

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



GOV. MSG. NO. 1258

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

June 3, 2025

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate,
and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Nadine Nakamura
Speaker, and Members of the
House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha President Kouchi, Speaker Nakamura, and Members of the Legislature:

This is to inform you that on June 3, 2025, the following bill was signed into law:

S.B. NO. 1578, S.D. 2,
H.D. 1, C.D. 1

RELATING TO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.
ACT 158

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josh Green M.D.".

Josh Green, M.D.
Governor, State of Hawai'i

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Center for
2 Cultural and Technical Interchange Between East and West Act of
3 1960, Public Law 86-472, authorized the establishment in Hawaii
4 of a center for cultural and technical interchange between East
5 and West, and Act 82, Session Laws of Hawaii 1975 (Act 82),
6 established an educational non-profit public corporation, the
7 Center for Cultural and Technical Interchange Between East and
8 West, Inc., better known and referred to as the "East-West
9 Center", to administer and operate the center. Act 82 specifies
10 the purposes of the East-West Center, which include, among other
11 things, the promotion of better relations and understanding
12 between the United States and the nations of the East through
13 the administration and operation of the East-West Center as an
14 educational institution operating in furtherance of the
15 objectives of Public Law 86-472 and the promotion, among the
16 nations of the East and West, of the use of the East-West Center
17 by qualified persons for cooperative study, training, and



1 research in matters of East-West significance, thus leading to
2 better relations and understanding as to such matters.

3 The legislature further finds that the East-West Center has
4 become a pivotal institution in fostering understanding and
5 cooperation between the United States and the nations of Asia
6 and the Pacific. Hawaii's unique geographical location and
7 multicultural heritage make it an ideal location for promoting
8 international relations, particularly within the Asia-Pacific
9 region. For over six decades, the East-West Center has
10 significantly contributed to the State's role as a bridge
11 between the East and West, enhancing the State's position in
12 international affairs.

13 The legislature further finds that the East-West center's
14 programs in research, education, and exchange have directly
15 benefited the State's economy, culture, and diplomatic
16 relations. While the federal government has provided
17 significant funding to the East-West center, this federal
18 support has fluctuated over the years. The legislature
19 recognizes that the center would benefit from regular,
20 predictable state resources to support the development of
21 programs and initiatives that align with the State's strategic



1 goals in international relations, education, and economic
2 development.

3 The legislature finds that the East-West center has served
4 and continues to serve a public purpose of promoting better
5 relations and understanding between the United States and the
6 nations of the East and that granting authorization to the
7 East-West center to receive appropriations of state funds exempt
8 from the requirements of chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes,
9 complies with the public purpose requirement of article VII,
10 section 4, of the Hawaii State Constitution.

11 The legislature further finds that strong sister-state,
12 sister-school, and similar relationships benefit the State's
13 businesses and economy, improve access to flights and
14 transportation, expand high school and college student
15 educational exchanges, broaden access to Pacific culture and
16 arts, preserve the State's relationships to the places of origin
17 of its immigrant communities, and spur sub-national government
18 collaborations to address common priorities, including the
19 eradication of invasive species, promotion of economic
20 development, advancement of clean energy, and preservation of
21 peace between nations. Further, it is appropriate for the State



1 to explore and take advantage of additional ways that Hawaii can
2 benefit from international partnerships, including generating
3 revenue abroad similar to many other jurisdictions. For example,
4 hosting facilities abroad for local farmers and retailers to more
5 easily sell Hawaii products in key markets, or investing in
6 projects that generate a return, could create revenue to support
7 Hawaii programs and services without additional expense to local
8 taxpayers.

9 The legislature also finds that international relations
10 across the Pacific have been rapidly changing. Additionally,
11 previous generations of the State's key community, business, and
12 government leaders who have carefully fostered and maintained
13 these important relationships are retiring or passing on. In
14 order for residents to continue to benefit from the State's
15 international ties, and for Hawaii to take advantage of
16 international business and revenue opportunities abroad, as so
17 many other jurisdictions currently do, it is critical that the
18 State adjust its engagement strategy, ensure continuity with its
19 sister-state communities and partners, and plan for the future.

20 Therefore, the legislature finds that in celebration of the
21 fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the East-West



1 center, the State must update its international engagement strategy
2 and reaffirm its commitment to building and maintaining the
3 international partnerships that have benefitted the State over
4 the years so they can continue to benefit local residents for
5 generations to come.

6 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 7 (1) Establish the official designation of the East-West
8 center as the center for cultural and technical
9 interchange between East and West, Inc., and exempt
10 state fund appropriations to the East-West center from
11 chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes;
- 12 (2) Rename the Hawaii sister-state committee as the Hawaii
13 sister-state and international partnerships commission
14 and amends its functions and membership;
- 15 (3) Require the office of international affairs to provide
16 support to the Hawaii sister-state and international
17 partnerships commission;
- 18 (4) Expand the department of business, economic
19 development, and tourism's authority to establish
20 out-of-state offices to include out-of-state
21 facilities to support sister-state or province



1 partnerships and other partnerships that promote and
2 enrich the people, cultures, environments, and
3 economies of the State and its international partners,
4 generate revenue for the State, and buy property; and
5 (5) Appropriate funds.

6 SECTION 2. Chapter 201, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
7 amended by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately
8 designated and to read as follows:

9 "§201- East-West center. (a) The official designation
10 of the East-West center shall be the center for cultural and
11 technical interchange between East and West, Inc.

12 (b) The qualifying standards and conditions related to the
13 receipt of funds under chapter 42F shall not apply to funds
14 received by the East-West center, or center for cultural and
15 technical interchange between East and West, Inc.; provided that
16 if the center for cultural and technical interchange between
17 East and West, Inc. contracts with a recipient or provider, then
18 the qualifying standards, conditions, and other provisions of
19 chapter 42F shall apply to the recipient or provider and the
20 contract.



1 (c) To receive state funds, the center for cultural and
2 technical interchange between East and West, Inc., shall:

3 (1) Be licensed or accredited, in accordance with federal,
4 state, or county statutes, rules, or ordinances, to
5 conduct the activities or provide the services for
6 which state funds are appropriated;

7 (2) Comply with all applicable federal and state laws
8 prohibiting discrimination against any person on the
9 basis of race, color, national origin, religion,
10 creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, or disability;

11 (3) Agree not to use the funds for entertainment or
12 lobbying activities in the State;

13 (4) Be incorporated under the laws of the State;

14 (5) Have bylaws or policies that describe the manner in
15 which the activities or services for which funds are
16 appropriated shall be conducted or provided;

17 (6) Have been determined and designated to be a tax-exempt
18 organization by the Internal Revenue Service; and

19 (7) Have a governing board whose members shall have no
20 material conflict of interest and serve without
21 compensation.



1 (d) The comptroller and state auditor may examine the use
2 of funds appropriated to the center for cultural and technical
3 interchange between East and West, Inc.

4 (e) The allocation of state support shall neither impinge
5 on the autonomy of the center for cultural and technical
6 interchange between East and West, Inc., nor imply state control
7 over its programs or policies, except as provided in this
8 section.

9 (f) The center for cultural and technical interchange
10 between East and West, Inc., shall submit a report to the
11 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
12 each regular session, which shall include an explanation of the
13 facility maintenance and other functions accomplished by state
14 fund expenditures in the previous fiscal year."

15 SECTION 3. Section 201-17, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

17 "(b) The office shall:
18 (1) Develop policies that promote and strengthen relations
19 with other countries in the areas of international
20 business, economy, culture, and the arts;



- 1 (2) Develop policies that promote transportation between,
2 and tourism with, other countries;
- 3 (3) Develop and promote international telecommunications
4 and high technology exchanges;
- 5 (4) Encourage the development of international sister-city
6 programs, pairing Hawaii cities with cities around the
7 globe for artistic, cultural, economic, educational,
8 and faith-based exchanges;
- 9 (5) Develop and promote Hawaii as the economic, trade,
10 commerce, transportation, banking, and tourism hub of
11 the Pacific;
- 12 (6) Develop an international affairs and peace education
13 curriculum that includes studies of international
14 affairs and peace initiatives and takes a proactive,
15 strategic approach to the development of policies that
16 promote the prevention of national and international
17 conflict, nonviolent intervention, mediation, peaceful
18 resolution of conflict, and structured mediation of
19 conflict; [and]



1 (7) Provide for exchanges of individuals between Hawaii
2 and other nations to develop international and
3 peace-based initiatives[-]; and

4 (8) Provide support to the Hawaii sister-state and
5 international partnerships commission."

6 SECTION 4. Section 201-81, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
7 amended to read as follows:

8 **"§201-81 Establishment of out-of-state offices; purposes.**

9 The department of business, economic development, and tourism
10 may establish and operate offices and facilities in out-of-state
11 locations, including foreign nations, to effectuate the
12 following purposes:

13 (1) Develop programs to reach targeted companies or
14 industries in the respective area and surrounding
15 regions;

16 (2) Monitor out-of-state government policies and
17 regulations that have an impact on business, markets,
18 sales, tourism, and related activities;

19 (3) Host government and business officials at conferences,
20 meetings and social occasions, or other events on



- 1 matters pertaining to business opportunities and
2 attraction of investments for the State;
- 3 (4) Develop and conduct advertising efforts, promotional
4 events, media coverage, and educational programs
5 regarding commerce in the State; ~~and~~
- 6 (5) Conduct related operations as needed, ~~[such as]~~
7 including hiring or contracting for consultants~~[-];~~
- 8 (6) Support sister-state or province relationships, as
9 defined in section 229-1, and other partnerships that
10 promote and enrich the people, cultures, environments,
11 and economies of the State and its international
12 partners; and
- 13 (7) Generate revenue for the State."

14 SECTION 5. Section 201-82, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended to read as follows:

16 "**§201-82 Powers of the department.** The department,
17 subject to the approval of the director of budget and finance,
18 shall have the following general powers to operate out-of-state
19 offices and facilities established:

- 20 (1) To enter into contracts, leases, or cooperative
21 agreements, or perform other transactions with any



- 1 person, firm, partnership, association, company,
2 corporation, or foreign nation, as may be necessary in
3 the conduct of its business and on [~~such~~] any terms as
4 the department may deem appropriate, using competitive
5 procurement practices, to the extent practicable, in
6 accordance with rules adopted by the policy board;
- 7 (2) To establish operational bank accounts in out-of-state
8 locations, including foreign denomination accounts, as
9 may be necessary in the conduct of its business,
10 notwithstanding the provisions of chapter 38;
- 11 (3) To receive by gifts, grants, devises, bequests, or
12 otherwise from private sources or a foreign nation,
13 any property, real, personal, or mixed, intangible or
14 tangible, absolutely or in trust, to be used and
15 disposed of, either the principal or the income
16 therefrom, in accordance with the conditions under
17 which it was received;
- 18 (4) To buy, sell, lease, rent, hold, maintain, use, and
19 operate any property, real, personal, or mixed,
20 tangible or intangible, in accordance with the
21 conditions under which it was received;



1 (5) To hire such personnel as may be necessary in the
2 conduct of its business and on [~~such~~] any terms as the
3 department may deem appropriate; and

4 (6) To do any or all other acts reasonably necessary to
5 carry out the objects and purposes of this part,
6 provided that the department shall not obligate any
7 funds of the State not appropriated to the
8 department."

9 SECTION 6. Section 229-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
10 amended to read as follows:

11 "[+]§229-1[+] [~~Definition.~~] Definitions. For the purposes
12 of this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires[~~r~~
13 "~~sister-state~~]:

14 "Commission" means the Hawaii sister-state and
15 international partnerships commission established under section
16 229-2.

17 "Sister-state or province [relationship] partnership"
18 means a [~~relationship~~] partnership between the State of Hawaii
19 and the state or province or similar governmental or political
20 subdivision of a foreign nation."



1 SECTION 7. Section 229-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 "~~[(1)]~~§229-2~~[(1)]~~ **Hawaii sister-state ~~[committee]~~ and**
4 **international partnerships commission.** ~~[(a)]~~ ~~There shall be~~
5 ~~established the Hawaii sister-state committee, to be placed~~
6 ~~within the department of business, economic development, and~~
7 ~~tourism for administrative purposes only, consisting of five~~
8 ~~members appointed by the governor as provided in section 26-34.~~

9 ~~The purpose of the committee shall be to advise the~~
10 ~~governor and the legislature on matters relating to sister-state~~
11 ~~or province relations and relations, in general, between the~~
12 ~~State and the states or provinces of foreign countries.~~

13 ~~[(b)]~~ ~~The governor shall appoint five members, one member~~
14 ~~from each of five lists of nominees submitted respectively by~~
15 ~~the following:~~

- 16 ~~(1) Speaker of the house of representatives;~~
- 17 ~~(2) President of the senate;~~
- 18 ~~(3) Native Hawaiian cultural organization;~~
- 19 ~~(4) East West Center; and~~
- 20 ~~(5) Hawaii State Association of Counties.~~



1 ~~A chair and vice chair of the committee shall be appointed~~
2 ~~by the committee members from among themselves. Members shall~~
3 ~~serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for expenses,~~
4 ~~including travel expenses, necessary for the performance of~~
5 ~~their duties.]~~

6 (a) There is established within the department of
7 business, economic development, and tourism, for administrative
8 purposes only, the Hawaii sister-state and international
9 partnerships commission.

10 (b) The commission shall support the governor,
11 legislature, and office of international affairs in building and
12 maintaining strategic long-term sister-state or province
13 partnerships that promote and enrich the people, cultures,
14 environments, and economies of the State and its international
15 partners.

16 (c) The commission shall consist of the following members:

17 (1) Three members appointed by the governor, with the
18 advice and consent of the senate; provided that two of
19 the three members appointed by the governor shall be
20 from a list of at least three nominees submitted
21 respectively by the:



- 1 (A) Office of Hawaiian affairs; and
2 (B) Center for cultural and technical interchange
3 between East and West, Inc.;
4 (2) One member appointed by the president of the senate;
5 (3) One member appointed by the speaker of the house of
6 representatives; and
7 (4) The chairs of the respective senate and house
8 committees with jurisdiction over international
9 affairs or intergovernmental affairs, who shall serve
10 as ex-officio, non-voting members of the commission.
11 (d) The commission shall elect from among its members a
12 chairperson and vice chairperson.
13 (e) Members of the commission shall serve without
14 compensation but shall be reimbursed for expenses, including
15 travel expenses, necessary for the performance of their duties."

16 SECTION 8. Section 229-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
17 amended to read as follows:

18 "~~{}~~**§229-3**~~{}~~ **Initiating sister-state relationships.** The
19 ~~[Hawaii sister-state committee]~~ commission shall evaluate and
20 develop recommendations for the initiation of all sister-state
21 or province ~~[relationships]~~ partnerships and forward its



1 recommendation to the legislature. The legislature, if it so
2 chooses, shall implement the recommendation to initiate a
3 sister-state or province [~~relationship~~] partnership by either
4 adopting a concurrent resolution or by enacting session law to
5 that effect."

6 SECTION 9. Section 229-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
7 amended to read as follows:

8 "[~~§~~229-4[~~§~~] **Maintaining sister-state relationships.** The
9 [~~Hawaii sister-state committee~~] commission shall periodically
10 evaluate established sister-state [~~relationships~~] or province
11 partnerships and forward its recommendations on maintaining
12 sister-state [~~relationships~~] or province partnerships to the
13 governor and to the legislature."

14 SECTION 10. Section 229-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended to read as follows:

16 "[~~§~~229-5[~~§~~] **Dissolving sister-state relationships.** The
17 [~~Hawaii sister-state committee~~] commission may make a
18 recommendation to terminate a sister-state [~~relationship~~] or
19 province partnership it deems to be defunct, moribund, or not
20 beneficial and forward its recommendation to the legislature.
21 The legislature, if it so chooses, shall implement the



1 recommendation to terminate a sister-state [~~relationship~~] or
2 province partnership either by adopting a concurrent resolution
3 or by enacting session law to that effect."

4 SECTION 11. There is appropriated out of the general
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$200,000 or so much
6 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
7 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
8 2026-2027 for the office of international affairs to develop an:

- 9 (1) Updated strategy for the State's international
10 engagement in the twenty-first century; and
11 (2) Analysis of potential investment and revenue
12 generation abroad.

13 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
14 of business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes
15 of this Act.

16 SECTION 12. There is appropriated out of the general
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$4,000,000 or so much
18 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
19 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
20 2026-2027 for the center for cultural and technical interchange
21 between East and West, Inc. to assist in the development and



1 maintenance of the State's international relationships,
2 programs, and partnerships.

3 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the university
4 of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 13. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
6 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

7 SECTION 14. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.



S.B. NO.

1578
S.D. 2
H.D. 1
C.D. 1

APPROVED this 3rd day of June, 2025



GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI‘I

Date: April 30, 2025
Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96813

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bill this day passed Final Reading in the Senate of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawai‘i, Regular Session of 2025.


President of the Senate


Clerk of the Senate

SB No. 1578, SD 2, HD 1, CD 1

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

Date: April 30, 2025
Honolulu, Hawaii

We hereby certify that the above-referenced Bill on this day passed Final Reading in the House of Representatives of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025.



Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker
House of Representatives



Brian L. Takeshita
Chief Clerk
House of Representatives