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Josh Green, M.D.
Governor

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Statement of
JOHN DE FRIES
Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Friday, February 24, 2023
1:30 p.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL NO. 1233 HD2
RELATING TO TOURISM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee on Finance,

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) appreciates the opportunity to offer comments on HB1233 HD2, which would require the School of Travel Industry Management of the University of Hawai'i to conduct a study that assesses the tourism social carrying capacity for each of the Hawaiian Islands.

Understanding capacity limits is important an important element of destination management. For example, we have seen improved experiences and reduced impacts to natural environments and facilities at state parks that have implemented reservations systems to manage capacity: Wai'ānapanapa on Maui, Lē'ahi (Diamond Head) on O'ahu, and Hā'ena on Kaua'i.

We appreciate the work Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee on Water and Land on this HD2, incorporating our suggested changes to include Lāna'i and Moloka'i in the scope of this study, and to consider a longer timeframe to facilitate the incorporation of more community and industry input.

While we ultimately defer to the School of Travel Industry Management on matters related to the implementation of this measure, HTA stands ready to assist, including utilizing the steering committees, task forces, and working groups convened as part of the Destination Management Action Plan process to find stakeholders to participate in this study.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide these comments on HB1233 HD2.