOT approve SB 2764 as it is written, rather convene a committee that will take the time to do the investigation thoroughly, ethnically, and responsibly. Require the committee to submit a reliable report that will inform the overhaul of the SFCA so that it is effective, transparent, and truly preserves and sustains Hawai'i's STATE ARTS AGENCY that serves all ethnic groups.

Mahalo for your time and the opportunity to express my concerns,

Teri Skillman

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/8/2024 5:48:40 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark T Howard	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill. Despite some surface appearances, Art is not Commerce.

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/8/2024 7:21:06 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tamika Keliiaa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose the Arts and Culture in Hawaii being run by the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Considering the conflict of interest between Business and Arts, and the preservation Culture and the promotion of Tourism, it does not seem logical to hand control of one field to experts of the other. In addition, the governor - who is not an expert in the Arts - is now expected to fulfill the role of selecting the Executive Director of the Arts. I oppose these decisions due to the fact that this does not seem like an effective way to run the Arts and Culture in Hawai'i.

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/8/2024 7:26:55 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brissa Christophersen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **oppose** SB2764 because I support Hawai'i Art! The State Arts & Cultural Foundation should remain as is. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission **SHOULD NOT** be transferred to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism

LATE

1288 Kapiolani Blvd, Apt 1905
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
February 8, 2024

Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

Subject: Testimony in Opposition to SB 2764, Relating to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism

Aloha, Chair Lee, VC Inouye, Chair DeCoite and VC Wakai

Please do not pass SB 2764 out of your committee. SB2764, Relating to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism proposes to transfer the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, repeal the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission, and require the Governor to select the Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, with the advice and consent of the Senate. It is not clear how these transfers would benefit the mission of these organizations or the State of Hawaii so as to disrupt the work of these organizations.

The mission of the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission and the State Foundation on Cultural and the Arts are founded on the preservation and perpetuation of Hawaii's culture, especially the Native Hawaiian Culture. As is now, through years of experience, the Dept of Accounting and General Services and the Commissions created to ensure this mission understand that.

I am especially concerned about funding for these organizations. DBEDT funding is primarily viewed from an economic and tourism perspective. Priority may not be given to the importance of preserving and perpetuating Hawaii's cultures. The bill has no language about transferring appropriations from DAG to DBEDT already allocated to these organizations and some promise that it will continue to receive such appropriations.

Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by Hawaii's cultures, especially of the Native Hawaiian culture. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the SFCA as a branch of DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Lastly, were these organizations consulted prior to the introduction of this bill, and what is the rationale for this dramatic change? How will the transfer of these organizations strengthen their administration, programs, and activities? Of what value is this movement to the State of Hawaii to cause disruption to these organizations, especially the repeal of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission?

Mahalo for your consideration of my testimony that urges that you defer this measure.

LEIMOMI KHAN

Constituent, Senate District 12

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/8/2024 8:30:25 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ralph Hasegawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I oppose. It is not clear how these transfers would benefit the mission of these organizations or the State of Hawaii so as to disrupt the work of these organizations. Mahalo, Scubie

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/8/2024 9:44:46 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mari Maffioli	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. Our community needs the arts and this is ridiculous that you would even consider cutting funding!

LATE

Testimony opposing SB 2764:

We strongly oppose transfer or elimination of our highly-respected Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

How can we the public be assured the HSFCA and public arts support would not suffer decreased funding with the proposed transfer?

Losing community and neighbor island representation of a commission defeats the HSFCA's community representation by eliminating transparency and community-based decision making, which is a core value of the foundation.

This bill limits native Hawaiian culture and arts support to the economic and tourism perspective. Having an independent culture and arts organization allows for the perpetuation of authentic traditions by native Hawaiians. This cannot be assured with the attaching of the HSFCA as a branch of an DBEDT. The independent agency perspective must be maintained to ensure authentic traditions.

Will the priorities of education and access to the arts remain if the agency is within business economic development and tourism? The department of Business Economic Development and Tourism does not align with the needs and priorities and funding of **not for profit culture and the arts organizations.**

To eliminate the commission would be to throw out the HSFCA's 50+ year history as a national leader in community-based arts funding and decision making. Doing so would be a stunning blow for our communities and for Hawaii as a revered leader in public arts and culture support throughout the country.

Thank you
David & Carol Kuraoka
Kauai

LATE

SB-2764

Submitted on: 2/8/2024 10:03:36 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/8/2024 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B Miyano-Young	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a visual artist in the community, I feel that the State Foundation On Culture and the Arts has already been doing their part to consult with Hawaiian cultural advisors. Having a whole slew of new people every 4 years to the process will slow everything down, especially since most may not have any art background.

Also, the SFCA does not have anything to do with the tourism bureau, and they should leave things as is.

Why try to fix something that isn't broken? Why try to reinvent the wheel?

Aloha,

From a concerned citizen from the art community.