



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

Thursday, March 13, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

In Opposition

H.B. 1378 HD2 Relating to the State Foundation on Culture and Arts

Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye and members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts:

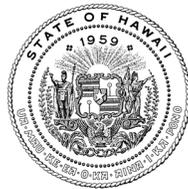
The Office of the Governor respectfully opposes H.B.1378 H.D. 2, Relating to the State Foundation on Culture and Arts. This bill establishes the Performing Arts Grants Program and Performing Arts Grants Special Fund to support performing arts in the State. Clarifies the scope of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts' responsibilities to include the coordination, planning, promotion, marketing, and execution of performing arts events. Amends the funding sources for the State Art Museum. Amends the amounts required to be transferred by agencies into the Works of Art Special Fund and the allowable uses of the Special Fund.

The Works of Art Special Fund has been a cornerstone of Hawai'i's commitment to arts and culture, ensuring stable, long-term investment in programs that enrich our communities, preserve our cultural heritage, and support local artists. By shifting to federal and general funds, this proposal threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding, forcing it to compete with other critical state priorities such as housing, education, and healthcare.

A stable and reliable funding source is essential to ensuring the long-term viability of State Art Museum. Without a dedicated revenue stream, funding becomes uncertain and subject to fluctuations based on economic conditions, shifting legislative priorities, or changes in administration.

For decades, the Works of Art Special Fund has provided a consistent and self-sustaining investment in the arts. I urge the committee to reject this proposal and protect Hawai'i's only dedicated revenue source for the arts, ensuring that future generations continue to benefit from a vibrant and thriving cultural landscape.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE
AND THE ARTS
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1378, H.D. 2

March 13, 2025
3:15 p.m.
Room 224 and Videoconference

RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURES AND THE ARTS

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill (H.B.) No. 1378, H.D. 2:

- Establishes the Performing Arts Grants Program (PAGP) within the State Foundation on Cultures and the Arts (SFCA) to provide grants for the coordination, planning, promotion, marketing, and execution of performing arts events.
- Establishes the Performing Arts Special Fund (PASF) to be administered by SFCA to be used for the coordination, planning, promotion, marketing, and execution of performing arts events.
- Amends Section 9-1, HRS, to define “performing arts.”
- Amends Section 9-21, HRS, to amend the purpose of SFCA to include the coordination, planning, promotion, marketing, and execution of performing arts events.

- Amends Section 103-8.5, HRS, to establish a cap on the amount transferred into the Works of Art Special Fund (WOASF); to require agencies receiving capital improvement appropriations to calculate their proportionate share of the total annual amount transferred into the WOASF; and to establish a cap on the unencumbered fund balance of the WOASF.
- Appropriates or authorizes 17.50 full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent positions and \$4,028,811 in general funds and 4.50 FTE permanent positions and \$283,962 in federal funds for FY 26 and FY 27 for SFCA.
- Appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds in FY 26 and FY 27 to SFCA to provide grants under the PAGP.

B&F supports the intent of the bill to establish a compliant process on the utilization of bond proceeds and create stability within the State Foundation of Culture and Arts. Utilization of bond proceeds are subject to tax exempt regulations of the Internal Revenue Service and could have unintended consequences when incorrectly expended. However, implementing a cap on the transfers into the WOASF will create administrative challenges due to the nature on which capital improvement projects are authorized and executed. In order to effectively and accurately calculate a proportional share, the department recommends that cost elements be identified during the appropriation process.

As a matter of general policy, B&F does not support the creation of any special fund, which does not meet the requirements of Section 37-52.3, HRS. Special funds should: 1) serve a need as demonstrated by the purpose, scope of work, and an explanation why the program cannot be implemented successfully under the general

fund appropriation process; 2) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries or a clear link between the program and the sources of revenue; 3) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 4) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. Regarding H.B. No. 1378, H.D. 2, it is difficult to determine if the PASF would be self-sustaining.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKĀ'I

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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Statement of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Thursday, March 13, 2025
3:15 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
415 South Beretania Street

In consideration of
HB1378 HD2
RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) offers comments on HB1378 HD2, establishing a Performing Arts Grants Program and Performing Arts Special Fund to support performing arts in the State. This legislation clarifies the scope of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts' responsibilities to include the coordination, planning, promotion, marketing, and execution of performing arts events. Amends the funding sources for the State Art Museum, and amends the amounts required to be transferred by state agencies into the Works of Art Special Fund, allowable uses and appropriates funds.

While DBEDT supports the bill's intent, we understand the areas in which there may be impacts and encourage continued dialogue with SFCA to mitigate these concerns while striking a compromise to achieve the intent.

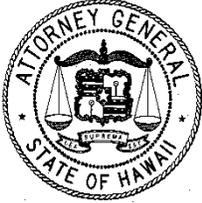
The construct of the special fund is crucial to the current federal landscape impacts on agencies such as the NEA which also provides SFCA with funding

resources.

In light of the transfer of SFCA to DBEDT active in other measures this session, we do agree that additional staffing is needed should HB1378, HD2 pass, both in DBEDT and SFCA.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts has served Hawaii admirably for decades. DBEDT looks forward to working with SFCA, our lawmakers and community to strike the right balance of the intent of this measure, in support of the value of all arts, including performing arts and in recognition of the landmark 1% for Art statute established by the Legislature and visionary architect Alfred Preis.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 1378, H.D. 2, RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS

DATE: Thursday, March 13, 2025 **TIME:** 3:15 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 224

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Alyssa-Marie Y.H. Kau, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Lee and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The purpose of this bill is to establish the Performing Arts Grants Program within the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to support performing arts. The bill also expands SFCA's responsibilities to include the coordination, planning, promotion, marketing, and execution of performing arts events. Further, this bill amends the permitted uses of the Works of Art Special Fund (WASF) and the amounts required to be transferred by agencies into the WASF.

The WASF, established by section 103-8.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), consists of one percent of the cost element of all state fund appropriations for the construction and renovation of state buildings. The WASF is generally funded by tax-exempt general obligation bonds. To maintain the tax-exempt status of the general obligation bonds, WASF moneys must be used in a manner that is consistent with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code. Using the tax-exempt general obligation bond proceeds for operating purposes jeopardizes the tax-exempt status of the bonds. See Treasury Regulations, 26 C.F. R § 1.148-1(c)(4)(iii) (definition of replacement proceeds), and 26 C.F. R § 1.148-10(a)(4) (overburdening the tax-exempt market).

This bill amends section 103-8.5(a), HRS (page 8, line 18, through page 9, line 8), by putting a cap on the total amount transferred to the WASF per fiscal year.

However, the bill does not specify how the caps on transfers into the WASF are implemented and how the Comptroller will segregate the excess funds in a way that the tax-exempt general obligation bonds are not calculated or transferred along with the excess funds. If the Legislature intends to transfer moneys from the WASF to the general fund, this could negatively impact the tax-exempt status of the general obligation bonds.

Additionally, the bill amends section 103-8.5(c), HRS (page 9, line 20, through page 10, line 10), by establishing a maximum unencumbered balance for the WASF in the previous fiscal year to prevent additional transfers of the one percent of appropriations. This bill further amends section 103-8.5(e), HRS, on page 10, line 12, through page 11, line 2, requiring agencies receiving capital improvement appropriations to calculate their "proportionate share of the total annual amount" to be transferred into the WASF. Currently, the Comptroller provides each user agency receiving capital improvement appropriations with criteria to determine which appropriations are subject to the one percent assessment. The user agencies then request, on an allotment basis, the transfer of one percent of the construction costs to the SFCA.

Because the bill does not clarify how the Comptroller or agencies should calculate the total amount and their proportionate share of the WASF, user agencies would not be able to determine when the WASF reaches its cap on transfers. Because there are no cost elements for capital improvement appropriations when appropriations bills are signed into law, it is not possible to calculate both the total amount to be transferred into the WASF or a user agency's proportionate share at that time. The bill also does not explain how the cap will be monitored; therefore, it will be difficult to find an equitable implementation of the cap on transfers into the WASF to determine which capital improvement projects will be subject to the WASF transfer.

We recommend that the Committee work with the Department of Budget and Finance and the Department of Accounting and General Services to resolve the implementation problems in the bill, both to prevent jeopardizing the tax-exempt status of general obligation bonds and to clarify how agencies would calculate their share of

transfers to the WASF. We note that the House Draft 1 version of the bill does not present such implementation difficulties.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



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250 South Hotel Street
Second Floor
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Governor
Josh Green, M.D.

Comptroller
Keith A. Regan

Chairperson
Konrad Ng

Commissioners
Susan Browne
Nalani Brun
Sean Connelly
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Testimony of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts
Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
Thursday, March 13, 2025 Conference Room 224 at 3:15PM
HOUSE BILL 1378 HD2
RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Chair Lee and members of the Committee,

Due to the introduction of amendment H.D. 2, the SFCA **OPPOSES** H.B.1378 H.D.2 which amends the Works of Art Special Fund and shifts much of the Art in Public Places program funding to a General Fund appropriation. The SFCA supported HB1378 as originally introduced as a measure to support the performing arts in Hawaii with an appropriation yet, H.D. 2 amends the measure to line out sections of the the Works of Art Special Fund 103-8.5 HRS.

Regarding H.B.1378 H.D.2 SECTION 6 which amends the Works of Art Special fund 103-8.5 HRS, the SFCA is grateful for the support of the legislature to fund the Art in Public Places Program though a General Fund appropriation in the State's budget, yet the SFCA **OPPOSES** amending 103-8.5 HRS by lining out much of section (b).

(b) The works of art special fund shall be used solely for [the following purposes:

(1) ~~Costs] costs related to the acquisition of works of art[, including any consultant or staff services required to carry out the art in public places and relocatable works of art programs; (2) Site modifications, display, and interpretive work necessary for the exhibition of works of art; (3) Upkeep services, including maintenance, repair, and restoration of works of art; (4) Storing and transporting works of art]~~

With the current Federal uncertainty, we are concerned if the APP program and positions shift to general funds and there is a State fiscal shortfall, there will be no funding source to support the SFCA and therefore the agency will cease to function.

Since the inception of the works of art special fund in 1989, the fund has supported staff services. If there is concern over its use for salaries, the positions financed through the Works of Art Special Fund can be supported through the general fund without amending 103-8.5.

The SFCA **SUPPORTS** SECTIONS 1 - 5 Which establish the Performing Arts Grants Program to support performing arts in the State; Clarifies the scope of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts' responsibilities to include the coordination, planning, promotion, marketing, and execution of performing arts events; Appropriates funds to provide grants under the Performing Arts Grants Program.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

Date: March 12, 2025

Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine Inouye, Vice Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Member
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Member
Senator Brenton Awa, Member

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HOUSE BILL HB1378 HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye and Members of the Committee,

My name is Konrad Ng and I serve as the Chair of the Board of Commissioners for the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. I strongly oppose House Bill 1378 HD2 (HB1378). This bill threatens the well-being of our local economy, communities and cultural institutions by removing the only dedicated and sustainable funding for the arts. Put plainly: this is a bad law because it hurts Hawai'i.

Economic Consequences: HB1378 will have far-reaching financial consequences. Many of Hawai'i's cultural organizations and nonprofits rely on funding, grants and community support to sustain their programs. This bill will create additional barriers that jeopardize their financial stability, ultimately resulting in job losses, reduced services and negative impacts on local businesses that depend on a thriving cultural sector.

A Threat to Cultural and Community Institutions: HB1378 poses a direct threat to Hawai'i's vibrant arts, cultural and nonprofit sectors. These institutions are fundamental to preserving our heritage and fostering creative expression, yet the bill's provisions could severely impact their ability to operate effectively. Policies that restrict or hinder these organizations will undermine the cultural richness that makes Hawai'i unique.

Disparate Impact on Hawai'i's Communities: HB1378 risks exacerbating existing inequities by displacing funding and placing undue burdens on communities. Many of these communities rely on the programs and services provided by the very institutions this bill would harm. The unintended consequences of this legislation could disproportionately affect Native Hawaiians, immigrants, and communities that depend on these resources for education, expression, and support.

Lack of Justification and Public Input: The rationale behind HB1378 is not sufficiently justified, and it appears to lack meaningful engagement with stakeholders who would be directly impacted. Before enacting any legislation that could have such profound consequences, it is imperative to conduct thorough research, engage in transparent dialogue and consider alternative solutions that would strengthen rather than weaken Hawai'i's cultural and nonprofit landscape.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to vote against HB1378 HD2. Instead, I encourage that the Works of Art Special Fund remains unchanged.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your commitment to representing the best interests of our community and I hope you will stand in opposition to this harmful bill.

Mahalo,



Konrad Ng, PhD
Commissioner, State Foundation on Culture and the Arts



March 13, 2025

Committee on Transportation Culture and the Arts
Sen. Lee, Chair
Sen. Inouye, Vice Chair

The Senate
The Thirtieth-Third Legislature
Regular Session of 2025

RE: [HB 1378 HD2 RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION
ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS.](#)

DATE: Thursday, March 13, 2025

TIME: 3:15 pm

PLACE: Conference Room 224

State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu HI

Aloha Chairs Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and the Members of the Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **OPPOSITION** of HB 1378 HD2
RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS.

SAG-AFTRA represents over 1400 actors, recording artists, and media professionals in
our state. Our members entertain and inform Hawai'i, America and the world.

While we support the creation of a Performing Arts Fund, the amendments added in
recent drafts threaten the long-term stability of arts and culture funding by dismantling the

Mericia Palma Elmore, Executive Director
SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local
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SCREEN ACTORS GUILD - AMERICAN FEDERATION
OF
TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS
SAGAFTRA.org
Associated Actors & Artistes of America / AFL-CIO



Works of Art Special Fund—Hawai‘i’s only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts.

Instead, it replaces this funding with federal and general funds, which are not guaranteed.

We support the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts and its decades-long history as a national leader in community-based arts funding; and we support keeping the funding for this important organization intact.

Respectfully,

Mericia Palma Elmore

Mericia Palma Elmore, Executive Director SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local

Mericia Palma Elmore, Executive Director
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SCREEN ACTORS GUILD - AMERICAN FEDERATION
OF
TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS
SAGAFTRA.org
Associated Actors & Artistes of America / AFL-CIO

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:06:07 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laurel Nakanishi	Testifying for HO?A Program (Hawai'i Open Arts)	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

Dear Chair Lee, Vice-Chair Inouye, and members of the committee,

I am writing to respectfully urge you to oppose **HB 1378-HD2**. While I appreciate that the bill would create funding for a Performing Arts Grants Program and a Performing Arts Grants Special Fund, it would cut essential funds for arts education and destabilize the arts in Hawai'i.

I work with a new program called HŌ'Ā, which is funded by the Works of Art Special Fund's educational branch. In this program, children in public and charter schools develop emotional well-being & a sense of place through immersive arts & mālama 'āina experiences. The students go on two field trips to a culturally important place in their home moku. In addition to learning about how to mālama this place, they reflect on their learning and connection through the arts. Teaching Artists and 'Āina Educators come together with classroom teachers to create an experience with the arts and 'āina that is long-term, nuanced, and deeply informed by history and mo'olelo.

After the program, a 3rd grade student from Wai'anae Elementary reflected, "I learned that we have a special island that has history!" A teacher from this class also remarked, "The students who struggle in the classroom thrived outdoors and in the arts."

We have moku cohorts in Wai'anae, O'ahu; Ko'olaupoko, O'ahu; and Kona, Hawai'i Island. A teacher from this last cohort shared that she loved "the integration of art, hana, song, dance, oli - all these things went together. And when the students got to share their knowledge at the hō'ike they became a type of expert. The students felt proud of not only their work, but their knowledge. In many ways, they are still internalizing things as we continue to practice them. The learning is still happening."

It is because the Works of Art Special Fund offers stable support for the arts that we can build partnerships with schools, parents, and community that are based in trust. With a stable source of funding, communities can count on our program returning year after year. While HB 1378-HD2 offers a temporary \$4 million allocation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, there is no commitment beyond that. Unfortunately, general funds and federal grants that could fill in for the special fund are subject to cuts and shifting priorities.

Please continue to support arts education for Hawai'i's children by **opposing HB 1378-HD2**.

Mālama Pono,
Laurel Nakanishi

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 1:30:23 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gaye Humphrey	Testifying for Hawai'i Arts Alliance	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

RE: Testimony in Opposition to HB 1378-HD 2

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Transportation and Culture and the Arts Committee:

I strongly **oppose HB 1378-HD 2**, particularly the provisions that amend the amounts required to be transferred into the Works of Art Special Fund and restrict its allowable uses.

HB 1378-HD 2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Arts Funding

The Works of Art Special Fund is the **only dedicated and sustainable** source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. This bill would severely limit its reach, placing arts programs, jobs, and future creative opportunities at risk.

While the bill proposes a **temporary general fund appropriation**, it comes with no guarantee of future support and is not a reliable replacement. As federal funding declines, state general funds will be prioritized for essential services like health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.

Why Protecting the Works of Art Special Fund Matters

Arts and culture are essential to Hawai'i's identity and economy, preserving our cultural heritage, driving tourism, enriching education, and contributing to economic vitality and community well-being. At a time when federal arts funding is declining, making arts funding increasingly precarious, it is critical to protect rather than dismantle the very foundation that sustains Hawai'i's creative and cultural communities. For decades, the Works of Art Special Fund has been a lifeline, providing stability during economic uncertainty and ensuring that Hawai'i's arts sector thrives for generations to come.

Proposed Amendment: Move Performing Arts Grants to HB 925-HD 3

We also propose that language from HB 1378-HD 2, which establishes a Performing Arts Special Fund and appropriates funds for Performing Arts grants, be moved to HB 925-HD 3, where it is more topically aligned. HB 925-HD 3 also proposes a dedicated revenue source by allocating a percentage of fees from state-run performing arts venues to the fund.

The Hawai'i Arts Alliance serves as an **advocate and trusted ally to artists and audiences** across the state. We work to amplify the transformative power of the arts, while engaging and educating keiki and families in arts that promote healing and cultural relevance.

I urge you to **protect the Works of Art Special Fund** and ensure that Hawai'i's arts and culture sector remains strong for generations to come. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your commitment to supporting Hawai'i's creative community.

Gaye Humphrey
Executive Director
Hawai'i Arts Alliance



March 12, 2025

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, Senator Kanuha and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the board of directors, staff, and 450 members of the Donkey Mill Art Center, I respectfully submit this testimony **in strong opposition to HB 1378-HD2**.

While the original intention of this bill—to establish a performing arts grant program—is welcomed and supported by many, HB 1378-HD2 has turned into a vehicle to restructure a committed funding source for HSFCA, which we strongly oppose. As a visual arts and culture center, the Donkey Mill Art Center deeply respects and supports all forms of artistic expression, including the performing arts, often incorporating them into our youth programs. However, the proposed changes, including restrictions on the Works of Art Special Fund, and shift to general fund appropriations are concerning and pose a significant threat to the arts and culture ecosystem across our state.

Since its establishment in 1967, the Works of Art Special Fund has been a cornerstone of Hawai'i's creative and cultural community and has provided an incredible amount of security to the sector. Altering its structure or imposing limitations jeopardizes the sustainability of organizations like ours and undermines our ability to effectively serve our community. For these reasons, we oppose HB 1378-HD2 in its current form.

Why Now Is the Wrong Time for This Change

- 1. HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai'i's creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
- 2. General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
- 3. Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai'i's Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Impact on Donkey Mill Art Center and the Arts Ecosystem

The Donkey Mill Art Center serves as a vital resource in Kailua-Kona on Hawai'i Island, providing arts and cultural opportunities for over 5,000 people annually. Our mission is to strengthen and support individual and collective well-being through hands-on classes, exhibitions, and cultural events in the visual arts.

Of particular importance is our Youth Education Program, which has provided keiki ages 2–17 with access to arts and cultural education for 30 years. **This program is supported in part by the SFCA's Artist in the Schools program, funded by the Works of Art Special Fund. These funds allow us to serve over 400 West Hawai'i keiki annually at under-resourced Title I schools such as Kahakai Elementary and Holualoa Elementary** and provides professional development opportunities to our teaching artists and classroom teachers.

Through this funding, we integrate visual arts, literature, performing arts, environmental studies, and 'āina-based learning to nurture our students' sense of self, family, community, and world. For schools and communities with limited resources, programs like these are invaluable and must be preserved.

We respectfully urge you to oppose HB 1378-HD2 in its current form and preserve the integrity of the Works of Art Special Fund. Dismantling this vital funding mechanism would have far-reaching consequences, particularly for rural communities and under-resourced schools like ours.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

With aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley Raymond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ashley" being more prominent than the last name "Raymond".

Ashley Raymond
Executive Director
Donkey Mill Art Center, Holualoa, HI
donkeymillartcenter.org

LATE

March 12, 2025

Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

Senator Chris Lee, Chair

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

RE: Testimony in Opposition to HB 1378-HD 2

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Transportation and Culture and the Arts Committee:

I strongly **oppose HB 1378-HD 2**, particularly the provisions that amend the amounts required to be transferred into the Works of Art Special Fund and restrict its allowable uses.

HB 1378-HD 2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Arts Funding

As HB 1378-HD2 states the mission of the state foundation and culture and the arts is to promote, perpetuate, preserve and encourage culture and the arts as central to the quality of life and people of the State. The Works of Art Special Fund is the **only dedicated and sustainable** source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. This bill would severely limit its reach, placing arts programs, jobs, and future creative opportunities at risk.

While the bill proposes a **temporary general fund appropriation**, it comes with no guarantee of future support and is not a reliable replacement. With the reduction in federal funding, changes in foreign policies, and skyrocketing national debt, the nation's economy will wreak havoc on state's general funds - most likely leaving the arts with little to no funding at all. Such an outcome will not only be devastating to our communities' because our ability to preserve and promote a sense of place, history, heritage, and future endeavors will be sabotaged but the economy will also suffer. Culture and the arts is a major contributor to the state's regenerative tourism endeavors, enhances the productivity of other sectors, generates revenues, and creates jobs.

We are Living in Perilous Times

On the federal level, with the signing of two Executive Orders, the arts are being significantly undermined. Below are two examples:

- Executive Order on "Initial Recissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions" revokes the previous administration's Executive Order #14084 promoting the arts, humanities, museums, and libraries. Case in point, the future of a vast collection of public artwork is in doubt as the Trump administration plans to fire workers who preserve and maintain more than 26,000 pieces owned by the U.S. government, including paintings and sculptures by renowned artists, some dating to the 1850s. (Attachment A)

- Executive Order on “Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs And Preferencing” has results in such actions as the National Endowment for the Arts canceling its Challenge America grant that was designed for ‘underserved communities.’ (Attachment B)

This lack of understanding and appreciation for the role and impact culture and the arts has on our nation’s well-being and prosperity will be further compounded by the actions being considered in this bill. Tampering with The Works of Art Special Fund in ways that significantly alter its intent creates great uncertainty for the SFCA, thereby, the people of Hawai‘i.

A Way Forward - Move Performing Arts Grants to HB 925-HD 3

A way to move forward to support both the Performing Arts and SFCA is to move the language from HB 1378-HD 2 that establishes a Performing Arts Special Fund and appropriates funds for Performing Arts grants, into HB 925-HD 3, where it is more germane. HB 925-HD 3 also proposes a dedicated revenue source by allocating a percentage of fees from state-run performing arts venues to the fund.

I urge you to **protect the Works of Art Special Fund** and ensure that Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector remains strong for generations to come.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Gail Mukaihata Hannemann

Board Member, Hawai‘i Arts Alliance

The Hawai‘i Arts Alliance was founded in 1980 by Alfred Preis. Through the many years we have engaged and transformed communities by supporting and cultivating creativity through the arts.

ATTACHMENT A

Washington Post

Democracy Dies in Darkness

EXCLUSIVE

Trump administration slashes division in charge of 26,000 U.S. artworks

The fate of holdings dating to before the Civil War is uncertain after the dismissal of most workers in the General Services Administration's fine arts and preservation units.

Updated March 11, 2025

By [Kriston Capps](#), [Ben Brasch](#) and [Samantha Chery](#)

The future of a vast collection of public artwork is in doubt as the Trump administration plans to fire workers who preserve and maintain more than 26,000 pieces owned by the U.S. government, including paintings and sculptures by renowned artists, some dating to the 1850s.

Fine arts and historic preservation workers at the General Services Administration told The Washington Post that at least five regional offices were shuttered last week and that more than half of the division's approximately three dozen staff members were abruptly put on leave pending their terminations. Workers expressed fear that the cuts will threaten a collection of precious art housed in federal buildings across the country, including Alexander Calder's 1974 "[Flamingo](#)" at the John C. Kluczynski Federal Building in Chicago and Michael Lantz's 1942 "[Man Controlling Trade](#)" outside the Federal Trade Commission building in D.C.

The cuts and restructuring follow President Donald Trump's executive orders on hiring freezes and reductions across the federal workforce, a GSA spokesperson said Tuesday, adding that the agency is "making decisions to optimize the workforce for our future mission, and remains committed to supporting impacted employees as they transition from federal service."

"This email serves as notice that your organizational unit is being abolished along with all positions within the unit — including yours," read the March 3 memo, signed by acting GSA administrator Stephen Ehikian. Ehikian added that the eliminated units "no longer align" with agency and White House goals, and referenced the efforts by Elon Musk's U.S. DOGE Service to slash costs across the government.

“It’s just the rug being pulled out,” said a worker who received the email, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because staff have been instructed not to speak to the media while on leave.

The worker said the dismissals have already left precious artworks in limbo. The 1941 Gifford Beal painting “Tropical Country,” which normally sits in the Interior Department building, is temporarily in a conservator’s studio for restoration — but the conservator now doesn’t know who to reach at the GSA or whether he’ll be paid for his work. “There’s been no planning or accounting or consideration for that,” the staffer said. “It’s supremely shortsighted.”

The dismissals come as the GSA, the central agency for federal building and technology operations, has indicated that it wants to sell off some 50 percent of its portfolio of federal buildings. On March 4, the GSA published but then deleted a list of “noncore” buildings that it intended to sell, including the headquarters for the Justice Department, the FBI and GSA properties, including historic buildings in Washington’s monumental core. A GSA spokesperson told The Post last week that the agency plans to republish the list.

According to former staffers, the agency is looking to end its lease for a storage facility in Northern Virginia that holds hundreds of paintings and sculptures, including pieces sponsored by the Depression-era Works Progress Administration, a New Deal program responsible for some of the nation’s most iconic images. Federal government watchdogs over the years have sought to reclaim WPA artworks, some of which were sold on eBay. When the works were commissioned, artists were paid as much as \$42 a week in 1934, or roughly \$1,000 a week in today’s dollars, for finished pieces.

The federal government’s art collection works like a distributed museum, with paintings and sculptures spread across courthouses and office buildings around the country. The government continues to add to its collection through the Art in Architecture Program, which devotes 0.5 percent of estimated construction costs for a federal building toward commissioning new artworks. Since 1974, the GSA has commissioned more than 500 works by artists for public plazas and federal offices, among them Sam Gilliam, Ellsworth Kelly and Maya Lin.

Many of them require frequent care, which is managed by small teams located in each of 11 regions across the country, plus a central office in Washington. The federal art collection is managed by a staff much smaller than that of other American art museums; Crystal Bridges in Bentonville, Arkansas, for example, boasts a smaller collection but employs about 300 people.

Some of these works are literally part of the buildings, such as Ben Shahn’s 1942 fresco “The Meaning of Social Security” plastered onto the wall of the Wilbur J. Cohen Federal Building in

Washington. Staffers wonder what would happen to those works if buildings were sold.

“The Fine Arts Program makes decisions regarding final disposition of artworks in disposed buildings on a case-by-case basis,” the GSA spokesperson said. “The overarching goals are to protect the artwork in the best way possible and to ensure the public’s access to the artwork.”

Possible actions, according to the agency, may include transferring limited ownership of an artwork to a building’s new owners, with an agreement to protect it; retaining ownership of a work or relocating it; or fully transferring a work to a building’s new owner and removing it from the GSA’s collection.

Fine-arts staff said the reduction-in-force notices came suddenly, leaving them little time to notify artists under commission or contractors working on objects.

Employees placed on leave described ongoing contracts with artists to commission new works that may now go unfulfilled. Repairing public sculptures clipped by vehicles or cleaning artworks vandalized with graffiti are routine parts of the job. Every two years, staff visit and personally inspect each artwork in the collection, a census that takes about four months.

A day after staffers were placed on indefinite leave, the director for the GSA Center for Fine Arts instructed employees to quickly upload their documents into a shared folder or risk losing the preservation history for these works, according to a copy of her email obtained by The Post. That director addressed her email to “for everyone left” and ended it by writing “this needs to be a priority.”

Staff members described fears about what long-term changes to the GSA’s art procurement process could mean. Trump signed an executive order on Jan. 29 restoring a directive from his first administration authorizing a National Garden of American Heroes, a monumental park to include some 250 statues of historical figures. Typically, the Art in Architecture Program has identified artists for commissions and asked them to take the lead, rather than dictate the content for artworks to be produced.

“One of the beautiful things is we’re not prescriptive. We don’t tell artists what to work on,” said another staffer, who also spoke on the condition of anonymity. “They go and percolate and come up with their concepts.”

ATTACHMENT B

Washington Post

Democracy Dies in Darkness

NEA nixes grant program for ‘underserved communities,’ shifting priorities

The National Endowment for the Arts canceled one initiative and said another would prioritize projects about the Declaration of Independence.

Updated February 6, 2025

By [Anne Branigin](#), [Herb Scribner](#), [Sophia Nguyen](#) and [Kriston Capps](#)

The National Endowment for the Arts said Thursday that it will alter its 2026 grant guidelines, eliminating a fund for underserved communities and prioritizing projects that honor the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

The moves come as the Trump administration’s directives to shut down diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) programs are forcing changes in Washington’s federally funded cultural institutions and as the executive branch seeks to put its mark on a patriotic celebration planned for next year.

The Challenge America grant will be canceled for 2026, [the NEA said in a news release](#). That [program](#) was reserved for projects that “extend the reach of the arts to underserved groups/communities,” according to the [NEA’s website](#). The agency encouraged Challenge America applicants instead to apply with the Grants for Arts Projects program.

Now, however, Grants for Arts Projects will “encourage projects that celebrate the nation’s rich artistic heritage and creativity by honoring the semiquincentennial of the United States of America,” its release said.

Applicants have until July 10 to apply. Organizations that already submitted grant applications under the program must submit a new one that complies with the updated guidelines, the agency said. The agency has numerous [other programs](#) for individuals and organizations.

“Funding priority will be given for projects that take place in 2026-2027 that celebrate and honor

the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence,” the statement continued.

According to the NEA, the changes were made because of “recent directives” and to “align with the agency’s mission.”

The announcement by the NEA follows an executive order, signed by President Donald Trump on Jan. 29, establishing a new task force — separate from the congressionally appointed U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission — that comprises the president, vice president, various agency leads and the chair of the NEA.

Under the order, the White House task force will “plan, organize and execute” the celebration, relegating the congressional commission to providing “recommendations and advice.” Federal agencies across the government are required to submit their plans for 2026 events no later than March 1. (The same executive order also revived an unrealized plan from Trump’s first term: the creation of a National Garden of American Heroes to feature 250 statues of U.S. historical figures.)

Efforts to prepare for the 250th anniversary predate the Trump administration. The National Endowment for the Humanities, for example, announced an initiative in 2019, “A More Perfect Union,” to fund grants in all 50 states and jurisdictions related to the nation’s founding.

Mary Anne Carter, whom Trump appointed NEA chair in 2019, is leading the organization as a senior adviser. Its previous chair, Maria Rosario Jackson, stepped down Jan. 20.

The NEA receives about \$200 million in federal funding every year as it awards grants to theaters, museums and other cultural groups. The agency received 2,195 eligible Grants for Arts Projects applications for the current fiscal year, which were submitted in February 2024. For 2025, the NEA previously said it would award 1,127 grants for a total of \$31,825,500 to support arts projects in 15 artistic disciplines and fields.

On Thursday, Elizabeth Auclair, an assistant director of public affairs at the NEA, wrote in an email to The Washington Post: “The FY2025 grants announced earlier this year were all approved by the NEA Chair under the previous administration. The recommended organizations then work with the NEA on finalizing the awards. Today’s update relates to applicants for FY2026.”

The cancellation of Challenge America, which offered \$10,000 grants to groups that could find matching funds, will be a particularly large blow to small arts organizations.

Will Bowling, director of education for Relative Theatrics, a theater company in Laramie, Wyoming,

which offers a literacy initiative for students, described Challenge America as “crucial.”

“I feel like the Challenge America program is on the chopping block specifically because it helps support communities with lesser access to the arts and, in some verbiage, may be considered ‘marginalized’ or ‘underserved’ — which are now rapidly becoming keywords that are associated with diversity, inclusion, equity and access,” Bowling said. “Wyoming is also one of the most underserved states in terms of access to artistic, cultural resources, and that’s sometimes just based on geography. Our cities are many hundreds of miles apart. One of the schools I serve is about 40 miles outside of town, stuck in the middle of the prairies. So providing arts access to rural communities is a really important component.”

Other grantees who benefited from the Challenge America program worry its elimination could harm the already fragile ecosystem for arts funding.

“We hope that having a track record of successful projects with the NEA would open doors to other funders,” said Diane Dowling, chief financial officer of Carpe Diem Arts, an arts organization in Silver Spring, Maryland. “That’s still to be seen. And with the Challenge America grant going away, I’m not sure what’s going to transpire with that.”

The move by the NEA comes less than two weeks after other cultural organizations across the federal government announced changes to comply with the flurry of new directives from Trump.

At the end of January, the Smithsonian Institution told employees that it would close its diversity office in response to Trump’s executive order that declared DEI initiatives to be “illegal and immoral discrimination programs.”

The Smithsonian made the changes days after the separate National Gallery of Art closed its diversity office and reassigned its staff in the wake of Trump’s executive order. The gallery’s website once listed values such as “diversity, equity, access and inclusion” but has swapped them for the phrase “welcoming and accessible.”

Also in January, Trump’s newly appointed Federal Communications Commission chairman, _____, Brendan Carr, called for an investigation into NPR and PBS over their commercials and suggested that both entities could lose federal funding.

During Trump’s first term, the White House submitted multiple budget proposals before Congress that recommended eliminating the NEA, which has long been a target of some politicians on the right.

Roger Schmidt, executive director of Sitka Fine Arts Camp, which serves students from rural Alaska

and more than 20 other states, called the change “a political and ideological stunt.” The camp has regularly received NEA grants, including \$60,000 for 2025, and is uncertain about how to craft an application that will fit the new funding priorities.

“What will we do here?” Schmidt said. “I don’t know. We’ll write something about how supporting kids in the arts is the way to celebrate being an American.”

He added: “If I were to tell the kids that this summer was going to be about the Constitution ... I think that narrow focus would be really devastating.”

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 8:34:48 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)	Testifying for Pride at Work – Hawai‘i	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i is an official chapter of [Pride at Work](#) which is a national nonprofit organization that represents LGBTQIA+ union members and their allies. We are an officially recognized constituency group of the AFL-CIO that organizes mutual support between the organized Labor Movement and the LGBTQIA+ Community to further social and economic justice.

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i fully opposes HB 1378 HD 2 .

We ask that you hold this piece of legislation in committee.

Mahalo,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)

President

[Pride at Work – Hawai‘i](#)

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 10:59:11 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Karabinus	Testifying for Honolulu Printmakers	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

The Honolulu Printmakers along with our 160 members strongly oppose this bill for the following reasons.

No Permanent Funding: The bill offers a **temporary** \$4 million allocation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027—**with no commitment beyond that.**

Uncertain Future: General funds and federal grants are subject to cuts and shifting priorities, leaving arts funding vulnerable.

Loss of a Lifeline: The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured that Hawai‘i’s arts sector remains resilient, even during economic downturns. This bill **dismantles that safety net.**

False Promises: Short-term funding gains are **not worth sacrificing long-term stability.** This bill weakens the arts ecosystem instead of strengthening it.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 3:15:59 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lin McEwan (Thieman)	Testifying for ProArts Playhouse Maui (ProArts Inc)	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

We would like to voice our wish for the Performing Arts components to be transferred to another Arts-focused bill.

ProArts is more than just a non-profit performing arts venue—it’s a hub for connection and community engagement. Our space is in high demand, with schools, civic groups, community organizations, and post-show discussion groups all eager to use it. And most importantly, ProArts is playing a pivotal role in creating a vibrant cultural district in South Maui.

As such, we see it as imperative that funding for the arts not be limited as it would be due to the restrictions on **the Works of Art Special Fund, as it is in this bill.**

Respectfully yours,

Lin McEwan (aka Linda Thieman)

Executive Director, ProArts Playhouse Maui

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TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 1378-HD2

Hearing Date: Thursday, March 13, 2025
Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
State Capitol, Room 224, 3:15 PM

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Becky Lind, and I serve as the Executive Director of Hāna Arts. On behalf of our organization, our dedicated artists, cultural practitioners, and the broader East Maui community, I respectfully submit testimony in strong opposition to HB 1378-HD2.

Hāna Arts is a lifeline for our isolated rural community, providing critical arts education, cultural programming, and economic opportunities for local artists. Our work is deeply rooted in the preservation and perpetuation of Hawaiian culture, engaging keiki to kūpuna in creative expression that strengthens identity, resilience, and well-being. The Works of Art Special Fund has been an essential pillar of this work, ensuring that organizations like ours can continue to serve communities that otherwise lack access to sustained arts programming.

HB 1378-HD2 puts the future of Hawai'i's arts and culture sector at risk by eliminating the state's only dedicated and reliable funding source for the arts. The proposed shift to general and federal funds creates a dangerous precedent, leaving arts funding vulnerable to political shifts, budget cuts, and competing state priorities. This change is particularly devastating for rural communities like Hāna, where access to resources is already limited, and where cultural and arts programs provide vital economic and social stability.

Why We Oppose HB 1378-HD2:

- **No Permanent Funding:** The proposed temporary allocation of \$4 million for two years does not provide long-term security for arts organizations.
- **Uncertain Future:** Without dedicated funding, organizations like Hāna Arts will struggle to plan, hire artists and educators, and sustain meaningful programs for our community.
- **Loss of a Safety Net:** The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured the survival of the arts sector through economic downturns. Dismantling this fund removes a critical safety net, threatening the very existence of arts education and cultural programs across the state.
- **Undermining Community Impact:** Arts programs serve as a bridge for healing, education, and cultural preservation, especially in the wake of disasters like the 2023 Maui Wildfire. Losing reliable funding would severely impact our ability to provide these essential services.

The arts are not an afterthought—they are the soul of our communities. We urge you to reject HB 1378-HD2 and instead protect a funding structure that has supported Hawai'i's artists, educators, and cultural practitioners for decades.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Lind
Executive Director, Hāna Arts

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:14:32 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zaesha Gonsalves	Testifying for Hale Mahaolu Ewalu	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express our strong support for HB 1378-HD2, which is essential for the continued development and access to the arts for our communities. Our housing sites Hale Mahaolu Ewalu & Kulamalu Hale have greatly benefited from this program, and the arts play a vital role in the lives of our residents, fostering creativity, connection, and cultural awareness.

The arts have been an invaluable resource in enriching our community, and this funding has directly supported initiatives that have brought people together, empowered individuals, and created opportunities for all. In particular, it has allowed us to provide programming that speaks to the diverse needs of our residents, offering an outlet for expression and engagement. This has also empowered our youth and kept them out of trouble. Art has provided them other outlets of ways to express their emotions. This was very helpful with our teens.

As organizations committed to the well-being of our residents, we recognize how important it is for the arts to remain a stable and reliable part of the community. The Works of Art Special Fund has been crucial in ensuring long-term support for the arts, even during economic downturns, and we believe it is vital to protect this funding to ensure that future generations can continue to experience the cultural richness that Hawai'i has to offer.

We urge you to support HB 1378-HD2 and the continued investment in Hawai'i's arts and culture. This bill is a critical step in ensuring our community has ongoing access to the resources needed to thrive creatively. We believe this funding is not just a luxury but a necessity for the social and cultural health of our residents.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Zaesha Gonsalves

HI LIC: RS- 83776

Housing Manager | Hale Mahaolu Ewalu | Kulamalu Hale

Kulamalu Hale: 65 Ohia Ku St Pukalani | Ph: 808-868-4148 Fax: 808-868-4182

Hale Mahaolu Ewalu: 88 Ohia Ku St Pukalani | Ph: 808-573-5500 Fax: 808-573-5501

To: COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, March 13, 2025

Re: Testimony in Strong Opposition of HB1378-HD2

From: Andrew Ogata, Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Committee Members:

The Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) strongly opposes HB1378-HD2, which threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund. While we recognize the bill includes some positive provisions, the loss of a dedicated funding source for the arts will have severe and lasting consequences for our communities.

HHRC has been privileged to work alongside the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and Capitol Modern, which has served as a safe haven for our local LGBTQIA+ community. Through their support, Capitol Modern has hosted events like Rainbow Prom, Transgender Day of Visibility, and World AIDS Day, creating a space where our LGBTQIA+ community can celebrate, find support, and build resilience. These events are more than just gatherings, they are lifelines for many individuals who often feel unseen and unsupported.

HB1378 Puts Hawai'i's Arts Sector at Risk

1. **No Permanent Funding** – The bill offers only a temporary \$4 million allocation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, with no long-term commitment. Without a dedicated source of funding, the future of arts and cultural programs remains uncertain.
2. **Unstable and Competitive Funding Sources** – By shifting arts funding to general funds and federal grants, this bill forces the arts sector to compete with other essential services like housing, education, and healthcare—sectors that already struggle for adequate resources.
3. **Loss of a Critical Safety Net** – The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured that Hawai'i's arts sector remains resilient, even during economic downturns. Eliminating this fund leaves arts organizations vulnerable to budget cuts and shifting state priorities.
4. **A False Trade-Off** – While short-term financial allocations may seem beneficial, sacrificing a dedicated funding source ultimately weakens the arts ecosystem rather than



strengthening it. A thriving arts sector contributes to economic growth, community engagement, and overall well-being.

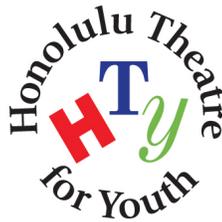
At HHHRC, we see firsthand how the arts provide healing, connection, and a sense of belonging, especially for marginalized communities. We also see at the federal level how programs and services for our queer communities are increasingly under attack. Now is not the time to weaken support for the very institutions that protect and uplift us. The arts do more than preserve culture; they provide safe spaces for expression, advocacy, and social change.

The arts are not a luxury, they are a necessity. They preserve our cultural heritage, promote public health, and provide a platform for marginalized communities to share their stories. As an organization committed to harm reduction and community wellness, we urge lawmakers to protect the Works of Art Special Fund and reject HB1378-HD2.

We respectfully ask the committee to **OPPOSE HB1378-HD2** and seek alternative solutions that do not jeopardize long-term arts funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Andrew Ogata, Director of Marketing & Development, Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center



March 11, 2025

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Eric Johnson
Artistic Director

Daniel A. Kelin, II
Director of Drama Education

This year Honolulu Theatre for Youth is celebrating 70 years of providing engaging and exciting live theatre and classroom activities for Hawaii's children. Support received from the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts has made it possible for HTY to keep arts education alive in schools across the State of Hawaii and enables students in even the most remote areas of Hawaii access to the arts.

We strongly encourage you to vote against HB1378-HD2. In its original form the bill was intended to support the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and protect funding for the arts. The bill has been modified and now threatens dedicated funding for the arts and the continued support of this important resource.

What appears to be a positive measure is actually a threat to long term stability of arts programming in schools and providing our community with positive, constructive experiences to build understanding and empathy.

Please protect the arts in Hawaii and oppose this measure.

Aloha,

Rebecca Dunning
Managing Director

Eric Johnson
Artistic Director



TO: SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
The Honorable Senator Chris Lee, Chair
The Honorable Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Committee

FROM: Micah A. Kāne, CEO & President

RE: Testimony in Opposition for HB 1378 HD2, Relating to the State Foundation on
Culture and the Arts

DATE: Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 3:15pm

LOCATION: Conference Room 224

The Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) strongly opposes House Bill 1378 HD2 regarding the works of arts special fund (Section 6). If enacted, HB 1378 HD2 will restrict the use of this fund to costs related to the acquisition of works of art. Capping the revenue and shifting State Foundation on Culture and the Arts' operating funding away from this dedicated source, risks stability to SFCA and the greater community which benefits from many programs that are supported by this special fund.

HCF has a long history of partnering with SFCA to increase access to arts education at public and charter schools through the Artists in the Schools program. This program is supported by this fund and restricting use of the fund will greatly reduce access to arts education for keiki throughout the state. HCF believes that when opportunities to practice and participate in arts and culture are inclusive and accessible to everyone, from keiki to kūpuna, we will have a healthier community in Hawai'i. HCF is committed to increasing access to arts and culture as one of the six essential sectors of the CHANGE Framework.

While HB 1378 HD2 provides that general and federal funds can be appropriated to finance positions and other costs of SFCA, these funds are not guaranteed over time and jeopardizes stable funding for arts and culture. With the uncertainty of federal funding and the need to address many priorities in the state, it is essential to maintain funding to provide stability to the arts & culture community which contributes significantly to the well-being of our whole community.



hawaiicommunityfoundation.org

827 Fort Street Mall Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

MAIN 808-537-6333 FAX 808-521-6286



Hawai'i was the first state in the country to adopt a percent-for-art law. Hawai'i must continue to affirm the importance of arts and culture. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 1378 HD2.



46 Merchant Street • Honolulu, HI 96813 • Phone (808) 536-4222 • Fax (808) 536-4226

March 12, 2025

RE: Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha e, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the TCA committee,

Thank you for your service to the State of Hawai'i.

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2, scheduled for hearing on Thursday, March 13, at 3:15 pm.

At a time of great uncertainty in state and federal funding for all public essentials, HB1378-HD2 dismantles a critical safety net for local arts workers, artists, our creative economy, and most importantly, the communities we serve across the state.

The long-term impact of this is debilitating to the people of Hawai'i. In the bill, temporary general funds are allocated for FY26 and FY27, but there is no commitment beyond that. On March 10, 2025, House Finance Chair, Representative Kyle Yamashita, spoke about the state budget with Hawaii News Now, saying, "What we can see, the number is probably going to go down." Senate Ways and Means chair Donovan Dela Cruz concurred that hundreds of millions may need to be trimmed from the budget for state programs. (Source: [Recession fears could dent state budget](#)).

As Gaye Humphrey stated in a [Civil Beat Community Voice piece](#) recently, The arts are not just about creative expression — they are a major economic driver in Hawai'i. More than 20,000 Hawai'i residents work in the creative economy, contributing to a \$3.3 billion industry that fuels small businesses across the state.

If this bill is passed and moves state funding for arts programs out of the Works of Art Special Fund and into general funds, and then in the final FY26 FY27 budget those general funds are cut, we risk destruction of a major economic driver in Hawai'i, while robbing keiki of critical arts education programs and sending a message to everyone that the state of Hawai'i devalues culture.

I know the members of this committee care about the people of Hawaii. In alignment with that value, please do not pass HB1378-HD2.

Mahalo for receiving my testimony,

Donna Blanchard
Managing Director
Managingdirector@kumukahua.org

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:49:04 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lori Nishikawa	Testifying for Quovadis Design	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is **Lori Nishikawa**, and I write to **strongly oppose HB 1378-HD2**, which threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

The arts are more than just creative expression; they are the heartbeat of our islands, connecting generations, preserving culture, and providing a path for healing and growth. **For me, the arts were a lifeline during some of the most challenging moments of my life.**

As a designer and strategist, my journey started not in corporate boardrooms, but in the vibrant community spaces where creativity was nurtured. It was in those spaces that I saw firsthand how the arts uplift individuals, empower local businesses, and serve as a foundation for economic resilience. **I owe my career, my voice, and my purpose to the opportunities that arts funding helped create.**

This bill jeopardizes those opportunities for future generations. By dismantling the **Works of Art Special Fund**, it removes a reliable funding source and replaces it with unstable alternatives, leaving the fate of our creative sector at the mercy of fluctuating budgets and shifting priorities.

Art is not a luxury—it is a necessity. It is the medium through which our keiki learn to dream, our kūpuna pass down wisdom, and our communities find common ground. **Weakening arts funding weakens the very fabric of Hawai‘i.**

I urge you to **oppose HB 1378-HD2** and protect the future of the arts in Hawai‘i. Let’s ensure that creativity continues to thrive, that our cultural identity remains strong, and that the next generation has the same opportunities that shaped me.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Lori Nishikawa

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:22:37 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maile Loo	Testifying for Hula Preservation Society	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chairperson Lee and members of the Committee,

We strongly oppose HB 1378 HD2. It breaks a long-standing, long-term commitment to a most necessary and impactful part of life that feeds our community - culture and the arts.

The beauty of the arts lies in its diversity, the many kinds and forms one can learn, practice, and be enriched by that cross cultures and ages, communities and ethnicities.

Your efforts unnecessarily sideline the often life-saving impacts arts and culture make on individual as well as community levels.

Please do not pass this bill and disrupt the established lifeline with short-term promises that lack stability and commitment to arts and culture which so readily uplift, educate, and enhance the lives of so many here in our islands.

We kindly request you do not pass HB 1378.

Maile Loo, Executive Director

Hula Preservation Society



Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

7192 Kalaniana'ole Hwy
Suite A-143A, #249
Honolulu, HI 96825
Phone: 808/933/9411
Email: hfia@hawaiiforest.org

Date: 03/12/25

TO: TCA Chair Lee and TCA Committee Members

FROM: Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

SUBJECT: Comments on HB1378 HD2 Relating to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts

Dear Chair Lee and TCA Committee Members,

The Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA) is a state-wide association of diverse individuals and businesses. Roughly 50% of HFIA members are woodworkers and our annual flagship event is Hawaii's Woodshow, in Honolulu. While we are a trade association focused on the forest industry, we also care deeply about the well-being of the arts community and the funding it receives. We encourage you to oppose HB1378 HD2.

This bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, a critical funding source that supports arts and culture programs across the entire state. The bill weakens the Works of Art Special Fund by removing the only reliable, dedicated funding source for arts and culture programs in Hawai'i. Ultimately, HB1378 HD2 sacrifices the long-term stability of one program in order to provide short term funding for another.

The HFIA believes that funding for performing arts is deserved, but a solution that provides those funds while maintaining funding to the Works of Special Arts Fund is necessary. On behalf of the Directors and members of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association, please oppose HB1378 HD2 and we encourage you to seek improved long-term funding solutions.

Mahalo,

Guy Cellier, President
Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

Established in 1989, HFIA's is a nonprofit organization founded by people committed to sustainable forest management. HFIA's mission is to promote healthy and productive forests and a sustainable forest industry through management, education, planning, information exchange, and advocacy. HFIA has over 130 members including woodworkers, landowners, sawyers, foundations, foresters, growers, educators, environmentalists, architects, millers, ranchers, and others interested in HFIA's mission and goals.

HFIA Board of Directors

Officers: President Guy Cellier, Vice President Irene Sprecher, Secretary Taylor Coons, Treasurer Wade Lee
Directors: Jeremy Campbell, Doug Gordon, Nicholas Koch, Michael Sowards, Aileen Yeh

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:05:40 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Edwards	Testifying for Hawai'i Craftsmen	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting testimony on behalf of Hawai'i Craftsmen, a statewide non-profit organization founded in 1966 and dedicated to promoting and preserving the rich tradition of fine craftsmanship in the Hawaiian Islands.

We oppose any legislation that seeks to replace or modify the Works of Art Special Fund and threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding. Therefore, we, and on behalf of our many members across the state of Hawai'i **strongly oppose HB 1378-HD2.**

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 10:15:23 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aly Ishikuni	Testifying for Art+Flea / MORI by Art+Flea	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Aly Ishikuni, and I am a Contracted Public Programmer at Capitol Modern, a museum that supports diverse communities and cultures. I am testifying on behalf of the museum, ART+FLEA, MORI by Art+FLEA, and our collective of over 800 independent artists, musicians, arts organizations, and creative small businesses—each of whom will be severely impacted by the proposed HB1378-HD2.

We are dedicated to providing the public with unique arts and culture experiences through free programs and events. However, this is only possible with the support of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) and the Works of Art Special Fund. This fund was created to provide dedicated public funding for arts and culture statewide and has played a crucial role in preserving and supporting Hawai'i's cultural heritage for decades. We urge you **not** to strip away the heart and soul of Hawai'i. Please continue to support SFCA's efforts in building a sustainable artistic future for our artists. By undermining programs and initiatives that support the arts, we risk losing the very fabric of our culture and our ability to sustain an arts-driven economy.

This bill threatens not only the financial stability of our local arts community but also the mental and emotional well-being of the thousands of individuals who rely on the arts for both their livelihoods and their means of expression. Art in all its forms fosters creativity, strengthens cultural identity, and serves as a source of comfort and healing, especially in these challenging times. For many of us, the arts are not a luxury—**they are a way of life.**

I urge you, with all due respect, to oppose HB1378-HD2 and carefully consider the long-term damage it could cause to the arts community and those who depend on SFCA-supported programs to thrive. If you care about the future of Hawai'i—its culture, economy, and the well-being of its people—I implore you to stand with us in protecting the arts and rejecting this bill. **Maintaining the dedicated 1% funding for the arts is essential.**

Thank you for your time and attention to this urgent matter.

Aly Ishikuni



Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
March 13, 2025

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Committee Members,

I write to Oppose HB 1378 HD2 in its current form, standing with the Hawai'i Arts Alliance:

“While HB 1378-HD2 includes some positive provisions, it ultimately **threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding** by dismantling the **Works of Art Special Fund**—Hawai'i's only **dedicated, reliable** funding source for the arts. Instead, it replaces this funding with **federal and general funds**, which are **not guaranteed** and will compete with other state priorities like housing, education, and healthcare.”

As director of Lei Pua 'Ala Queer Histories of Hawai'i, a multidimensional project that works to illuminate and honor gender and sexual diversity across the multicultural landscape of these islands, I witness the vital, often singular, role that artists, and public art works, play in giving voice and humanity to members of our communities who are too often erased and consigned to the margins of society.

Now more than ever, as the new federal administration seeks to dismantle public support for the arts and humanities and their role in helping to imagine and create a more just and equitable society, the State of Hawaii must renew its steadfast commitment to the Works of Art Special Fund as a dedicated source of support for programs that uplift and include the lives, experiences, and potential of all in our communities.

Thank you for your consideration of the growing movement calling for this understanding,

Joe Wilson
Director

Queerhistoriesofhawaii.org

March 12, 2025

To the Senate Committee on Transportation, Culture and the Arts,

This testimony is in strong OPPOSITION to HB1378-HD2 as it provides no commitment to fund the arts past 2027 and leaves the future of arts funding in a vulnerable state.

As the current Executive Director and former ED and current board member of Pu'uhonua Society, an arts and culture not-for-profit that has supported community for over 50 years, we know the importance of sustained government support for arts organizations, arts programming, and individual artists. There is a vital connection between the Works of Art Special Fund and a thriving arts ecosystem in Hawai'i.

HB1378-HD2 prioritizes immediate needs while sacrificing long-term stability and sustained funding overall weakening the arts ecosystem. Over time this bill will remove dollars behind many arts programs and statewide initiatives that support the arts. Support for artists translates to support for our communities as Dr. Jill Sonke, Ph.D. and founding director of the Center for Arts in Medicine at the University Florida states, "just like exercise and good nutrition, regular arts participation and creative activity can support and enhance our health and wellbeing in measurable ways - having a real impact on conditions like hypertension, depression, dementia and more... Arts and culture resources should be available in every community." Whether now or in the future, it is not the time to take ANY resources from a sector which positively impacts health and wellbeing for all.

Continuing Hawai'i's only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts is imperative and should not be replaced but federal and general funds which are never guaranteed. Again, we stand in strong OPPOSITION to HB1378-HD2 as it ultimately threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding.

Mahalo for your care and consideration,

Emma Broderick

Emma Broderick
Executive Director, Pu'uhonua Society

Maile Meyer

Maile Meyer
Former Executive Director, Pu'uhonua Society
Current Board Member, Pu'uhonua Society

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 4:16:23 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolyn K Wright	Testifying for Maui Academy of Performing Arts	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Maui Academy of Performing Arts respectfully submits this testimony opposing HB1378-HD2. While we are in full support of the portion of the bill establishing the Performing Arts Special Fund, we do not support the proposed changes to the Works of Art Special Fund. We recommend that the language in HB1378 establishing the Performing Arts Special Fund be incorporated into HB 925. In addition, we recommend that the word “live” be added before “audience” in the definition of the performing arts to ensure that the Performing Arts Special Fund be reserved for locally produced events performed live for audiences in Hawaii and not for motion pictures or television filmed in Hawaii. Mahalo for supporting arts and culture in Hawaii.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:23:09 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Yee	Testifying for The LVRG Group	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We stronly oppose HB1378 HD2.

Funding for Hawai'i's Culture & Art programs should be protected and expanded - not put at risk or diminished.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 8:48:01 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jayne-Lee Mokulehua	Testifying for Gravitas Pasifika	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jayme Mokulehua and I oppose HB 1378-HD2. Dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund, our only dedicated arts funding, is a grave mistake. Replacing it with temporary, unreliable general and federal funds jeopardizes the long-term stability of Hawai'i's arts and culture. This fund has been a lifeline, ensuring resilience. Temporary funding is unsustainable, and general funds are subject to shifting priorities. We cannot sacrifice long-term security for short-term gains. I urge you to reject this bill and protect the Works of Art Special Fund.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 9:09:22 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jose Inigo Santos	Testifying for The Foundation for an Engaged Pacific	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1378-HD2, as it threatens the long-term stability of arts funding in Hawai‘i by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund—our only dedicated and reliable funding source. Replacing it with general and federal funds, which are uncertain and subject to shifting priorities, puts the arts at risk. While the bill offers a temporary \$4 million allocation, there is no commitment beyond 2027, leaving the future of arts funding vulnerable. The Works of Art Special Fund has sustained Hawai‘i’s arts sector through economic downturns, and removing it endangers the cultural ecosystem. I urge the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts to reject HB1378-HD2 and protect dedicated funding for Hawai‘i’s arts and culture.



IATSE LOCAL 665

FILM, TELEVISION, STAGE, PROJECTION AND TRADESHOWS
Since 1937



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF THEATRICAL STAGE EMPLOYEES, MOVING PICTURE TECHNICIANS, ARTISTS AND ALLIED CRAFTS
OF THE UNITED STATES, ITS TERRITORIES AND CANADA, AFL-CIO, CLC

Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i
Regular Session of 2025
Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
Testimony by IATSE 665
March 13th, 2025

LATE

HB 1378 HD2 RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS.

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Tuia'ana Scanlan, IATSE International Trustee and President of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **IATSE 665 opposes HB1378 HD2**, relating to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

While we support the creation of a Performing Arts Fund, the amendments added in recent drafts threaten the long-term stability of arts and culture funding by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund—Hawai'i's only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts. Instead, it replaces this funding with federal and general funds, which are not guaranteed. We support the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts and its decades-long history as a national leader in community-based arts funding; and we support keeping the funding for this important organization intact.

IATSE 665 opposes HB1378 HD2. We urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

In Solidarity,

Tuia'ana Scanlan
IATSE International Trustee
President, IATSE 665
(he/him/his)

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:50:28 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia Berlin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Save funding for the arts!

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:34:12 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chachie Abara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Chachie Abara. I write in **strong support** of HB1378 HD2, which seeks to establish the **Performing Arts Grants Program and Special Fund**, expand the scope of the **State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA)**, and strengthen **funding mechanisms for the State Art Museum and Works of Art Special Fund**.

As a wellness and culture advocate, I have seen firsthand the transformative power of the performing arts in Hawai‘i. The performing arts not only preserve and perpetuate our cultural heritage but also serve as a vital platform for storytelling, community building, and economic growth. However, despite their significance, performing artists and organizations often face financial barriers that limit their ability to create, showcase, and sustain their work.

By establishing the **Performing Arts Grants Program and Special Fund**, this bill provides essential resources to support local performers, cultural practitioners, and arts organizations. Furthermore, by expanding the SFCA’s role to include **promotion, marketing, and execution of performing arts events**, HB1378 HD2 ensures that these creative efforts receive the visibility and infrastructure needed to thrive. Additionally, the bill’s amendments to the **Works of Art Special Fund and the State Art Museum’s funding sources** will help sustain these critical institutions, ensuring that the arts remain accessible to all.

Investing in the performing arts is an investment in Hawai‘i’s identity, economy, and future. The passage of HB1378 HD2 will help elevate Hawai‘i’s vibrant creative community, empower artists, and foster a richer cultural landscape for generations to come.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. I urge you to pass this bill and provide the much-needed support that Hawai‘i’s performing artists and cultural institutions deserve.

Respectfully submitted,

Chachie Abara

Filipino Mental Health Initiative Hawaii

mariachachie.hawaii@gmail.com

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 10:24:46 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Makana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Yes

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 7:03:24 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lu Ann Mahiki Lankford-Faborito	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support to contiune funding necessary for our cultural events.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:05:53 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Scarlino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the bill to keep arts thriving in the the state of Hawaii.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 8:29:09 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Solomon Enos	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

A testimony in Opposition to HB 1378 HD 2

To the Chairperson Senator Chris Lee and Vice Chairperson Lorraine R. Inouye on the Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts.

Thursday, March 13, 2025

3:15 PM, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

I am testifying in Opposition to House Bill 1378 HD 2.

My name is Solomon Robert Nui Enos, Artist in Residence at the Capitol Modern.

I am deeply concerned about the language in this bill, as it destabilizes public art funding at a time when we risk losing federal support for public art. This is a particularly harsh blow as we move into a time when mental-health related issues across our State are likely to spike, with the politics of cruelty targeting members of our community who were already vulnerable.

Art saves lives, and art changes lives. When the hundreds of children and students a week pass through the museum, I am honored to give talks and share with them drawings and 3D sculpted and printed concepts that explore new realms like Hawaiian Science Fiction and Pacific Futurism. Coupled with this, I leave them with two “forever ideas”.

The first is that Art is problem solving. Every human-made thing began with paper and pencil, and with these vital tools, we can draw our way out of the state of the world we are in.

And lastly, I remind them that for every hour they spend playing video games or watching television, then need to spend an hour drawing, or painting, or writing poetry, or working on the the great novel we all carry within. At least a 1 to 1 ratio; one hour taking, and one hour making.

Art is hope made manifest, Art saves lives.

Me ka ha'aha'a ame ka mea 'ano nui,

Solomon Enos.

tolomona@gmail.com

1(808)-218-3731

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 10:15:51 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholas Kaleikini	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Nicholas Kaleikini and I am a musician, teacher, and entrepreneur. I grew up in a musical family and upon retrospect really understand and most importantly appreciate the significance and impact of art, in particular music, in my upbringing. As a father of a one-year-old, I am even more aware of the importance of the arts in a child’s life. I frequent the Capitol Modern and see the many families and children who enjoy the free events: embracing art, tapping into their curiosity, and most importantly having fun. I hope my children (we are expecting another) can enjoy these creative events that not only appeal to families in a healthy and safe way, but offer a lot of inspiration with all the many different creative outlets like live music, the museum gallery, and local artisans. It would be a shame to have the future of our creative community be jeopardized. As a state that quite literally thrives off of Hawaiian culture, it should take up the responsibility of cultivating and nourishing the creative community. It should not be left at the hands of the federal government. The way in which we promote our island culture and arts does not fairly meet the funding the state provides. There is value beyond just tourism. Our local creative community brings people together to enjoy each other’s company in a sphere of creative inspiration like these free events at the museum. My concern is those proposing this bill don’t see the value in our creative community because they quite literally haven’t attended any of these events. Maybe if they did, they would see the children dancing, see the kūpuna admiring works of art, see the local artisan selling their products as a second means of income, and see local musicians embraced and highlighted in ways different from the usual hotel circuit. So with that said, I invite you to come and experience an event for yourself, every first and third Friday. Alooha and mahaaalo.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:24:55 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alejandra Rojas Silva	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

Aloha,

As a member of the arts community in Hawai‘i and a scholar of art history more generally, I wan’t to vehemently oppose this bill. I have a PhD in Art History from Harvard University and have worked in the arts for last 25 years. I am concerned that this bill will impact the art history of Hawai‘i, and the Unites States more generally, in ways that have not been anticipated or considered by this committee.

The most worrisome part about this bill is that, while seemigly increasing the definition of arts to the performing arts, the bill does not offer permanent funding for any arts beyond 2027. Neither the arts as defined before this bill nor afterwards are protected after 2027. This leaves both the priorities of arts funding before this bill and after sorely at risk.

As an art historian by trade, I can attest that previous art funding in Hawai‘i has guaranteed that we are able to tell the story of these islands. My current institution (although I am testifying as an individual) and institutions outside of Hawai‘i have borrowed works from the State Foundation in order to tell the story of this territory. At present, HoMA has works from the State Foundation on view, the MAC in Maui plans to also borrow works, and the Musuem of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles is currently considering borrowing works from the Foundation for a large exhibition that will examine the art history of Japanese American postwar artists. These exhibitions would be greatly diminished without these works, and the history of the islands would be harder to access, to the deminishment of all people of Hawai‘i and beyond. These are but three current examples of what we would loose if we stop funding or diminish the funduing of the visual arts in Hawai‘i. We lose no less than our history, our identities, our understanding of self. This is a loss that cannot be easily replaced. A loss that we chose not only for ourselves but for future generations. It is short sighted and history will judge us harshly.

I agree that arts should be considered more widely. Your arguments for the significance of the performing arts are well taken, but if you stand behind your arguments for the significance of these arts, then you do not need to diminish visual arts funding, but to increase the funding for performing arts. The performing arts have state funding of their own and that funding should remain, not compete with visual arts. And if the performing arts are as significant as you claim, their funding shouwl certainly be guaranteed beyod 2027.

Consider also the debt we all have to support Hawai'i's creative sectors. This goes well beyond the jobs and opportunities for people directly involved in the visual arts, it affects other industries, including tourism, education, and healthcare, to name a few.

Some version of this bill has come up more than once and the public opposition is strong. Disguising it as an increase in the definition of arts does not take away from the reality that funding is not secure past 2027.

I vehemently oppose this bill,

Alejandra Rojas Silva, Ph.D.

Dear Chair Lee and members of the transportation and Culture and Arts Committee,
I am a second-grade teacher with the Department of Education and **OPPOSE** HB1378HD2. Our school has benefited from the Art in Public Places program supported by the Works of Art Special fund. The sculpture in front of our school is an iconic landmark, our students participate in the Hawaii State Art Museum's education programming and we look forward to Artists in the Schools opportunities.

The Works of Art Special fund is critical to ensure arts funds are maintained and not absorbed by the many pressing needs of the state. Public School children, just like private school children, need the arts to help them learn, think creatively and to express themselves. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts does public school students of Hawaii a big service in providing arts education opportunities statewide. We urge you to ensure the arts are part of Hawaii's future by maintaining Hawaii's pioneering arts law.

Attached are testimonies by students to **Keep Art Special \$**

Thank you,

Mrs. Johnson, 2nd grade teacher



3-11-25

Dear Law Maker,

We need art, Money, and fun and lives. Think about your kid part, and your family, and friend. What will your family and friends think about you? Art is a fun thing. Think about your law that you are trying to make it pass. Think about people that love art. Think about the schools and think about what you are doing.

Please promise you will not do it law maker. Please Stop.

From,



Save
Art



3-11-25

Dear Law maker,

Our future needs art.

I Love to make art.

Do not take it away!

Keep your promise!

Art is Super Special. Please,
please don't take it away.

I am mad. grrrrrrrrr!

From,



Keep Art!



Dear LAW maker,

our future needs art.

I love to make art.

do not take it away!

Keep your promise.

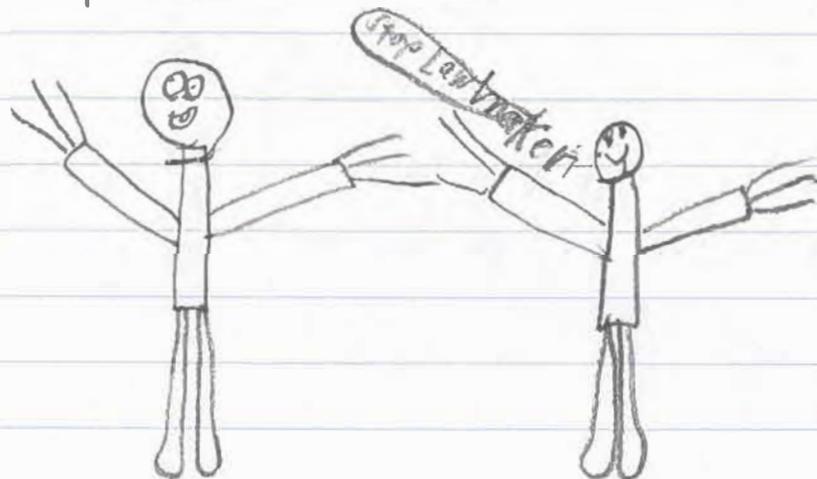
Art is special.

We need art LAW maker.

Please don't take away art.

We need art to learn.

Art helps us to learn.



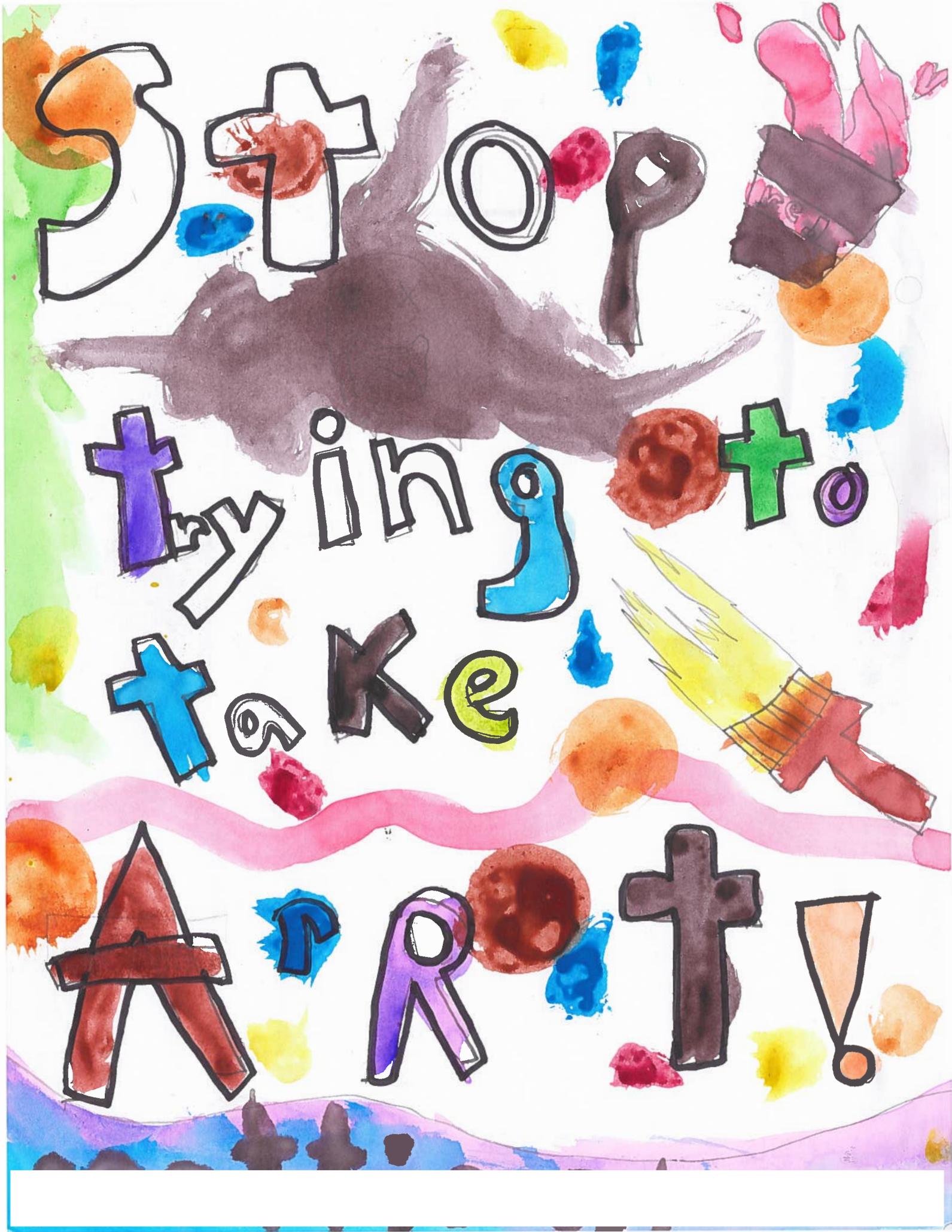
From,

STOP

trying to

take

APPROX!



Dear lawmakers

Our future needs Art !!!!!!

I love to make Art !!! now

Do not take it away !!!!!!

Keep your promise !!! Right now

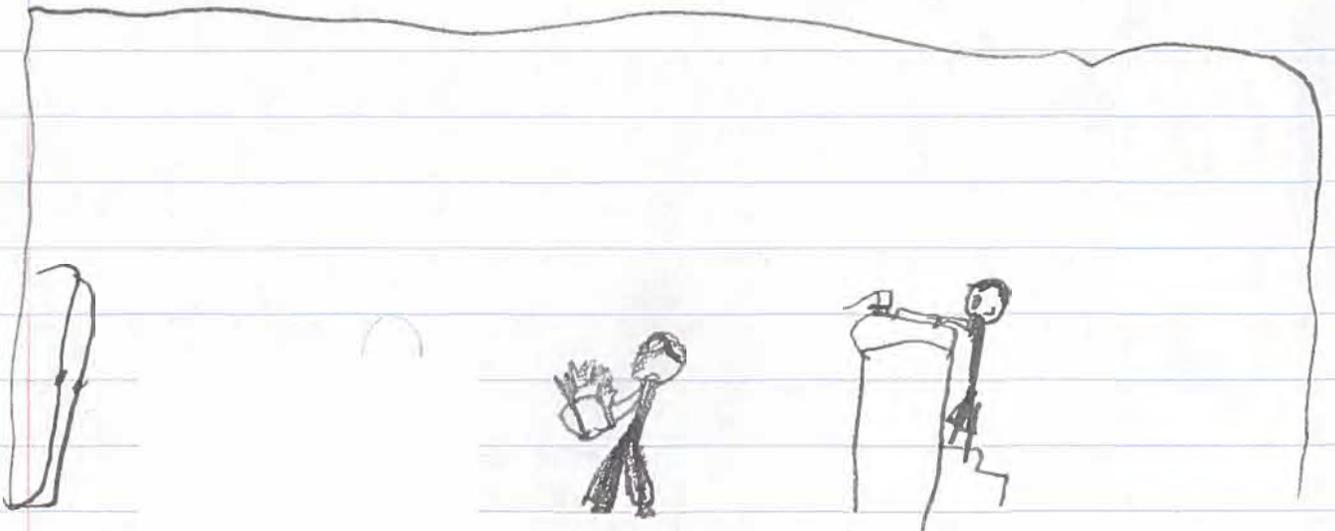
You are making us sad Stop!

You are making us mad too!!!

Wise try, but you not taking it away!

Leave us alone! We want art please

leave us in Peace lawmaker.



DOON +

Take

awa

wa



3-11-2

Dear Law maker,

Our future art needs art.

I love to make art.

Do not take it away!!!

Keep your promise!

~~What if a kid wa-~~

nts to be an artist

when they grow up?

They won't. Please Keep

art.



Do not take

away art



3-11-25

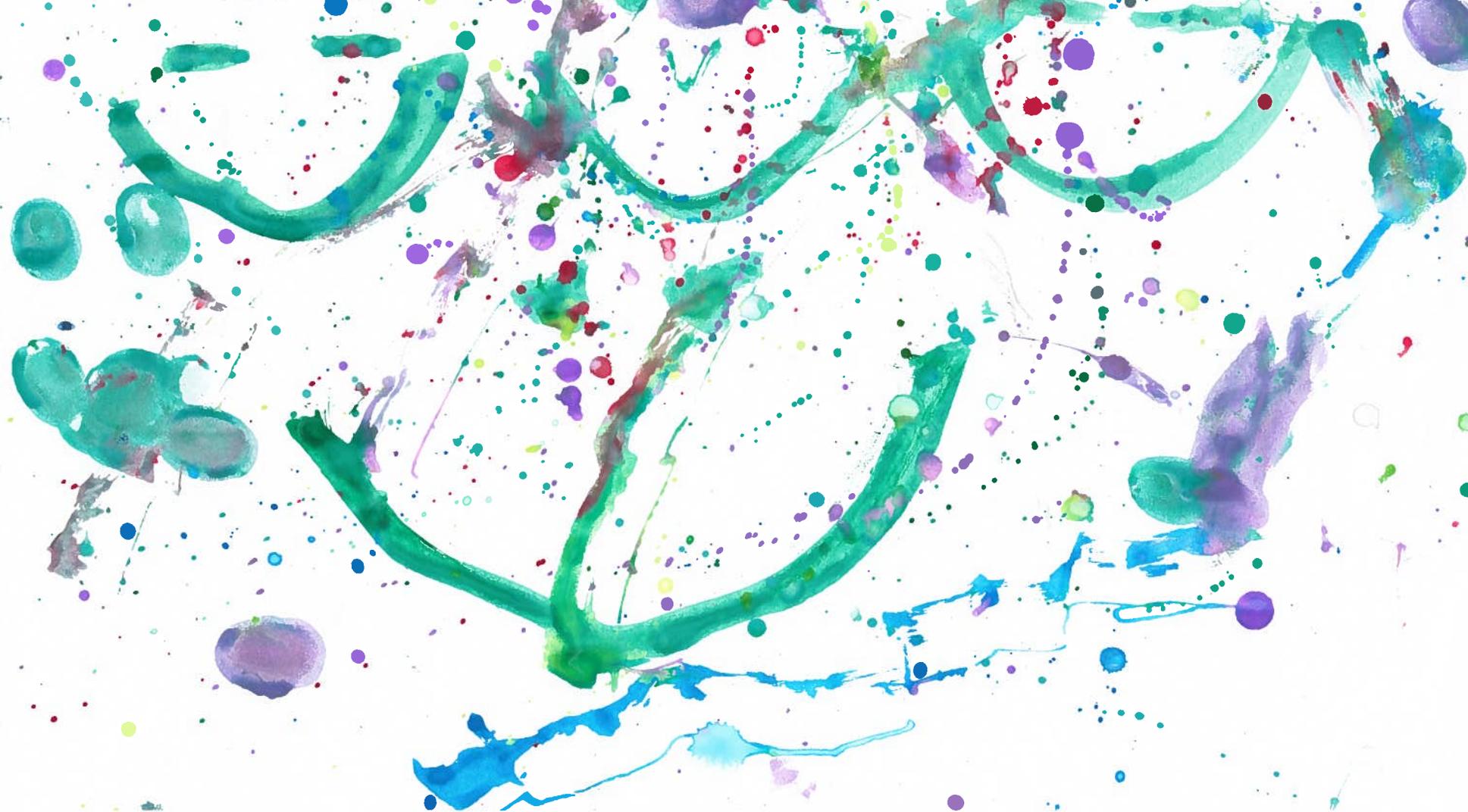
Dear Law maker
 Don't future needs Art
 Don't take away
 Art. If you
 clothes are so
 clothes won't be a
 thing. Keep your promise
 Art is special
 so don't take it
 away.

fire



TOOO PPPP
 Don't take away
 Artt !!!
 Artt !!!
 Be just
 me + !!!
 if you take
 away Art

LOVE ART



3-11-25

Dear Law maker,

Our future needs art.

We Love to make art.

Do not take it away!

Keep your promise!

You **NEED** to stop!

Art makes us special.

Art helps us express our feelings. Art shows our imagination.



Save art
Please

Stop!



STOP NOW

LAWMAKER

DON'T TAKE

ARTIST

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 2:56:28 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jose Gonzalez	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

To Senators Lee, Inouye - chair and vice chair respectively, as well as Senators Elefante, Kanuha and DeCorte of the TCA committee.

Aloha and thank you for taking my testimony in opposition of HB 1378 HD2.

Access to arts programming and guided cultural practice is vitally important to human development in ways so vast that the benefits are difficult to quantify. It is that difficulty to quantify the benefits however, that makes it all too easy for some members of our society to miss the benefits and inherent value that art and cultural practice offers.

Particularly when fostered at a young age, an appreciation for art serves many functions for a well rounded individual. Among those are the development of a creative and analytical mind, high emotional intelligence, and a deep sense of belonging and dedication to one's community and culture. I think you can all agree these are qualities that this country needs more of.

Passing this bill would put the state's ability to foster healthy hearts and minds of its people at immediate risk by eliminating the dedicated funding source for State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. This is more than just funding for SFCA. It means funding for all the programs and community organizations that SFCA supports. Not only would this lead to severely reduced access to arts training and experiences for all but it will almost certainly lead to the loss of jobs throughout the state.

Please do not allow this bill to be approved.

Thank you for your time.

sincerely,

Jose Gonzalez

Honolulu

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:33:08 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steven A Macas	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

My name is Steven Alberto Macas, and I am an artist and advocate for Hawai‘i’s creative community. I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to HB1378, which threatens to destabilize arts funding in our state.

The fact that we are once again fighting to protect arts funding is deeply concerning. The arts are not just a pastime or an afterthought—they are a vital part of Hawai‘i’s cultural identity, economy, and education system. The people who rely on these programs—artists, educators, and community members—deserve stable and reliable funding to continue their contributions to our state.

Cuts to arts funding do more than reduce opportunities for artists. They diminish the cultural fabric of Hawai‘i, limit access to creative education, and weaken an industry that generates economic value and fosters innovation. There are other areas within the state budget where funds can be reallocated—our already modest arts budget should not be the first place considered for reductions.

I urge you to reject this bill and protect the future of the arts in Hawai‘i. The creative community is worth investing in, and stable funding is essential to ensuring its continued growth and impact.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Steven Alberto Macas

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 7:42:22 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Zimmel	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

This is absurd. I thought we had felt with this a year ago. Does the city and county really think stopping investment in arts and culture? Would you recommend I save money by not investing in a 401k? Would you recommend I save money by not changing the oil in my car? Those are more logical ways to save money. Strongly oppose.

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 7:02:12 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rhiana	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

My name is Rhiana Alana Lewis, an artist who moved here from the mainland 3 years ago, I am a musician as well as working in homeless services.

As a child from a broken home, music and writing were the only things that I had to help me to process and to cope. Expressing myself in those musical notes was a way for me to get my emotions out in a healthy way, and it is still that way for me.

Mental Health is an issue not just on these islands, but the world as a whole. Studies have shown that persons who participate in art therapy decrease feelings of anxiety and depression. Art IS Mental Health. Art is prevention for mental illness.

Art and Culture programs are not only for people of all ages, but actually help parents' relationships with their kids. Varying art programs can hold the hands of the parents in our communities, and give clues as to how to let their child explore their artistic side, or how to enrich them. Which can be a skill and joy that they carry with them the rest of their lives.

This is something I wish I had as a child, and take pride in being a part of as an adult.

It takes a village to raise a child right, without this funding the village won't be able to help, and so much of our community will suffer.

There are so many people who participate in the many activities that stand to be affected by HB1378-HD2, not just our past, but our present and our future.

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 1:57:42 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaela Teho	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

HB1378 seeks to deny access and suppress the voices of Native and local voices that deserve to be heard. It is deceptive and seeks to harm the island community as a whole beyond the arts. As the assaults on our rights mount, we need fit leaders who promote community and show up to hear their public. With our civil liberties threatened, our community needs leaders whose policies do not create more division and suppress our voices and our morale.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 8:30:47 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily McIlroy	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

My name is Emily McIlroy, and I have been a practicing artist and art educator in Honolulu since 2008. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

Normally, this is where I would express how much the arts mean to me and to our collective human experience. However, I find myself exhausted and exasperated that I, and everyone else in our community who values the arts, is being asked to do this AGAIN and AGAIN and AGAIN. We have shown up over and over to submit our testimony, to share our heartfelt stories, to beg for the support that artists and art educators so desperately need. We inundated the Capitol last year with our presence when a similar bill was on the table, and spoke our truth. Senator Chris Lee promised that he would talk to the community over the interim, but this has not happened. Instead, he is trying to usher through a new bill on such short notice that the masses will not have to time to organize and oppose him. This has to stop. The Works of Art Special Fund needs to be protected indefinitely.

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:41:48 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lloyd Harold Kumulaʻau Sing Jr.	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha kākou.

My name is Kumulāʻau Sing Jr. I am giving my testimony in opposition of HB1378-HD2 that ultimately will **threaten the long-term stability of arts and culture funding** by dismantling the **Works of Art Special Fund. The Works of Art Special Fund is** Hawaiʻi’s only **dedicated, reliable** funding source for our arts community even during times of economic hardships. This HB will replace this funding with **federal and general funds**, which are **not guaranteed** and will compete with other state priorities like housing, education, and healthcare.

This Bill aims to allocate \$4 million for funding to support Hawaiʻi’s art community for fiscal years 2026 and 2027; it does not guarantee further support beyond that. This short-term funding gain will not strengthen Hawaiʻi’s arts community but in the long run weaken it by removing the safeguards that were in place by the Works of Art Special Fund.

This bill has potential to cause great harm and cut many initiatives. As a beneficiary of the SFCA FTA grant, I have seen how art is timeless. It has the ability to capture the feelings, beliefs and how we, the people of Hawaiʻi and how far our society has come in good and bad times. As a cultural bearer and weaving practitioner I ask you all to please NOT SUPPORT HB 1378-HD2. Art is a creative form of sovereignty and healing to all who call Hawaiʻi home.

Mahalo for your time and consideration to share my thoughts and views to the committee today.

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 7:52:22 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Wilson	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I oppose appropriating funds away the state art foundation. And the board of the foundation opposes it as well. I approve of adding performing arts, I would prefer to see that and the appropriation of funds from special to general to be lined out.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 4:05:40 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily States	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

To our Hawaii Legislature,

I strongly oppose HB1378 HD2. As an artist, art teacher, community advocate, mother, and Native Hawaiian. I deeply believe in the power of art to heal, bridge opposing views, inspire purpose, bring joy, propel action, and provide beauty and mystery to the world we live in.

I understand that this bill will make funding more difficult to secure and also less likely to be available for art. This is a sad a terrible thing and the result will be the opposite of all the benefits aforementioned.

The budget for the arts is relatively small. As a community we are not asking for more, we are just asking to preserve a fund that has gone towards the dreamers, weavers, story tellers, practitioners, painters, and poets of this generation and the generations to come.

Please don't make it harder for us to do what is already difficult.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Emily States

Testimony by SHERMAN WARNER
To the HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
On HOUSE BILL NO. 1378 HD2
March 13, 2025 at 3:15 p.m.
Room 308 and Videoconference

RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye and Committee Members

Mahalo for the opportunity to express my strong OPPOSITION to HB 1378 HD2.

A resident of Waimea on Hawaii Island, I served two terms as an at-large commissioner with the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, and during those eight years I never tired of advocating for the SFCA and proudly explaining how the founding of SFCA and its revolutionary funding model — a percent for the arts — established a model for public arts organizations across the country. I am alarmed at the destructive threat that this bill poses to the SFCA.

I heartily support programs that benefit the performing arts. After graduating from the University of Hawaii in 1968 with a degree in theatre, I spent my professional life working in the theatre. I worked in both commercial and in non-profit theatre. I have depended on grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Arts Council on the Arts. I worked in regional non-profit theatre, at the New York Shakespeare Festival, co-founded a successful non-profit Off-Broadway theatre, and I was a Broadway producer and general manager with about two dozen shows and several Tony Awards to my credit. I produced in London, Germany, Canada and across the U.S.. As a Broadway producer, I subsidized the budgets of non-profit regional theaters across the country so that they could co-produce new shows with the potential to move to Broadway. I love theatre. I know what it's like to start a theatre and to struggle for funding to keep it alive. In retirement, I've served on the board of directors of the Kahilu Theatre, been board president and also served as interim artistic director.

My lifetime commitment to the performing arts cannot be questioned, but I firmly believe that HB 1378 HD2 is not the way to support the performing arts. If the intent is to support the performing arts, do it in a way that doesn't turn the SFCA into legislative roadkill. A standalone performing arts bill with a discrete funding source could be administered effectively by the SFCA. Support for the performing arts should not be the sugar coating on a poison pill for the SFCA.

The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured the financial stability of the SFCA for more than 50 years. That apolitical funding stream is critical to the SFCA's continued success.

The mission of the SFCA — to promote, perpetuate, and preserve culture and the arts in Hawai'i and to celebrate and emphasize the cultural richness and diversity of Hawai'i — is under unprecedented attack by a federal government determined to erase cultural and artistic diversity and values from our society. In Hawaii, those are the values that we honor and celebrate. Now is the time to strengthen and defend SFCA and its mission, not to threaten or diminish it in any way.

Save the SFCA.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 3:20:52 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
samuel schryver	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

HB1378HD2 threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund which is Hawai'i's only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts. Please reject this bill in its current form. Mahalos!

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:47:46 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Janes-Brown	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Mr. Chair, Madame Vice Chair and members of Senate Committee on TAC,

My name is Paul Janes-Brown, I am a former Co Chair of Maui Democrats Education Committee and a pro bono visual arts consultant for the State Foundation on the Culture and the Arts. I am testifying in opposition HB1378-HD2. While I fully support efforts to provide funds for the performing arts, I do not believe it should be at the expense of the current beneficiaries of the Works of Art Special Fund. This bill would harm the State Museum, the State Foundation on Culture & The Arts and the artists, staff, and workers who support the purpose of the Special Fund not to mention the people of Hawai'i.

The late Masaru "Pundy" Yokouchi was the visionary who was responsible for the creation of the first in the nation special fund for the creation, selection, purchase and maintenance of works of art owned by the State. Since then every state, many cities and the Federal government followed Hawai'i's first in the nation special fund for visual arts.

Also, this bill places a cap on proceeds from the fund. This will be harmful as well.

If the legislature wants to create additional recipients of funds and expand the scope of Pundy's vision, then, the best way to do that would be to create a new fund for the performing arts or expand the percentage in the current fund to create a win, win, win. I hope you will agree this bill, as written, is harmful to the arts in our state and would be an insult to the memory of Pundy Yokouchi. Please join me in opposing this Bill moving any further. Mahalo nui loa.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:29:48 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margaret Sutrov	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

As a professional artist and teaching artist who works in the arts through multiple avenues, including the Artist in the Schools grants through the Hawaii SFCA, I urge you to safeguard funding for the arts. I appreciate the efforts within this bill to expand access to the arts, but when the funding source is not safeguarded, it puts all our ongoing efforts to nourish our communities' hearts on unstable ground.

During the best of times, artists do their work without traditional employment benefits or guaranteed future paychecks. Please don't further put artists' ability to give to their communities at risk.

As a teaching artist, these are some of the value I provide my students:

- **Creative problem solving. The arts teaches us to find solutions that didn't previously exist—a skill needed across disciplines these days.**
- **The ability to look closely. When I teach drawing, I teach my students to see. I'd like my mechanic, my doctor, the structural engineer certifying my home will stand up all to have this skill.**
- **The ability to value their own perspective and to appreciate others' ways of seeing—What do we need more in this divided world?**
- **Social-emotional outlet. The arts allow us to express ourselves, to feel human, to feel we're not alone.**

Please find a way to support the arts, that allows us to know the funding for the grants we apply for and the programs we take part in--that all help us create beauty in our communities--will continue to exist in future years.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 5:38:24 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members.

I do not support HB1378 HD2.

I am writing to urge you to not pass HB1378 HD2. It does not create new funding for the performing arts. Although it showed promise initially, it evolved into a serious threat to sustainable arts and culture funding in Hawaii.

Please do not pass HB1378 HD2.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 5:41:39 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margo Ray	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Don't restrict the Works of Art Special Fund, it is a a critical funding source that supports arts and culture programs across the entire state!

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 5:59:13 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Parkinson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am opposed to this bill.

This Bill Puts the Arts at Risk

No Permanent Funding: The bill offers a temporary \$4 million allocation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027—with no commitment beyond that.

Uncertain Future: General funds and federal grants are subject to cuts and shifting priorities, leaving arts funding vulnerable.

Loss of a Lifeline: The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured that Hawai'i's arts sector remains resilient, even during economic downturns. This bill dismantles that safety net.

False Promises: Short-term funding gains are not worth sacrificing long-term stability. This bill weakens the arts ecosystem instead of strengthening it.

Thank you.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 6:15:05 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellen Crocker	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern, I oppose HB1378 HD2. While [HB 1378-HD2](#) includes some positive provisions, it ultimately **threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding** by dismantling the **Works of Art Special Fund**—Hawai‘i’s only **dedicated, reliable** funding source for the arts. Instead, it replaces this funding with **federal and general funds**, which are **not guaranteed** and will compete with other state priorities like housing, education, and healthcare.

Why This Bill Puts the Arts at Risk

- **No Permanent Funding:** The bill offers a **temporary** \$4 million allocation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027—**with no commitment beyond that.**
 - **Uncertain Future:** General funds and federal grants are subject to cuts and shifting priorities, leaving arts funding vulnerable.
 - **Loss of a Lifeline:** The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured that Hawai‘i’s arts sector remains resilient, even during economic downturns. This bill **dismantles that safety net.**
 - **False Promises:** Short-term funding gains are **not worth sacrificing long-term stability.** This bill weakens the arts ecosystem instead of strengthening it.
- Sincerely, Ellen Crocker

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 7:09:59 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Virginia Holte	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts ,

I OPPOSE HB 1378-HD2

Leave the arts funding alone!

The humans that are artists and run arts organizations arts are the least funded, hardest working , most honest grass roots folks around.

The arts (all kinds-including, but not limited to dance, theatre, visualarts) are what keeps people sane in this insane world.

So , in all due respect.. go bottom pick and find whatever money you need from somewhere else.

As you very well know, thanks to Pundy, he helped secure at least 1% of government money for the arts. We do not want to see him rolling over in his grave.

Thank you.

Virginia

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 7:26:42 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amanda Brightbill	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a public school teacher, it is heartbreaking to hear that funding for the arts may decrease. Students deserve more than short-term funding for the arts. Please vote no on this bill and work to secure more permanent funding for the arts. Our keiki deserve a well-rounded education.

Mahalo,

Amanda

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 7:34:16 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danica Rosengren	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly encourage you all to oppose this bill, which cuts allocated arts funding during time when general and federal funds are being cut. Arts and culture are the heartbeat of Hawai'i, and a cut to the funds wouldn't only mean less opportunity for artists to make a living wage here, but it also would cut the arts education programing by 75%. Already the money allotted to arts education does not cover every school and student. Out of all the grants that were awarded this year through Artists in the Schools, only half had a dedicated arts specialist on campus- and even less had an arts specialist both in visual and performing arts. These grants fill the current gap in arts education that is occurring in the state, and by cutting the funds. In addition, arts and culture support positive mental health, the fostering of communities, and truly saves lives. There was a kupuna last year after the Maui fires who shared that almost every Monday, she considered ending her life. But she couldn't, because she had hula on Tuesday. I implore you to not cut the dedicated arts funding for the state of Hawai'i, and respect and honor the deep transformation that the arts have on the lives of our community members.

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 12th, 2025

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Debra McGee

Affiliation: Director of Kona Dance and Performing Arts, Performer with Prince Dance Company, Teaching Artist with the HSFCA

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Debra and I am a dance educator, director, performer and choreographer who lives on Hawai‘i island since 2011 as a working artist. I am submitting testimony in **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

It is my life’s passion and purpose to share the love of dance on this island specifically with our youth communities. The programs I am dedicated to change lives through the arts. Arts programs have kept me grounded and connected to my community, especially during challenging times like the pandemic.

Key Points

1. **HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the **Works of Art Special Fund**, which is the **only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide**. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
2. **General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is **temporary** and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as **health, housing, and education**—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
3. **Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai‘i’s Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and **community well-being**. We need **stable, dedicated funding** to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to **OPPOSE HB1378-HD2** and to protect the **Works of Art Special Fund**, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,
Debra McGee

Director of Kona Dance and Performing Arts, Performer with Prince Dance Company, Teaching Artist with the HSFCA
808-769-0464

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 9:07:46 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steven Kean	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Steven Kean. I am a working professional artist based on the North Shore of Oahu and am also on the Teaching Artist roster of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts since 2018. I am writing to express **STRONG OPPOSITION** to Bill HB1378 HD2. This bill has the potential to have a direct negative impact on the children of Hawaii, fellow artists, colleagues, and me. The bill cuts funding for Artists in the Schools among other important programs. This year, I led two AITS residencies at Ka'ala Elementary and Waialua Elementary Schools and Professional Development sessions at each school. I also attended the annual Teaching Artist Institute in 2024, which was hosted by Maui Arts and Cultural Center. These experiences contributed tremendously to my professional growth as an art educator and for the teachers who participated in the PD sessions I led as part of my AITS residencies. BHB1378 HD2 would cut funding for Professional Developments for Teaching Artists and Teachers, hindering our growth, which in turn affects the keiki. I urge you to protect the future of the arts and the future of the people of Hawaii. Mahalo

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 9:22:13 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Ball	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Members of the Committee,

As an art educator, a former board member of the friends of Capitol Modern, and a citizen and father whose family's lives have been immesurably improved through the art community in Hawaii, I urge you oppose the unfriendly amendments to HB1378 that gut the Works of Art Special Fund. These funds are essential to maintaining Hawaii's rich artistic and cultural legacies--please do everything in your power to resore full funding to the Special Fund or othwise oppose this legislation. Art has never been more powerful than in these troubled times.

Mahalo nui loa,

Dave Ball, Waialae-Kahala

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 9:30:18 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julie Matheis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill would deceptively devastate the arts sector within a few years. Removing the current funding source was sneakily included here, but artists notice details. The arts are necessary to cultivate complex problem solving skills, which our youth lack nowadays. The rich culture of Hawaii survives through artistic practices and your proposal to gamble with the funding secured by SFCA is appalling. Our futures and this treasured place will be lacking if you proceed to rob this 1% funding from the SFCA. Practice democracy and listen to what the people of Hawaii want. I want my kids, and their kids, and their great grandchildren to have access to the arts. Stealing this dedicated funding is unacceptable.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 9:35:18 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Cook	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 13, 2025

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Mauiola (Christine) Cook

Affiliation : Community Member

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mauiola (Christine Cook), and I am an educator and cultural practitioner, from Kaua‘i. I am submitting testimony in **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

I have been teaching creative dance in the schools for almost 40 years. You cannot imagine how much students love creative dance classes. Former students who are now adults will frequently remind me how much they loved the classes when they were in school.

Key Points

1. HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.

The bill restricts the **Works of Art Special Fund**, which is the **only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide**. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.

2. General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.

The proposed general fund appropriation is **temporary** and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as **health, housing, and education**—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.

3. **Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai'i's Identity and Economy.**

The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and **community well-being**. We need **stable, dedicated funding** to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to **OPPOSE HB1378-HD2** and to protect the **Works of Art Special Fund**, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawai'i's arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,
Mauliola (Christine) Cook

PO 326 Kilauea, 96754

8086528173

Mauliola3@gmail.com

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 10:54:07 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barry Gitelson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Date: [Hearing Date]

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Barry Gitelson, glass artist and magician

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Barry and I am a glass artist and performing magician from South Kona]. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

I have been performing here in the state for over 45 years and have benefited from state grants. I worked with Artists in the Schools for many years as a performer and a judge.

Key Points

1. **HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
2. **General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
3. **Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai‘i’s Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has

supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawai'i's arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,
Barry Gitelson aka GitelGlass aka The Great Barusky

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 11:24:32 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
amy r craig	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition to HB1378_HD2

Relating to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts

Chair Kapela, Vice Chair Kong , and Members of the Committee,

My name is Amy Rose Craig, and I am an artist, educator, and advocate for arts funding that prioritizes the visual arts, community engagement, and the integrity of the Works of Art Special Fund. I submit this testimony in strong opposition to this bill, which seeks to divert funds from the existing Works of Art Special Fund and expand the responsibilities of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) beyond its original mission.

Concerns with the Bill

1. Misallocation of the Works of Art Special Fund

The Works of Art Special Fund was established to support public visual art installations, conservation, and education. This bill seeks to dilute those resources by expanding allowable uses to include performing arts events, marketing, and administrative costs that were never part of the original intent. The fund was designed to ensure that visual art remains an integral part of public spaces, and redirecting these funds undermines that purpose.

2. Administrative Overreach and Mission Creep

The SFCA has historically managed visual art programs, including public art acquisition, museum curation, and conservation. This bill shifts SFCA's focus toward event production and marketing for performing arts, which is not within its core competencies. Expanding SFCA's responsibilities without adequate planning, expertise, or infrastructure may lead to inefficiencies and mismanagement.

3. Threat to Visual Arts Funding

By removing clear funding allocations for visual arts and introducing vague language about grants and operational costs, this bill risks deprioritizing the creation, preservation, and exhibition of public art. Visual artists, educators, and conservators rely on the Works of Art Special Fund, and any reallocation reduces opportunities for new commissions, maintenance of existing artworks, and community arts education.

4. Lack of Fiscal Transparency and Oversight

The bill does not provide a clear funding cap for the proposed Performing Arts Grants Program, nor does it establish safeguards to prevent the depletion of existing visual arts funds. Without proper oversight, this could lead to significant financial strain on SFCA's current projects and reduce its ability to fulfill existing commitments.

5. Alternative Avenues for Performing Arts Funding Already Exist

The performing arts are already supported through multiple state, federal, and nonprofit grant programs, including the Hawai'i State Foundation's existing grants program. Rather than forcing SFCA to redirect funds away from public art, a separate funding mechanism should be established for performing arts initiatives.

Conclusion

While performing arts are an essential component of Hawai'i's cultural landscape, this bill undermines the foundational mission of the SFCA and threatens to erode critical funding for public visual art. Instead of repurposing existing funds, lawmakers should explore alternative funding sources for performing arts grants that do not jeopardize Hawai'i's visual arts programs.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to oppose this bill and to protect the integrity of the Works of Art Special Fund for its intended purpose.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Amy Rose Craig

Amyrosecraig@gmail.com

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:20:22 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kenny Endo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1378 HD2 because it doesn't protect the arts into the future. The value of the arts needs to be realized and respected.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:21:28 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maki Morinoue	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Maki Morinoue, and I am an artist, art director, and volunteer to advocate for the arts and culture and preserve history within the moku of Kona on Hawai'i Island. My parents are co-founders of The Donkey Mill Art Center, which they built to bring artists in schools program and hold thought-provoking classes, lectures, and exhibits for all ages for 30 years at the art center. I am writing in strong opposition to HB1378 HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

As someone deeply connected to my community through the arts and the preservation of culture, I've seen firsthand how creative expression preserves our culture, strengthens our communities, and empowers our keiki to take pride in who they are and where they come from. Without stable funding, these lifelines to cultural identity and community healing will suffer.

HB1378 HD2 would dismantle the Works of Art Special Fund, the only dedicated and sustainable source of public arts funding in our state. Replacing it with general fund appropriations offers no long-term security, especially as state budgets tighten. This means fewer cultural programs, fewer jobs, and less access to the arts — directly impacting Hawai'i's identity, economy, and future generations.

Beyond cultural preservation, the arts are proven to **support mental and emotional well-being**. As Hawai'i faces compounding crises — including a growing housing crisis, federal job cuts, and economic strain — access to creative outlets becomes even more critical. Art heals. It provides hope, connection, and stability when people feel overwhelmed. It helps children and families navigate trauma and creates opportunities for positive community engagement. Reducing funding during this time will only deepen the burden on our communities.

Furthermore, the arts significantly contribute to our local economy. According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Hawai'i's arts and culture sector generates over **\$2.6 billion** in economic activity annually and supports more than 22,000 jobs statewide. Dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund would not only jeopardize cultural preservation but also weaken our already fragile economy.

The arts are not expendable. They are essential to our well-being, cultural identity, and economic resilience. Please do not undermine decades of investment that have built a thriving arts and

culture ecosystem in Hawai'i. Now, more than ever, we need the arts to keep our communities connected, uplifted, and hopeful.

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378 HD2 and protect the Works of Art Special Fund. Our culture, creativity, and collective well-being depend on it.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Mahalo for your time,

Maki Morinoue

Artist - Art Director - Culture and the Arts volunteer and advocate

Hawai'i Island

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 4:59:23 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mina H Elison	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mina Elison and I am a Kanaka ʻŌiwi curator, community organizer, educator and artist from Keʻei, Kona Hema on Hawaiʻi.

I am writing in **strong opposition to HB1378 HD2**, which threatens to **dismantle the Works of Art Special Fund** — the **only stable source of public funding for the arts in Hawaiʻi**. Without it, **cultural programs, jobs, and community access to the arts** will suffer, weakening the very fabric of who we are.

The arts are more than entertainment — they are **lifelines for cultural identity, mental well-being, and economic vitality**. As Hawaiʻi faces increasing economic strain, housing insecurity, and federal job cuts, **art is what keeps communities hopeful and connected**. Now is not the time to reduce funding; it's the time to invest in what heals and sustains us.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Hawaiʻi's arts and culture sector generates over \$2.6 billion in economic activity annually and supports more than 22,000 jobs statewide. Cutting the fund will not only hurt cultural preservation but also **undermine a key pillar of our economy**.

Furthermore, access to arts education has been linked to improved academic performance and reduced dropout rates, factors that contribute to lower crime rates. Studies have shown that students engaged in the arts are more likely to stay in school and develop essential life skills, reducing the likelihood of criminal behavior.

Art heals. Culture connects. Community thrives.

Please **OPPOSE HB1378 HD2** and **protect the Works of Art Special Fund** — our future generations, economy, and well-being depend on it.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Mina Elison

**HB1378-HD2 Written Testimony from Seema Sueko-Low
Submitted 3/11/2025**

Aloha e, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the TCA committee,

Thank you for your service to the State of Hawaii.

I am writing to respectfully **oppose HB1378-HD2**, scheduled for hearing on Thursday, March 13, at 3:15 pm.

At a time of great uncertainty in state and federal funding for all public essentials, HB1378-HD2 pours salt into the wound and dismantles a critical safety net for local arts workers, artists, our creative economy, and, most importantly, the communities we serve, from keiki to kupuna.

While at face value, this bill appears positive, its long-term impact is debilitating to the people of Hawaii. In the bill, temporary general funds are allocated for FY26 and FY27, but there is no commitment beyond that. Further, just yesterday, March 10, 2025, House Finance Chair, Representative Kyle Yamashita, spoke about the state budget with Hawaii News Now, saying, "What we can see, the number is probably going to go down." Senate Ways and Means chair Donovan Dela Cruz concurred that hundreds of millions may need to be trimmed from the budget for state programs. (Source: [Recession fears could dent state budget](#)).

If this bill is passed and moves state funding for arts programs out of the Works of Art Special Fund and into general funds, and then in the final FY26 FY27 budget those general funds are cut, we will be robbing keiki of critical arts education programs, devastating hundreds of workers in the creative economy of contracts and jobs, and sending a message that the state of Hawaii devalues culture.

I know the members of this committee care about the people of Hawaii. In alignment with that value, please do not pass HB1378-HD2.

Mahalo for receiving my testimony,

Seema Sueko-Low

Theater Artist

www.seemasueko.com

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:43:56 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Young	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1378 HD2. The arts are vital to a flourishing life. The arts unite people in innumerable ways and foster resilient communities. The arts foster creativity, innovative thinking, resourcefulness, empathy and understanding, all qualities need to solve 21st century problems. If we are to be a thriving community we need more arts in society not less. As an educator for the DOE, I absolutely oppose this bill. Thank you for your consideration.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:51:38 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
noriko donna	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Noriko Donna, and I am a cultural practitioner from Holualoa, Hawaii Island.

I am writing in **strong opposition to HB1378 HD2**, which threatens to **dismantle the Works of Art Special Fund** — the **only stable source of public funding for the arts in Hawai‘i**. Without it, **cultural programs, jobs, and community access to the arts** will suffer, weakening the very fabric of who we are.

The arts are more than entertainment — they are **lifelines for cultural identity, mental well-being, and economic vitality**. As Hawai‘i faces increasing economic strain, housing insecurity, and federal job cuts, **art is what keeps communities hopeful and connected**. Now is not the time to reduce funding; it’s the time to invest in what heals and sustains us.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector generates over \$2.6 billion in economic activity annually and supports more than 22,000 jobs statewide. Cutting the fund will not only hurt cultural preservation but also undermine a key pillar of our economy.

Furthermore, access to arts education has been linked to improved academic performance and reduced dropout rates, factors that contribute to lower crime rates. Studies have shown that students engaged in the arts are more likely to stay in school and develop essential life skills, reducing the likelihood of criminal behavior.

Art heals. Culture connects. Community thrives.

Please **OPPOSE HB1378 HD2** and **protect the Works of Art Special Fund** — our future generations, economy, and well-being depend on it.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Noriko Donna

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:58:51 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Faith Kalamau	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose to this bill

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:10:58 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Latham	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please keep the Works of Art Special Fund in place to ensure that funding of the arts is guaranteed.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:55:06 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tamara Moan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am opposed to HB1378-HD2. As a working artist and teaching artist, the Works of Art Special Fund has supported me through a number of years and has made a significant difference to artists, students, and the general public through culture and arts programs.

HB1378-HD 2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.

The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.

General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.

The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.

Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai‘i’s Identity and Economy.

The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 7:56:53 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Akiko Cutlip	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha my name is Akiko Cutlip. I am an artist/ art teacher live on Big Island Hawai'i.

I am writing in **strong opposition to HB1378 HD2**, which threatens to **dismantle the Works of Art Special Fund** — the **only stable source of public funding for the arts in Hawai'i**.

Without it, **cultural programs, jobs, and community access to the arts** will suffer, weakening the very fabric of who we are.

As an artist myself, art always helps me to find my own identity. Many young students need art to find themselves and create art with their own expressions . It is so important in our lives to have art as tool to create our own individuality. I often taught art in kindergarten, when I bring art materials for them to create painting, drawing or clay art, their face rid up with smiles and excitement. There are more than just text book or just pencil writing to explore their individuality. Those colors in their oil pastel box or paint tubes that can make them happy. We cannot erase art from our every day life.

Art heals. Culture connects. Community thrives.

Please **OPPOSE HB1378 HD2** and **protect the Works of Art Special Fund** — our future generations, economy, and well-being depend on it.

Thank you so much for reading my testimony.

Please keep art alive!

Akiko Cutlip

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:09:40 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
fred hofer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Fred Hofer, and I am from Hilo

I am writing in strong opposition to HB1378 HD2, which threatens to dismantle the Works of Art Special Fund — the only stable source of public funding for the arts in Hawai‘i. Without it, cultural programs, jobs, and community access to the arts will suffer, weakening the very fabric of who we are.

The arts are more than entertainment — they are lifelines for cultural identity, mental well-being, and economic vitality. As Hawai‘i faces increasing economic strain, housing insecurity, and federal job cuts, art is what keeps communities hopeful and connected. Now is not the time to reduce funding; it’s the time to invest in what heals and sustains us.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector generates over \$2.6 billion in economic activity annually and supports more than 22,000 jobs statewide. Cutting the fund will not only hurt cultural preservation but also undermine a key pillar of our economy.

Furthermore, access to arts education has been linked to improved academic performance and reduced dropout rates, factors that contribute to lower crime rates. Studies have shown that students engaged in the arts are more likely to stay in school and develop essential life skills, reducing the likelihood of criminal behavior.

Art heals. Culture connects. Community thrives.

Please OPPOSE HB1378 HD2 and protect the Works of Art Special Fund — our future generations, economy, and well-being depend on it.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Fred Hofer

Hilo

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:58:33 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
james koons	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please, please, please oppose this bill.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:28:42 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Matson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **strong opposition to HB1378 HD2**, which threatens to **dismantle the Works of Art Special Fund** — the **only stable source of public funding for the arts in Hawai‘i**.

Without it, **cultural programs, jobs, and community access to the arts** will suffer, weakening the very fabric of our identity and cultural connection to each other and this unique place.

The arts are more than entertainment — they are **lifelines for cultural identity, mental well-being, and economic vitality**. As Hawai‘i faces increasing economic strain, housing insecurity, and federal job cuts, **art is what keeps communities hopeful and connected**. Now is not the time to reduce funding; it’s the time to invest in what heals and sustains us.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector generates over \$2.6 billion in economic activity annually and supports more than 22,000 jobs statewide. Cutting the fund will not only hurt cultural preservation but also undermine a key pillar of our economy.

Furthermore, access to arts education has been linked to improved academic performance and reduced dropout rates, factors that contribute to lower crime rates. Studies have shown that students engaged in the arts are more likely to stay in school and develop essential life skills, reducing the likelihood of criminal behavior.

Art heals. Culture connects. Community thrives.

Please **OPPOSE HB1378 HD2** and **protect the Works of Art Special Fund** — our future generations, economy, and well-being depend on it.

Mahalo nui,

Shannon M.

Hawai‘i Island Resident

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:09:34 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yvonne Manipon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am an artist, cultural worker, art teacher and art administrator and I am opposed to bill HB1378 HD2 because the Works of Art Special Fund has served as a vital **safety net for arts and culture in Hawai‘i**, ensuring that even during economic downturns, the creative sector can survive and thrive. At a time when arts and culture are central to community healing, economic development, and cultural preservation, this is not the time to gamble with funding.

Authoritarianism is not just a political system—it is a culture. It thrives by reshaping narratives, controlling collective memory, and suppressing diverse voices. To resist authoritarianism effectively, we must engage in cultural strategies that counteract its influence, using art, storytelling, and performance to create a more inclusive democracy.

With federal funding to the state already shrinking, general funds will likely be prioritized for essential services like health, education, housing, and transportation—leaving **arts and culture at the bottom of the list**.

This bill will undermine the legacy of Hawaii artists and cultural workers who have perpetuated and established the benefits of an inclusive democracy!

Thank you,

Yvonne Manipon

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:35:46 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emelia Briscoe	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, please oppose bill HB 1378-HD2. This bill threatens Hawaii's only dedicated funding source and would replace it with temporary, unreliable funding.

Having no permanent funding after 2027, competing with funds for education, housing and healthcare weakens the long-term support for Hawaii's creative community.

Please oppose this bill so that Hawaii can continue to find expression and connection through amazing artists, rich cultures and valuable traditions.

Mahalo,

Emelia Briscoe

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:45:59 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra Drexler	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 11, 2025

To: The Senate Committee on Transportation, Culture and the Arts

From: Debra Drexler, Professor, Interim Director of the Museum and Galleries, UHM

RE: Opposition to HB 1378 - HD2

This testimony is to express my strong objection to HB 1378 - HD2

. I have been an art professor at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa since 1992, and am also appointed Acting Director of the John Young Museum, The Art Gallery, and the Commons Gallery at UHM from 8/23-8/85. As an educator and Acting Gallery Director, I see the positive impacts that the 1% for art makes on the community, Native Hawaiian artists, and the emerging artists. The SFCA is one of the only avenues for support for Native Hawaiian artists. Recently, the The Art Gallery at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa held the exhibition Mai Nā Kūpuna Mai, which featured works by Native Hawaiian artists. The SFCA recommended four major pieces out of this show for purchase. Three of those artists had not had work previously collected by the SFCA (Marques Hanalei Marzan, Maika'i Tubbs, Puni Jackson) The fourth artist, Sean Kekamakupa'aikapono Kaonohiokalani Lee Loy Browne, is considered a treasure of the community. While the SFCA has collected his sculpture in the past, this is the first of his paintings recommended for collection. The bill states that "the SFCA has enough works of art and there is no need to acquire more art for the state collection." That is not true. The state does not have enough work by Native Hawaiian artists and is working to address that through recommendations of purchases.

The state also does not have enough work by the upcoming generations of emerging artists. Recently the SFCA also recommended for purchase the work of three MFA students part of the current show that is up at the UH Art Gallery, *Still Standing*. There are currently 280 art students at UHM, who have a great deal to contribute to the community. Often the first opportunity students have professionally is funded through programs offered by the State Foundation and

Culture in the Arts. The SFCA funds organizations that give young artists the opportunity to exhibit and sell their work and to work in the community doing valuable service such as Arts in the School. Compared to other states Hawai'i is sadly lacking in art education in public schools. Often the only exposure students get to the arts is through SFCA programs. Already, there is a huge brain drain, with talented students going to other states where there is more opportunity, without the 1% for art, we would lose even more of our talented young artists. Because I work closely with these young artists, I know how passionate driven and gifted they are. I know how much they are willing to give back to the community, and it is important for them to have the cultural institutions in place that allow them to reach their full potential. In sharing their immense talents with the community they make the state a better place to live in. I have taught at UHM for 33 years, and over the years, I have seen the great impact that my former students have made in the community because of their access to programming that is funded by the SFCA.

Most other states have private galleries that participate in the cultural discourse and support artists. Because of the high cost of real estate Hawai'i has far fewer private galleries. Artists who are making a cultural impact and furthering the pursuit of knowledge in the field of art are completely dependent on public institutions to show and sell their work. Many of the wealthiest property owners in the state live in other states or countries, and support the cultural institutions in their home cities, not here. SFCA is one of the only sources of revenue for nearly every major cultural institution. The SFCA was the first institution of its kind in the country and marks a major achievement for the State.

Tourist destinations are becoming more competitive. Many tourists look for a place that offers cultural engagement. Funding of the arts is essential in making Hawaii a desirable destination. The arts also raise the quality of life for those who live here. Thank you for considering my testimony. Please consider your commitment to the future, to the quality of life for local residents and for the perpetuation of Kanaka culture. Mahalo for your time in reviewing my testimony.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:50:23 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolann Biederman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I write as a resident who is deeply concerned that this bill **HB1378 HD2**, while offering much needed short term funding for the performing arts, may unintentionally compromise future funding for the full scope of funding for the arts in Hawaii. Please re-consider how the amendments could negatively impact long-term stability for arts and culture funding.

The richness and diversity of the arts in Hawai‘i – music, dance, visual arts, Hawaiian culture, media, crafts – impressed and inspired me from the day I arrived 38 years ago and I have supported the arts ever since. I've worked as a consultant to the nonprofit sector for the past 25 years in the areas of executive transition, grant writing, special events, and project management. Many of my clients are performing arts organizations. Through first-hand experience, I can say without reservation that funding that enhances the SFCA’s vital grant-making programs supports so many wonderful artistic partnerships that enrich, educate and uplift student and general audiences throughout the state.

However, the SFCA must continue to have flexibility to distribute resources that support performing artists as well as visual, dance, theatre artists and cultural practitioners who turn creative dreams into realities. The amendments may have a devastating effort on arts and culture in the years to come. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Carolann Biederman, 44-391 Nilu St. #4, Kaneohe, HI 96744

cabc.consulting@gmail.com

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:58:01 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Olivia Heung	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Without publicly commissioned artworks through the Works of Art Special Fund, the islands risk turning into one generic city indistinguishable from the mainland. Publicly commissioned works are integral to Hawaii's identity, they are a contrast against market forces and enrich our urban environments. They remind us of our locality and mark places in our memory. The things making Hawaii unique are disappearing, one small business after another while rapid development is occluding our view of the mountains and sea. Artists are trained to find beauty and reflect it back to us, let's continue to support and work together with the arts to conserve Hawaii's character and fund its creative economy.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:35:10 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
May Izumi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The bill pretty much dismantles the provision in Hawaii state law dedicated to funding art. It presumes that art is unimportant even though local artists (and their families and sub-contractors) will be adversely affected. These artists live in the communities and any money they spend stays in Hawaii. There is a misconception that the arts are a drag on the economy when in reality the arts generate millions of dollars and jobs locally. It would be stupid to get rid of an economic engine like that.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:38:43 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jenny chang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

You should not be passing this bill! Hawaii is one of the most culture that revolves around art. Passing this means the culture of art will be removed and the future generation will not understand the importance of art if it is gone. This will make a lot of people lose their jobs and that will not be good. Art may be a nuisance to those who don't understand but Hawaii needs it. It is a part of our culture! You can't take things away because you think it's necessary. Focus on the real problems like the housing industry and the homelessness. Stop going after the important ones !!!!

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:44:55 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
May Balino-Sing	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm May Haunani Balino-Sing., and I stand before you today to offer my testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, a bill that threatens the long-term vitality and stability of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund. This fund is the lifeblood of our arts community—Hawai'i's only dedicated, reliable source of funding for the arts, even in times of economic hardship.

By replacing the Works of Art Special Fund with federal and general funds, this bill risks losing our arts community's steady support. Federal and general funds are uncertain at best and will inevitably compete with other critical state priorities such as housing, education, and healthcare—areas that already face significant funding challenges.

While HB1378-HD2 proposes \$4 million for the arts community in fiscal years 2026 and 2027, this is far from a sustainable solution. This short-term funding offer doesn't guarantee ongoing support beyond that period and will ultimately undermine the long-term health of our arts sector. Stripping away the safeguards built into the Works of Art Special Fund could result in severe cuts to essential initiatives, impacting generations of artists and culture-bearers.

As a beneficiary of the SFCA FTA grant, I've seen firsthand how art serves as a powerful and enduring testament to our collective history and culture. Art captures our stories—our beliefs, our struggles, and our triumphs as the people of Hawai'i. As a cultural practitioner and weaver, I implore you not to support HB1378-HD2. Art is not just a creative expression—it is a form of sovereignty and healing for all of us who call Hawai'i home.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration. I am grateful for the opportunity to share my thoughts with the committee today.

Ke Aloha no,

May H. Balino-Sing

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:54:40 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Celia Cheng	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please oppose this bill because while HB 1378-HD2 includes some positive provisions, it ultimately threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund—Hawai‘i’s only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts. Instead, it replaces this funding with federal and general funds, which are not guaranteed and will compete with other state priorities like housing, education, and healthcare.

The uncertain future of general funds and federal grants are subject to cuts and shifting priorities, leaving arts funding vulnerable. The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured that Hawai‘i’s arts sector remains resilient, even during economic downturns. This bill dismantles that safety net. I oppose this bill because we need to secure permanent funding that is stable in order for the arts to thrive in Hawaii.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:08:20 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
wayne zebzda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: [Hearing Date]

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Wayne Zebzda

Affiliation (working public artist)

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name isWaye Zebzda, and I am a sculptor and metal fabricator on Kauai.. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Having completed 5 permanent public sculptures in Hawai‘i over the last 20 plus years I have had the opportunity to see them embraced by the communities they are a part of. They become part of the identity of the people who live and work there. They give us a sense of place, wonder, hope and worth. Every great civilization has been infused with the arts. Hawai‘i proudly led the way in public art for the rest of the nation. Don't stop now.

Key Points

- 1. HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
- 2. General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.

3. Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai'i's Identity and Economy.

The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawai'i's arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,

Wayne Zebzda

Island of Kauai, Hawai'i

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:10:40 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Pollock	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have worked in the non-profit arts sector for over 50 years. To see the National Endowment for the Arts under threat of collapse is heart breaking. HSFCA will be affected deleteriously.

How did we get here? Persistent, unrelenting attempts to dismatle John F. Kennedy's vision for a vibrant arts community.

Why not live and let live? Let live JFK's vision.

The Arts for, by, and of the people are essential for a humane, caring, and thoughtful society.
Live and let live.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:13:06 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Ha	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am opposing HB1378 HD2 as an artist and a patron of the arts. The funding of public art is important to the people of Oahu and deserves it's own proper long term dedicated fund.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:15:25 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheela Sharma	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB 138 because it threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund. There is no commitment beyond 2027 so this is narrow and shortsighted. This bill threatens the long term stability of necessary arts and culture funding.

Thank you for considering opposition to HB 138.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:15:34 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiana Duvauchelle	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to strongly oppose HB 1378-HD2 because it puts Hawaii’s arts and culture at risk by cutting off long-term funding. While the bill provides \$4 million for 2026 and 2027, there is no promise of funding after that, leaving our arts community uncertain about the future.

For years, the Works of Art Special Fund has been a lifeline for Hawaii’s artists and cultural programs, helping them survive even during tough economic times. This bill takes that safety net away, making arts funding dependent on government budgets that can change at any time.

HB 1378-HD2 does more harm than good—it offers temporary money now but weakens the arts in the long run. Instead of cutting off reliable funding, we should be working to protect and strengthen Hawaii’s creative community.

I vote NO on HB 1378-HD2 and support a better solution that ensures long-term funding for Hawaii’s arts and culture. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tiana Duvauchelle

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:20:22 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kayla Marie	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this measure arts in Hawaii need long term support and funding. Having arts compete with other programs will harm arts in Hawaii.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:20:32 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jillian Steele	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

During world War II there was a special group of individuals who were charged with the task of protecting and recovering cultural heritage sites and art pieces all across Europe as the allied forces closed in on axis power territories. Hitler has already seized countless art pieces for his own use some of which still have yet to be found today. The fact that during the height of WWII we were able to assign a group of folks to the sole purpose of preserving and recovering cultural artifacts of Europe shows how important it is to preserve these pieces for future generations. Although the United States is not actively at war as of 3/11/25 why are we doing away with necessary funding for the arts? What did the monuments men fight for only to defund our own arts programs back home?

From the Author of Monuments Men:

"If, in time of peace, our museums and art galleries are important to the community, in time of war they are doubly valuable. For then, when the petty and the trivial fall away and we are face to face with final and lasting values, we... must summon to our defense all our intellectual and spiritual resources. We must guard jealously all we have inherited from a long past, all we are capable of creating in a trying present, and all we are determined to preserve in a foreseeable future. Art is the imperishable and dynamic expression of these aims. It is, and always has been, the visible evidence of the activity of free minds...."

Robert M. Edsel

Testimony to oppose HB 1378-HD2

Dear Committee and Representatives,

I ask that you consider the effects that these bills will have on the people of Hawaii.

First, this bill affects a side of life in Hawaii, one that we may not notice. It's the need to escape from the chaos in the world – from divisive politics, from global wars, from economic uncertainty. People may seek sporting events, movies, and dining out – but these forms of entertainment cost money. On the other hand, a visit to the Capitol Modern provides free entertainment and stimulating exposures to the visual and performance arts. The two bills would cease all funding to the Capitol Modern (Hawai'i State Art Museum), one of the greatest educational and entertainment venues available to the people of Hawaii – and it's all free.

This bill will have even more far-reaching consequences. It will affect the funding for the vital art education programs provided by the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts – funding that is the lifeline to all arts organizations and teaching artists across our islands and the funding for the Capitol Modern.

As an art educator (with decades of teaching art in special ed programs and higher education Hawaii), I speak from experience: Art is critical to our survival as human beings in a world overwhelmed by virtual/social media/streaming content – and the passive nature of our existence. The act of creating something from nothing – be it clay, poetry, paint, music, or dance – engages our spirit unlike anything else. We can travel beyond the mundane and enter our own personal creative dimension. We can express ourselves by giving form to the thoughts and feelings that lie deep within us .

A final comment about endorsing funding for the arts: We can't help but pause and wonder at the statue of Father Damien at the entrance to the Hawai'i State Capitol or Chicken Man at HISAM, both of which are the result of funding for the arts.

For the sake of uplifting and free experiences with the arts for the people of Hawaii, for the sake of nurturing one's soul in ways that bear no cost, I ask that you vote against HB 1378-HD2.

Sincerely,

Jill Morton

Colorcom

<https://www.colorcom.com>

Color Matters

<https://www.colormatters.com>

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:31:15 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Ching	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jennifer Ching, and I am concerned parent/grandparent from Holualoa, Big Island

I am writing in **strong opposition to HB1378 HD2**, which threatens to **dismantle the Works of Art Special Fund** — the **only stable source of public funding for the arts in Hawai‘i**. Without it, **cultural programs, jobs, and community access to the arts** will suffer, weakening the very fabric of who we are.

The arts are more than entertainment — they are **lifelines for cultural identity, mental well-being, and economic vitality**. As Hawai‘i faces increasing economic strain, housing insecurity, and federal job cuts, **art is what keeps communities hopeful and connected**. Now is not the time to reduce funding; it’s the time to invest in what heals and sustains us.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, **Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector generates over \$2.6 billion in economic activity annually** and supports **more than 22,000 jobs statewide**. Cutting the fund will not only hurt cultural preservation but also **undermine a key pillar of our economy**.

Furthermore, access to arts education has been linked to improved academic performance and reduced dropout rates, factors that contribute to lower crime rates. Studies have shown that students engaged in the arts are more likely to stay in school and develop essential life skills, reducing the likelihood of criminal behavior.

Art heals. Culture connects. Community thrives.

Please **OPPOSE HB1378 HD2** and **protect the Works of Art Special Fund** — our future generations, economy, and well-being depend on it.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Herb and Jennifer Ching

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:37:12 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Bennett	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 13

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Carol Bennett

Affiliation (working public artist)

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Carol Bennett, and I am an artist and a parent on Kauai.. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

I was lured to Hawaii because of its vibrant Public Art Program, leaving behind a job at Disney and a teaching position. Having lived here for 40 years I’ve had no regrets. My kids have taken advantage of art, drama and music education opportunities, we see all the museum shows when on Oahu and I have been the recipient of various Art in Public Places commissions. Our own KSA and other cultural organizations on our island flourish with the help of HSFCA additional funding.

Key Points

- 1. HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
- 2. General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.

3. Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai'i's Identity and Economy.

The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawai'i's arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,

Carol Bennett

Island of Kauai, Hawaii

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:46:57 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Connor Asato	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Legislature,

I feel that this is ridiculous and shame on you guys. You feel that money is so much more important than the arts and culture. You are not getting to the root of the problem which is the mainland and international investors. If you wanted to keep the money in Hawaii, you would have laws that prevent these corporations to invest in Hawaii. It's sad to see what Hawaii has become.

Mahalo,

Connor

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:50:35 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Douglas	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Bob Douglas, and I am an artist on Hawai‘i Island. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

1. **HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
2. **General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
3. **Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai‘i’s Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector.

Aloha,

Bob Douglas
Island of Hawai‘i, Hawai‘i

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:24:09 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Venus K Rosete-Medeiros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE HB1378 HD2

While [HB 1378-HD2](#) includes some positive provisions, it ultimately **threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding** by dismantling the **Works of Art Special Fund**—Hawai‘i’s only **dedicated, reliable** funding source for the arts. Instead, it replaces this funding with **federal and general funds**, which are **not guaranteed** and will compete with other state priorities like housing, education, and healthcare.

Why This Bill Puts the Arts at Risk

- **No Permanent Funding:** The bill offers a **temporary** \$4 million allocation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027—**with no commitment beyond that.**
- **Uncertain Future:** General funds and federal grants are subject to cuts and shifting priorities, leaving arts funding vulnerable.
- **Loss of a Lifeline:** The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured that Hawai‘i’s arts sector remains resilient, even during economic downturns. This bill **dismantles that safety net.**
- **False Promises:** Short-term funding gains are **not worth sacrificing long-term stability.** This bill weakens the arts ecosystem instead of strengthening it.

Please stand with the arts and culture community be OPPOSING this bill that will have a negative impact on our local arts cultural community.

Mahalo,

Venus

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 3:33:45 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Perry Buchalter	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While [HB 1378-HD2](#) includes some positive provisions, it ultimately threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund—Hawai‘i’s only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts. Instead, it replaces this funding with federal and general funds, which are not guaranteed and will compete with other state priorities like housing, education, and healthcare. Based on the above information I am opposed to this bill. Support for the art is an essential part of any thriving democracy, the art should flourish.

11th March 2025

To: **Senate Committee on Transportation, Culture and the Arts**

Chair, Chris Lee

Vice Chair, Lorraine Inouye

Committee Members Senator Brandon Elefante, Senator Dru Kanuha, Senator Samantha DeCorte

From: Janet Sato, retired art educator

RE: STRONGLY OPPOSED to HB1378-HD2

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and TCA Committee Members,

I am a lifelong resident of Maui County who appreciates your dedicated leadership and community mindedness. I sincerely thank you for your service to the State of Hawai'i, but am writing to voice my strong opposition to HB 1378-HD2 which has evolved into a serious threat to sustainable arts and culture funding in Hawai'i by significantly weakening the **Works of Art Special Fund** and effectively removing the only reliable, dedicated funding source for arts and culture programs in Hawai'i. The offer of a short-term \$4 million general fund appropriation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, with no guarantee of future funding, sacrifices long-term stability. I respectfully urge you to consider the damaging long term consequences when this current version of the bill is heard by your committee on Thursday, March 13th.

Recently retired after 42 years of service as a public school teacher, I have spent my life working in and advocating for the arts, particularly secondary arts education. Hundreds of my visual arts students have been the grateful beneficiaries of the SFCA's varied programs over many years. I have personally witnessed how the multi-faceted experiences provided by these opportunities to meet and work with professional artists, musicians, storytellers, writers, thespians, cultural practitioners, and private organizations extended learning far beyond the walls of the classroom and deep into the community, creating long term positive effects for all involved. The work of the SFCA is not invisible, unnecessary, or unimportant - preserving, perpetuating, and promoting opportunities to educate and challenge each of us to think broadly and creatively cannot be sacrificed.

I recently completed my first term volunteering as the Maui Commissioner on the Board of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. I have been impressed with what I learned in regard to the breadth and scope of how the SFCA works tirelessly to positively impact every community member on **every** island. I would hate to witness the loss of the significant strides previously set into motion by our lawmakers through this dangerously amended bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 4:07:44 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann Zamber	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 13

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Ann Zamber

Affiliation (Hawaii DOE Art Teacher Grades 9-12)

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ann Zamber, and I am a public school art educator for the State of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Key Points

1. **HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
2. **General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
3. **Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai‘i’s Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has

supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawaii's arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,
Ann Zamber
Island of Hawaii, Hawaii

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 4:23:57 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Duarte	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

<p>Aloha Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts; Senator Chris Lee, Chair; and Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair; and committee members:</p> <p> </p> <p>I am writing to voice my strong opposition to HB1378-HD2. </p><p>I believe that the bill would subject funding for the </p><p>arts in Hawai'i to a level of instability from which it would not soon recover. As a visual arts administrator, I can attest that the support that arts organizations and programs receive from SFCA are crucial, vital, and foundational to their ability to plan and deliver arts programming to the community in a manner that is efficient and impactful. Disruptions to that funding and </p><p>built-in uncertainty would greatly hamper an already lean arts eco-system and jeopardize the livelihood of many arts professionals, artists, and makers—</p><p>not to mention put a massive dent in Hawai'i's unique arts and cultural sphere. </p> <p>I work for a Honolulu-based nonprofit arts organization that is presenting Hawai'i Triennial 2025, the state's largest, thematic exhibition of contemporary art from Hawai'i, the Pacific, and beyond. The exhibition gathers contemporary artists from beyond our shores to share their work with people in Hawai'i while also putting their work in dialogue with the work of Hawai'i artists—</p><p>the results are truly meaningful exchanges and unexpected collaborations that have lead to further opportunities overseas for Hawai'i artists. Held once every three years, Hawai'i Triennial is internationally known, attracting artists, curators, and art seekers from around the world, many of whom recognize that Hawai'i has a unique viewpoint to share on the artworld's stage. The theme of this iteration is ALOHA NŌ, which invites artists to consider the many layered meanings of aloha as a practice in truth-telling, resilience, resistance, connection (to 'āina and one another), and healing.</p> <p>Hawai'i Triennial </p><p>is a massive undertaking for our organization—</p><p>an endeavor that is made possible by crucial, foundational funding from SFCA, which delivers support efficiently. Given our limited resources as a small nonprofit, I'm concerned that HB1378-HD2 would introduce some inefficiencies and require additional advocacy activities that most arts nonprofits cannot sustain.</p> <p>I thank you all for your consideration.</p> <p>Mahalo nui,
 Nicole Duarte</p>

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 4:36:29 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hazel Ito	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2, scheduled for hearing on Thursday, March 13, at 3:15 pm.

HB1378-HD2 threatens to dismantle art funding and will impact school students, artists, and a diverse range of members of our community. Please do not pass this bill.

Thank you,

Hazel Ito

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 4:38:01 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jude Rooney	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB 1378-HD2. Although it offers short term funding it does not insure long term stability for the arts in the state of Hawaii. We cannot risk losing long term funding for the arts. It is too important and often overlooked in legislature. We cannot take a step backwards in providing protection for the arts in the state of Hawaii.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 4:40:05 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bonnie Kim	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 11, 2025

Opposing the Bill HB1378-HD2

Dear Whom I May Concern:

When this bill was initially introduced earlier this year, it did not mention of dismantling the Works of Arts Special Funds but only of introducing to create a Performing Arts Grant Program. So I submitted the testimony letter in favor of the bill last month. But now I see that HB1378-HD2 now aims to get rid of the Works of Arts Special Funds. I feel like I have been tricked to believe that this bill will support arts programs in Hawaii. I also feel that it just made many folks who believe in supporting the arts and accessibility of art for all more confused with this bill to divide us and get false support testimony letters.

I strongly oppose this revised bill, HB1378-HD2 because it will have detrimental effects not only in arts sectors in Hawaii but many other sectors and programs, such as arts education in schools, various cultural programs statewide, health programs for different populations, just to name a few. As an independent artist, I create, collaborate and work with different arts organizations in the state of Hawaii. As a teaching artist, I provide arts integrated residencies through the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts' (HSFCA) arts education program called Artists in the Schools (AITS) Program. The program offers arts integrated residencies to public and charter schools in the State of Hawaii. Arts integrated residencies provide valuable learning opportunities and experiences for students to learn and express not only arts but also other core subjects, such as reading, math, science, and other subjects in more holistic approaches. The program is offered to public schools for free currently and without this, many students will not have the valuable learning opportunities offered by teaching artists. Especially for neighbor island schools where the accessibility to arts is even more limited, they will suffer even more from having much less opportunities to learn in more creative and innovative approaches.

Supporting education for our future is crucial. Hawaii has much less accessibility to arts and arts education compared to most mainland states due to our remote location in the world. Dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund will rob our children's learning opportunities and also creative outlets for mental health and many more other valuable arts and cultural

programs statewide. I oppose the proposed bill, HB1378-HD2 and hope the state legislature will find ways to support more for education and arts.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Kim

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 4:42:40 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaua Kama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB1378 HD2, which proposes to establish the Performing Arts Grants Program and expand the responsibilities and funding structures of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA).

While supporting the performing arts is a worthy goal, this bill raises significant concerns regarding transparency, prioritization of state resources, and potential displacement of existing cultural efforts:

1. Lack of Community Accountability

Expanding the SFCA’s responsibilities to include planning and execution of performing arts events, without clear mechanisms for community consultation or representation, risks centralizing cultural authority in ways that could marginalize grassroots artists and culturally grounded practices. Hawai‘i’s diverse communities—particularly Kānaka Maoli artists and cultural practitioners—must be at the center of any efforts to promote the arts in our islands.

2. Shifting of Funds and Priorities

This bill amends the funding sources for the State Art Museum and increases transfers into the Works of Art Special Fund. Without clear accountability or detailed explanation of how these funds will be used, this risks diverting critical resources away from broader, existing cultural preservation and education programs. The prioritization of events and grant administration over long-term cultural sustainability is concerning.

3. Risk of Commercialization Over Cultural Integrity

By placing an emphasis on marketing and promotion, this bill could unintentionally promote commodified or mainstream representations of "Hawaiian culture" that erase or sideline authentic, community-driven expressions—particularly those not considered “performative” in a Western sense. Hawai‘i’s arts landscape is not just for consumption—it is a living, breathing expression of identity, spirituality, and resistance.

4. Insufficient Safeguards Against Inequity

There are no explicit provisions in HB1378 HD2 to ensure equitable access to these grants or programs, nor guarantees that rural, Native Hawaiian, or marginalized communities will benefit. Without such safeguards, there is a real danger that this program could widen the existing disparities in access to arts funding in Hawai‘i.

In conclusion, while supporting the arts is important, HB1378 HD2 lacks the critical components needed to ensure that such support is equitable, community-centered, and culturally respectful. I urge the Committee to defer this bill and instead work with communities—especially Kānaka Maoli cultural practitioners—to co-create policies that uplift the arts in ways that are pono, inclusive, and grounded in aloha ‘āina.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E.Kaualilinoe Kama

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 4:46:48 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sofia Enriquez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello, my name is Sofia Enriquez, and I'm a visual artist based in both Southern California and Honolulu, Hawaii. My artistic journey has been profoundly shaped by Capital Modern and the incredible programming they offer to both artists and the broader community. One of the most pivotal moments in my career was my first museum exhibition in 2021 at the Hawaii State Museum (now Capital Modern). The exhibition, titled *Mucho Botánica*, was an interactive mural installation that gave me the chance to showcase my work in a museum setting for the first time.

The installation was a vibrant, colorful, and immersive experience, blending art, light, and music. Collaborating with local light artists and music producers, we created a unique environment for museum visitors after COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. This project reminded me of the power of art to connect people, to inspire, and to bring us together in moments of collective celebration.

Art museums like Capital Modern are vital to our culture. They provide a platform for living artists to share their work while preserving the cultural and subcultural influences that shape the art world. Protecting the museum's programming is crucial because it ensures that the creativity of Hawaii continues to thrive, offering both locals and visitors an opportunity to engage with its rich artistic heritage.

As a downtown staple, Capital Modern brings people together, offering a space for education, collaboration, and shared experiences. It plays a central role in keeping the vibrant art scene alive in Hawaii, and it is essential that we support it for future generations.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:15:20 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Codie King	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 13

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Codie M King

Affiliation: Retired Wailoa Center Director, State Parks, DLNR

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Codie M King, and I am the retired Wailoa Center Director of 25 years, State Parks for the State of Hawai‘i. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Key Points

1. **HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
2. **General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
3. **Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai‘i’s Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has

supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawai'i's arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,
Codie M King, retired State Park, DLNR
Island of Hawai'i, Hawai'i

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:18:48 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan C. Browne	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for including the performing arts as part of Hawaii's public art, supported by funds from the Works of Art Special Fund. I am in favor of this part of the bill. As a commissioner on the SFCA board, I understand how vital the Works of Art Special Fund is to supporting the arts and arts education in Hawaii. Please do not cut or amend the funds coming from this important source. We are in uncertain times with federal funds being cut from all areas. We cannot rely on those funds any longer. All of the citizens in Hawaii are counting on our legislators to do the right thing.

Mahalo,

Susan Browne, susanab@maui.net; 808-283-9285

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:23:29 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gerard Elmore	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Gerard Elmore, VP of Film at NMG Network and Executive Director of 'Ohina (Labs and Films).

I'm writing in opposition of this bill.

It's important that anything we do in regards to the Arts we need to provide stability. Right now, as this is written, there is only funding for FY26 and FY27 and that creates uncertainty and almost definitely means we'll be back testifying next year and many years to advocate for funding.

With the federal government massively cutting, it's important we preserve and nurture the art programs we have. It's what makes Hawai'i stand out and the vitality of our arts ecosystem, The Works of Art Special Fund, and our art community is paramount.

Please, let's not gamble with arts funding. We need it more than ever before.

Mahalo,

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:35:01 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Helena Noordhoff	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Helena Noordhoff, and I am an art educator at the Honolulu Museum of Art school and Leeward community college. I strongly oppose HB 1378-HD2, which would reduce funding for local artists, educators, and the acquisition of art for the state.

As an educator, I see firsthand the transformative power of art in students' lives. Art is not just an outlet for creativity; it is a means of personal growth, healing, and self-expression. In a world filled with uncertainty and challenges, artistic practice provides individuals with the ability to process emotions, develop problem-solving skills, and engage with diverse perspectives.

Beyond individual benefits, art has a profound impact on our communities. It fosters cultural preservation, encourages dialogue, and strengthens our local identity. Public investment in the arts ensures that future generations have access to creative resources that inspire innovation and critical thinking—skills that extend far beyond the studio and into all aspects of life.

Cutting funding for the arts undermines these essential contributions. It devalues the role of artists and educators who dedicate themselves to enriching Hawai'i's cultural and educational landscape. Instead of reducing support, we should be investing more in the arts to ensure that they remain accessible and integrated into our society.

I urge you to oppose HB 1378-HD2 and continue to support the arts in Hawai'i. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

Helena Noordhoff

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:47:47 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jane Yoo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a resident of Molokai - perhaps the last bastion of Hawai'i culture - I urge you to oppose this bill that threatens sustainable support for the arts and culture. Without arts and culture, we lose our identity. Please help preserve what little we have left. Please ensure that funding for the arts and culture remains strong for all the generations to come.

Mahalo for doing the right thing!

Jane Yoo

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:54:04 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B. Lani Prunés	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

How dare you undermine the arts in Hawai'i when they uphold so much of the community!
Whether funding is removed slowly or quickly, it's wrong. Please reconsider the investments
needed at this time to continue to help the community thrive, employ artists and admin, and
uphold the arts as worthy.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:58:42 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lois Sato	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE HB 1378-HD2

It is disappointing that the current legislators who played a major role in authoring this bill appear to be unaware of the hardwork and tenacity of their predecessors to ensure Hawaii's Art continues as a lifeline for artists and for the people of the community to enjoy throughout their lifetime. With the support of former Gov. John Burns and Masaru "Pundy" Yokouchi the early artists Tadashi Sato, Satoru Abe, Harry Tsuchidani, Isami Doi, Toshiko Takaezu, Jerry Okimoto paved the way for future Hawaii artist to showcase their work throughout Hawaii. Art in public places have the ability to spark conversation, connection, creativity and community - we cannot sacrifice the long-term positive impact and stability ART have provided.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:04:03 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1378 HD2.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:07:59 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kye Harford	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill threatens the stability of arts and culture funding and I oppose to it.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:16:09 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Trudee Kim Siemann	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 13

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Trudee K. Siemann

Affiliation: Hawai‘i Island Artist

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Trudee K. Siemann, and I am a Hawai‘i Island artist. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Key Points

1. **HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
2. **General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
3. **Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai‘i’s Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has

supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawai'i's arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,
Trudee K. Siemann
Island of Hawai'i, Hawai'i

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:30:21 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Owen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill as it will hurt artists and erode support for artists and the arts throughout Hawaii. I have always been proud of Hawaii for supporting the arts longer than any other state. But now we must stand strong with artists and the arts at a time when it is going to be tougher than ever to maintain support for the arts.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:35:08 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Clarice Miki Yokouchi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition to HB 1378-HD2

Dear Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts,

I am writing in opposition to HB 1378-HD2. While I recognize the bill's positive intentions, I believe it poses a significant risk to the long-term stability of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i. The Works of Art Special Fund has been a critical and reliable source of support for the arts in our state, providing a safety net during economic downturns and ensuring that arts and culture are consistently funded.

Replacing this dedicated funding source with federal and general funds creates uncertainty. These sources are not guaranteed and are subject to competing priorities such as housing, education, and healthcare. A temporary allocation of \$4 million in fiscal years 2026 and 2027 does not provide the long-term security that Hawai'i's arts community needs to thrive.

For the sake of the arts sector's future, I urge you to oppose HB 1378-HD2 and work toward a solution that ensures consistent, reliable funding for the arts in Hawai'i.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

C. Miki Yokouchi

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 12

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Mark Branner

Affiliation: University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa / Department of Theatre and Dance

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mark Branner, and I am a Professor of Theatre in the Department of Theatre and Dance at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. I am submitting testimony in **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

1. HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.

The bill restricts the **Works of Art Special Fund**, which is the **only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide**. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.

2. General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.

The proposed general fund appropriation is **temporary** and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as **health, housing, and education** – leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.

3. Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai‘i’s Identity and Economy.

The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and **community well-being**. We need **stable, dedicated funding** to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

I urge you to **OPPOSE HB1378-HD2** and to protect the **Works of Art Special Fund**, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawaii's arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,

Mark Branner
Honolulu, Hawaii

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:54:23 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathi Mukai	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture on the Arts,

I oppose HB1378-HD2 because it threatens the stability of arts funding in Hawaii. The Works of Art Special Fund provides essential, reliable support for the arts and replacing it with uncertain federal and general funds risks the future of our creative community. The temporary allocation of \$4 million does not offer long term security the arts need.

I urge you to reject this bill and protect dedicated funding for the arts in Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kathi Mukai

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:55:39 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Phillippe Fernandez-Brennan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony to the Hawai‘i State Legislature: Protect Hawai‘i’s Arts & Culture!

Date: March 13, 2025

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Phillippe Fernandez-Brennan, and I am a Ph.D. cadidate at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, College of Education and teacher at Hālau Kū Māna Pulbic Charter School in Makiki, O‘ahu, Hawai‘i. I am writing to strongly urge you to OPPOSE HB 1378-HD2, which threatens the future of Hawai‘i’s arts and culture.

Hawai‘i’s arts and culture are an essential part of our identity. As a teacher at a Native Hawaiian-focused public charter school, I have observed the positive impact on my students when they learn how to ‘ulana lauhala (weave lauhala), kuku kapa (pound kapa), make a hula ki‘i (traditional hula using ki‘i or images and puppetry). My students also learn how to make traditional tools like i‘e kuku (kapa beater), ‘ohe kapala (bamboo stamp), and nose flute.

We rely on community partners like the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Windward Community College, the Hula Preservation Society, and traditional Hawaiian practitioners who depend on the State Foundation on Culture & the Arts and its Works of Art Special Fund to keep our culture alive and thriving, and keep opportunities alive for my young students to make, share, inspire, and grow through art . This fund is the ONLY reliable and dedicated source of arts funding in Hawai‘i, and without it, our cultural programs, events, and education opportunities could disappear.

HB 1378-HD2 may look like it’s helping by offering temporary funding, but this bill puts the future of our arts in jeopardy. Here’s why:

1. No Permanent Funding: The bill only promises \$4 million for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, with no guarantee after that. This is not enough to secure the future of Hawai‘i’s arts.
2. Uncertain Future: Federal and general funds are unreliable, and they can be cut or reduced at any time. This makes arts funding vulnerable and puts our cultural programs at risk.

3. Losing a Lifeline: The Works of Art Special Fund has kept our arts alive, even when times were tough. If this bill passes, we lose that safety net.
4. False Promises: Short-term funding will not protect our arts long-term. This bill will actually weaken the arts ecosystem instead of helping it grow.

We need to stand up for the arts and make sure they are protected for future generations. I ask that you oppose HB 1378-HD2 and keep the Works of Art Special Fund strong.

Please support our community, our culture, and our future. We cannot afford to take this risk.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Phillippe Fernandez-Brennan

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:46:05 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bailey Onaga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an artist and arts educator born and raised in Hawaii, I oppose this bill. Without educational programs and access to the arts, our community would be devoid of cultural perpetuation, historical documentation, and self expression. During these unsettling and alienating times I have seen firsthand how the healthy outlet of arts have helped to inspire hope in others, especially the youth.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:46:54 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth Anderson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony urging you to OPPOSE HB 1378-HD2. It is critical to maintain a reliable funding source for the arts. The Arts in Hawaii are severely underfunded, so it is extremely important to not pass legislation that threatens long-term funding for arts and culture.

HB 1378-HD2 essentially threatens long term stability of arts and culture by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund—Hawai'i's only dedicated , reliable funding source for the arts. Instead, it replaces this funding with federal and general funds, which are not guaranteed, particularly with the current Presidential administration. Arts funding will have to compete with other state priorities like housing, education and healthcare. The arts will lose that competition.

Particularly disturbing is the fact the bill offers a temporary \$4 million allocation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027—with no committment beyond that. This will leave the arts with an uncertain future. General funds and federal grants are subject to cuts and shifting priorities, leaving the arts vulnerable.

The Works of Arts Special Fund has ensured that Hawai'i's arts sector remains resilient, even during economic downturns. This bill dismantles that safety net.

These are false promises. Short-term funding gains are not worth sacrificing long-term stability. This bill weakens the arts ecosystem instead of strenthening it.

The arts strengthen communities socially and economically. They are vital for promoting understanding of history and culture, promoting creativity and expression, and fostering empathy. Weakening funding for the arts, weakens the strength of our State and its cultural resources.

Please oppose HB 1378 and instead support saving the stable long-term plan to fund the arts—the Works of Art Special Fund, a necessary fund to maintain support artists and the arts in Hawaii.

Thank you,

Beth Anderson

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:16:08 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Edwards	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting testimony as an artist working and living in Hawai'i. I strongly oppose HB 1378-HD2, and any other attempts to threaten the long-term stability of arts and culture funding, specifically those that seek to replace or modify the Works of Art Special Fund. The Hawai'i creative community is a dedicated and persistent voting bloc, and we will not give up. Enough already. Go fix something that is actually broken, not the Works of Art Special Fund. Mahalo for your time.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:19:31 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Crystal Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill. Please DO NOT pass this as this would actively harm local artists.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:29:53 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Yasuko & Saleem Ahmed	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the Committee,

As strong supporters of and participants in arts and culture, we urge you to oppose HB1378-HD2.

Our children benefited from many of the programs offered by arts organizations that receive support from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, and the artists in the schools program is vital to child development. HB1378-HD2 threatens the support of these organizations and slashes the artists in the schools program.

In our retirement, living on fixed income, we appreciate Capitol Modern. How wonderful to have a free museum that celebrates local artists and offers programming for all ages.

Funding for the arts is already under threat from the Federal government, let our state be a beacon of hope and support arts and culture instead of hurting this vital resource.

We appreciate how hard you work to support the people of Hawaii, and thank you for this opportunity to voice our concern.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Carol Yasuko & Saleem Ahmed

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:35:32 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amelia	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The art community matters!!

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:43:37 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Milena Ordonez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Supporting and funding local artists is a very crucial aspect in bringing people together and developing collaboration/community. It also showcases people's dedication, hardwork, and talent that can inspire the youth and adults who wish to do the same. Public art should never be a topic of question. It should live as a priority for as long as possible because of the beauty it brings to our community and the doors of opportunities that open for local artists.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:07:30 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andi Struzziero	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Given the current state of our government and the actions that are being taken against the best interests of all US citizens, we must do whatever we can to uphold and protect the arts. In a time of unrest, uncertainty, and fear, people require the arts more than ever as a way to express themselves and to find peace within their community. The arts bring us joy and collaboration, and now more than ever we should be funding these initiatives, not trying to dismantle them.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:16:07 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elisabeth Mather	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a member of Hawaii's arts community, I oppose this bill because it dismantles permanent funding for the arts. Please do not remove the Works of Arts Special Fund.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:33:01 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leigh Wong-Miyasato	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:17:50 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Matsumoto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **opposition** to HB1378, relating to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. The purpose of this measure changes the structure of funding. The arts, in its many forms, not only provides creative outlets for keiki to kupuna, but also a unique way to capture Hawai'i's history. For decades, the State Foundation has been able to support local artists and provide opportunities to expose communities to public art. This program, as is, is very stable.

I **oppose** this measure for the following reasons:

- Changes made in this bill only offers commitment to funding for fiscal years 2026 and 2027. I would like to see the Arts supported indefinitely.
- Language is changed for use of the Works of Art Special fund. Currently this fund provides support for arts programs and positions statewide. Without protecting it, these programs, jobs, and exposure to the arts is in jeopardy.
- With so much uncertainty in our country, using general funds will make it a competitive space between many different priorities and less money for the arts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:26:24 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maxime Cuchet	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Max High-Cuchet, and I am an O'ahu-based artist. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

Key Points

- 1. HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai'i's creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
- 2. General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
- 3. Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai'i's Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawaii's arts and culture sector.

**Sincerely,
Max High-Cuchet**

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:42:50 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lila Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 11

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Lila Lee

Affiliation: Oahu Artist

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lila, and I am an artist born and raised on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Key Points

1. **HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
2. **General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
3. **Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai‘i’s Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has

supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawaii's arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,
Lila Lee

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:05:47 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellison Montgomery	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill on the basis that it cuts off funding after 2027. The arts need long term funding and should not have to compete with other priorities. Hawai'i is beautiful in many ways due to it's vibrant art scene, murals and museums. Museums create gathering spaces for the community to interact and share ideas which is more important now than ever. Please support the future of our artists, keep the works of art special fund.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:07:52 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alec Bayer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The arts are an import part of Honolulu's culture as a city, as is true with many cities. Places like Capitol Modern are important to myself, the community of O'ahu, the community of all of Hawai'i and even beyond.

It is important to maintain consistent funding for these projects that breathe life into Honolulu and Hawai'i as a whole.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 12:12:11 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wayne Levin	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While HB 1378-HD2 includes some positive provisions, it ultimately **threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding** by dismantling the **Works of Art Special Fund**—Hawai‘i’s only **dedicated, reliable** funding source for the arts. Instead, it replaces this funding with **federal and general funds**, which are **not guaranteed** and will compete with other state priorities like housing, education, and healthcare.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 12:20:56 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mareva Minerbi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a dance artist and Lecturer and **I strongly oppose HB1378 HD2**. This bill threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund—Hawai‘i’s only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts. Instead, it replaces this funding with federal and general funds, which are not guaranteed and will compete with other state priorities like housing, education, and healthcare. I urge you to protect this essential funding mechanism and vote against HB1378 HD2.

Mahalo for your time and consideration. I appreciate your leadership and commitment to Hawai‘i’s future.

Mareva Minerbi,

Lecturer in Dance, Leeward CC

Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
The Hawaii State Senate
415 S Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: OPPOSITION to Bill [HB1378](#)

March 11, 2025

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and esteemed members of the Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts,

My name is Erika Molyneux, and I am a new media arts faculty-member at Leeward Community College and a former board member of the Honolulu Printmakers and Gallery 'Iolani at Windward Community College. The statements expressed are my opinions as an individual and do not represent the position of my college or these organizations.

Please OPPOSE Bill [HB1378](#), which establishes the Performing Arts Grants Program and Performing Arts Grants Special Fund to support performing arts in the State, clarifies the scope of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts' responsibilities to include the coordination, planning, promotion, marketing, and execution of performing arts events, amends the funding sources for the State Art Museum. Amends the amounts required to be transferred by agencies into the Works of Art Special Fund and the allowable uses of the Special Fund, and appropriates funds.

While [HB1378-HD2](#) includes some positive provisions, it ***ultimately threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding*** by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund—Hawai'i's only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts. This fund has ensured that Hawai'i's arts sector remains resilient, even during economic downturns. This bill dismantles that safety net. Instead, it replaces this reliable funding with with a temporary \$4 million allocation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027—with no commitment beyond that. According to this bill, federal and general funds are to be used to fund the arts. These funds are not guaranteed and will compete with other state priorities like housing, education, and healthcare.

Short-term funding gains are not worth sacrificing long-term stability. This bill weakens the arts ecosystem instead of strengthening it.

For all these reasons, please OPPOSE Bill [HB1378](#). Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Erika Molyneux
Assistant Professor, New Media Arts
Leeward Community College
Resident of Kāneo'he, Hawai'i

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 1:10:07 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marilyn Hillman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I object to this bill in it's present form. vote no

This bill while creates funds for performing arts, yet it takes funding away from other art programs."Amends the funding sources for the State Art Museum. Amends the amounts required to be transferred by agencies into the Works of Art Special Fund and the allowable uses of the Special Fund."

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Marilyn Hillman

Your constituent

Keokea, Kula, Maui, HI

Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Date: March 12, 2025

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Cathleen Murayama

Affiliation: Retired Public Elementary School Teacher and Community Member

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawaii's arts and culture sector. My testimony is in **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i. The arts not only preserves our cultural heritage but also contributes to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure the arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

The proposed general fund appropriation is **temporary** and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education - leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.

I urge you to carefully examine this version of **HB1378-HD2** and to not move it forward in order to protect the **Works of Art Special Fund** which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. The bill restricts the **Works of Art Special Fund**, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai'i's creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.

This is not the time to destroy the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 5:52:20 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristi Auyong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am opposing the cuts related to HB1378. Many organizations and non profits struggle with the high cost of expenses to run a business in Hawai'i and require these grants to stay afloat. Art has an immerse effect on social emotional learning for all which has been scientifically proven to help with stress, creativity and more. Reducing the grants for these organizations means that there won't be outreach services and programs for the community to enjoy. Please reconsider this bill as the community loves and needs art. Thank you

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 6:37:17 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Forrest Leonard	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I'm writing to you in opposition to HB1378 HD2.

This bill threatens vital funding for the arts and culture of Hawaii, which are major contributors to our state's economy. Hawaii is renowned for its vibrant arts and culture, and the passing of this bill would devastate that. This funding supports artists and organizations that bring people out to spend money at their events and exhibitions, which in turn increases the revenue of the surrounding businesses such as restaurants and shops. While this funding cut saves money on paper, it will substantially curtail the economic prosperity that the arts and culture generates here in Hawaii, and will be greatly detrimental to our commerce in the long run.

Again, I'm encouraging you to oppose HB 1738 HD 2. I hope that you will understand the vital role this funding provides for our art and culture, and that you will choose to preserve the economic prosperity that it brings.

Mahalo,

Forrest Leonard

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 6:50:03 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert I Nehmad	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We (myself and Deborah Nehmad) strongly urge the Committee to oppose HB1378 SD2.

It puts the arts at risk, shutting off a critical source of dedicated funding at a time when the future of funding for non-profits has never been more tenuous. NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO MAKE SUCH DRASTIC CHANGE.

PLEASE PROTECT THE ARTS IN HAWAII!

Deb & Robert Nehmad

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 7:28:45 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jun Szegedi-Duffield	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jun and I am writing to strongly oppose HB 1378-HD2. As a community member and artist, I am deeply concerned that this bill threatens the stability of Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund, the only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts in our state.

The arts are not an optional luxury—they are the heartbeat of our communities, reflecting Hawai‘i’s diverse cultural heritage, supporting local artists, and strengthening our economy. The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured that the arts remain resilient even during economic downturns, providing long-term stability that temporary, competitive funding simply cannot replace.

While HB 1378-HD2 offers a short-term \$4 million allocation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, this is merely a temporary fix that will leave the arts vulnerable to funding cuts in the future. Replacing a dedicated funding source with federal and general funds—both of which are subject to shifting priorities—jeopardizes the very programs that make Hawai‘i’s cultural landscape vibrant and accessible.

Without permanent funding, we risk losing vital arts education programs, public art initiatives, and the creative opportunities that enrich our communities. The promise of short-term gains is not worth the long-term harm this bill would cause.

I respectfully urge this committee to reject HB 1378-HD2 and seek solutions that protect, rather than weaken, arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i. Our artists, educators, and cultural practitioners deserve stable and secure support. Let’s stand together to ensure that Hawai‘i remains a place where the arts can thrive for generations to come.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

**HB1378-HD2 Written Testimony from Seema Sueko-Low
Submitted 3/11/2025**

Aloha e, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the TCA committee,

Thank you for your service to the State of Hawaii.

I am writing to respectfully **oppose HB1378-HD2**, scheduled for hearing on Thursday, March 13, at 3:15 pm.

At a time of great uncertainty in state and federal funding for all public essentials, HB1378-HD2 pours salt into the wound and dismantles a critical safety net for local arts workers, artists, our creative economy, and, most importantly, the communities we serve, from keiki to kupuna.

While at face value, this bill appears positive, its long-term impact is debilitating to the people of Hawaii. In the bill, temporary general funds are allocated for FY26 and FY27, but there is no commitment beyond that. Further, just yesterday, March 10, 2025, House Finance Chair, Representative Kyle Yamashita, spoke about the state budget with Hawaii News Now, saying, "What we can see, the number is probably going to go down." Senate Ways and Means chair Donovan Dela Cruz concurred that hundreds of millions may need to be trimmed from the budget for state programs. (Source: [Recession fears could dent state budget](#)).

If this bill is passed and moves state funding for arts programs out of the Works of Art Special Fund and into general funds, and then in the final FY26 FY27 budget those general funds are cut, we will be robbing keiki of critical arts education programs, devastating hundreds of workers in the creative economy of contracts and jobs, and sending a message that the state of Hawaii devalues culture.

I know the members of this committee care about the people of Hawaii. In alignment with that value, please do not pass HB1378-HD2.

Mahalo for receiving my testimony,

Seema Sueko-Low

Theater Artist

www.seemasueko.com

Date: March 13, 2025

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

From: Elizabeth Lentz-Hill

Affiliation: Independent Performing Artist

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

I am an independent performing artist, and I **oppose HB 1378-HD2**.

It is vital to retain current funding through the Works of Art Special Fund and the current allowable uses of the funds, in order to provide a stable source of funding to support Hawaii's arts and culture practitioners and offerings for the public.

The committee has the unique opportunity to be a hero for Hawaii's arts and culture sector by simply maintaining the status quo.

I strongly encourage you to vote no on HB 1378-HD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to expression my **opposition to HB 1378-HD2**.

With aloha,
Elizabeth Lentz-Hill
Honolulu, HI 96826

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 8:04:33 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cora Currier	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a resident of Moloka'i, a mother of young children who benefit from arts programming at the Molokai Arts Center and Public Library. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

- 1. HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai'i's creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
- 2. General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
- 3. Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai'i's Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawaii's arts and culture sector.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 8:20:28 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julie Uyeno-Pidot	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Lee and Inouye, and members of the committee,

My name is Julie Uyeno-Pidot and I would like to submit testimony in strong opposition to HB 1378 HD 2: Relating to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. While I believe that this bill is well-intentioned, I am highly concerned about the loss of funding for art-related programs in the State of Hawai‘i, given the sweeping budget cuts occurring at the federal level. These cuts will impact the state’s general funds, which will need to fill the gap. There are too many competing priorities to make way for the new state fund (i.e., the Performing Arts Grants Special Fund) proposed in this bill, which, if passed, only guarantees financing for the next two fiscal years. Instead, I respectfully propose the maintenance of the already established Works of Art Special Fund, which guarantees a steady amount of financing based on one percent of the renovation costs for state capital improvement projects.

The arts provide us with windows into the experiences and perspectives of others. This generates understanding and empathy, both of which are badly needed during this period of increasing political divisiveness. In order to preserve public access to the state’s wonderful art collection and support the creation of new works of art, stable funding is needed. The Works of Art Special Fund offers this stability. All you need to do is keep it intact by opposing this measure. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,
Julie Uyeno-Pidot

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 8:26:43 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tracey Zhang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good morning chairmans,

My name is Tracey Zhang, an individual citizen and I oppose this bill.

Growing up, I wasn't the best at school. I had low motivation to be studious. I felt lost and found no meaning to life. What saved me was art.. in all different forms (music, painting, dance, poetry). I found it therapeutic as a child and more so as an adult. Although my career is not in art, I am still deeply moved by one's creativity. To be able to tell a story by music, painting, dance, poetry, etc. is moving and inspiring.

I oppose this bill as it will deeply suppress creativity for all individuals of all different ages. To take away art is to take away color. Hawai'i will no longer be colorful, it will just be a white canvas with black paint.

Thank you for your time.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 8:30:55 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margaret ANN Renick	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Pleae DO NOT pass this bill! Hawaii has worked hard to insure arts funding for future generations. This bll is a stop gap measure at best, and does not guarantee arts support after 2027. Arts make our community healthier, more connected and more beautiful. Do not cut this short. Mahalo.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 8:37:21 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rose Anne Jones	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As former Executive Director of Hawaii Craftsmen for 7 years, a Statewide Arts Organization for the 3d arts of ceramics, fiber, glass, mixed media and wood, I know and appreciate Hawai'i's tradition of supporting the arts. The strong and vibrant Arts World is not a dispensible commodity. The HSFCA organization established in the 1960's was a recognition of the value of human expression in the past, present and future.

After moving to Kaua'i in 2011, over the past 12 years, I've served as Volunteer Board member for the Kaua'i Society Board of Directors' (KSA)-- many of those years as Treasurer. The HSFCA makes an invitational annual visit to KSA's premier juried art show: "Art Kaua'i". This year's Juror, Tom Klobe, an international name in the arts and fine crafts world, will jury the accepted work and judge the work for awards in the September, 2025 show.

The recognition that the HSFCA has made a difference in so many artists' lives...I don't have the space here to provide story after story of its dramatic impact. Many of the artists honored by the HSFCA have become nationally and internationally recognized for their abilities and vision to express our shared humanity to the world.

Visitors come to Hawaii, not just for its beautiful scenery and ocean breezes. It's the culture and traditions that enchant visitors. The music, dance and the arts are all valued in our State.

In my many visits around the world exploring other countries, my husband and I became friends of the people who owned the apartment we stayed in Romania. The owners, from this former, Communist country, asked where we were from in the U.S...we replied.. "From Hawaii". This couple beamed and invited us to dinner at their home. They wanted to know what living in Hawaii was like and they longed to visit our State. Living under Communism I had no idea that they were aware of Hawaii. They replied... "Everyone in the World Knows the enchantment of Hawaii".

Please don't take that sense of "Enchantment" away from the world. The world knows that Hawaii is not only comprised of beautiful scenery. It is the sense of Hawaiian heritage that brings visitors here. Please due your duty to "Culture and the Arts" which makes Hawaii unique among tropical destinations. Please vote NO on this bill.

The world is watching what Hawaii does in the Arts. Please don't take diminish or destroy funding for the HSFCA.

Mahalo,

Rose Anne Jones / Kaua`i

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 8:57:12 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patrick Karjala	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to oppose HB1378 HD2 in its current written form. Making it so that the SFCA has no permanent funding after 2027 and causing it to lose long-term support will only undermine the fund's purpose.

Please do not pass this bill.

Mahalo,

Patrick Karjala
Mililani HI

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 8:57:28 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Adrienne Ouellette	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a resident of Oahu and I oppose this bill because funding for the arts in Hawaii plays a critical role in preserving Hawaii's cultural heritage, supporting a local artistic community, and ultimately is an economic benefit to the state. The arts provide educational opportunities, promote tourism, and contribute to our economy in meaningful ways. I urge you to prioritize continued arts funding and reject this bill.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:13:04 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Gumapac	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, My name is Tara Gumapac and **I Oppose HB1378 HD2**. As an Arts Educator and Artist for over 25 years, the arts have impacted and shaped who I am as a person, teacher and advocate today. I have been in the Department of Education for over 15 years, a practicing artist and business owner for over 25 years and the arts helped me get through many personal journeys in my life and I know have helped our youth get through tough times in theirs.

If you take away this funding, you are taking away:

-Art in Public Places Program – A program acquires and commissions artworks for public spaces, integrating visual art into state buildings to enrich Hawai‘i’s cultural environment;

-Capitol Modern (formerly the Hawai‘i State Art Museum) – Located in downtown Honolulu, this museum showcases a diverse collection of public artworks, offering educational and cultural experiences for residents and visitors.

- Maintenance and Conservation – The fund ensures the upkeep, repair, and restoration of public artworks, preserving Hawai‘i's cultural heritage for future generations.

- Educational Initiatives, including Artists-in-the-Schools (AITS) – This program connects professional artists with students, offering hands-on, culturally relevant arts experiences to ensure access to arts education statewide.

You are taking away our voices. You are taking away the opportunity to express who we are as people. Many of our youth cannot write or express how they feel in words, but art makes you feel who they are people. It helps you connect and create relationships with one another. It works the kinesthetic and the psyche of people to connect with their emotions and feel what it’s like to live in the artists shoes.

Taking away funding also takes away students ability to get into industry jobs like Graphic Designers, Engineers, Automobile builders, Fashion designers...the whole industry that is our world is shaped and formed in same way by ART, CREATIVITY AND INNOVATIVE THINKING.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:15:18 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eren Star Padilla	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am opposing this measure on behalf of my high school art students, colleagues from McKinley HS Art Dept and myself, a visual artist. There should be NO funding cuts for the arts in any way shape or form. We bring our students to the museums annually, and work hard to collaborate with these esteemed organizations for authentic, meaningful, cultural and civic experiences. Just in the past 3 years, Mt art students have visited Capitol MODERN, displayed art there, participated with Honolulu Contemporary in an exclusive exhibition along side Hawaii's top practicing artists, we have worked with HOMA on "Home of the Tigers" exhibition this past winter, also displaying student work there, and have many other amazing experiences too long to list here. The funding for arts should be INCREASED including protection the museum campuses throughout the state. What's more, artist spaces, galleries and studios are rapidly disappearing because of the high cost of living and rent. The legislature should not only fund art purchases with 1% revenue from all new construction and public use buildings, but support artists and non for profits by allowing zoning for mixed use spaces, live work space, cheaper and more available access to empty or unused commercial spaces, and of course sponsor grants and awards for exemplary artists. Do NOT cut the arts! Thank you.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:32:16 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eric Chang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislators,

I am a performing artist, performing arts organizer, a previous recipient of the SFCA Folk Arts Apprenticeship Award, and president of the Hawai'i Museums Association.

I submitted initial testimony in strong support of HB1378, **but now oppose HB1378 HD2 in its current form.**

I still strongly believe that enabling SFCA to provide direct support to performing arts activities would make an enormous impact in projects involving preservation, innovation, and collaboration across Hawai'i's multicultural landscape. **But not at the expense of restricting SFCA's most stable and reliable source of funding: the one percent from state capital improvement projects.**

I admire and applaud the lawmakers whose intent is to annually fund both visual and performing arts at levels that strongly fuel Hawai'i's creative economy. However, the one percent law is crucial to providing consistent support that does not leave the arts and culture sector vulnerable to the whims of future legislators. The one percent is a long-term commitment to the deep value and unwavering support of arts and culture in our community.

In 1967, Hawai'i became the first state in the nation to adopt a percent-for-art law with the enactment of the Art in State Buildings Law, expanded in 1989 with the Works of Art Special Fund. This landmark legislation, a source of great pride in Hawai'i, inspired governments around the world to pass similar legislation to support and sustain arts in their communities.

The spirit of HB1378 – to create new funding for performing arts – would have a transformational impact on communities across Hawai'i. **However, I oppose this amended bill because it severely restricts SFCA's most reliable source of funding, and threatens its future.** I urge you to not support this bill.

Mahalo for your time and dedicated service,

Aloha,

Eric Chang

Honolulu, Hawai'i

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:33:20 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jodie Chock	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is unfortunate to hear yet again that funds for the arts in Hawai'i are being compromised by the same leaders that we hoped to look to for support. As a public school visual arts educator, the arts are not only the livelihood of my career, they are my entire life. I became a teacher for my students because I am passionate about the arts, especially since I have seen student lives literally saved by the arts. The arts provide emotional support and communication for those who struggle to have their voices heard. Please do not take this aspect away from the people who need it the most.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:45:59 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hailey Tanaka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

please do not approve this bill. Art must be protected for everyone and future generations to come.

thank you,

Hailey

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:56:29 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
maura fujihira	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

hello, it is important now more than ever to keep consistent funding for arts and culture. i oppose HB1378 HD2. aloha, maura

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:58:17 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teig Grennan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Opposition to HB 1378-HD2

I am writing to oppose this bill **HB 1378-HD2**. Now is not the time to experiment with public arts funding. I urge legislators to vote “no” on this bill which includes proposed shifts in funding for the SFCA in order to eliminate its existing protections from funding cuts in the future. We all know that if moved to general funds, the arts will be the first budget legislators will cut.

This is an unpopular move by a select members of the legislature, and their attempts to bypass public input or knowledge about the nature of **HB1378-HD2** speak volumes for their intentions behind what they are proposing. Do not evict arts funding from its present home with false promises of a new space to live, knowing the new home is scheduled for demolition. The public supports and loves the arts. Don't allow such vital programs to be shifted towards more vulnerable funding sources when they are already protected for good reasons.

Sincerely,

Teig Grennan

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:59:52 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pononui Cabrinha	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and urge you to protect and stand up for the arts!

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 10:08:49 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amaya Eckel	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in opposition with this, and in agreement with the Hawaii Arts Council, in that “While HB 1378-HD2 includes some positive provisions, it ultimately **threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding** by dismantling the **Works of Art Special Fund**—Hawai‘i’s only **dedicated, reliable** funding source for the arts.”

With Aloha,

AE

Teacher, Musician, Writer, and Advocate for the Arts

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 10:15:03 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter Powlison	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Yamashita and Lee's mysterious vendetta against arts funding continues - for some reason - with the addendums and edits added to an otherwise arts-friendly bill. Restricting the SFCA's ability to use the works of art special fund, and reducing that fund, is unacceptable in a democratic state in 2025. It's not good at any time, but especially now, with the Fed gone haywire, the promise of general fund money in this bill is looking more and more dodgy. I have worked in and with many arts organizations, patrons, publications, etc. over the years and have never seen an organization of this size that has the ability to directly fund and help so many different artists and arts organizations as the Hawaii SFCA. This organization should be (and rightfully IS) a point of civic pride, and these persistent bills from Kyle Yamashita and Chris Lee, which consistently bring the community together in protest, are tone-deaf, unwelcome, and seem at this point malicious. I strongly oppose this bill.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 10:37:31 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
George Davis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- **No Permanent Funding:** The bill offers a temporary \$4 million allocation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027—with no commitment beyond that.
- **Uncertain Future:** General funds and federal grants are subject to cuts and shifting priorities, leaving arts funding vulnerable.
- **Loss of a Lifeline:** The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured that Hawai'i's arts sector remains resilient, even during economic downturns. This bill dismantles that safety net.
- **False Promises:** Short-term funding gains are not worth sacrificing long-term stability. This bill weakens the arts ecosystem instead of strengthening it.

HB1378-HD2 Written Testimony from Elizabeth Baxter
Submitted 3/12/2025

Aloha e, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the TCA committee,

Thank you for your service to the State of Hawaii.

I am writing to respectfully **oppose HB1378-HD2**, scheduled for hearing on Thursday, March 13, at 3:15 pm.

At a time of great uncertainty in state and federal funding for all public essentials, HB1378-HD2 pours salt into the wound and dismantles a critical safety net for local arts workers, artists, our creative economy, and, most importantly, the communities we serve, from keiki to kupuna.

While at face value, this bill appears positive, its long-term impact is debilitating to the people of Hawaii. In the bill, temporary general funds are allocated for FY26 and FY27, but there is no commitment beyond that. Furthermore, on March 10, 2025, House Finance Chair, Representative Kyle Yamashita, spoke about the state budget with Hawaii News Now, saying, "What we can see, the number is probably going to go down." Senate Ways and Means chair Donovan Dela Cruz concurred that hundreds of millions may need to be trimmed from the budget for state programs. (Source: [Recession fears could dent state budget](#)).

If this bill is passed and moves state funding for arts programs and SFCA staff salaries out of the Works of Art Special Fund and into general funds, and then in the final FY26 FY27 budget those general funds are cut, we will be robbing keiki of critical arts education programs, devastating hundreds of workers in the creative economy of contracts and jobs, and sending a message that the state of Hawaii devalues culture and arts.

I know the members of this committee care about the people of Hawaii. In alignment with that value, please do not pass HB1378-HD2.

Mahalo for receiving my testimony,

Elizabeth Baxter

11 March 2025

To: Chair Kapela and Members of the Committee

Re: In **OPPOSITION** to **HB 1378-HD2**,
relating to the **State Foundation on Culture and the Arts**

I am writing in **strong opposition to HB 1378-HD2**, that **threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding** by dismantling the **Works of Art Special Fund**—Hawai'i's only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts. Instead, it replaces this funding with federal and general funds, which are not guaranteed and will compete with other state priorities like housing, education, and healthcare.

The Works of Art Special Fund currently serves as a dedicated, reliable funding stream for the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) ensuring consistent, year-to-year support for the Art in Public Places Program, the Capitol Modern Museum, and grants to support artists and cultural programming statewide.

HB 1378-HD2 would significantly alter funding for the arts by capping the revenue and moving SFCA's operational funding away from this dedicated source, and would instead rely on general fund appropriations and federal grants. This change would create serious uncertainty because general fund appropriations are not guaranteed year to year and are subject to competing state budget priorities. Additionally, federal funds are also unpredictable, particularly under the policies of the current administration.

Eliminating the Works of Art Special Fund as a stable, recurring source of support jeopardizes long-term investments in public art, artist grants, and cultural programs across Hawai'i, placing SFCA's core work at the mercy of unpredictable funding cycles.

Like any business, arts and culture depend on sustainable support, like the dedicated special fund. The arts are more than creative expression – they are a major economic driver in Hawai'i. More than 20,000 Hawai'i residents work in the creative economy, contributing to a \$3.3 billion industry that fuels small businesses across the state.

Federal funding for arts and culture is facing uncertainty, with potential cuts that could reduce overall support for the creative sector. Now is not the time to take risks with state funding or amend the Works of Art Special Fund, which has provided a stable, dedicated source of arts funding for decades.

At a moment when federal support is in jeopardy, Hawai'i has an opportunity to stand strong in its commitment to arts, culture, and heritage—not weaken it. I strongly urge you to oppose HB 1378-HD2.

Respectfully,

Erin Palmer
206 852-8653
1975 Judd Hillside
Honolulu, HI 96822

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:02:44 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glorianne Garza	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

Key Points

1. **HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai'i's creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
2. **General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
3. **Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai'i's Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawai'i's arts and culture sector.

Glorianne K Garza

Artist,

Volcano, Hawai'i

Hawai'i State Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

Re: Hearing on HB1378-HD2 – Thursday, March 13, 2025

Date: March 12, 2025

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Bruna Stude, Artist, Kaua'i

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Bruna Stude, and I am an artist living in Kaua'i. I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens arts and culture funding in Hawai'i by eliminating the Works of Art Special Fund—our only dependable resource for arts funding.

I urge you to **oppose HB1378-HD2** and protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported Hawai'i's arts and cultural ecosystem for decades. Now is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Thriving societies recognize the importance of investing in the arts, as they reflect our identity and connect us across generations. Museums and cultural organizations provide invaluable insights that enrich our understanding of the world.

Engaging with the arts enhances community well-being, and by prioritizing creativity, we invest in a brighter future for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your commitment to supporting Hawai'i's arts and culture sector. Securing sustainable arts funding is essential so that future generations can continue to experience the profound benefits that art brings to our lives.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Bruna Stude
Artist, Kaua'i

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:12:03 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
caroline holmes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB 1378-HD2 proposes capping the revenue and shifting SFCA’s operational funding away from this dedicated source and instead relies on general fund appropriations and federal grants. This shift creates serious uncertainty: • General fund appropriations are not guaranteed year to year and are subject to competing state budget priorities. • Federal funds are also unpredictable, particularly under the policies of the Trump administration. By eliminating the Works of Art Special Fund as a stable, recurring source of support, HB 1378-HD2 jeopardizes long-term investments in public art, artist grants, and cultural programs that are key parts of Hawaii economy and cultural sustenance.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:22:11 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aerin Turnquist Vanhala	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to strongly oppose HB1378 HD2. Capitol Modern is more than just a space—it is a vital hub for the LGBTQIA+ community, a cornerstone of artistic expression, and a provider of free cultural enrichment for all. This bill threatens to dismantle a place that fosters inclusivity, creativity, and community engagement.

Hawaii’s arts and culture must be protected, not diminished. I urge you to vote against HB1378 HD2 and stand with those who believe in the power of art to bring people together.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards, Aerin Turnquist Vanhala

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:22:32 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelsey Angel Baehrens	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Kelsey Angel Baehrens. I'm a professional actor, musician, theater director, and producer from Kailua, O'ahu. I'm writing to you today from Los Angeles, where I'm performing at East West Players, the oldest Theater of Color (not to mention the oldest Asian theater!) in the country.

I consider myself an O'ahu legacy artist. My parents, Angela Angel and Scott Baehrens, are artists themselves who were either raised in or entrenched themselves in Hawai'i arts communities. My mother graduated from Leeward Community College's renowned theater program with local arts heroes like Roslyn Catracchia, Reiko Ho, Patrick Fujioka, and the late great Lisa Matsumoto. She and my father co-created Excel Entertainment, a precursor for 'Ōhi'a Productions, whose original musicals like Once Upon One Noddah Time and The Princess and the Iso Peanut are, in my opinion, among our crown jewels of locally grown theater. My parents were also documentary filmmakers, who traveled to Micronesia to help preserve the endangered cultures there. They built an impactful arts program at Waipahu High School in the 90s called SMILE. My father produced shows for the Waikīkī Blue Note, and for decades, my mom served 'Ōlelo Community Television as a camera operator, producer, and brilliant COO.

I remember being a toddler basking in the joy of the theater and music spaces they created, at the iconic Hawai'i Theater, at Waipahu High School, at Ala Moana Center for shows like Imagination, Wishes and Wings, and Christmas Gift of Aloha, being taken to Honolulu Theater for Youth productions, and ultimately realizing the arts were my destiny, too. Hawaii continued to build me up as I grew. I attended Mid-Pacific School of the Arts, 7th through 12th grade, on a full ride scholarship. My confidence bloomed with local programs for kids like PAPA and Allegra Performing Arts. I cut my professional acting and directing teeth in productions with Hawai'i Theater, 'Ōhi'a Productions, Hawai'i Shakespeare Festival, Manoa Valley Theater, and KOA Theater.

Today, I'm a working artist who thrives solely on the money I make in the arts (on the continent). I am living my and my parents' dream. I am also a co-creator of a new production company called the Talk Story Collective, a team of kanaka and kama'āina wahine producing Hawaiian plays and storytelling arts in communities across the country. Last year, we co-produced our debut theatrical piece in Las Vegas called "Hawai'i Talk Story", where Hawai'i-born actors traveled from 8 states just to be together, to speak pidgin on stage together, and to bring a piece of home to Hawaiians in Vegas. I cannot tell you how meaningful that event was for me, for all of us.

I dream of returning home soon and planting my roots back in Hawaiian soil. Without my foundation in the local arts community, my career would not exist. I need to give back to the place that raised me with such love and joy and encouragement. In order to realize my ambitions to grow our local theater and music scenes, I will need funding from my state government. There is no getting around that. I know firsthand the difficulty of fundraising, the grind in getting folks to believe in your mission as much as you do. You probably understand that feeling better than anyone. Times are hard, and artists are always among the first to feel it. Yet artists are still essential to social infrastructure, as educators, as keepers of culture, as activists, as thought leaders. A friend of mine likes to say that art changes culture and culture changes policy.

While HB1378 includes positive provisions that I believe head in the right direction, it ultimately threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund. It is our only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts. Replacing this funding with federal and general funds, especially now, can only reduce our funding as it will compete with very high priorities like housing, education, and healthcare.

Thank you for reading my testimony and for your tireless work for Hawai'i. It does not go unappreciated with me and my community. Please reconsider HB1378. Artists want to come home to Hawai'i to do their work, and we need local art and artists now more than ever.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:23:44 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Iden	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 13

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Tara Iden

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Tara Iden, and I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Key Points

HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts

The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without this fund, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, putting programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.

General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement

The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be redirected to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.

Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai‘i’s Identity and Economy

The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. Stable, dedicated funding is crucial to ensuring that arts and culture continue to thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. Now is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your commitment to supporting Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,

Tara Iden

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:31:41 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lanakila Makua	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

The HSFCA is very important in preserving the Culture and Arts in Hawaii! In 1995-96 I was a student representative for a HSFCA At Baldwin High School. This experience set me up for a professional career in the arts. I learned the business side by watching the process over three years. Recently, under Hulilau Wilson we were able to provide steady work for three years with 8-10 employees for a specialty art project on Maui. Some of whom were Lahina fire survivors. The employees were grateful to have this work while working though their grieving process.

It is also important for local artist to help foreigners understand the traditional and contemporary art of Hawaii as it has evolved through support from the HSFCA. Any funding cuts are tragic to our continuous evolution of traditional and contemporary arts of Hawaii!

Mahalo,

Lanakila Makua

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:32:06 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ka'imina'auao	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha esteemed members of the committee,

My name is Ka'imina'auao, and I am a proud 'ōiwi of Hawaii, born and raised in this beautiful state. As a performing artist, I have found my calling and a safe space to self-actualize through the arts. The arts have not only allowed me to contribute to our community but have also provided countless others with a platform to express themselves and connect with one another.

I stand before you today to express my strong opposition to Bill 1378 HB, which proposes only a temporary allocation of funding for the state foundation on culture and the arts for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, with no commitment beyond that period. This bill, while offering short-term support, fails to address the long-term needs of our vibrant arts community.

The arts are an essential part of Hawaii's cultural fabric. They offer a means for individuals to share their stories, preserve our rich heritage, and foster a sense of unity among diverse groups. As a performing artist, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of the arts in the lives of our youth. Through arts education and community programs, young people are given the opportunity to develop their talents, build confidence, and find their voice.

Long-term funding for the arts is crucial to ensure that future generations of artists and the youth we mentor have the resources and support they need to thrive. Temporary funding, as proposed in Bill 1378 HB, leaves our arts programs vulnerable to the whims of shifting priorities and budget cuts. General funds and federal grants are often subject to reductions, making it difficult to sustain consistent support for the arts. Short-term funding gains are not worth sacrificing long-term stability.

Moreover, Bill 1378 HB dismantles the Works of Art Special Fund, which is Hawaii's only dedicated funding source for the arts. This fund has been instrumental in providing consistent support for arts programs across the state. Its removal would leave a significant void, jeopardizing the future of arts funding in Hawaii.

By committing to long-term funding, we can provide stability and security for our arts organizations, allowing them to plan and execute programs that have lasting impacts. This commitment will ensure that the arts continue to be a vital part of our community, offering a safe space for self-expression, creativity, and personal growth.

In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider the provisions of Bill 1378 HB and advocate for a more sustainable approach to funding the arts in Hawaii. Our community deserves a steadfast commitment to the arts, one that recognizes their value and ensures their continued presence for generations to come.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ka'imina'auao

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:36:04 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Edwards	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I writing to you to oppose this bill that provides critical funding for Arts & Crafts Programs here in Hawai'i. We need these fundings in order to provide essential support, services, and tools to artists and programs here throughout the Hawaiian Islands.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:52:42 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alison Week	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alison Week, and I am an independent filmmaker based in Hawai‘i. While I strongly support funding for the arts, I urge you to oppose HB1378 HD2, as it threatens the long-term sustainability of arts and culture in our state.

The Works of Art Special Fund has been a vital, dedicated source of support for the arts, ensuring stability even in times of economic uncertainty. Replacing it with general and federal funds—neither of which are guaranteed—puts our creative sector at risk. While the bill offers a temporary allocation, it fails to provide a long-term solution, leaving Hawai‘i’s artists and cultural institutions vulnerable to shifting state priorities.

As a filmmaker, I have seen firsthand how consistent arts funding can foster creative storytelling, cultural preservation, and economic opportunities for our local creative industries. I urge you to continue striving for solutions that provide lasting, sustainable support for Hawai‘i’s arts community.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Alison Week

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:59:02 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daisy Church	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Daisy Church**, and I am writing to strongly oppose HB1378-HD2 in its current form. I am an **animator and artist** and a **professor of cinematic arts at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa**. My professional and personal life are deeply connected to the arts, and I have witnessed firsthand the profound impact that stable arts funding has on our community, our students, and the creative sector as a whole.

While HB1378-HD2 may appear to create new funding for the performing arts, it does so at the expense of the **Works of Art Special Fund**—a critical and reliable funding source that supports arts and culture programs across the entire state of Hawai‘i.

The Works of Art Special Fund is a Lifeline

The Works of Art Special Fund has long served as a vital safety net for Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector, ensuring that even during economic downturns, the creative sector can survive and thrive. As an artist and professor, I’ve seen how this funding supports not only professional artists but also students and emerging creatives, helping them develop their skills and contribute to Hawai‘i’s rich cultural fabric. HB1378-HD2 threatens to undermine this stability by diverting resources away from the fund, jeopardizing long-term support for arts and culture programs statewide.

Why This Bill is Harmful

1. **Temporary Funding at Best** – HB1378-HD2 offers a short-term \$4 million general fund appropriation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, but with no guarantee of future funding. Once this temporary funding runs out, the arts sector will face increased vulnerability.
2. **Uncertain Future for the Arts** – With federal funding to the state already shrinking, general funds will likely be prioritized for essential services like health, education, housing, and transportation—leaving arts and culture at the bottom of the list.
3. **Dismantling a Critical Safety Net** – The Works of Art Special Fund has provided consistent and stable support for Hawai‘i’s creative sector. Weakening this fund would leave arts and culture programs exposed to future budget cuts and funding shortfalls.

4. **No Real Gain for the Arts** – In exchange for temporary funding, the bill sacrifices long-term stability. The potential short-term boost does not justify the long-term harm it would cause to the arts and culture sector.

Why This Matters

Arts and culture are essential to Hawai‘i’s identity, economy, and community well-being. They foster creativity, preserve traditions, drive tourism, and contribute to economic development. As an artist and educator, I see how arts programs enrich the lives of students and create opportunities for local artists to thrive. At a time when arts and culture are central to community healing and resilience, now is not the time to gamble with funding. Weakening the Works of Art Special Fund will have lasting negative consequences for Hawai‘i’s creative community.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote **NO** on HB1378-HD2. Protect the Works of Art Special Fund and ensure the long-term stability of Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Daisy Church

Animator, Artist, and Professor of Cinematic Arts
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 12:05:05 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
alec singer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB1378, a bill that I strongly oppose as an artist and facilitator on O‘ahu. Supporting the arts means supporting cultures and communities that brings to life the places, spaces, and ideas that permeate through us. Everyone is a creative person, and fostering that inherent ability, whether latent or not, brings much value to the life we live.

Funding for the arts isn't just about making art, but also about the archiving of our individual and collective history through a fantastic lens, and the presentation of our past in a way that uniquely aligns with our future. This bill directly opposes such an interaction with who we are as people, where we come from, and how we interact and support ‘ā‘īna.

We must understand the reasons behind the folks who are suggesting this bill, because if they truly believe that cutting the already minimal amount of support for state funded arts and culture here in Hawai‘i is beneficial, we need an explanation. It is not about saving money and cutting costs, there is something buried within them, that if not uncovered, will continue to come out in ways that are detrimental to the people they are supposed to serve.

Good luck, and once again, I strongly oppose HB1378.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 12:14:42 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kiara Womack	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Committee members and public,

How can this be happening again. Last year, we, the arts community, stood before you, united, opposing this destabilizing of the Arts Special Fund. Why am I seeing the same people on this committee, who claimed last year to be moved by our deepest protestations of this bill. Do not take arts away from public schools. Do not take arts programming away from local people. Stop assaulting arts for the public in Hawai‘i. As a teaching artist, I am heartened when I share with young haumana standing on Capitol Modern grounds that this is our museum; this space is for us, like your school and public library, and park. Arts are for the people. Bills like this make art elitist and only for those in private schools; only for those who can afford to pay out of pocket to enter museums. As a teaching artist for Artists in the Schools I do not take for granted that sometimes I am providing the only arts programming for the year for some grade levels at public schools. This bill threatens to destroy our carefully constructed arts communities. It threatens the livelihood of arts educators who may be forced to seek work on the continent if this bill is passed. It is shameful to threaten arts education for keiki. The arts are for all.

A‘ole.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 12:25:24 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Catherine Seemann	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While this bill initially showed promise, it has evolved into a serious threat to sustainable arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i. Although HB1378-HD2 appears to create new funding for performing arts, it does so by severely restricting the Works of Art Special Fund, a critical funding source that supports arts and culture programs across the entire state. I strongly oppose HB 1378-HD2 in its current form as it threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 12:32:34 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Allison OConnor	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill leaves future funding for Arts in Hawaii at risk, relying on uncertain grants from government. The Works of Art Special Fund has ensure support for arts in Hawaii. Access to art and artistic practices, for both children and adults, leads to improved mental and physical health, this will lead to happier and healthier residents. Cutting funding for the arts after 2027 is a step backward. I strongly oppose this bill.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 12:36:05 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lahela Maio	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am strongly opposed to this bill as it threatens the vitality of arts and culture funding. The dismantling of the Works of Art Special Fund will directly impact our entire lāhui and community here in Hawai‘i, especially Native Hawaiians and other indigenous peoples/cultures. The youth will directly feel the impacts in schools and other educational programs, as engaging in expressive and unique learning methods stimulates better growth and shapes cultural identity. As a kanaka Hawai‘i myself, I would not be as connected to my culture and history if not for learning hana no‘eau, or Hawaiian arts and crafts. It has allowed me to grow as a practitioner and contributor to my lāhui, engage in the receiving of and passing on of ancestral knowledge and practices, and preserve the heritage and history of Hawai‘i through hands-on application and learning. If this bill is passed, it will create uncertainty and instability within our communities, not to mention already during an unprecedented time for federal and general funding. Instead of bringing communities together, it will forcefully divide us all and pit us against other state priorities, like housing and education, to struggle to get a small piece of the whole pie. The dismantling of this Works of Art Special Fund will also see its effects in the loss of beloved community events and programs that have been sustained for generations and have become internationally renowned and recognized as capturing the essence of Hawai‘i and its Native Hawaiian people and communities. To approve of this bill is to approve of any and all future defects that will trickle down to the youth and those most affected by its loss.

OPPOSITION TO HB 1378-HD2

Stability in funding for Arts and Culture is essential in this moment and into the future.

Music, dance, performance and the visual arts, from elementary school onward into our collective senior years, are core to our humanity.

Our legislature established SFCA in 1965 (two generations ago) to "promote, perpetuate, preserve, and encourage culture and the arts, history and the humanities as central to the quality of life of the people of Hawai'i".

Try to imagine the absence of that vision!

Without Arts and Culture funding would First Fridays in Hilo be more or less viable?

Hilo community art venues, the Wailoa Center and East Hawaii Cultural Center, on opening nights are packed with visitors. Local establishments between Ponahawai, Kamehameha Avenue, and Waianuenue Ave, benefit from the economic multiplier effect of these events.

Significant boosts to our local economy follow each and every art presentation and performance at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, the Kahilu Theater, the Donkey Mill Art Center, and the Volcano Art Center.

Dedicated funding for the Arts is an essential element of Good Government for the People.

I sincerely hope that we will be wise enough to continue this legacy for our keiki, and for the local businesses serving our communities.

Na'u me ke aloha, na

Michael D. Marshall
Professor, UH Hilo Art Department
SFCA Commissioner at-large

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 12:49:21 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monica Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 12, 2025

Aloha Honorable Chairman Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the Hawai'i State Legislature Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts,

My name is Monica Lee, and I was born in Hilo on Hawai'i Island, grew up in Salt Lake and Moanalua on O'ahu, and now live in Waikīkī. As a concerned arts staff member and culture advocate, I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill HB 1378, HD2 RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS, which poses a significant threat to the long-term stability of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

My primary concern stems from the bill's dismantling of the Works of Art Special Fund. This fund represents Hawai'i's only dedicated and reliable source of funding for the arts. Replacing it with federal and general funds creates a precarious situation. Federal funds are subject to fluctuating national priorities, and general funds will inevitably be pitted against other critical state needs such as housing, education, and healthcare. This shift introduces a level of uncertainty that jeopardizes the consistent support necessary for a thriving arts and culture sector.

The arts are not a luxury; they are an essential component of a healthy and vibrant society. In Hawai'i, the arts play a crucial role in:

Economic Impact: According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the arts and cultural sector contributes billions to the state's economy annually, supporting thousands of jobs.

Education: Arts education has been proven to improve student engagement, critical thinking skills, and overall academic performance.

Cultural Preservation: Art forms like hula, mele, and visual arts are vital to preserving and transmitting Hawai'i's unique cultural heritage.

Community Building: Arts initiatives foster social cohesion, bring diverse communities together, and enhance quality of life.

Personally, I have witnessed the profound and transformative power of art. In these divisive times, art serves as a bridge, facilitating crucial conversations and fostering healing. It transcends language barriers and political divides, offering a space for shared understanding and emotional connection. The arts provide an outlet for expression, a means of processing trauma, and a

catalyst for positive change. To undermine the funding that makes these experiences possible would be a grave disservice to our communities.

The Works of Art Special Fund has provided a stable foundation for arts organizations and artists throughout the state. Dismantling this fund in favor of unreliable funding sources will create instability, hindering the ability of arts organizations to plan long-term, develop innovative programs, and serve their communities effectively.

Therefore, **I urge you to reject HB 1378-HD2** and instead explore alternative solutions that strengthen, rather than dismantle, Hawai'i's dedicated arts funding. We must prioritize the preservation and growth of our arts and culture sector, ensuring that its benefits are accessible to all residents of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Monica Lee

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 12:50:46 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
susan hogan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1378 HD2. Passage of this bill will effectively destroy the HSFCA. It puts in jeopardy long term funding for the arts and restricts the Works of Art Special Fund drastically. It allows the Art in Public Places Progeam to continue to collect art but does away with guaranteed funding to care for it and provide interpretation necessary for the taxpayer to enjoy it.

Hawai'i's creative community will suffer deeply if this bill is passed. Programs, jobs, and future opportunities will be erased.

Do not kill Hawaii's landmark arts program legislation. Mahalo.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 12:51:20 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rich Richardson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Rich Richardson, I live in Kalihi Valley and have been a resident of Hawaii for 32 years. I have worked at Hui No’eau on Maui, my own gallery in Chinatown, ran The ARTS at Marks Garage for 15 years, and co-founded First Friday and Chinatown Artists Lofts. I have juried shows and shown my own work at many different venues and really appreciate the tradition of support from the Works of Art Special Fund.

Arts bring people together to celebrate positive achievements, swap cultural influence and push traditional practices into the future. Creativity, innovation and the arts are linked and their economic impact is huge. Jobs, urban renewal, sustainable tourism all benefit from continued support.

I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i. Mahalo!

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 12

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Nawahine Lanzilotti

Affiliation: Performing artist

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

To Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nawahine Lanzilotti. I am an O‘ahu resident, independent performing artist, and Founder / President of the local performing arts nonprofit Pulse Oceania dedicated to advancing contemporary performance in Hawai‘i. I **strongly oppose HB1378-HD2**.

Growing up as a Native Hawaiian performing artist from O‘ahu, I never thought it would be possible to return home as a professional performer because of the limited resources and opportunities here. As I got older, this reality motivated me to return home and start a nonprofit specifically devoted to changing this for future local performers so they would not have to be displaced from their own home.

Last week, I joined fellow Hawai‘i delegates including visual and performing arts professionals from the DOE, University of Hawai‘i, State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, and the Hawai‘i Arts Alliance in DC to speak with our federal representatives about the great contributions of our diverse artistic community to our state economic and social resilience.

Gaining a deeper understanding of the fragile federal funding landscape made it clear that **this bill is exactly the opposite of what our community needs for artists to thrive**. The committee’s attempt to advance this divisive legislation that establishes performing arts funds while threatening the state arts funding is extremely unfortunate. HB1378-HD2 would only destabilize the entire creative community, hurting smaller arts organizations and communities on our neighbor islands who rely solely on state arts funding, while also greatly compromising arts education in the state.

At a time when federal arts funding is deeply uncertain, our state legislators should be doing all they can to protect arts funding locally and honor the immense role arts and artists play in Hawai‘i’s future.

Best–

Nawahine Lanzilotti

Founder / President, Pulse Oceania

Mānoa, O‘ahu

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 1:19:23 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Billie Jean Marks	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Opposition to HB 1378

March 12, 2025

I live on Lanai and have been a long-time supporter of the Lanai Art Center in various capacities, including serving on their Board for many years. I currently am an active volunteer in the Lanai Art Center Gallery.

I am writing today in opposition to HB 1378. The structure of this bill would effectively rebalance funding sources for foundations that support our Art Center, putting our funding at risk in the future.

The Lanai Art Center (LAC) is a non-profit organization central for disseminating art education and economic opportunity on Lanai. We maintain a working ceramic studio and woodshop for the use of our community members and students at Lanai High and Elementary School, as well as offering a multitude of classes and activities throughout the year. Our gallery is volunteer-staffed and provides an outlet for our artists and students and provides needed revenue for LAC. That being said, we rely heavily on grants from funding organizations that would be impacted by HB 1378.

Again, please consider Hawaiian rural populations. We have few resources at our disposal, and we rely on just a handful of creative outlets. Our art programs offer our community a creative and economic venue. Please do not put our funding at risk.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 1:22:21 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carley Shimizu	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing this testimony to oppose HB1378-HD2 because it jeopardizes long-term funding for the arts. The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai'i's creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk. Arts in Hawai'i are a critical piece to our culture and society. Hawai'i artists need support, not cuts, in this economy. More than 20,000 Hawai'i residents work in the creative economy, contributing to a \$3.3 billion industry that fuels small businesses across the state. Cutting funds to our arts will impact not only the artists and individuals, but also our culture and heritage here in Hawai'i. Having the support to create art is one of the key ways we share our stories and culture with visitors and future generations. I have been very lucky to be immersed in the plethora of artworks of Hawai'i throughout my childhood here; it's the reason why I wanted to become an artist. Thank you for considering my testimony to oppose HB1378 HD2.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 1:25:29 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelly Ciurej	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill threatens the works of art funding which is hawaii's only dedicated arts funding source. This bill is detrimental to the consistent funding of arts and should not be passed.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 1:30:17 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shelly Choy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly oppose Bill HB1378 HD2. Our state needs to focus more on arts in schools, community art organizations, teacher development in the arts, and just ART in general! I am a printmaker located on the island of Oahu. Thank you for reading my testimony.

Shelly Choy

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 1:51:19 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Tengan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While I fully support funding and grants for the Performing Arts, I strongly oppose HB 1378-HD2 as it is written, which seeks to eliminate the Works of Art Special Fund as a stable, recurring source of support. This bill jeopardizes long-term investments in public art, artist grants, and cultural programs across Hawai'i, placing SFCA's core work at the mercy of unpredictable funding cycles and the whims of politicians who like to use the arts and political bargaining chip.

This bill, as written, seeks to divide our arts and culture community and attempts to obfuscate the author's desire to gut the Work of Art Special Fund. This is highly disappointing on the part of our legislators. I urge our legislators to support policies that strengthen, rather than weaken, Hawai'i's investment in the arts overall.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 1:54:12 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
annie cusick wood	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the Committee,

As a strong supporter of and participant in arts and culture, we urge you to **oppose** HB1378-HD2.

I have worked with Honolulu theatre for Youth and Hawaii Education of the Arts (HEARTS) for 19 years serving the children of Hawaii. Our children, schools and their families benefit from many of the programs offered by arts organizations that receive support from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, and the Artists in the Schools program is vital to child development. HB1378-HD2 threatens the support of these organizations and slashes the artists in the schools program.

Funding for the arts is already under threat from the Federal government, let our state be a beacon of hope and support arts and culture instead of hurting this vital resource. With funding cuts and a possible recession in our future, it is extremely important that there is dedicated funding to support the arts, as they are often the first thing cut if they can be. Imagine how bleak the life of a child where there is little or no experience of the beauty and cultural richness of art. Art and in particular childrens participation in the arts opens an opportunity for children to understand themselves in relation to the world and a chance to express themselves in ways that no other means can.

Instead of cutbacks, I urge Hawaii to prioritize surrounding our children with art of every kind, theatre, visual art, singing, dancing, etc. Everyone knows deep down that this makes for a much richer, fuller and harmonious life and community. That is what I know you all want for Hawaii - as i do too.

I appreciate how hard you work to support the people of Hawaii, and thank you for this opportunity to voice my concern.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Annie Cusick Wood

Re bill HB 1378-HD2

Aloha Legislators,

I am writing on behalf of myself & others who have been teaching Arts Education in Hawaii's elementary schools for the past 3 decades.

In particular, I am most concerned about Hilo's rural schools as well as Molokai's Mauna Loa , Kilohana & Kaunakakai schools. These children have almost no exposure to the arts. Access to the arts is vital for developing creative & critical thinking skills in young adults. In many rural schools, where resources are scarce & focus is often placed on core academia, children miss out on the opportunity to engage in artistic activities that foster emotional expression, problem solving & innovation.

Arts education provides a well rounded learning experience, helping improve in other areas such as literacy & mathematics while promoting cultural awareness.

The arts supports the well being & mental health in underserved areas.

In investing in the future of Hawaii's youth & ensuring that creativity remains a central component of their educational journey.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 2:16:36 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Mori	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose bill HB1378 HD2 as it stands today.

I feel that support for art is more important now than ever as we loose various types of governmental funding. Art is crucial for a healthy community.

Aloha,

Susan Mori

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 2:24:05 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Ann A Lentz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY oppose HB1378-HD2.

Please keep this critical funding of SFCA in place. Once removed it will never be restored.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 2:27:58 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell Gibson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I live in the 96740 zip code and I oppose HB1378 HD2 because it will compromise future funding for the arts and thereby compromise the health of our community. Mahalo. .

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 2:29:40 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chloe Hartwell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 12

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Chloe Hartwell

Affiliation: Hawai‘i Contemporary Board of Directors

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378

Testimony in Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Chloe Hartwell, and I am submitting testimony on behalf of myself and fellow Hawai‘i Contemporary board members in **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2**, which poses a significant threat to the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Hawai‘i Contemporary is a leading nonprofit dedicated to bringing people together through contemporary art, and our board members are deeply concerned about the impact of this bill on the arts ecosystem in Hawai‘i, which is vital to the preservation of our diverse cultural identity and the continued success of our local creative communities, economy, and public education.

Key Points

1. **This bill jeopardizes long-term arts funding.** The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai‘i’s already underfunded creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk. We must deepen our investment and commitment to arts & culture, not diminish it.
2. **Arts & Culture are critical to Hawai‘i’s identity and future.** The arts not only serve to preserve and share our cultural heritage, but they also contribute significantly to the state’s economy, educational system, and community well-being. To ensure that the arts continue to thrive and benefit Hawai‘i’s economy and cultural landscape, we must prioritize stable, dedicated funding.

3. **General funds do not guarantee future support for the arts.** While the bill proposes a temporary general fund appropriation, this is not a sustainable solution. There is no guarantee of future support, and with federal funding uncertainties, general funds are likely to be redirected. This would leave the arts with little to no funding and further jeopardize our future.

The Hawai'i Contemporary Board of Directors and our extended network are tremendously grateful for your commitment to supporting the arts. We appreciate and honor the contributions the Works of Art Special Fund has provided to Hawai'i's arts and culture, and for its critical role in the education and economic development of our home.

In Summary: We urge you to Oppose HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported Hawai'i's arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that supports diverse economic growth and allows our creative and cultural communities and youth in arts-integrated schools to flourish. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Mahalo,

Chloe Seto Hartwell, Hawai'i Contemporary Board Member
Wailupe, O'ahu

Piia Aarma, Board Chair

Maile Meyer, Vice-Chair

Kristen Chan

Gloria Lau

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 2:38:41 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Faryn Kogachi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 12, 2025

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Faryn Kogachi

Affiliation: Artist

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Faryn Kogachi. I'm a Honolulu resident. I'm an artist and provide my work to Mori Hawai'i in order to supplement my income. I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

The funding for the Arts in Hawaii is crucial to the well being of the community. It provides a venue for artists to show and sell their work and it offers opportunities for everyone to learn to express themselves artistically. It perpetuates Hawaii's traditional techniques in woodwork, fiber weaving, and incorporating island materials to create something beautiful.

Key Points

- 1. HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai'i's creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
- 2. General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
- 3. Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai'i's Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism,

education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawaii's arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,

Faryn Kogachi

Honolulu, HI

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 2:54:34 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie T.	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Given the current political climate, we are all angry. Defunding the Works of Art Special Fund is removing our rights to freedom of speech, which includes artistic expression, and will only make us angrier. The U.S. government is already defunding everything as much as they possibly could for personal gains without care for the people, so why threaten to take away the funding for the voices of Hawai'i? This is how people of all ages, especially children in school, share their experiences and culture within the community when their art is displayed in special gathering places such as Capital Modern. How many times do we have to fight for our freedom of expression? This is the second time that officials in charge want to pass a law to take away a special part of our community. This, being the second time to justify why protecting the Arts District and its funding is important to us, shows how the our state's elected officials do not value what the community cares about: preserving the culture and voice of the people. Passing this bill will only weaken the trust for those elected representatives, who swore they would protect the people.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 3:14:39 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lise Michelle Childers	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha all,

My name is Lise Michelle S. Childers, a resident of Honolulu, O‘ahu. I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2.

The funding for Arts in Hawai‘i is crucial to the health and well being of a community, providing a venue for members of community to share art, ideas, creative energy, as well as gather, connect and express themselves. It provides a place for people to learn crafts and build artistic practices that help to cultivate minds that can also help to build and improve the community that we exist in with one another. It provides a space for the collection of art in Hawai‘i, art of Hawaiian perspectives and island persepectives, and supports the livelihood of arts workers who have very specfic expertise to exhibit and preserve collected art. Public funding for arts supports arts education for children in Hawai‘i.

Works of Special Art Fund should be protected, as an important foundation that will allow for the flourishing of arts, community health, creative ecosystem, education. The deconstruction of such a foundation should be discouraged. I urge you to oppose HB1378-HD2.

Sincerely,

Lise Michelle S. Childers

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 3:15:05 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth Marcil	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition to HB 1378-HD2

Aloha, Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts,

I strongly oppose HB 1378-HD2, a bill that threatens the long-term stability of arts funding in Hawai‘i by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund. While I appreciate efforts to support the arts, replacing a dedicated funding source with temporary allocations and uncertain general funds puts the entire sector at risk.

As a teaching artist working directly with K-12 students, I integrate visual arts into STEM, project-based learning, and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programs. Through the Artists in the Schools (AITS) program, I bring hands-on, arts-integrated experiences into classrooms, engaging students in creative and critical thinking. My work aligns with the Kennedy Center’s definition of arts integration - “...an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both.” For example, I use the Engineering Design Process in STEM education to help students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills through visual art and paper engineering. In project-based learning, I have collaborated with teachers in Math, Life Science, English, and Social Studies, often partnering with community organizations to foster a deeper appreciation for Hawai‘i’s native species and the importance of conservation. In my SEL programs, I guide middle school students in navigating adolescence using CASEL’s Core Competencies—Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making—connecting these concepts to the Hero’s Journey, a framework they recognize from popular films and literature and can apply to their personal life journeys. The arts provide a bridge to understanding, confidence, and connection in ways that no other subject can replicate. This work benefits all students, but its impact has been especially profound in the wake of the **Lahaina fire**. For those who have suffered trauma and loss, arts education has been a **lifeline**, providing a safe space for students to process emotions, find their voice, and regain a sense of stability. The creative process fosters healing, resilience, and connection—critical elements in helping our communities rebuild.

Programs like Artists in the Schools (AITS) make these opportunities possible, ensuring students across Hawai‘i receive a well-rounded education. However, without a dedicated funding source like the Works of Art Special Fund, these programs face an uncertain future. General funds and

federal grants, while helpful, are not guaranteed and shift with changing priorities. The \$4 million allocation in HB 1378-HD2 for 2026 and 2027 is only a temporary fix—what happens after that? Without stable funding, arts education programs will be left in limbo, forcing schools and educators to scramble for resources year after year.

The arts are not an afterthought—they are essential to education, cultural preservation, and economic vitality. The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured that the arts remain accessible, even in times of economic hardship. Dismantling this fund would weaken Hawai‘i’s arts ecosystem rather than strengthen it.

I urge you to oppose HB 1378-HD2 and protect the future of the arts in Hawai‘i. A thriving arts sector benefits us all and deserves a funding model that reflects its lasting value.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Beth Marcil
Teaching Artist - HSFCA Teaching Artist Roster
808.283.3388
bethmarcil@gmail.com
www.artfromtheinsideout.com

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 3:36:07 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Ann Harada	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1378. And to quote from the statement by the Hawai'i Arts Alliance--"While this bill initially showed promise, it has evolved into a serious threat to sustainable arts and culture funding in Hawai'i. Although HB1378-HD2 appears to create new funding for performing arts, it does so by severely restricting the Works of Art Special Fund, a critical funding source that supports arts and culture programs across the entire state. The Hawai'i Arts Alliance strongly opposes HB 1378-HD2 in its current form."

Now more than ever, we need the arts. To continue expanding the quality of life here in the islands and to encourage our artists, our storytellers to develop Hawai'i's identity and culture. Mahalo.

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 4:29:32 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hyo Kwon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm a resident of Manoa district, mother of a 7 year old.

I'd like to submit a testimony in opposition to the bill HB1378 HD2. Public Art programs plays an essential role in the life and education of our communities and families and Art Special Fund needs to be protected.

As someone in the creative industry myself living in Oahu, I hear so many stories first hand how these public events and classes inspired younger children to grow up to be successful artists and designers, that in return make our community so much stronger, diverse and beautiful. Art, Music and Theatre is possibly the most effective way we can connect one another, reflect and learn about ourselves and strengthen as a community and I believe we need it more than ever as the very core of our value as a democratic society is constantly being thretened with every changing world.

Without Art Special Fund is critical, in sustaining our community of creatives, artists and educators and therefore must be protected by all means.

Mahalo,

Hyo Kwon

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 4:41:43 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Avalon Paradea	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Avalon Paradea, and I am an artist and educator from Waikōloa, Hawai‘i.

I am writing in **strong opposition to HB1378 HD2**, which threatens to **dismantle the Works of Art Special Fund** — the **only stable source of public funding for the arts in Hawai‘i**.

Without it, **cultural programs, jobs, and community access to the arts** will suffer, weakening the very fabric of who we are.

The arts are more than entertainment — they are **lifelines for cultural identity, mental well-being, and economic vitality**. As Hawai‘i faces increasing economic strain, housing insecurity, and federal job cuts, **art is what keeps communities hopeful and connected**. Now is not the time to reduce funding; it’s the time to invest in what heals and sustains us.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, **Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector generates over \$2.6 billion in economic activity annually** and supports **more than 22,000 jobs statewide**. Cutting the fund will not only hurt cultural preservation but also **undermine a key pillar of our economy**.

Furthermore, access to arts education has been linked to improved academic performance and reduced dropout rates, factors that contribute to lower crime rates. Studies have shown that students engaged in the arts are more likely to stay in school and develop essential life skills, reducing the likelihood of criminal behavior.

Art heals. Culture connects. Community thrives.

Please **OPPOSE HB1378 HD2** and **protect the Works of Art Special Fund** — our future generations, economy, and well-being depend on it.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Avalon Paradea

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 5:16:23 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellen Zanetos	Testifying for Hawai'i Department of Education	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Ellen Zanetos and I'm an Art Teacher on the big island at Hilo High School. I'm writing today to oppose HB1378. As a professtional art educator, I know and have witnessed first hand the postitive impact arts & culture has on this community. Just this past weekend I took a group of students to the East Hawai'i Cultural Center and they were amazed at the beautiful exhibition titled, Aloha Nō. Some of them even made comments that they have never seen artwork displayed like that and it was their favorite excursion of the school year. This bill threatens the long term financial support of arts & culture in Hawai'i, which in turn would negatively impact our keiki and community members. The arts are imbedded in Hawaiian culture and cutting funding would be detrimental. Mahalo for your consideration and reading my testimony.

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 4:59:57 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pua Heimuli	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I am writing in strong opposition to bill HB1378-HD2.

The Works of Art Special Fund is the backbone of our state's arts programs. It supports everything from public art installations to arts education in schools, and it helps preserve the cultural heritage of Hawai'i. Without this dedicated funding source, these art programs would have to rely on unpredictable federal and general funds in the next few years.

As someone who loves and participates in Hawai'i's vibrant art scene, I've seen firsthand the incredible impact this fund has on our community. I've attended countless art events, exhibitions, and performances across the islands, and I've seen how they bring people together and enrich our lives. The arts are not just a hobby or a pastime; they're a vital part of our economy and identity. They inspire young minds and make our communities more beautiful and engaging.

Please protect the Works of Art Special Fund by opposing this bill. Dedicated funding is essential for keeping the arts scene in Hawai'i thriving and ensuring that future generations can enjoy the same cultural richness and sense of place the arts provide.

Mahalo nui,

Pua Heimuli

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 5:33:43 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Linares`	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Brian Linares. I am a Honolulu resident and the founder of Exhibition Grid: A Contemporary Art Experience, LLC. Our organization is dedicated to fostering engagement with public art through guided experiences and educational programs. We also provide valuable gig work and training opportunities for emerging artists, students, and art professionals through the Good Jobs Hawaii program. I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i, and directly impacts the ability for creative professionals to gain valuable work experience and training.

The funding for the arts in Hawai'i is crucial to the well-being of the community. It provides a venue for artists to showcase their work, offers educational opportunities for everyone to engage with art, and perpetuates Hawai'i's cultural heritage. Our organization relies on a thriving arts ecosystem to deliver our programs and support the creative workforce.

- **HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts and Opportunities for Creative Professionals:**
 - The bill significantly alters the funding sources of the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. This directly impacts the ability for creative professionals to gain valuable work experience and training.
 - Without this funding, Hawai'i's creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
- **General Funds Create an Unstable Environment for the Arts and Those Who Work Within the Creative Economy:**
 - The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. This instability makes it impossible for creative professionals and arts organizations to plan and grow their programs effectively.
 - As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services, leaving the arts with little to no reliable funding.
- **Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai'i's Identity, Economy, and Community Impact:**
 - The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being.

- We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawai'i's arts and culture sector.

Mahalo nui loa,

Brian Linares,

Honolulu, HI

Founder, Exhibition Grid: A Contemporary Art Experience, LLC

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 7:35:38 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra Koonohiokala Norenberg	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Many, if not most, believe in the days of their youth that money is the path to happiness, freedom, contentment, satisfaction, and overall well being. But if money is all that is required to be happy in a society, then why is it that the poorest of societies rank among the happiest of Nations while the richest, (such as the United States), tend to rank among the least happy according to the Happy Country Index, (HCI)?

That said, politics and fiscal responsibility should support social well being in a stable, consistent, and meaningful way through predictable and regular funding because social well being predictably needs regular and healthy investments through culture and arts programs.

Unfortunately, moving funding for culture and arts programs into a competitive landscape that relies on the whim of one president or another is not conducive to ensuring a healthy, vibrant, and happy society because it creates inconsistencies in funding and the possibility that culture and arts programs established to ensure the well being of society are neglected to free up funding for some federal/state politician's personal/public agenda.

So, in good conscience, I oppose this bill.

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 4:38:07 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Fae Yamaguchi	Testifying for State Foundation on Culture and the Arts	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Fae Yamaguchi. I was born and raised in Hawai'i. I am a practicing artist who has been teaching art to the children of Hawai'i for the past 35 years. Through the SFCA Artists in the Schools program, I was at Lanakila Elementary, a title 1 school, for the past few months teaching art to the second graders. For many, it was the first time they had been exposed to art and given an opportunity to give form to ideas they have in their head.

I was also at various public schools across the island as part of the Art Bento program, which included a museum visit to Capitol Modern - Hawaii State Art Museum. For most of the children, it was the first time they had ever been to an Art Museum. I still remember the first time I visited the Honolulu Academy of Arts with Manoa School, many many years ago. It still remains a significant memory for me.

Through the SFCA/Hawaii State Art Museum, I taught art at the IHS Kaaahi Women and Family Shelter. Next week I will be teaching at Kauhaiki Village, the supportive housing for the formerly homeless. I cannot stress how important it is to give these children a sense of individuality within a safe environment, and to encourage their creative ideas. Their ideas are something no one can ever take away from them. Through art they may create their own stable sense of self.

In these troubled changing times, it is of utmost importance to embrace humanity and remember that we are creative human beings. It is through thinking like an artist, that we may overcome problems by nurturing thinking outside the box.

I hope you will consider the insight to see beyond black and white numbers and recognize the intangible qualities that make us human.

Please oppose **HB1378 HD2**

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 6:48:22 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amber Coppings	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I was walking downtown the other day and noticed three fantastic public art sculptures that I had not seen in awhile. There were locals and tourists enjoying the unique art and the beautiful day around each of them. These moments of peace and community are created by artists. Artists work hard and artists/the arts deserve long term stability. Please reject bill 1378 as it stands.

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 10:02:14 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jenna Shafer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2 as destabilizing the funding of arts and culture would unravel community engagement and identity, devalue the importance of art and culture during a time of economic uncertainty, and would ultimately disenfranchise the most vulnerable minority groups at a time when federal funding is unreliable and used as ransom. To remove permanent funding for the arts in Hawai'i is to further subject residents to the erasure of their diverse backgrounds and cultures and increasing the likelihood that the arts will be financially unattainable for the average citizen. It is through permanent funding of art and culture that new residents and visitors are able to better understand the historical and cultural significance of Hawai'i and thus either find a sense of belonging, or at the very least become better informed of what makes Hawai'i more than just a vacation destination. Reliable funding of the arts also enables locals to continue to learn about their home, their ancestors, their history, as well as ensure dialogue of why learning this history through art and culture is essential to the well-being of not only their communities, but of the state as well.

When times are hard, people need reasons to keep going. The permanent funding of arts and culture in the state has ensured that residents are able to find community and inspiration to keep going, despite the hardships that are still only barely getting started.

ALOHA

My name is Gunda Nollenberger, and I am writing today as a citizen. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB 1378-HD2 `Relating to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts`.

As I understand it, the proposed wording of H.B. No. 1378 H.D. 2 appears to create new funding for performing arts, it does so, however, by severely restricting the Works of Art Special Fund - a critical, dedicated and sustainable source of funding that supports arts and culture programs across the entire state. The bill offers a short-term \$4 million general fund appropriation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, with no guarantee of future funding. In exchange for temporary funding, the bill sacrifices long-term stability, putting the entire sector at risk. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services (health, housing, education and transportation), leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.

Firsthand, I experience how excited our community is, whether they are artists or people enjoying the works of art, to get together at Capitol Modern's special events. The aim is to support, promote, and recognize the excellence of Hawai'i's diverse artists; create, display, and maintain in public places the state art museum's collection of works of art that represent the diversity and excellence of the State's artistic expression.

Giving artists the opportunity to present their work and audiences to experience creative ideas expressed in art forms makes our world as a whole, and Hawai'i in particular, a culturally richer place. Art is not always tangible, but it inspires people in so many different ways. We need innovative concepts to explore new avenues to move forward, think outside the box, and feel positive about the place we all share and most of us call home. From my experience, museums are places of interest when filled with people (life!) who get to meet artists and get involved with the arts, including events after hours - a platform for conversation.

The arts cannot exist in a space that lacks an outlet to give it expression. It is an important landscape providing enriching experiences with the arts.

Arts and culture are essential to Hawai'i's identity and economy. Therefore, I urge you to oppose HB 1378-HD2 to protect the Works of Art Special Fund. This is not the time to dismantle the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities.

MAHALO

Gunda Nollenberger

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 8:59:29 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Goodman	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

I would like to express my opposition to HB 1378 HD2.

While it does create a Performing Arts Grants Program and Performing Arts Grants Special Fund, it replaces the allocated 1% with general revenue and federal funding. In today's national political climate, there is little expectation that federal funds will be funding the arts of any kind for quite a while or if awarded, abruptly pulled because someone of note in Hawai'i made some public comment that offended someone in a position of power outside of the State.

By placing the funding exclusively on federal funds and general revenue, this bill essentially reneges on nearly 40 years of the State's commitment to "...*promote, perpetuate, preserve, and encourage culture and the arts as central to the quality of life and people of the State.*" There was a great deal of wisdom in funding the arts in the present way, as those legislators who proposed and adopted that model no doubt knew well, that the support of the arts are easily swept away by either a temporary need that could have been handled in other ways or by a very persuasive speaker with his or hers own agenda that may not have served the majority of our citizens.

In consideration of the above, I ask the members of Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts not to approve HB 1378 HD2.

Thank you,

James Goodman

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 10:52:03 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Mager	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Legislators,

I am a cross-disciplinary performing artist and a former Taiko Center of the Pacific Fellowship recipient here in Honolulu

I am submitting testimony to **oppose HB1378 HD2** in its current form. Funding for the arts in Hawai'i is crucial to the cultural fabric of these islands. The arts bring together individuals and communities in a way that no other discipline can, and if we lose this secure funding from the state capital improvement projects, there will be no guarantee for the future of arts from future Legislators. Our goals and sometimes our livelihoods as cultural practitioners count on the state's commitment to long-term funding.

I urge you **not** to support this bill..

Thank you.

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:19:28 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hana Yoshihata	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Hana Yoshihata and I strongly urge you to oppose HB 1378-HD2. The Works of Art Special Fund directly supports the incomes and livelihoods of many artists living and working in Hawai‘i, including myself. As an artist who has had the honor of having my work acquired by the State Foundation’s Art in Public Places program, this financial support not only drives me to continue creating art that can belong to and enrich our community, but also financially enables me to do so. Getting to have my art publicly accessible to the people of Hawai‘i has been deeply meaningful to me, as I know it has been for many of my fellow artists who also strive to bring beauty and hope to our community. The support of the Works of Art Special Fund creates many opportunities for these connections between artists and communities and fosters positive collective cultural growth. I fear the elimination of the Works of Art Special Fund proposed in HB 1378-HD2 and replacement with funding from federal and general funds would threaten the long-term support and stability of artists and the arts in our community. I believe passing HB 1378-HD2 in its current form would be to our collective cultural detriment.

Please oppose HB 1378-HD2 in its current form and retain the Works of Art Special Fund to continue integral support of artists throughout our pae ‘āina.

Mahalo for taking my perspective and opinion into consideration.

Me ke aloha,

Hana Yoshihata, Hawaii Island

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 11:43:05 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shereen Balles	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai Kākou,

I am in opposition of HB 1378.

Mahālo,

Shereen

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 1:36:02 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jake Shimabukuro	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please OPPOSE HB1378 HD2 – Protect long-term Arts & Culture Funding in Hawai'i

Date: March 13, 2025

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and members of the TCA Committee

From: Jake Shimabukuro

Affiliation: Artist

Subject: Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jake Shimabukuro, a local musician born and raised in Honolulu, Hawai'i. It is my understanding that this bill is of great concern to the art community as it seems to threaten the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i. This may lead to artistic and cultural programs being cut, resulting in less opportunities for young artists to achieve the support they need to pursue their creative careers.

I believe most of us here today are passionate about the arts because we believe that it brings people together and makes us feel human. It teaches us empathy and fosters community engagement, while also providing economic opportunities and enriching lives. King David Kalakaua spoke of the importance of the arts and how it is vital for every culture to survive.

I know money is limited. And no matter what side you sit on for this bill, we all want the best things for the communities we serve, especially for the children. I believe there has to be a way that we can protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has been a source of financial support that fosters creative thinkers and doers. In my own experience, I have found that creativity and

self-expression are key elements in living with a peaceful heart and a healthy mind - two things we could all use more of today.

In closing, let's oppose HB1378-HD2 and find other options. I truly believe investing in the arts today is more important than ever.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony. We are truly grateful for your support and service.

Sincerely,

Jake Shimabukuro

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 7:04:30 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
preston lentz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2. If history teaches us anything, once a state institution loses funding it never recovers because the funding is never restored. The Arts are a critical pathway into our unique and special Hawaiian identity. If anything, funding should be increased to enhance the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts ability to bring more art into the lives of our legislators and citizens.

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 8:58:01 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Miller	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While HB 1378-HD2 does include some positive provisions, it ultimately **threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding** by dismantling the **Works of Art Special Fund**. **This is** Hawai'i's only **dedicated, reliable** funding source for the arts. Instead, it replaces this funding with **federal and general funds**, which are unreliable and will compete with other state priorities like housing, education, and healthcare. And as the Trump administration is obliterating arts, humanities and science funding IN HAWAII, the arts and the culture we artist's embody and express, will be in danger. "A people without a vision will perish" and artists are the visionaries of the future and the keeper of our treasured cultural past. You legislators have the power and the responsibility to support the artists as a valuable resource for the strength of Hawaii's identity and global reputation. MAHALO

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 9:05:17 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Allan E Garcia	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Allan Garcia
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
Allangar@gmail.com
March 13, 2025

Committee on Transportation & Culture and the Arts
Hawai'i State Legislature

415 South Beretania Street

RE: Opposition to HB1378 HD2

Aloha Senator Chris Lee and Members of the Committee,

I'm writing in opposition to HB1378 HD2, which would dismantle the Works of Art Special Fund—Hawai'i's only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts. Replacing it with federal and general funds means arts funding will no longer be secure and will have to compete with other priorities like housing and healthcare.

The arts bring our community together, keep our culture alive, and are vital for mental well-being. Publicly funded arts programs give everyone access to creative expression, healing, and a sense of belonging. Without stable funding, our local artists and cultural programs will struggle, and Hawai'i will lose an essential part of what makes it special.

Please protect the Works of Art Special Fund and keep investing in the heart and soul of our islands. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,
Allan Garcia

Resident of Senate District 14

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 9:53:16 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rosina Potter	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is embarrassing to see the state question the Works of Art Special Fund again. Restricting the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide, will cause deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.

General Fund are not a reliable replacement, it is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. In a political environment where so many services are being cut, it is terrifying to see the state join in jeopardizing funding that has a deep impact on our island community.

The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism, education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 10:56:32 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jairus Kiyonaga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine R. Inouye and members of the Transportation and Culture and the Arts committee,

I am testifying in extreme opposition of HB1378, HD2 RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Jairus Kiyonaga

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 11:56:15 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vanessa McCowan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While I do admire this that this bill attempts to fund arts and culture, ultimately by dismantling the **Works of Art Special Fund**—Hawai‘i’s only **dedicated, reliable** funding source for the arts - this bill replaces our special fund with federal and general funds which are not guaranteed. Our current administration is evidence that federal funds in particular are at the whim of an administration and not guaranteed.

Hawaii is so special because of our culture and history, and a huge part of celebrating this special place comes from celebrating the art that is generated by our varied and historied peoples. **We need to maintain a permanent fund that supports the arts in order to prevent serious loss of culture here in the islands.**

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 12:40:30 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Scott Gorrell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1378. Public art must be promoted in a sustainable fashion, which this bill does not do. Mahalo.

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 12:41:43 PM
Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen Cabral	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This Bill Puts the Arts in Hawaii at Risk

- **No Permanent Funding:** The bill offers a **temporary** \$4 million allocation for fiscal years 2026 and 2027—**with no commitment beyond that.**
- **Uncertain Future:** General funds and federal grants are subject to cuts and shifting priorities, leaving arts funding vulnerable.
- **Loss of a Lifeline:** The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured that Hawai‘i’s arts sector remains resilient, even during economic downturns. This bill **dismantles that safety net.**
- **False Promises:** Short-term funding gains are **not worth sacrificing long-term stability.** This bill weakens the arts ecosystem instead of strengthening it.

Please do not change the strong commitment the State has shown the arts. Be pono.

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 12:42:39 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Love	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: March 13, 2025

To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)

From: Katherine Love

Affiliation: Artist and Curator

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

The funding for the Arts in Hawaii is crucial to the well being of the community today and for future generations. Artists, students, visitors, and the general public are served by a robust arts ecosystem which is supported by many stakeholders and reliant on continued funding through the SFCA and the Works of Art Special Fund. Please do not vote for this bill which will harm the strides that Hawai‘i has taken to center the arts as important for the public good.

Key Points

- 1. HB1378-HD2 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts.**
The bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, which is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Without it, Hawai‘i’s creative community will face deep cuts, leaving programs, jobs, and future opportunities at risk.
- 2. General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.**
The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. As federal funds diminish, general funds will likely be diverted to essential services such as health, housing, and education—leaving the arts with little to no funding at all.
- 3. Arts and Culture Are Essential to Hawai‘i’s Identity and Economy.**
The arts not only preserve our cultural heritage but also contribute to tourism,

education, and community well-being. We need stable, dedicated funding to ensure arts and culture can thrive for future generations.

Closing

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund. This is a crucial time in history with many uncertainties. Let us show the rest of the nation that Hawai'i stands strong in support of the arts.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your commitment to supporting Hawaii's arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,

Katherine Love, Honolulu, HI

LATE

HB-1378-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 12:50:41 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/13/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John G Romans	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose the new bill due to its removal of long-term security for funding in the arts. While I recognize that the bill provides increased funding for the short term, the arts rely on external sources of security to encourage necessary risk-taking to create new work. Predicatability of funding for the arts is more important for artistic growth than short term funding booms. Short term funding increases will only benefit artists who immediately receive grants and will homogenize the art which is supported in communities.

As an arts educator, I believe in the fostering new artists and the utility of the arts in developing malleable, creative thinkers for all fields of work. Slashes to longterm funding security damage the arts' ability to remain evolving. External funding is also crucial to allowing community access to the arts and alleviating the burden of families to support life enrichment through the arts and culture.

Therefore, I oppose this bill and its reduction of longerm financial security for the arts.