



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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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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

Thursday, April 10, 2025
3:00 PM

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

In consideration of
HCR 163 HD1
**RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
AND TOURISM**

Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports HCR 163 HD1, urging the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to establish an annual festival celebrating Pacific Islands culture and arts. Following the tremendous success of the 13th Annual Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture (FestPAC) hosted in Hawaii in 2024, we recognize the significant cultural and economic benefits that cultural celebrations bring to our state.

The establishment of an annual Pacific cultural festival aligns with regenerative and cultural tourism framework and the cultural practitioners and businesses in our creative sectors across the state. The 2024 FestPAC demonstrated the substantial economic impact such events can generate, with over 500,000 visitors contributing to our tourism economy while simultaneously strengthening Hawaii's position as a cultural hub in the Pacific. An annual celebration would create sustainable opportunities for local

artisans, practitioners and businesses and reinforce Hawaii's unique cultural identity in the global marketplace while fostering deeper connections among Pacific Island nations.

Neighbor island representation as well as Honolulu City and County would be important to include in the further development of this concept and request the committee's consideration to include all counties in the state in an SD1 for this proposed endeavor.

DBEDT looks forward to working in concert with the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, our counties and related agencies to further discuss the scope, costs and manpower to launch and maintain an annual Pacific islands festival of culture and arts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



No. 1 Capitol District Building
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**Testimony of KAREN EWALD, Executive Director
State Foundation on Culture and the Arts**

**Before the
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2025 Conference Room 224 at 3:00PM**

**HCR_163 HD1
URGING THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS TO ESTABLISH
AN ANNUAL FESTIVAL CELEBRATING PACIFIC ISLAND CULTURE AND ARTS**

Dear Chair Lee and members of the Committee,

The SFCA is pleased to SUPPORT H.C.R. 163 H.D 1 which urges the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to establish an annual festival celebrating Pacific island culture and arts.

In 2024, the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) participated in Hawaii's hosting of the 13th Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture (FestPAC) with uniquely created exhibitions and presentations featuring Hawaiian traditions and art forms. FestPAC took place from June 6-16, 2024. During this time, the SFCA, Hawaii State Art Museum/Capitol Modern launched *Ke Ao Lama - Enlightened World*, a showcase of Pacific peoples, ingenuity and creativity. Through this collective of exhibitions, Capitol Modern showcased the proliferation of Pacific culture, from traditional practice to contemporary expression that highlights the evolution of enlightened indigenous thought and creativity. Information on the events and links to videos can be found on the SFCA's website [or by clicking this link](#).

The Festival brought 13,688 guests to the Hawaii State Art Museum during the month of June 2024. The SFCA invested over \$800,000 of Federal, State and Special Funds in hosting the Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture at the Hawaii State Art Museum. This included funds for for native Hawaiians and pacific islanders living on the neighbor islands to travel to Oahu to present during the festival.

Through this experience, the State Foundation on culture and the Arts is committed to an annual Ke Ao Lama Festival contingent on availability of funding and staff resources.

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

HCR-163-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/8/2025 2:44:09 PM

Testimony for TCA on 4/10/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chanara Casey Richmond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HCR 163. Chanara Richmond HD42.

HCR-163-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/8/2025 5:33:30 PM

Testimony for TCA on 4/10/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Don Baluran	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this.

HCR-163-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 2:26:04 PM

Testimony for TCA on 4/10/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.