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**Josh Green, M.D.**  
*Governor*

**John De Fries**  
*President and Chief Executive Officer*

Statement of  
**JOHN DE FRIES**  
Hawaii'i Tourism Authority  
before the  
**COMMITTEES ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM  
AND WATER AND LAND**

February 14, 2023  
1:00 p.m.  
State Capitol Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

In consideration of  
**SENATE BILL NO. 65**  
**RELATING TO REGENERATIVE TOURISM**

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Aloha Chairs DeCoite and Inouye, Vice Chairs Wakai and Elefante, and Members of the Committees on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism and Water and Land,

The Hawaii'i Tourism Authority (HTA) appreciates the opportunity to offer comments in support of the intent of SB65, to incorporate a regenerative tourism framework into the State Planning Act by expanding objectives and policies for the visitor industry.

The ethic of mālama – care and stewardship – is the core of our visitor education and destination management efforts. HTA's work is framed by four interacting strategic pillars: Natural Resources, Hawaiian Culture, Community, and Branding – the last of which is dependent upon the strength of the first three. Regenerative tourism builds upon the mālama ethic, once masterfully presented by Senator Kenneth Brown in a 1973 address.

A framework for Hawaii'i's regenerative tourism future, which seeks to balance the economics of tourism with the wellbeing of our communities and natural resources, was laid out in HTA's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, adopted in January 2020. Preparation of our next strategic plan, for the period of 2026-2030, will begin next year.

We strongly support the intent of SB65 and stand ready to work with our colleagues at the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to update the state Tourism Functional Plan to reflect the principles embraced in HTA's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, the Aloha+ Challenge and Sustainable Development Goals committed to in that plan, our board's adoption of the 'Āina Aloha Economic Futures Declaration, as well as the hard work of our communities in generating the Destination Management Action Plans, a grassroots articulation of regenerative principles.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide these comments on SB65.