



TESTIMONY OF
DANIEL NĀHO'OPI'I
Interim President & CEO
Hawaii Tourism Authority
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM
Thursday, March 20, 2025
10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 423

In consideration of
HCR 142/HR 136

**URGING THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY AND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
TO EXPAND THE KĀHEA AIRPORT GREETINGS PROGRAM TO DISPLAY KEIKI ART IN ALL
NEIGHBOR ISLAND AIRPORTS.**

Aloha Chair Tam, Vice Chair Templo, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) offers comments on HCR 142/HR 136, urging the Hawaii Tourism Authority and Department of Transportation (DOT) to expand the Kāhea Airport Greetings program to display keiki art in all neighbor island airports.

HTA agrees that the Kahea Airport Greetings Program plays a valuable role in enhancing the visitor experience. The program offers free, year-round Hawaiian entertainment and cultural enrichment while also supporting young artists by showcasing student artwork at Daniel K. Inouye International Airport. HTA recognizes the importance of preserving and promoting Hawaii's rich cultural resources.

The HTA has supported Hawaii's young artists through the Kahea Airport Greetings program at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport, facilitated by a Memorandum of Understanding with the DOT. Expanding the Kahea Airport Greetings program to include keiki art in all neighboring island airports aligns with HTA's commitment to cultural preservation, education, and community engagement in Destination Stewardship.

As stated in this resolution, funding for the Kahea Airport Greetings program was cut in fiscal year 2025. The HTA has requested \$888,889 in funding for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 to continue this significant program. However, if the Legislature wishes for this program to be permanent, we

request additional funding to successfully implement a keiki art program throughout the state. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the DOT and the Kahea Greetings Program.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our comments.