



TESTIMONY OF DANIEL NĀHO'OPI'I
INTERIM PRESIDENT & CEO, HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM
Tuesday, January 30, 2024 10:00 a.m.
In consideration of
HB 1517
RELATING TO THE TOURISM SPECIAL FUND

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) offers the following comments on HB1517 for your consideration. HTA appreciates the intent of this measure that reestablishes the tourism special fund to be expended by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority and allocates revenues from the transient accommodations tax.

We agree that "tourism marketing and tourism impact expenses should be paid for by tourists, rather than the residents of this State," as it had been from the inception of HTA until 2021. We also understand that the Legislature has an immense number of factors to consider when allocating funds to ensure that tourism's contributions to the people of Hawai'i are used wisely.

HTA has commissioned a study to examine various models of tourism governance so that we may return to you with recommendations for HTA's future, including recommendations on funding mechanisms. That study has begun, and a report is expected this summer.

HTA appreciates the legislative discussion of this matter, as well as the opportunity to offer these comments.