



TESTIMONY OF
CAROLINE ANDERSON
Interim President & CEO
Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Monday, March 31, 2025
3:15 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 308

In consideration of
SB 1536 SD 2 HD 2
RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) supports SB 1536 SD 2 HD 2, which repeals exemptions of the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the HTA from the State's Employees' Retirement System (ERS) and requires a retirant returning to service as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the HTA to re-enroll into the Employees' Retirement System (ERS). It also sets the effective date on July 1, 3000.

Removing these exemptions ensures that all state employees, regardless of their position, contribute to and benefit from the ERS equally. This also allows the search for the President and CEO to proceed and addresses the urgent need to fill a position that has been vacant for over a year. We prefer the language in SB 1536 SD 2, which sets the effective date upon the bill's approval, allowing us to move forward as quickly as possible. This bill also requires a retirant returning to service as the President at CEO of HTA to re-enroll into the ERS, which may limit prospective candidates. As such, we request this new provision of re-enrolling into the ERS be deleted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our support of SB 1536 SD 2 HD 2.