



Ke'ena Kuleana Ho'okipa O Hawaii
Hawaii Convention Center
1801 Kalakaua Avenue, Honolulu, Hawaii 96815
[kelepona tel 808 973 2255](tel:8089732255)
[kelepa'i fax 808 973 2253](tel:8089732253)
[kahua pa'a web hawaii.tourismauthority.org](http://hawaii.tourismauthority.org)

[Josh Green, M.D.](#)
Governor

[John De Fries](#)
President and Chief Executive Officer

Statement of
JOHN DE FRIES
Hawaii Tourism Authority
before the
COMMITTEE ON CULTURE, ARTS & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Wednesday, March 15, 2023
10:00 a.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 309 & Videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE BILL NO. 449 SD2
RELATING TO THE FESTIVAL OF PACIFIC ARTS

Aloha Chair Tam, Vice Chair Martinez, and Members of the Committee on Culture, Arts & International Affairs,

The Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of SB449 SD2, to appropriate funds to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism for the Thirteenth Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture to be held in Honolulu from June 6 to 16, 2024.

It is an honor for Hawaii to be selected as the host of this event, the world's largest gathering of indigenous Pacific Islanders which only occurs every four years. Though Hawaii delegations have participated in the festival since the 1970s, this will be the festival's first time in Hawaii. In the Hawaiian cultural tradition of ho'okipa, there is a reciprocity associated with the hospitality extended by our fellow Pacific Islanders at festivals hosted in the decades past, so it is important for us to extend the same hospitality to them.

For Hawaii to host the festival is a monumental opportunity to amplify HTA's four interacting strategic pillars: Natural Resources, Hawaiian Culture, Community, and Branding. With appropriate funding to support the festival, Hawaii will be able to showcase ourselves as a capable host of high-level international gatherings.

We support SB449 SD2 and stand ready to assist in planning and support the Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture as it relates to the implementation of this measure. We further commend the diligent work of the Commission, led by our own Chief Brand Officer Kalani Ka'anā'anā, that brought us to this point.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.