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Statement of
JOHN DE FRIES
Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

February 1, 2023
1:00 p.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE BILL NO. 420
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of SB420, establishing the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group within the Department of Agriculture to complete an interagency food systems plan.

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority's Destination Management Action Plans, also known as DMAPs, were developed in collaboration with Hawai'i's communities. Contained within the six plans are hundreds of actions and sub-actions identified by kama'āina, many of which speak to the importance of supporting local agriculture, shopping and dining with local businesses, and building capacity for agritourism.

The further development of sustainable food systems in Hawai'i addresses those DMAP actions, advances the goals of the Aloha+ Challenge, the principles of the 'Āina Aloha Economic Futures Declaration (to which HTA has committed), and moves us closer to a model of regenerative tourism. It also offers more avenues to capture visitor spending – over \$19 billion in 2022 – and keep those dollars circulating in Hawai'i.

HTA stands ready to participate in the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group, and appreciates the intent of SB84 to advance sustainable food systems in Hawai'i. We also defer to the Department of Agriculture on the implementation of this measure. Mahalo.