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Josh Green, M.D.
Governor

John De Fries
President and Chief Executive Officer

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

Thursday, February 23, 2023
11:30 a.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL NO. 308 HD1
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

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

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of HB308 HD1, 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, defers to our colleagues at the Department of Agriculture on matters of implementation, and appreciates the intent of HB308 HD1 to advance sustainable food systems in Hawai'i. Mahalo.