



TESTIMONY OF
CAROLINE ANDERSON
Interim President & CEO
Hawai'i Tourism Authority

LATE

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

1:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Room 229

In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 510
NOMINATION OF TODD APO
BOARD OF DIRECTORS, HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of Todd Apo's nomination to serve as a member of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) Board of Directors.

Mr. Apo is currently our newly elected board chair, serves as our 2025 Legislative Permitted Interaction Group Chair, and is a member of our board's Ho'okahua Hawai'i Standing Committee, Administrative & Audit Standing Committee and Governance Study Permitted Interaction Group 2025.

He brings an unparalleled wealth of experience and leadership to the table. His educational background, including a Juris Doctorate from the William S. Richardson School of Law and an MBA from the University of Hawai'i, equips him with both the legal framework and business acumen necessary to make informed decisions that will positively affect our visitor industry.

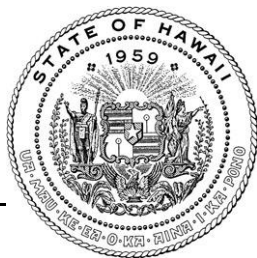
As the current Chief Executive Officer of 'Iole, Mr. Apo has demonstrated his commitment to sustainability and community resilience. His previous role as Vice President of Community Partnerships & Public Affairs at the Hawai'i Community Foundation underscores his dedication to collaboration and effective advocacy, particularly in areas like affordable housing and climate resilience — issues that are crucial for our communities and our visitors alike.

His experience with organizations ranging from The Howard Hughes Corporation to The Walt Disney Company to Ko Olina Resort - The Resort Group, shows his capability in community and tourism development and public and governmental affairs. His adeptness at integrating cultural values with corporate goals ensures that tourism in Hawai'i remains respectful and beneficial to our local communities.

Furthermore, Mr. Apo's commitment to public and community service is evident through his time as the Chair of the Honolulu City Council, and leadership roles and memberships with various organizations, including the Bishop Museum (Vice Chair, 2021-present), Hawai'i Special Olympics (Board member, 2007-present; Board Chair, 2011-2015), NAIOP Hawai'i (board member), Make a Wish Foundation (Board Chair, 2017-2019), and Boys & Girls Club Hawai'i (Vice Chair, 2019-2020). His active engagement with the community reflects his dedication to the well-being of our local communities.

In summary, Todd Apo is highly qualified for the Hawai'i Tourism Authority Board of Directors. His leadership skills, vision, and commitment to the economic well-being of Hawai'i and our communities make him an exceptional candidate. He will be a tremendous asset to the HTA and to the people of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our support.



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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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Testimony of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Tuesday, April 1, 2025
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
GM 510
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the
Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee,
TODD APO, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai and members of the Committee.

I strongly support the confirmation of Mr. Todd Apo to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA).

Todd is highly respected and active in the community – he has served on numerous boards including Bishop Museum, Friends of Hawai'i Charities, Land Use Research Foundation, Boys & Girls Club Hawai'i, Red Cross Hawai'i, Hawai'i State Workforce Development Council, Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation, College Connections Hawai'i, and many more. On these boards, he has served in multiple leadership positions including board chair and vice chair.

He has extensive leadership experience and a diverse background including his work as an attorney, leadership positions in the tourism industry and community development, serving in the Honolulu City Council, and his most recent work with community organizations Hawai'i Community Foundation and 'Iole. Todd has led long-term strategic planning for development plans and implemented community, business and governmental initiatives. He is a strong leader and has a proven track record in the

organizations that he has worked with and a commitment to bettering our communities and serving the people of Hawai'i.

His entire adult life has been devoted to officiating youth sports at the high school and collegiate levels. This skillset has proved him to be a very good moderator as a board member. I believe that Mr. Apo's experience with community and stakeholder relationship building, government relations and advocacy, together with his focus on climate impact, sustainability and resilience, make him well suited to continue serving on the Hawai'i Tourism Authority and being an asset to the organization.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer my strong support.



COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
HAWAII CHAPTER

April 1, 2025

LATE

Senator Lynn Decoite Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

RE: **GM 510 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, TODD APO, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.**
Hearing date: April 1, 2025 at 1:00PM

Aloha Chair Decoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the committees,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of NAIOP Hawaii in **STRONG SUPPORT of GM 510 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority("HTA"), Gubernatorial Nominee, TODD APO, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.** NAIOP Hawaii is the local chapter of the nation's leading organization for office, industrial, retail, residential and mixed-use real estate. NAIOP Hawaii has over 200 members in the State including local developers, owners, investors, asset managers, lenders, and other professionals.

NAIOP Hawaii stands in **STRONG SUPPORT of GM 510, appointing Todd Apo to the board of HTA.** Mr. Apo has vast experience in leadership roles across many sectors of Hawaii including the Honolulu City Council, Hawaii's development and tourism industries, non-profits and government relations. In his previous capacity as the Chairman of the Honolulu City Council, Mr. Apo focused on stakeholder relationship building to lead policy oversight and operations for the legislative branch of the County.

More recently, as the Vice President of Community Partnerships & Public Affairs at the Hawaii Community Foundation, he led government relations, advocacy, and partnership projects with both the executive and legislative branches focusing on affordable housing, and sustainability/climate resilience. In his current position as Chief Executive Officer for 'Iole, Mr. Apo leads a non-profit organization overseeing 2,400 acres in North Kohala to establish a Global Resilience Hub through partnerships with various community partners. Under his guidance 'Iole focuses on food and energy security seeking to combine indigenous knowledge and practice with today's science to create solution models for climate impact, sustainability, and resilience.

In his role as one of NAIOP Hawaii's Board of Directors, Mr. Apo has demonstrated to NAIOP members firsthand his leadership, ability to collaborate with peers to produce balanced solutions, and the innate ability to see the overall perspective and navigate the challenges that lay ahead. He is well respected amongst his peers and carries himself with the utmost level of

Senator Lynn Decoite Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
April 1, 2025
Page 2

professionalism. Hawaii is fortunate to have such a respected professional step forward to serve as a board member of HTA.

Moreover, Mr. Apo is a pillar in our community having served as a leader of several organizations such as Hawaii Special Olympics, Bishop Museum, Friends of Hawai'i Charities, Land Use Research Foundation, Make a Wish Hawaii, Boys & Girls Club Hawaii, Child & Family Services, and Red Cross Hawaii. In his spare time, he serves as a Basketball Official for High School Basketball, the NCAA Big West and Western Athletic Conferences, and Pacific West Conference. His many years of service to our community is a testament to Mr. Apo's high level of character and dedication to the people of Hawai'i.

As a HTA director, he will bring wealth of knowledge, a new perspective and a strong desire to understand Hawaii's pressing issues. With the challenges our state and tourism industry may face in the future, there is no better member of our community to help guide HTA. Mr. Apo will be a valuable member of HTA and bring new energy, experience, and a strong commitment to drive Hawaii forward. Accordingly, NAIOP Hawaii **STRONGLY SUPPORTS GM 510**.

Mahalo for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Reyn Tanaka', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Reyn Tanaka, President
NAIOP Hawaii

GM-510

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:43:00 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kekoa McClellan	Testifying for The American Hotel & Lodging Association	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism,

Please accept this testimony in **Support of Todd Apo's nomination to the Hawaii Tourism Authority**.

Mr. Apo's professional and community reputation needs no recitation, and his many successes speak for themselves. Rather than discussing Mr. Apo's credentials and how they relate to AHLA's more than 160 member properties in Hawaii or our 110,000 member employees, I would like to instead offer my personal observations of Todd, whom I have known as Kumu, Chair, Coach, Colleague and Friend.

Todd is a man of clarity and accountability. He is an honest broker, a kind human, and a caring kanaka. Todd will tell you what you need know, when you need to know it. Todd is tactful, respectful, and a gentleman's gentleman. Todd brings professionalism and trust to the helm of the Hawaii Tourism Authority at the exact moment when HTA needs it the most.

Todd and his entire 'ohana reflect an *aloha* and commitment to *kūlia i ka nu'u* (striving for excellence in all acts) that has been shared with generations of Hawaii's students and the communities that he and his family have served for decades. I was a student of Mr. Apo's mother, who taught alongside my paternal grandmother at The Kamehameha Schools; and my wife speaks fondly of Todd's wife, under whom she too studied mathematics at Kapālama. To understand Todd's *'ohana*, and their *'ano*, is to understand the source of Todd's commitment to authenticity, his genuine humility, and his love of service to others.

We need leaders at HTA whose motivations for participation on the board are rooted in bettering Hawaii, leaders without blatant conflicts of interest, leaders with a *true* love for our communities, leaders who do not seek to enrich themselves or their personal projects, leaders who are not serving for themselves alone, leaders we can trust, leaders like Todd Apo.

Thank you for considering Todd Apo's nomination to the Hawaii Tourism Authority. Should you consent to his appointment, our visitor industry and the communities we serve will benefit tremendously from his work at HTA.

Mahalo piha for your time,

Kekoa McClellan

Spokesperson

The American Hotel and Lodging Association



Alaska
AIRLINES

HAWAIIAN
AIRLINES

Testimony of
ALASKA AIRLINES and HAWAIIAN AIRLINES

Before the Senate Committee on
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Tuesday, April 1, 2025
1:00 P.M.
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 229

In consideration of
GM 510

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE HAWAI'I TOURISM AUTHORITY, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, TODD APO, FOR A
TERM SET TO EXPIRE ON 06-30-2028.

The Honorable Lynn DeCoite, Chair
The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

Re: Testimony in Support of GM510

Alaska Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines is in **strong support** of the nomination of Mr. Todd Apo to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA).

Mr. Apo is a proven leader whose deep understanding of Hawai'i's people, values, and challenges makes him exceptionally qualified to serve on HTA's Board. He is currently the CEO of 'Iole, a nonprofit focused on advancing sustainability, resilience, and regenerative community development in North Kohala—work that aligns with HTA's ongoing mission to foster a more balanced and community-centered approach to tourism.

Mr. Apo's professional background reflects a rare blend of public, private, and nonprofit leadership. His tenure as Honolulu City Council Chair was marked by effective legislative action, responsible budget oversight, and a commitment to strengthening community-

government relationships. His senior roles at the Hawai'i Community Foundation and Howard Hughes Holdings Inc. demonstrated his ability to integrate cultural values into development and philanthropy, promoting long-term benefits for Hawai'i residents.

Apo's academic foundation—holding a Juris Doctor from the William S. Richardson School of Law and dual A.B. degrees in Computer Science and Economics from Brown University—equips him with the critical thinking, strategic insight, and policy fluency needed for this role.

Importantly, Mr. Apo also serves as a valued member of the **Alaska Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines Hawai'i Community Advisory Board**, where he provides trusted counsel on how our airlines can better serve the people of Hawai'i while respecting local culture, strengthening communities, and promoting responsible tourism.

His current and past board service—including with the Bishop Museum and Hawai'i Special Olympics—underscores his deep-rooted commitment to Hawai'i and its people.

In short, Todd Apo brings the experience, leadership, and heart that HTA needs at this important moment. We urge the committee to **recommend his confirmation**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

TO: SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Committee

FROM: Micah A. Kāne, CEO & President

RE: Support for GM 510, Nomination of Todd Apo to the Board of Directors of the
Hawai'i Tourism Authority

DATE: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at 1:00pm

PLACE: Conference Room 229

Hawai'i Community Foundation fully supports Todd Apo's nomination to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) Board of Directors. With extensive experience in community development, public affairs, and tourism, Todd is an ideal candidate for this role.

Currently, as CEO of 'Iole, a nonprofit focused on sustainability influenced by indigenous knowledge, Todd has demonstrated leadership in advancing initiatives aligned with Hawai'i's values that will benefit the long-term health of our society. He has shown exceptional relationship-building skills throughout his career, and continues to do so at 'Iole by creating alignment across the local community, University of Hawai'i, Arizona State University, and government at the federal, state, and county levels.

Previously, at HCF he led initiatives and developed relationships to promote the CHANGE framework across the state's non-profit and business sectors. This work required a sophisticated understanding of systems and people to find balance in the areas of the economy, natural environment, housing, and governance.

Apo's previous leadership as Honolulu City Council Chair further highlights his expertise, overseeing significant legislative initiatives and strengthening community governance.

Todd is a proven leader, and on behalf of HCF, I am confident he will continue to be a valuable asset to the HTA and Hawai'i. Mahalo.



March 30, 2025

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
Senate
Hawaii State Legislature

Support for GM 510 - Nomination of Todd Apo to the Hawaii Tourism Authority

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Tourism,

On behalf of the Kohala Coast Resort Association, we are in full support of Todd Apo's nomination to the Hawaii Tourism Authority Board of Directors.

I've had the pleasure of working with Todd during his tenure with Aulani Resort, Hawaii Community Foundation, and in his new role as CEO of 'Iole in the Kohala District of Hawaii Island. We also serve together on Alaska Airlines Hawaii Community Advisory Board. Todd's vast experience in tourism, government, law, non-profit organizations and philanthropy will bring a unique and important perspective to the Hawaii Tourism Authority's board of directors. He is thoughtful, deliberative, and a consensus builder who can sort out complex challenges, and find creative solutions.

On behalf of our 5,500 employees, and their 17,500 family members across Hawaii Island, mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie P. Donoho". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Stephanie Donoho, Administrative Director

Craig Anderson, VP Operations, Mauna Kea Resort –President
Pat Fitzgerald, CEO, Hualalai Investors – Vice President
Charlie Parker, General Manager, Four Seasons Hualalai – Secretary
Daniel Scott, Managing Director Rosewood Kona Village – Treasurer
Chris Sessions, DOSM, Fairmont Orchid – Board of Directors
Scott Head, VP Resort Operations, Waikoloa Land Company – Board of Directors
David Givens, General Manager, Hilton Waikoloa Village – Board of Directors
Rob Gunthner, Area VP Resort Operations, Hilton Grand Vacations – Board of Directors
Pete Alles, Regional VP and GM, Mauna Lani, Auberge Resorts Collection – Board of Directors
Mark Goldrup, General Manager, Waikoloa Beach Marriott – Board of Directors

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 10:20:48 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeff Wagoner	Testifying for Outrigger Hospitality Group	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It has come to our attention that Todd Apo has been nominated as the Chair of the Hawaii Tourism Authority Board. Todd has been a significant leader across numerous organizations within Hawaii and has the experience and leadership capabilities to excel in this role. Therefore, we at OUTRIGGER Hospitality Group strongly support the nomination and confirmation of Todd to this important role for tourism in Hawaii.



JAMES CAMPBELL
COMPANY

James Campbell Building
1001 Kamokila Boulevard, Suite 200
Kapolei, HI 96707
Phone: 808.674.6674
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April 1, 2025

LATE

Senator Lynn Decoite Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

RE: GM 510 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, TODD APO, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

Hearing date: April 1, 2025 at 1:00PM

Aloha Chair Decoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the James Campbell Company in **STRONG SUPPORT of GM 510 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority("HTA"), Gubernatorial Nominee, TODD APO, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.** The James Campbell Company has been at the helm guiding master planning and development of O'ahu's Second City of Kapolei. Economic growth and tourism are essential components of our master planning efforts and we enthusiastically support Todd Apo's appointment.

Mr. Apo has vast experience in leadership roles across many sectors of Hawaii including the Honolulu City Council representing Kapolei and the west O'ahu region, Hawaii's development and tourism industries, non-profits and government relations. In his previous capacity as the Chairman of the Honolulu City Council, Mr. Apo focused on stakeholder relationship building to lead policy oversight and operations for the legislative branch of the County.

More recently, as the Vice President of Community Partnerships & Public Affairs at the Hawaii Community Foundation, he led government relations, advocacy, and partnership projects with both the executive and legislative branches focusing on affordable housing, and sustainability/climate resilience. In his current position as Chief Executive Officer for 'Iole, Mr. Apo leads a non-profit organization overseeing 2,400 acres in North Kohala to establish a Global Resilience Hub through partnerships with various community partners. Under his guidance 'Iole focuses on food and energy security seeking to combine indigenous knowledge and practice with today's science to create solution models for climate impact, sustainability, and resilience.

As a HTA board of director, he will bring wealth of knowledge, a new perspective and a strong desire to understand Hawaii's pressing issues. With the challenges our state and tourism industry may face in the future, there is no better member of our community to help guide HTA. Mr. Apo will be a valuable member of HTA and bring new energy, experience, and a strong commitment to drive Hawaii forward.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Matthew K. Caires
Vice President, Development Affairs



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

*Senate Committee on Economic Development & Tourism
GM 510 – Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the Board of Directors of the
Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, Todd Apo
April 01, 2025*

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association, I write in strong support of Todd Apo's nomination to serve on the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

Todd is an exceptional nominee whose professional background and personal integrity make him uniquely qualified to contribute to HTA's work of guiding tourism forward in a responsible and sustainable way. His deep and wide-ranging experience spans the legal profession, nonprofit and community organizations, real estate development, resort and tourism operations, and the Honolulu City Council. This breadth of knowledge will provide invaluable insight to the HTA Board.

I've had the opportunity to work alongside Todd in various capacities over the years, and he is someone who not only brings smart, strategic thinking to the table—but also a genuine desire to serve our community. Whether during his time as Senior Vice President of Community Development for the Howard Hughes Corporation, or leading public affairs for Disney's Aulani Resort, Todd has demonstrated time and again that he knows how to navigate complex issues, build consensus, and keep the long-term interests of Hawai'i's people and economy at the forefront.

More recently, his leadership at Hawai'i Community Foundation and as CEO of 'Iole further demonstrates his commitment to advancing sustainability, resilience, and local values—all of which align with HTA's mission and priorities.

Todd has a proven track record of working across sectors to get things done. His resume reflects a lifetime of service and an unmatched understanding of how tourism intersects with economic development, cultural preservation, land use, government, and community well-being. That's exactly the kind of perspective HTA needs at the board level as we continue to evolve our visitor industry for the future.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support.

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 10:02:16 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Higashi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting my testimony in favor of Mr. Todd Apo's appointment to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. I believe that his appointment to the HTA is both timely and important as the organization requires visionary leadership and sound stewardship.

My support is informed by my personal and professional relationship with him that goes back more than 20 years. He has unquestionable moral character and an unwavering Aloha for Hawai'i.

His experience as an elected official, in professional leadership roles in both the private and nonprofit sectors, and his long and distinguished years of service in a diverse set of critical Hawai'i community organizations make him uniquely qualified to assume this role at the HTA. I am confident that his presence on the Board will build faith in Hawai'i and beyond that the HTA is on a footing to fulfill its core mission, and do so in a manner that is pono.

I urge the Committee to favorably consider his nomination and move him forward in the confirmation process. Mahalo.

Aloha,

Scott H Higashi

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 10:42:58 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randall John Francisco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of Mr. Apo who brings a great deal of experience and knowledge to this organization. His leadership will provide additional guidance critical to the organization and its board members.

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 1:15:21 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John N. (Jack) Kittinger	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear members of the Senate Economic Development and Tourism Committee,

I am writing in support of the nomination of Todd Apo to be appointed as the CEO of the Hawaii Tourism Authority Board. Todd is an excellent leader, community advocate, and has the deep respect and admiration of stakeholders and thought leaders throughout our islands. He is the right leader for this important moment in our tourism sector and will help steward the HTA toward a regenerative tourism approach that will benefit our communities and economy.

Thank you,

Jack Kittinger, PhD

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 2:05:58 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann Botticelli	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai and members of the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism,

It is my pleasure to testify in strong support of the appointment of Todd Apo to the Hawaii Tourism Authority. Todd and I serve together on the Board of the Bishop Museum, which has allowed me to witness his clear and rational thinking, his calm focus in addressing urgent issues and his ability to understand and work with a variety of perspectives and opinions. I have also worked with Todd on advancement initiatives for the Polynesian Voyaging Society, where he also provided thoughtful, logical mana'o on a range of initiatives. I am confident that Todd will provide a steady voice in this time of change at HTA. I cannot think of a better appointee.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Ann Botticelli

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 5:34:42 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charmaine T. Doran	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Decoite, Vice-Chair Wakai, and Committer members:

I am writing in support of GM510 and the nomination of Todd K. Apo to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority Board of Directors.

In recent times, the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) has been struggling to find its footing and now sits at critical juncture. In order to fulfill its mandate and mission successfully, the HTA's board must have members that have policy and budgeting experience, business sense, unquestionable integrity, astute cultural awareness, and political acumen. Mr. Apo embodies all of these characteristics and more.

As someone who has had the privilege and honor to work with Mr. Apo, I have always been most impressed with his innate ability to foster collaborative relationships built on respect, open communication, and a spirit of cooperation.

I humbly ask for your favorable consideration of the nomination of Todd K. Apo to the Board of Directors for the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

Mahalo.

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 5:45:36 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sam Moku	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Chair DeCoite and Committee members of the
Economic Development and Tourism,**

I am in full support for the nomination of Todd Apo as a Board of Director of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

I have known Todd for over 40 years in various capacities i.e in the public and private sector - as a City Council member, senior roles at Aulani Resorts and later on Hawaii Community Foundation. He was also a board member with me at Special Olympics Hawaii and now serves on the Bishop Museum board.

Todd's skill sets and diverse expertise in both the private and public sector will go a long way in serving as a board member on our State's Tourism Authority Board and the future of tourism in Hawai'i

Mahalo for your consideration!

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 7:31:04 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeremy Shorenstein	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of Todd Apo's confirmation as Chair of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

I had the privilege of working alongside Todd as co-chair of the NAIOP Government Affairs Committee. In this role, I witnessed firsthand his ability to navigate complex issues with a level-headed, thoughtful approach. Todd is a leader who listens carefully, weighs all perspectives, and understands when to push forward and when to wait for more information before making a decision. His ability to balance strategic action with patience and insight makes him an ideal candidate for this role.

Tourism is at a crossroads in Hawai'i, requiring leadership that can bring stakeholders together, address challenges with clear-eyed pragmatism, and ensure that tourism benefits both residents and visitors. Todd's experience, temperament, and willingness to engage in meaningful dialogue make him well-suited to guide the HTA during this critical time.

I respectfully urge the committee to confirm Todd Apo as Chair of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Shorenstein

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 7:01:16 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sterling Higa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Todd is a rare person with experience in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. I know him as a friend and a colleague, as we worked together while he was VP of Community Partnerships & Public Affairs at the Hawaii Community Foundation. At the time, I was Executive Director of Housing Hawaii's Future, a nonprofit.

In that role, I observed Todd's thoughtful and wise approach to public policy. He is not one for knee-jerk reactions. Rather, he considers different perspectives. Then he finds paths that address the needs of stakeholders. He is as collaborative a leader as can be found in Hawai'i today.

Todd is also willing to share his mana'o with younger generations (the author included). He is patient and generous in explaining how he approaches questions of public policy.

This is the kind of leadership approach needed by HTA at this critical juncture. As legislators, you are not strangers to the headlines swirling around the agency. HTA has been plagued by controversies about its purpose and effectiveness. A leader like Todd is well-suited to take on such challenges.

Hawai'i is lucky that talented and experienced people like Todd step up to take on these thankless (and uncompensated) volunteer positions on boards and commissions.

I hope you will commend him for his civic spirit and confirm his nomination.

Stephen M. Teves
1099 Alakea Street, Suite 2530
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

GM510

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, TODD APO, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

Tuesday, April 1, 2025
1:00 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism,

I ask for your support for Governor's Message 510, the nomination of Todd Apo to the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA). I have known Todd for over 30 years. I first met Todd when we were at the William S. Richardson School of Law at the same time in the late 1980s. We have become friends since then and I have always seen in Todd the ability of Todd to bring people together, even when they have differing views. Moreso, I have always admired Todd's commitment to public service and his passion for serving the people of Hawai'i. Through his dedication to hard work, I know Todd will be a great addition to the HTA Board.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.
Stephen M. Teves

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 3:07:08 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
stephanie iona	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Humbly submitting my support of Todd Apo as a member of the Hawaii Tourism Authority Board. Todd is ideal in providing the stable leadership required in this challenging times the organization is experiencing. Many positive steps have been taken over the last two years, and Todd has the right demeanor and spirit to continue the good work accomplished going forward.

LATE

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 4:50:59 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nikki Medwetz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the members of the Senate Economic Development and Tourism Committee,

I have worked in public relations in the Hawaii hospitality industry for nearly 14 years. When I first moved to Hawaii, I had a lot to learn about the culture; but I had the opportunity to work for Todd Apo for nearly five years, and during that time he mentored me and gave me a foundational knowledge that has allowed me to be successful in helping to promote Hawaii as a unique and special destination. Todd has the perfect combination of cultural knoweldge, political background, community connection, and hospitality experience that is essential and required to be successful as the HTA board chair. In this position, Todd will be able to pass along the same inspiration and leadership he provided to me to our entire industry, and help continue to lead our community to success. I urge you to confirm Todd Apo as the HTA Board Chair. Mahalo.

LATE

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 4:51:25 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Yamaguchi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Lynn DeCoite

Vice Chair Glenn Wakai

Hawai‘i State Capitol

Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism

Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Senate Committee on Tourism,

I am writing in strong support of the nomination of Todd Apo to serve on the Board of Directors of the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority (HTA).

I first met Mr. Apo more than twenty years ago during his tenure on the Honolulu City Council, where he demonstrated a deep commitment to public service. As Council Chair, he worked collaboratively across sectors, managed complex budgets, and consistently prioritized community voices in policymaking.

Following his time in government, Mr. Apo joined The Walt Disney Company, where he led public affairs during the launch of Aulani, A Disney Resort & Spa. In this role, he gained critical experience in the visitor industry—balancing brand integrity with cultural sensitivity. This ability to integrate Hawaiian values into a global brand is a vital skill set in today’s evolving tourism landscape.

As Senior Vice President of Community Development at The Howard Hughes Corporation, he again demonstrated this balance—leading community engagement for the Ward Village master-planned development and navigating the intersection of private interests and public good. More recently, through leadership roles at the Hawai‘i Community Foundation and now as CEO of ‘Iole, Mr. Apo has been on the front lines of addressing climate resilience, food security, and building innovative public-private partnerships—key priorities in HTA’s Strategic Plan and for the future of tourism in Hawai‘i.

Mr. Apo brings an understanding of Hawai‘i’s complex socio-economic challenges and a proven ability to engage thoughtfully and respectfully with diverse stakeholders. At this critical inflection point for our visitor industry, we need leaders like Mr. Apo—leaders who are

grounded in community, guided by cultural values, and committed to building a model of tourism that benefits both residents and visitors.

Within the applicable rules and regulations, I respectfully urge your support for Mr. Apo's appointment to the HTA Board of Directors. His leadership, cultural grounding, and track record of collaboration will serve our state and our visitor industry well.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support.

With aloha,
Denise Yamaguchi

GM-510

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 8:47:30 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Ramirez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of Todd Apo for Chair of the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority

Aloha Chair DeCoite and Members of the Committee,

My name is Cindy Ramirez, and I’m writing in strong support of Todd Apo’s confirmation as Chair of the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority (HTA).

I had the privilege of serving on Todd’s staff during his time on the Honolulu City Council. He leads with calm and clarity—but also with thoughtful tenacity. Todd is collaborative and reflective, yet not afraid to ask hard questions, press leaders to be accountable, and challenge outdated systems that no longer serve their original purpose. He has a talent for cutting through bureaucracy and getting to the heart of an issue.

Todd brings a rare combination of public service, private-sector business acumen, and legal expertise. His experience as an attorney and executive gives him a sharp understanding of how systems work—and how they can work better. He’s able to navigate the complexities of government while staying rooted in a strong sense of community and purpose.

Equally important is Todd’s long-standing commitment to service beyond his professional roles. He’s spent years contributing to nonprofit boards and philanthropic efforts across the state, including his work with the Hawai‘i Community Foundation and currently with 'Iole. That kind of hands-on, community-centered involvement speaks volumes about where his values lie and how deeply he understands Hawai‘i’s needs and strengths.

HTA sits at a critical crossroads, and Hawai‘i needs someone who can lead with strategic insight and a deep understanding of local priorities. Few leaders bring the depth of experience and community-minded focus that Todd does to this kind of position.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share this testimony.

Sincerely,

Cindy Ramirez

GM-510

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 12:18:11 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
A.J. Halagao	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senators,

I write in FULL SUPPORT of TODD APO to serve as board chair of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

I have had the privilege of knowing Todd for about 20 years. In all his capacities, he has served the people of Hawai'i with honor and distinction.

I am confident his leadership will serve HTA well.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Avelino ("AJ") Halagao

GM-510

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:49:05 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/1/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Calvin Mann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the confirmation of Todd Apo as the new chair of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority board. I have known Todd since high school and had the pleasure of working with him for several years delivering affordable homes for many kamaaina families. Over the years of friendship, both personal and professional, I affirm that Todd's character, leadership, creativity, and compassion will guide him to be an exceptional po'o kula of HTA board and make good decisions on behalf of Native Hawaiians, our lāhui and the state of Hawai'i. Mahalo nui for your consideration.

Aloha,

Calvin Mann