



DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

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JOINT STATEMENT ON THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY'S U.S. BRAND MANAGEMENT & GLOBAL SUPPORT SERVICES

HONOLULU – The parties to the contested award of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority's U.S. Brand Management & Global Support Services procurement are pleased to announce that a potential pathway towards a resolution has been identified for the best interest of the people of Hawai'i. After the award of the procurement to the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement was announced in June followed by a formal protest from the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau, both parties have worked tirelessly and collaboratively during this time and have found a way forward in partnership.

"I am very pleased with the progress that the two organizations have made in coming together so that we can move forward in the best interest of the State," said DBEDT Director Mike McCartney. "Both organizations add tremendous value to the visitor industry with their commitment and skills. In the spirit of HRS §5-7.5b, the Aloha Spirit law, we plan to move quickly, collaboratively and with due diligence during this extension, to work through the details so that a resolution that is right for all of Hawai'i is reached."

Kūhiō Lewis, CNHA chief executive officer shared, "We look forward to having a seat at the table alongside HTA, the visitor industry, HVCB and the people of Hawai'i to achieve a regenerative model that protects and perpetuates our precious community, resources and 'āina. Finding solutions is easy with the right spirit and focus. It is time to move forward. Together."

"We also look forward to collaborating with HTA and CNHA to collectively achieve a regenerative tourism model that positively impacts Hawai'i's natural resources and benefits residents statewide," said John Monahan, president and CEO of the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau. "We are pleased to be able to continue to share the Mālama Hawai'i message in the U.S. marketplace during this uncertain economic climate as we enter the fourth quarter. However, it is even more important that we look ahead and continue our branding and education programs for the crucial first quarter of 2023 when many people are planning and booking their travel."

HTA President and CEO John De Fries said, “The commitment and resilience shown by both organizations in finding a shared pathway forward, demonstrates the spirit of Mālama Ku‘u Home or, caring for our beloved home. Going forward, we will utilize our collective momentum and creativity to work through the details of how best we can serve Hawai‘i.”

While work continues on the resolution of the protest, a six-month extension of HVCB’s current contracts for U.S. Brand Management and Global Support Services will extend their work until March 31, 2023. This extension, agreed to by all three parties, will ensure the continuation of important work in visitor education including the GoHawaii.com website and call center.

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