



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

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR

**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
DIRECTOR

**DANE K. WICKER**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804  
Web site: [dbedt.hawaii.gov](http://dbedt.hawaii.gov)

Telephone: (808) 586-2355  
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of  
**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
**Director**  
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEES ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS;  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM**

Thursday, March 13, 2025  
1:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of  
**HB1391, HD1**  
**RELATING TO TRADE.**

Chairs Lee and DeCoite, Vice Chairs Inouye and Wakai, and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) offers comments on **HB1391, HD1** which establishes the Hawaii-Ireland trade commission within DBEDT.

Such a commission could help identify trade opportunities and provide a pathway to bring these opportunities with Ireland to fruition. Areas of economic development, educational opportunities for students and academics, energy, governance, and the sharing of knowledge regarding global concerns could be pursued.

This program will significantly contribute to Hawaii's role and position in international affairs, and align with Hawaii's goals in economic development, international relations and education.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**HB-1391-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 4:33:19 PM

Testimony for EDT on 3/13/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rita Kama-Kimura	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts**  
**Chris Lee, Chair    Lorraine Inouye, Vice Chair**

**Committee on Economic Development and Tourism**  
**Lynn DeCoite, Chair    Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair**

**My name is Rita Kama-Kimura, and I stand in opposition to this bill HB1391 HD1 Hawai'i-Ireland Trade Commission.**

**This bill appears to have slipped through the house. The first, hearing had only two testimonies, mainly comments.**

**The second hearing had one comment, plus 11 testimonies opposing ... but the 11 were ignored and the bill moved forward.**

**My question is, what exactly is this relation regarding Bill 1391 HD1 "Hawaii-Ireland Trade Commission" based on? studies? trade relationships? bilateral trade and investments? Is there a history? Is there really that much potential business between Hawaii and Ireland? Why Ireland?**

**On page three of the bill, line 11 through 14, it reads:**

**(g) The members of the commission shall serve without compensation *but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses*, including travel, reasonably incurred in the performance of their official duties**

**Question? By travel, I take it this reimbursement (using our tax-payor monies) will this also include but not be limited to √ airfare, √ hotel, √ ground transportation, √ meals, √ entertainment, √ incidentals? Is there a limit on how many members of the commission this may be limited too? how many trips could we be talking about? This could add up when considering the commission has 11 members.**

**I did contact Rep. Quinlan's office regarding this, what studies this was based on. However, I have not had any response, as yet.**

**So, in closing I say “no” on passing this bill forward. We need to be more prudent on the handling of tax-payor monies! Again, I ask you to not pass this bill any further!**

**Respectfully,  
Rita Kama-Kimura**

**HB-1391-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 4:56:12 PM

Testimony for EDT on 3/13/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary Smart	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am absolutely opposed to the waste of our tax dollars on this unnecessary and unwanted program.

Hawaii does not need to provide free vacations to commission members based on the excuse of researching trade opportunities.

Vote NO!