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

**Before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE & ARTS
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2025 Conference Room 309 at 9:30AM**

**HR_158/HCR_163
URGING THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS TO ESTABLISH
AN ANNUAL FESTIVAL CELEBRATING PACIFIC ISLAND CULTURE AND ARTS**

Dear Chair Kapela and members of the Committee,

The SFCA is pleased to SUPPORT H.R. 158/H.C.R. 163 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](#).

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 over forty hotel rooms for native Hawaiians 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

Submitted on: 3/18/2025 10:35:20 AM

Testimony for CAA on 3/19/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Duke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kapela, Vice Chair Kong, and Committee Members,

Attending FestPAC 2024 at the Hawaii Convention Center was one of the richest, most enjoyable cultural experiences I've ever had in Hawaii. I learned so much about our Pacific Island Neighbors, their cultures, and how much our communities have in common. I believe hosting an event like this on an annual basis would foster stronger bonds between Pacific Island nations as well as bring in needed tourism revenue for our state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo,

Will Duke